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Date: June 16th, 2025

Time: 3:30 AM
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The sound of metal **ticking** against each other and wrenches **rwrorking** bolts into places filled the quiet air of the basement. None of the individuals down there felt the need to start a conversation, and nobody minded.

: Hey, uh, this is the wrong wrench,

Sid, the one working on the machine broke the silence.

Sid: Make sure you get the one with the square notch- don't they teach this at school?

Andy inspected the wrench she was about to hand the calico. She was sitting on the gray desk next to Sid, watching them work, while Phillip sat in a chair off to the side. He was doing whatever it is he does- crosswords, reading, who knows.



Andy: Well, they cut out the S.T.E.A.M. class- I think the teacher quit

Sid: geeze

Sid frustratedly murmured under their breath.

Sid: I've always known public school was *horrendous*

The calico started using the square wrench and fixed one of the bolts on their machine.

Sid: Ever since what happened in 7th grade*, I've been certain. It's horrible-

**Sid only went to public school when they were around the age of 12-13, putting them in 7th grade. This ended not-so-great and Sid now has a burning hate for public school systems. Lore drop!*

While Sid kept rambling about school systems and whatnot, Andy looked to the side of the table, awkwardly fidgeting with her paws. She really liked her school. *Most* of the kids were alright and it was the only time she was with her friends- the very few she had, anyway. Sid hating it made her feel like she was doing something wrong, somehow. But eventually she tried to shrug it off- then the basement door opened.

Footsteps came (slowly) running down the stairwell and around the basement floors. Sid perked up anxiously and tried to get the two young cats to calm down.

Sylvester and Tessa surrounded the gray table Andy was sitting on. Sylvester was going slow enough so that Tessa would be able to catch up, as she was using her cane.

Sid: G- GUYS- what are you doing!?

Tessa tried going for the kill and raced around one of the sides of the table, catching Sylvester off guard and causing the two of them to stumble onto the ground in a fit of laughter. Phillip, who was sitting on a red chair next to the table, looked over, smiling at the two.

Sid: Be careful!

Sid tried to shoo the two away from their machine, worried they might break it, even though they were far from near it.

Tessa: *[getting up from the floor, grabbing his cane]* It's alright- ow- we're not gonna *destroy* your thingy.

Sid: It's not a *thingy*- and, anyways, you have no idea what might go wrong, *especially* with you two playing games like *this*!- now, please, either go back upstairs or just- be careful! And stay *still*!

Before Tessa could roll her eyes, another pair of footsteps came from the staircase. Mabel gently skipped down the stairs and walked over to where Phillip was sitting, putting a paw on the tabby's shoulder.

Mabel: What's all this yelling about?- oh! Sid, that's a very good thingy-build you've got there!

Mabel walked over to Sid's machine and started touching the metal, making Sid frantically run over.

Sid: Don't *touch* it! Only *I'm* allowed to work on it, I don't want anything breaking- and for the last time, it's not a "*thingy-build*," or some "*thingy*"- it's an in-the-works teleporter, I'm trying to rework my old project, and if *anything* goes wro-

Before Sid could continue, Mabel happily called everyone upstairs to come look, making Sid more irritated. Tessa giggled.

: Holy carp! This looks interesting,

Sid, who was face palming, took their paw away from their face and looked to see *everyone in the house walking down the stairs*. Mascot was already down the staircase- he was the one who said "holy carp" (do people even say that?), Peter following close behind.

Sid rolled their eyes and tried to set a barrier between their project and the group. Andy walked up beside them and smiled, proud that she also got to help out, though didn't do any building.

Peter: What is it, exactly?

Sid: It's, *hopefully*, a teleporter, if I got everything correct. It's still all theoretical, though hopefully I've got everything down-

: My kid! Making a teleporter!

Sydney walked up between Mascot and Peter, leaning on one of their sides. She looked proud, as if she didn't make even more intricate builds in her glory days.

Sid: *in-the-works*!

Sid's shoulders slumped forward. They didn't like all this attention on them, let alone on some machine scrap, and they didn't like how many people were here in their workplace.

Andy: I even helped with the tools! I gave them this wrench [*holds up wrench*], they used it to screw in this-

Andy, attempting to lightly tap the metal, accidentally dropped the wrench on a very important button that was *supposed* to be screwed into the metal but *some* cats had to interrupt Sid.

A giant blue light swirled up in the middle of the machine, causing a gush of air to flow through the room.

Sid: What did you do!?

Sid yelled and pushed Andy off to the side. They started frantically typing and poking at a board with buttons and small screens. Suddenly, the portal (was it even a portal if nobody knew if it took you somewhere!?) started pulling the group towards it. The force only got greater by the second.

Andy was the first to get pulled in, followed by screams and yells and Peter, stupidly, running in after her. In the next 6 seconds, almost all of the group were pulled in until it all abruptly stopped.

The portal disappeared, only leaving Phillip, Tessa and Sylvester collapsed on the ground.

Words: 1,005

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