

If given the choice to go back in time to this morning and change the decisions that brought you here, you were sure you would have done so in a heartbeat. Your first bad decision this morning had been responding to a cryptic text message from Sans, confirming that you were not, in fact, busy.

The second was when you checked the date and realized what day it was. February 14th. Of course, it had been silly of you to assume that Sans was planning something normal, like a nice lunch or a walk in the park.

Oh, no. Normal had left your vocabulary entirely after meeting your neighbors.

So, instead of flowers and chocolate or dinner and a movie, you had found yourself staring at Sans incredulously as the escape room worker handcuffed his wrist to the radiator that sat in the corner. The room had been decorated to look like a hotel suite, with the addition of notes and books scattered around on the walls and tables.

You felt like you were in a true crime documentary. How romantic.

Sans planted himself on the ground in front of the decoration he was attached to as the employee went over the rules and the story that went with the room. Apparently, you were an agent that needed to 'rescue' Sans and get the both of you out in an hour.

You wouldn't be surprised if Sans took the opportunity to nap while you solved puzzles.

You and Sans were left alone in the room, and the glowing red timer above the door began ticking down. Even if you knew it was fake, it almost felt a bit ominous.

You shifted your weight between your feet as you looked around, not entirely sure where to start.

“...This feels very one-sided,” you mused.

Sans hummed, “Moral support is a very important job. All of this ‘believing in you’ is tiring me out.”

You sighed and accepted your fate, making your way over to leaf through the papers scattered on a desk. “Yeah, yeah. I hardly even know where to start. Have you done one of these before?”

He nodded, “A few times. A lotta the folks in my household like to solve stuff. Puzzles were a big part of our culture, so Papyrus got pretty excited when he heard humans did things like this.”

You softened just a bit at that, chuckling softly as you tried to make sense of the clutter. “It seems like something he'd enjoy.”

“He does, even if it gets a bit chaotic when everyone goes. Most of the time, nothing even ends up getting solved, but that's okay. They have fun with it.”

You glanced back over at him. “Do you?”

“Well, yeah. Why would I have let you drag me out to do something I didn't want to do?” He smiled, squinting in the way you knew indicated he was teasing, but you knew what he meant. If Sans truly didn't want to do something, he wouldn't.

“Ah, yes. I dragged you kicking and screaming. Of course, that's exactly how I remember it.”

Sans chuckled when you played along before he shook his head. "Don't worry about the clutter. It's probably there to distract you more than anything. Look for anything that's circled, highlighted, or dated. Not every paper or book is going to be a clue."

You looked back at him curiously, "Okay, Mr. Mystery Expert. Any other sage advice for me?"

"Well, since you're asking..." he trailed off, and the lights in his eyes darted around the room, carefully taking everything in. "You're looking for a four digit code and a small key."

How... oddly specific. "I believe you and all, but how do you figure?"

"The nightstand drawer is locked. And there's a safe in the wall under the desk."

You ducked down to check under the desk, noting the panel with a digital keypad on it. Of course, Sans had already been sitting on the floor. It would have been easy for him to spot. How did he end up with the easy job again?

You pivoted to look under the rest of the furniture while you were at it, blinking in surprise when you caught sight of a small box shoved under the armchair. It slid out easily when you pulled on it, and the lid came off just as easily.

Sans whistled a little four note tune, like you'd just opened a treasure chest in a video game. You couldn't help but chuckle softly.

"Nerd."

He shot you a wink, not bothering to confirm or deny your claim against him. He didn't need to. "Is it the boomerang or the hookshot?"

“Neither. It's one of those flashlight pens.” you clicked the button on the side of it, though the light was a pretty purple-blue color. “Ah. Scratch that. It's one of those blacklight pens.”

He hummed and leaned back a bit. “Ah. A fitting tool for the light of my life.”

“Sans.”

“Hm?”

“I will hit the emergency exit button and leave you stuck to a radiator.”

His grin widened, “It's kinda nice right here, actually. You're so considerate of my comfort.”

You rolled your eyes, though even you couldn't help the smile on your face. “I don't know how you could possibly be comfortable like that, but suit yourself.”

“...I don't think I have any of those on me.”

You paused what you were doing and slowly looked back at him, your expression scrunching in confusion, “Huh?”

“Suits. I don't have any right now. Can't exactly fit a tux in my pocket. And I definitely can't fit the armor kind of suit in my pockets.”

You just stared quietly at him for a few moments before you turned away without a word, shining the blacklight on the notes scattered about on the walls. When you scanned it over a news article, the light revealed a circled date. Four digits.

You moved back to the safe and quickly punched in the date. You couldn't help the little cheer you made when it beeped and swung open for you, only to reveal a puzzle box. You turned the little box over in your hands for a moment before gently tossing it to Sans, who let it bounce off of his chest and into his lap.

"Since you're stuck there, might as well give you something to do, right?"

"Really making me do all the heavy lifting here, huh?" he agreed easily enough, examining the box for a few moments before he got to work.

"How dare I give you a task to do?" You joked back with him as you continued looking through the room for any sort of clues or keys.

"I don't know how I'll ever cope," he lamented, though his delivery was entirely dry.

You chuckled and shook your head, wandering over to each set piece and inspecting it. You heard a few rapid clicks from across the room as Sans worked at solving the puzzle box. You kneeled down to look over the nightstand just as a dull thunk came from the box.

You didn't bother looking back at Sans, too distracted by glaring at the lock on the drawer like you could intimidate it into opening. You couldn't.

Sans tapped your shoulder before reaching over you to dangle a little key in your vision. "Here you go. I finished my task."

You opened your hand for him to drop the key into, which he promptly did. "Oh, thanks. That's actually exactly what I..."

You trailed off, your expression scrunching before you looked back at Sans over your shoulder. He smiled nonchalantly back at you before he casually sauntered back over to the radiator. He plopped himself back in front of it and slid his hand into the cuff again.

“...You could have done that... the *whole time*?”

His grin widened, “Done what?”

You just quietly stared at him as the red numbers above the door quietly ticked down. His grin twitched like he was fighting back laughter.

“You gonna unlock the drawer, or...?”

Your gaze narrowed at him before you slowly turned to unlock the nightstand. You pulled it open before huffing a sigh.

“Oh, look. A handcuff key that I definitely, for sure, needed to find in order to free the absolute goober of a skeleton that brought me here.” Even though he could apparently get out by himself, you handed the key off to him and watched as he needlessly unlocked it.

“Phew. What a relief. I thought I was going to be stuck there forever.”

“I’m sure the employee would have let you out eventually.”

Sans stood up and needlessly dusted himself off before he began to wander around the room to help you out with more than just little comments.

“Maybe. But luckily for me, I already have you.” He smiled over at you, something a bit more genuine than the usual teasing grin he wore.

You blinked a few times before looking away. “I think you might be the furthest thing from a damsel in distress, but I’m happy to help. I guess.”

With the two of you working together, you practically breezed through the rest of the room, unlocking the door with time to spare. The employee at the front counter congratulated the both of you with cheesy stickers before you left.

As you walked out the door, you peeled your sticker off just to press it to the front on Sans’ jacket, the holographic lock and key catching the sunlight like a badge of honor.

“Oh, are we trading stickers? Nice.” He took your hand and pressed the one he’d gotten onto the back of it. ‘I Survived’ in a mismatch of letters like it was a ransom note.

“Ominous. I like it.” You chuckled softly and held up your hand to admire the silly little sticker.

Sans chuckled and shoved his hands in his pockets as he walked. After a moment, he glanced back over at you. “...Hey.”

You quirked a brow, “Hi, Sans.”

He shook his head, “Thanks for going with me. It was nice.”

What a silly thing to thank you for. You grinned and lightly bumped into his side, “Thank you for inviting me. I had fun, even if I was stuck doing most of the heavy lifting.”

The lights in his eyes got just a bit brighter, “I’m glad.”

“You should invite me to go places with you more often.”

“I’m sure I could pencil that into my very busy schedule. Maybe somewhere between ‘second breakfast’ and ‘nap again’.” You doubted there was actually a schedule at all.

You hummed thoughtfully, “Yeah, but if you did it then, you’d have to reschedule ‘be a general nuisance’.”

“That’s alright. I think I could put that off for you.” He winked over at you.

You linked arms with him, smiling softly at the idea. “Well, in that case... It sounds like a plan. I look forward to it.”

He smiled back over at you, the lights in his eyes bright and almost fuzzy. “Yeah, me too.”

The two of you were more than content to let a comfortable silence fall as Sans took you back home, content with the little outing for the day. Your gaze flickered down to the sticker on the back of your hand, a warmth settling in your chest at the idea of ‘next time’, and every time after that.