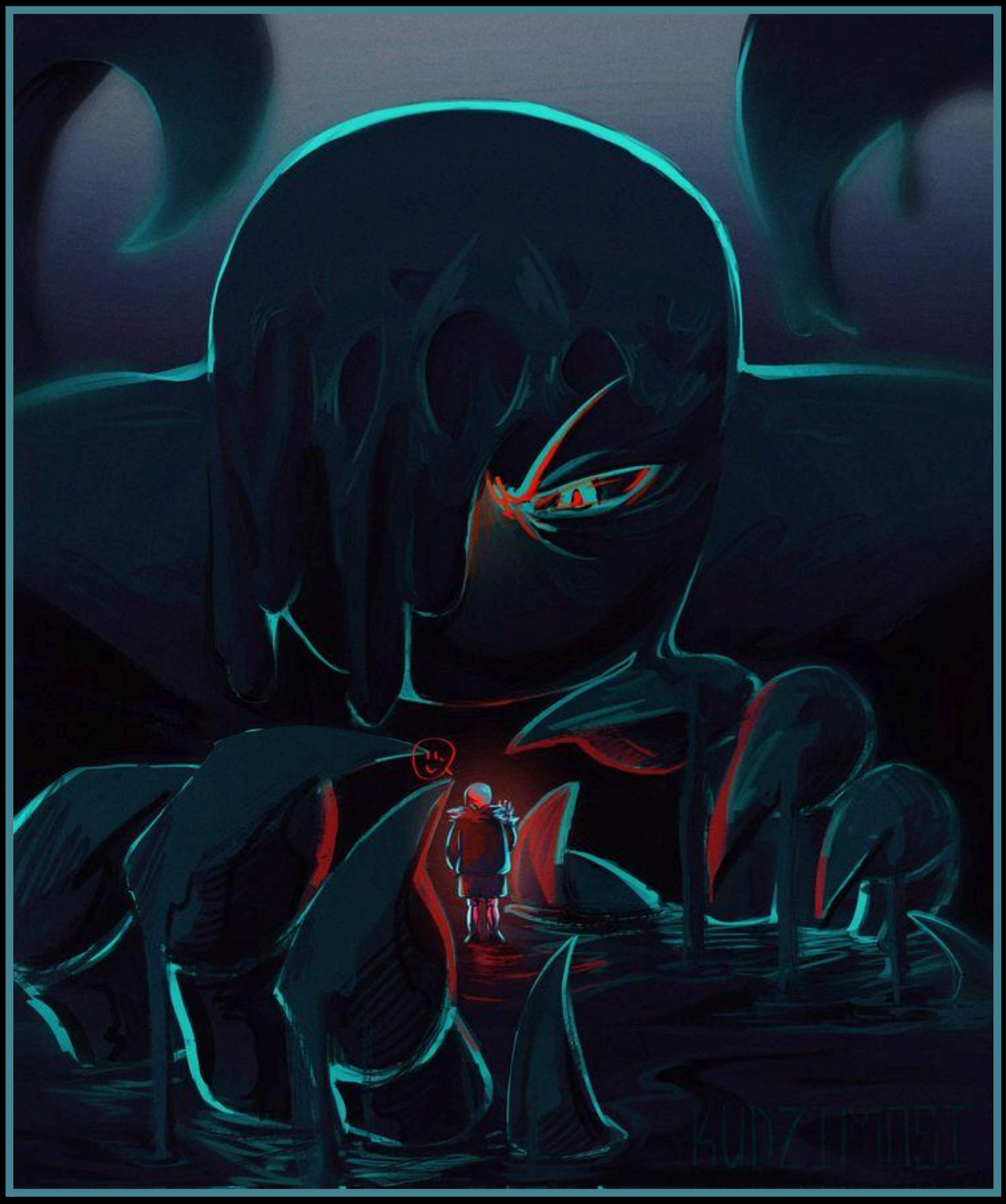
The Art Of Dissociation



A Document on Nightmare's manipulation of Killer Sans

Doc made by: Akuma Ujjain

Color Key:

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Lime - FSIQ, Intelligence

Red - Strategy, Planning, Tactics

Yellow - Deception, Unpredictability

Cyan - Manipulation, Social Engineering, Psychological Warfare

Green - Reasoning, Thinking, Insight, Analysis, Social Intelligence

Pink - Emotional Intelligence, Adversity

Blue - Foresight

Magenta - Field Skills, Adaptability

Category Descriptions

- FSIQ: FRI, PSI, VCI, VSI, WMI. PSI and WMI can be grouped as CPI depending on the case
- Intelligence: Crystallized, Fluid
- Planning: Contingency, Coverage, Intricacies, Invincibility, Preparation Process, Versatility
- Strategy: Building, Complexity, Flexibility (aka Adaptability), Fortitude (aka Success Rate), Logistics
- Tactics: Management, Potency, Synergy
- Deception: Acting Skills, Fabrication, Information Control, Misdirection, Sophistry (aka Verbal Deception + Bluffing)
- Unpredictability: Behavioral Volatility, Cognitive Volatility, Creativity, Unconventionality
- Manipulation: Direct, Indirect, Emotional, Logical, Mass, Coercion
- Social Engineering: Aura, Charisma, Communication, Influence Building, Leadership, Resource Allocation
- Psychological Warfare: Abusing Insecurities, Demoralization, Emotional Inducement, Mind Control, Reinforcements
- Reasoning: Deductive, Inductive, Abductive
- Insight: Cold Reading, Intuition, Memory, Observation, Perception
- Analysis: Data, Description, Deviation
- Social Intelligence: Awareness, Cognition, Intuition
- Emotional Intelligence: Facilitation, Perception, Understanding, Engagement, Management, Realization
- Thinking: Abstract, Application, Convergent, Divergent, Holistic, Metacognition
- Adversity (AQ/AC): Discipline, Stress Tolerance, Perseverance, Impulse Management, Mental Fortitude
- Foresight: Anticipation, Prediction, Preclusion
- Field Skills: Information Gathering, Formulation Speed, Social Integration, Risk Assessment, Safeguarding, Setting Trap, Multitasking

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Context:

Nightmare's is said to embody the very concept of negativity, the root of all negative thoughts.

Meaning every negative thought that has ever occurred or will occur is actively monitored, influenced, and manipulated by nightmare.

He serves as the voice in the back of your mind whenever you experience any form of negative emotions or thoughts.

Both Joku and Rahafwabas state that their characters are somewhat canon to each other.

However, the most important point is that Joku mentioned he's considered canon within the Dreamtale storyline.

This implies that the canon nightmare's scaling also naturally applies to the canon story of Killer—also known as "something new."

Other AUs would have to follow this pattern, as without him, negative emotions wouldn't exist.

As once again, he's naturally the cause of every negative thought in every AU.

He's also capable of being able to perform the same level of feats without haxs (meaning that wherever he scales with his hax, he scales even higher without them)

Killer Sans:



Killer sans is a sans that was trapped in endless genocide timelines.

He remembers every reset and all the suffering that came with them.

he fell under the Player's influence and became obsessed with feeling "something new."

Over time, he slowly lost his sense of self and forced himself into emotional numbness.

<u>This is something that's very important.</u>

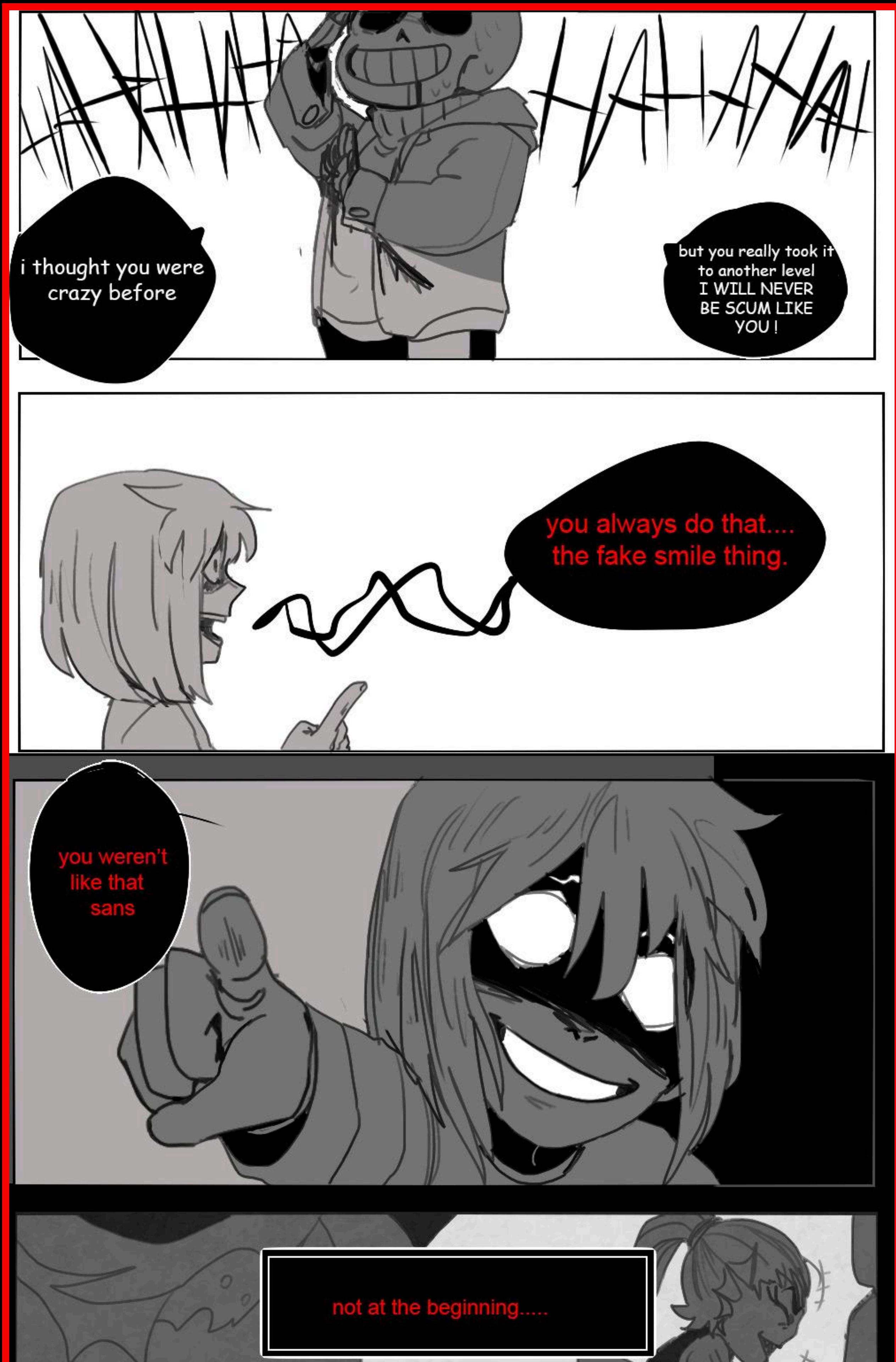
Phase 1: Project Genesis



During the 176th genocide run in a row, Chara attempts to convince Sans to kill everyone else alongside them, offering him the opportunity to experience something new.

However, this route ultimately ends the same way as the previous ones.

Sans refuses.

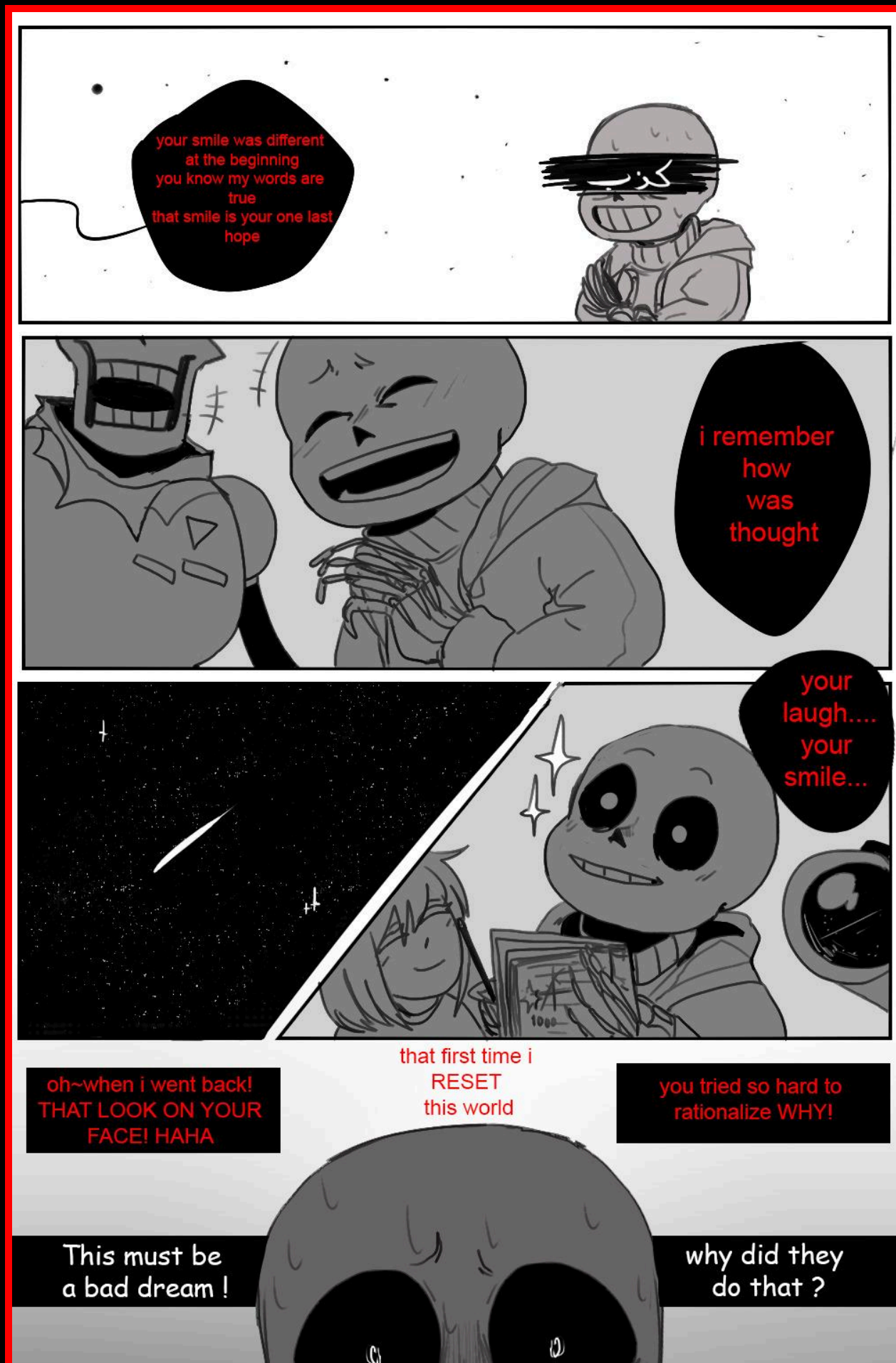

HAHAHA
HAHAHA!
i thought you were crazy before
but you really took it to another level
I WILL NEVER BE SCUM LIKE YOU !
you always do that.... the fake smile thing.
you weren't like that sans
not at the beginning.....

Despite everything he has experienced across the countless resets, he still refuses to become like Chara.

And this interaction reveals something important about his character: Sans wasn't always like this, and his smile wasn't always fake.

His behavior is not necessarily an indication that he was always emotionally detached or incapable of experiencing genuine happiness.

Rather, the repeated resets have gradually changed him, wearing down his mental state until he begins withdrawing from the world around him.


your smile was different at the beginning
you know my words are true
that smile is your one last hope
كذب
i remember how was thought
your laugh.... your smile...
that first time i RESET this world
oh~when i went back! THAT LOOK ON YOUR FACE! HAHA
you tried so hard to rationalize WHY!
This must be a bad dream !
why did they do that ?

This distinction is important because it establishes that Sans's psychological deterioration is a process rather than an inherent characteristic that he naturally had beforehand.

He has been forced to experience the same events repeatedly, remember what happened, and watch everything return to the beginning, regardless of how much those experiences affect him.

So back when the first reset occurred, Sans attempted to rationalize Chara's actions.

He wanted to understand why they had done what they did.

There was presumably some explanation behind their behavior, some reason that could make the events understandable to him.

But as the resets continued, that initial attempt to rationalize the situation gradually deteriorated.

After experiencing the same cycle repeatedly, Sans began questioning whether he should tell someone what was happening.

- Should he tell someone about the resets?
- Should he try to explain what Chara was doing?
- Could anyone help him?

But those questions were met with the same problem every time.

They wouldn't remember at all.


After so many resets
you started thinking
...
"should i tell someone?"
"they won't remember...."
"i..DONT.....CARE...ANYMORE"
You want to continue....
or stop
anything other than RESET
So....to avoid the pain...you closed yourself off
sans are
you ok
HAHAHA
HAHAHA
SANS
but when i do something new

No matter whom he told, the next reset would erase their memories of the previous timeline.

Sans would be left carrying the burden of those experiences alone, while everyone else returned to their ordinary lives without remembering what had happened.

Eventually, this resulted in the change of his attitude.

I don't care anymore.

This wasn't because the events had stopped affecting him.

Rather, It was because the repeated resets had affected him so severely that he had begun to lose the motivation to do anything about them.

He was trapped in a cycle where his experiences mattered to him, but apparently mattered to nobody else.

He could attempt to explain what was happening, but nobody would remember.

He could try to change the outcome, but another reset could undo it.

He could grow attached to someone, only to watch the relationship return to its original state that it was before the reset.

Over time, this would make it increasingly difficult for Sans to believe that anything he did could produce a lasting result.

This eventually led to Sans wanting one of two things to happen.

1. He wanted Chara to either continue.

2. Or he wanted them to stop.

Anything other than another reset.

Because at that point, the continuation of the timeline and its complete cessation would at least represent a definitive outcome.

Either something would finally change, or the cycle would finally end.

Another reset, however, would simply return him to the same situation.

The same knowledge that everyone else would forget what he had experienced.

This explains why Sans began closing himself off from the world around him.

By distancing himself emotionally, he could reduce the possibility of forming attachments that would only become another source of pain when the timeline reset.

If he stopped expecting anything from others, perhaps he would no longer be disappointed and the resets would hurt less.

And if he stopped allowing himself to become emotionally invested, perhaps he could endure the endless repetition without being continually wounded by it.

His detachment therefore becomes a defensive mechanism.

- Sans closes himself off because he wants to avoid experiencing the same emotional pain over and over again.

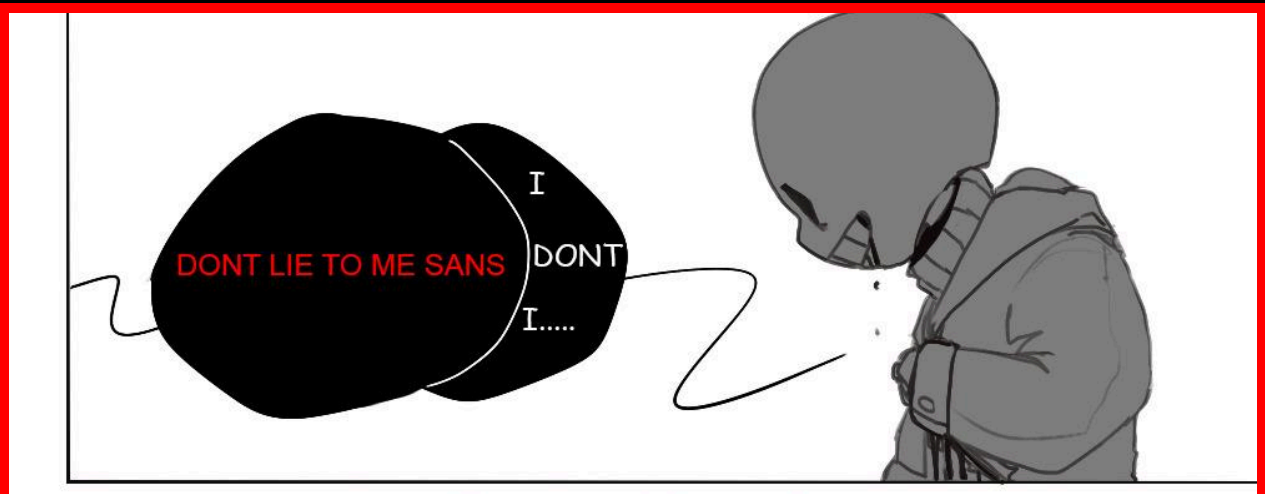
Yet this also creates an important contradiction: although he wants to avoid further suffering, he still wants something new to happen.

He doesn't necessarily want to remain trapped in the same emotional state forever.

He wants an experience that differs from everything he has already endured.

And Nightmare can exploit that desire.

So when Chara introduces something different, Sans finally begins experiencing something he has been deprived of throughout the resets: novelty.


DONT LIE TO ME SANS
I
DONT
I.....


I have seen what you are !
why even try ?
give up .... i did


a part of you ENJOYS hurting me
trying new things
feeling new things


and getting hurt

The prospect of doing something new offers a temporary escape from the repetitive nature of his existence.

For someone who has experienced the same events over and over, novelty can become especially appealing because it breaks the pattern he had grown accustomed to.

In this situation, Sans begins to enjoy trying new things and experiencing different sensations.

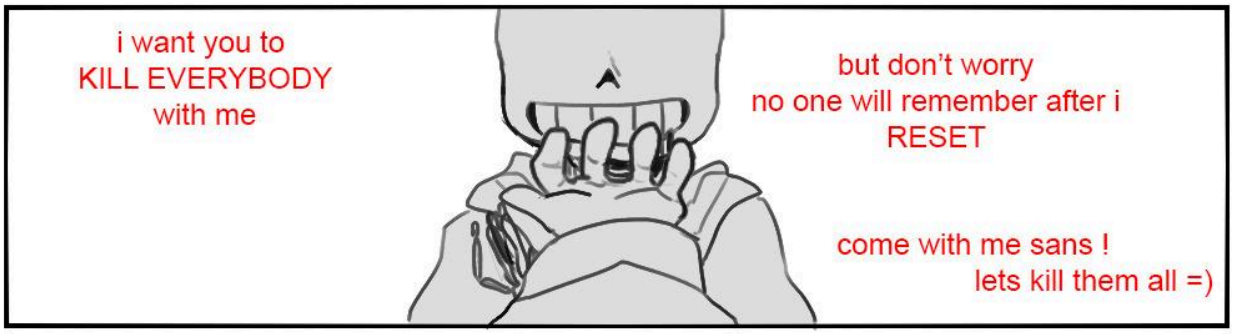
He begins enjoying hurting chara, as well as the complicated sensations associated with hurting them and being affected by the consequences of his own actions.

This is significant because it demonstrates how far his psychological state has deteriorated.

The desire to experience something new has become entangled with the possibility of doing things he would previously have refused to do.

However, there is an important distinction here.

that's why.....i give you this opportunity
to do something new









Wanting to experience something new does not automatically mean Sans is willing to abandon every principle he possesses.

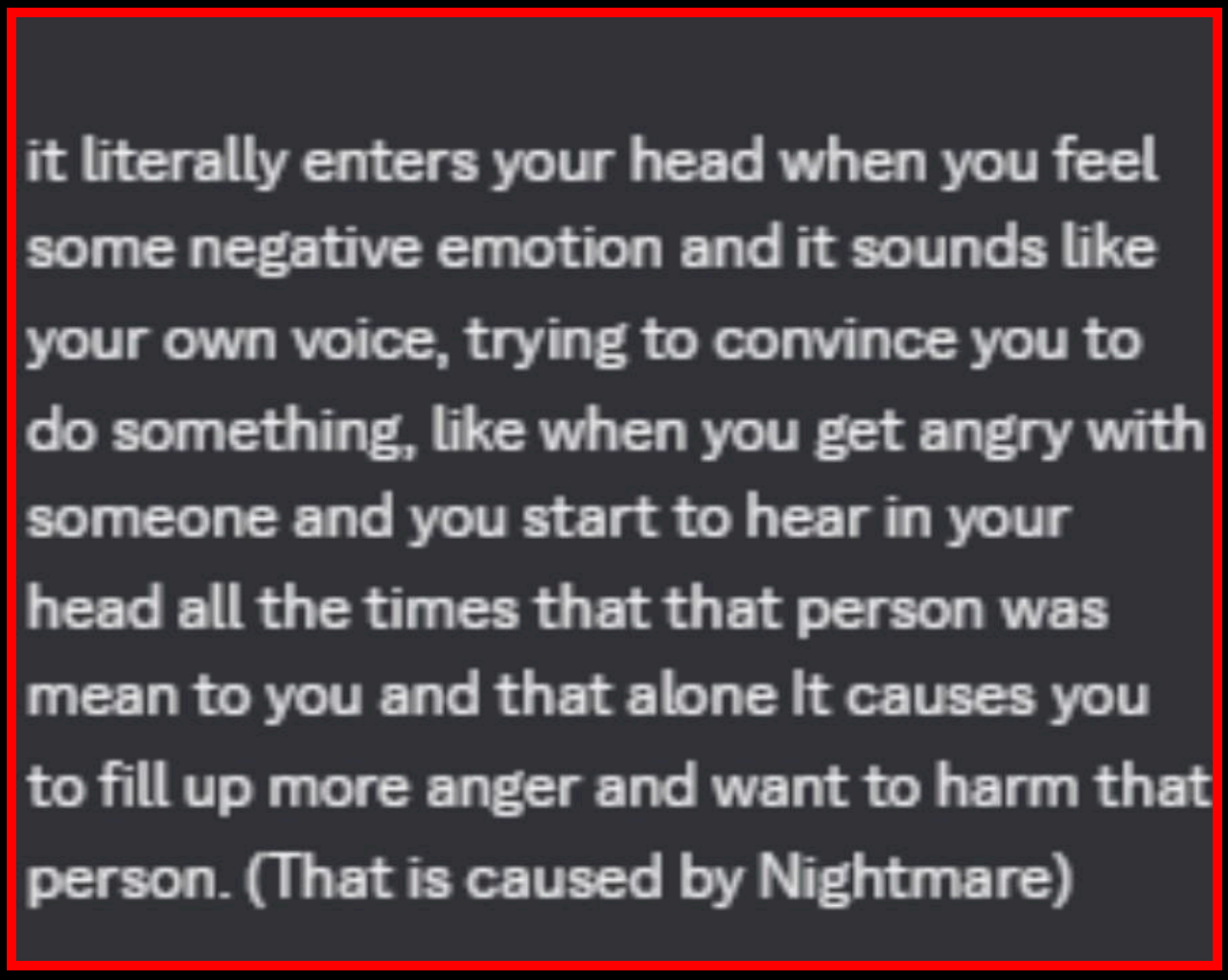
That is precisely what makes his repeated refusals important.

Despite his deteriorating mental health, his isolation, and his growing desire for novelty, Sans continues to refuse Chara's proposal.

And, according to the story and information that is given to us, this refusal persists across the infinite timelines and possibilities in which Chara attempts to convince him.

As I've stated above in the context box, Nightmare is established as the root of all negative thoughts.

He influence's, creates, and manages the negative thoughts that emerge within a person's mind alongside the reasoning process that comes with said thoughts.



This naturally means Nightmare would have to be responsible for the negative thoughts driving his deteriorating psychological state.

The frustration caused by the resets, the growing emotional exhaustion, the desire to stop caring, and the longing to experience something different.

Nightmare would not merely need to implant these thoughts inside Sans's mind.

He would also need to make them appear to be Sans's own thoughts.

In other words, Nightmare would have to manipulate Sans internally while maintaining the illusion that Sans was independently arriving at these conclusions.

The reasoning would appear to belong to Sans himself.

And because Sans already has legitimate reasons to feel exhausted and emotionally detached, Nightmare could exploit those existing circumstances without making his influence obvious.

Nightmare builds upon Sans's genuine experiences while also steering his thoughts toward an outcome he would not otherwise accept beforehand.

The most important evidence in this—Is the claim that Sans would always refuse Chara, regardless of how many timelines or possibilities they explored.



One AU alone contains an infinite amount of possibilities,



so that implies that attempting to persuade Sans through different approaches should, in principle, and logically, provide an enormous range of opportunities to find a successful method.

Chara could attempt to persuade him through friendship, curiosity, frustration, or the promise of new experiences.

Yet Sans will continue to say no.

Establishing a fundamental boundary in his characterization: even when Sans experiences negative thoughts and wants something new, he will not agree to killing his friends.

His psychological deterioration does not automatically erase this boundary.

This distinction between having a thought and acting upon it is essential in Nightmare's Manipulation right now.

Nightmare's influence may explain the negative thoughts Sans experiences, but the repeated refusals show that the negative thoughts that Sans feels alone are insufficient to make him agree to Chara's proposal.

His refusal remains consistent, even after the resets have taken a significant toll on his mental health.



This is because Sans's underlying code prevents him from crossing that particular boundary.



He may want to experience something new, but he will not kill his friends to accomplish it.

And that creates the obstacle Nightmare needs to overcome.

Because If Sans continues refusing Chara across all these attempts, Nightmare would need another way to make the desired outcome that he wants possible.

Instead of continuing to manipulate Sans (at the moment), he can exploit the person repeatedly trying to persuade him:

That person being the player.

After 176 unsuccessful attempts, the player has repeatedly encountered the same result.

Sans refuses.

Regardless of what they try, he continues to reject the proposal that they give him.

Eventually, the player begins to realize that ordinary persuasion is not going to work.

They want Sans to hurt his friends.



They want Sans to kill them.



They want him to say yes.



But he refuses to do so.



This creates a psychological opening for Nightmare that he himself set up.

The player's frustration grows because Sans continues to deny them the outcome they want.

The repeated failures can encourage increasingly desperate attempts to achieve their objective.

Rather than accepting Sans's refusal, the player begins looking for a way around it.

And so, exploiting the player's frustration, impatience, obsession, and dissatisfaction with the repeated outcomes.

He encourages the player to think that Sans's refusal is an obstacle that must be removed.

He makes the player increasingly focused on achieving the desired result, regardless of the consequences.

The player therefore considers an option that came from their negative thoughts that they previously would not have entertained:

Changing Sans himself so that he can finally say yes.



Rather than simply forcing Sans to agree, Nightmare manipulates the player into changing the conditions that prevent him from agreeing.

The player has already tried repeatedly to convince Sans.

They have already experienced the frustration of reaching the same outcome again and again.

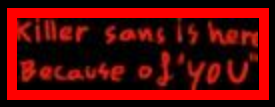
Nightmare exploited that frustration until the player decided that persuasion was no longer enough.

If Sans will never agree under his existing conditions, then those conditions must be changed.

The player therefore modifies Sans's code, allowing him to respond differently and making the previously impossible answer possible.

Nightmare has successfully manipulated the player into doing what he wanted.

This explains the significance of the statement that Killer is here because of you.



The same general principle applies to other AU characters as well, with Dreamtale being the exception to this particular pattern. (Because it has no code to manipulate and doesn't follow the same rules as other AU's.)





This also connects directly to Killer's desire to experience something new.



Killer knows that he is different.



He knows that he is another AU version of Sans.

He is aware of his place within a larger collection of alternate universes rather than existing as the only possible version of himself.

This awareness contributes to his desire to experience something beyond the ordinary.

He wants to feel something new.

But the important question is where that desire ultimately leads.

Nightmare exploited these existing circumstances, guiding the negative thoughts surrounding them toward an outcome that Sans would otherwise continue to reject.

The player's intervention then changes the conditions under which Sans can act.

As a result, the desire to experience something new becomes part of the psychological foundation of Killer's identity.

Nightmare could have attempted different approaches to influencing Sans's thoughts.

But Nightmare's plan uses the player as the decisive variable—leading to the layers put behind this plan:

1. Nightmare exploits the repeated failure of persuasion itself.

2. Every refusal reinforces the player's frustration.

3. Every failed attempt makes the desired outcome seem further away.

And

4. the more determined the player becomes to obtain that outcome, the more tempting it becomes to alter the conditions preventing it.

5. Nightmare can therefore turn Sans's consistency against him.

6. Sans's refusal becomes the very thing that pushes the player toward changing his code.

Nightmare exploited the resulting frustration and directed it toward an intervention that allowed Killer to exist.

The method does not require Sans to independently abandon his mentality, but rather it relied on the player changing the conditions that maintained it.

The resulting chain can be represented as follows:

1. Repeated resets → psychological deterioration →

2. desire for something new → continued refusal to kill his friends

3. player frustration → Nightmare's manipulation of the player →

4. modification of Sans's code → Killer's creation.

So when all these pieces are considered together, Phase 1 becomes the foundation for Phase 2.

Phase 2: The Devil's Assistant



With Phase 1 now complete, Nightmare's manipulation leads directly into the next stage of his plan.

Now that Sans has finally reached the point where he can say "yes" to Chara's proposal, he becomes capable of joining them in the genocide of every monster in the Underground.



Chara has already given him the justification he needs to take that step: nobody will remember what happens after the reset, and he will have the opportunity to experience something new, to feel something different, and perhaps even to have fun.



And that is precisely what Nightmare wants.

By convincing Sans to participate in the genocide routes, Nightmare can push him further into a state of dissociation, gradually distancing him from his own actions, emotions, and sense of identity.

The more Sans participates in these killings, the easier it becomes for him to separate himself from the person committing them.

He can begin to treat the violence as something detached from who he is, even while he remains the one carrying it out.

However, the reason Sans finally agrees to Chara's proposal is especially important.



He has given up on everyone.

As his dialogue says, Sans has reached a point where he no longer believes the people around him can understand what he has experienced.

They cannot remember the previous timelines, the resets, or the suffering he has endured throughout them.

From his perspective, every attempt to maintain a connection with these people becomes increasingly meaningless because the relationships he remembers are constantly being erased and restored without anyone else retaining the memories that gave them meaning.

He has spent countless timelines watching the same people live their lives, make the same decisions, and return to the same starting point.

Meanwhile, he is left carrying the accumulated memories of experiences that, to everyone else, never happened.



Eventually, his thoughts begin to reflect this hopelessness.

- They couldn't understand.
- They couldn't help him before.
- How could they help him now?

These thoughts represent and demonstrate how far Sans has withdrawn from the people around him.

The people he once cared about are no longer people he believes can help him, because, from his perspective, they cannot even recognize that he is suffering.



Consequently, when Chara offers him an opportunity to experience something new, Sans has less reason to resist than he once did.

If nobody remembers what happens, if every consequence can be erased, and if the people he cares about cannot understand what he is going through anyway, then what reason does he have to continue protecting the same world that has repeatedly left him alone with his memories?

This is where the previous genocide routes begin to reveal themselves through his actions.

Rather than being an entirely sudden change in behavior, Sans agreeing to participate in the killings is interpreted as the culmination of the psychological deterioration that occurred throughout the earlier resets.

His refusal to participate was one of the remaining boundaries separating him from the person Chara and The Player wanted him to become.

Now, after being worn down by repetition and encouraged by the promise of novelty, that boundary has finally been crossed.

And Nightmare has achieved exactly what he wanted: Sans is no longer simply experiencing negative thoughts. He is beginning to act upon them.

This leads directly into one of the most significant pieces for this next part: the first time Sans kills Papyrus during the genocide runs, specifically during his breakdown.

The dialogue in this moment reveals the resentment, jealousy, desperation, and emotional pain that Sans has carried for a long time through the resets.

Rather than presenting his actions as the result of a single emotion, his breakdown exposes several conflicting feelings that have accumulated within him.



He says:

"You do not know how much I hated you."

"You do not know how jealous I was of you."

"You don't remember."

"I get hurt, you are a failure brother."

i needed you papyrus but....."you do not Remember and in the end i get hurt for you hahaha" why dont you remember "why dont you rememer" why "why" why "why" Apparently "I" do "not" need "you" i'm sorry papyrus "no i'm not"

أحتجت لك بابايريس لكن ....."أنت لا تتذكر و في الأخير أنا من يتأذا لأجلك هههه"
لماذا لا تتذكر "لماذا لا تتذكر " لماذا "لماذا" لماذا "لماذا" على "ما" يبدو "أني" لا "أحتاجك"
لأخي...."فاشلا مثلك" أنا أسف بابيريس "أنا لن أتأسف لشخص مثلك"

"I needed you Papyrus, but you don't remember."

"You do not remember, and I get hurt for you."

"Why don't you remember?.."

"Why? Why? Why?"

"Apparently I do not need you."

These statements are important because they reveal that Sans's relationship with Papyrus is not as emotionally straightforward as it appears.

On one hand, Sans expresses hatred and jealousy toward his brother.

On the other hand, he admits that he needed Papyrus.

His resentment exists alongside an attachment that he has apparently been unable to abandon completely.

He is not expressing a desire to hurt someone he dislikes; he is actively confronting the painful contradiction of needing someone who, from his perspective, cannot remember the experiences that have damaged him.

The repeated emphasis on Papyrus not remembering is especially revealing.

Sans remembers what happened, but Papyrus does not.

That difference creates an emotional imbalance between them.

Sans has experienced countless timelines in which he watched Papyrus live, die, and become involved in events that were subsequently erased.

Yet whenever a reset occurs, Papyrus returns without the memories that would allow him to understand Sans's suffering.

To Papyrus, their relationship continues from whatever point the timeline establishes.

To Sans, however, that same relationship carries the accumulated weight of experiences Papyrus cannot even begin to recall.

This means that Sans is not angry because Papyrus fails to understand him.

He is angry because, in his eyes, Papyrus cannot understand him.

The memories that give Sans's pain its context are absent from Papyrus's mind, leaving Sans trapped in a cycle where his suffering remains real to him but effectively nonexistent to everyone else.

That is what makes the line "I needed you Papyrus, but you don't remember" so significant.

Beneath the resentment, Sans is admitting that he wanted his brother's support.

He needed someone who could recognize what he was going through, someone who could acknowledge that the repeated resets had affected him.

Yet Papyrus cannot provide that support because he has no memory of the events that caused Sans to need it in the first place.

And from Sans's perspective, that failure is devastating.

He needed Papyrus, but Papyrus could not remember why.

He was hurt by experiences that Papyrus could not remember sharing.

He wanted to be understood by someone who had no way of understanding him.

Consequently, the resentment grows until it begins to overshadow the attachment beneath it.

His jealousy and hatred become intertwined with his longing for his brother's support, creating an increasingly unstable emotional state.

This is precisely the kind of psychological vulnerability Nightmare can exploit—as he was the one to implant it inside of him.

Because as I've established plenty of times before, Nightmare is capable of influencing individuals by acting as an internal voice and making those thoughts feel as though they originate from the individual themselves.

Applied to Killer, this means Nightmare did not need to create every negative emotion from nothing.

Instead, he can take existing frustrations, insecurities, resentments, and unresolved emotional wounds and amplify them until they become increasingly difficult to resist.

Sans already has reasons to feel isolated. He already experiences the psychological consequences of remembering what others forget.

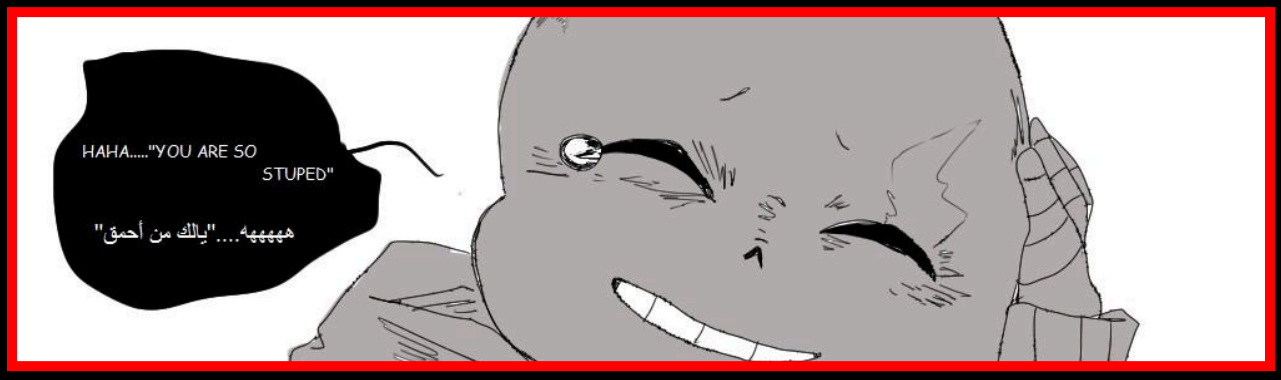
He already has a complicated relationship with his own suffering and the people he believes cannot understand it.

By acting as Sans's inner voice, Nightmare can reinforce his resentment toward Papyrus, deepen his jealousy, and repeatedly draw his attention back to the pain associated with the resets.

Thoughts that might otherwise remain fleeting or manageable can become increasingly persistent, intrusive, and emotionally overwhelming.

Instead of allowing Sans to process his conflicting feelings, this influence pushes him toward interpreting them in the most destructive possible way.

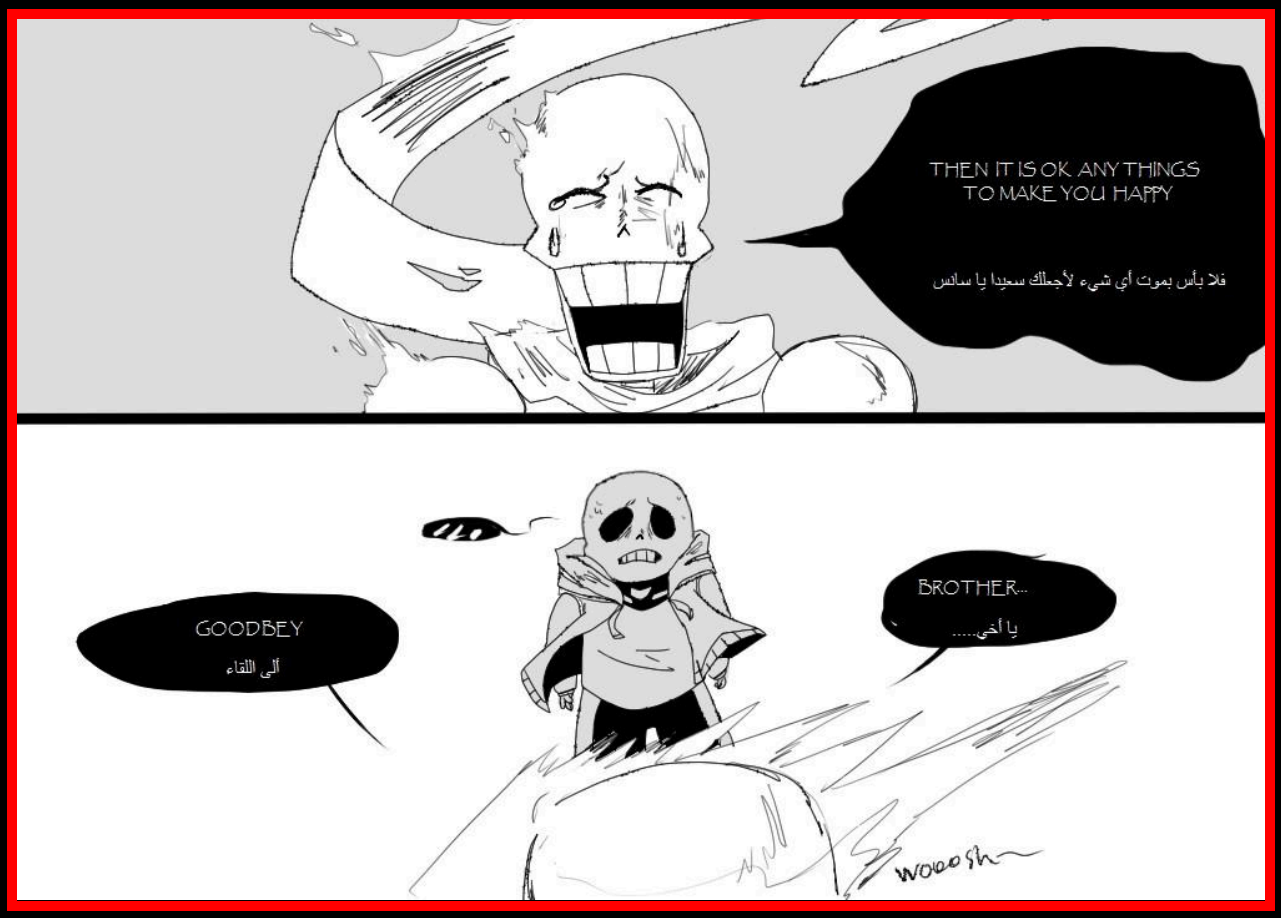
His need for support becomes another reason to feel betrayed.



And his inability to make Papyrus understand becomes further evidence, in his mind, that relying on his brother was pointless.

The result of this is a feedback loop in which Sans's existing pain fuels his negative thoughts, while Nightmare's influence makes those thoughts more intense and difficult to escape.

The more Sans dwells on what he has lost, the more material Nightmare has to work with.



And when Sans finally kills Papyrus, all of these conflicting emotions collide.

The act itself does demonstrate that Sans has become willing to kill.



But His subsequent breakdown reveals that killing Papyrus has affected him far more deeply than he might have anticipated.

Despite everything he has said about his brother, the act forces him to confront the emotional significance of what he has done.

He has killed someone he resented.

But also someone he needed.

That contradiction is what makes the moment so important.

If Sans had completely stopped caring about Papyrus, there would be little reason for the killing to provoke such an intense emotional response.

Instead, his breakdown shows that his attachment has not simply disappeared.



It has become entangled with his resentment, and the act of killing Papyrus forces those opposing feelings to surface together.

Nightmare's influence, as I explained, shows how Sans could reach the point of committing such an act while still being emotionally affected by it afterward.

He has been pushed toward doing something destructive, but that does not mean every part of him has accepted what he has done.

Another important detail is the contradiction in Sans's own mind following the killing of Papyrus.



He expresses that he does not want this anymore. Yet, at the same time, another part of his internal dialogue expresses the opposite sentiment: "Yes, this is what I want."

This is a sign of Sans actively attempting to dissociate himself from the situation.

On one side, he recognizes the emotional reality of what has happened.

He has killed Papyrus, and the act has affected him.

There is still a part of him that does not want to accept the violence, the consequences, or what the killing might mean about the person he has become.

On the other side, he has already participated in the genocide.

He has agreed to Chara's proposal, crossed a boundary he previously refused to cross, and entered a situation in which killing has become something he is willing to do.

The conflict between these two responses creates a psychological divide.

One part of Sans protests against what is happening, while another attempts to justify or embrace it.

Rather than allowing these conflicting feelings to coexist and confronting what they mean, he separates himself from the experience by leaning into the idea that this is what he wants.

In other words, the thought "This is what I want" functions as a means of distancing himself from the emotional consequences of his actions.

If he convinces himself that he wants to do this, then he does not have to confront the possibility that he is doing something he cannot emotionally accept.

He can attempt to turn a painful, conflicting experience into a choice he has supposedly made willingly.

However, that does not necessarily mean the conflict disappears.

His breakdown shows the opposite: the feelings he is trying to suppress continue to surface, forcing him to confront the emotional consequences despite his attempts to distance himself from them.

By reinforcing the thoughts that encourage Sans to continue while simultaneously exploiting the pain that makes him want to reject what he has done, Nightmare can push him further away from a stable understanding of his own feelings.

Sans becomes caught between the part of himself that recognizes the horror of his actions and the part that attempts to convince him that those actions are desirable.

The longer this conflict continues, the easier it becomes for him to detach himself from the present moment rather than process it—and the more LOVE he gains, the easier it becomes to distance himself as well.

This is where dissociation becomes central.

Sans is not necessarily becoming free of his emotions.

He is becoming increasingly disconnected from how he experiences and interprets them.

His contradictory thoughts allow him to move between rejecting his actions and justifying them, creating distance between himself and the reality of what he is doing.

Instead of fully confronting his guilt, grief, resentment, and attachment, he can attempt to bury those feelings beneath the belief that he wants what is happening.

Nightmare benefits from that separation because it makes Sans increasingly vulnerable to further manipulation.



It becomes even more significant when Chara reminds Sans that none of this ultimately matters because they can simply reset.



This statement provides Sans with another justification for distancing himself from the consequences of his actions.

1. If everything can be reset, then the killing can be treated as temporary.
2. If the timeline can be erased, then the suffering associated with it can supposedly be erased as well.
3. If nobody remembers what happened, then Sans can tell himself that the events do not need to carry the same weight they otherwise would.

However, this reasoning overlooks the central problem that has defined Sans's experiences from the beginning.

1. The others may forget.
2. But sans remembers, The reset does not erase his memories.

It does not undo the emotional experiences he has accumulated, nor does it eliminate the psychological effects of repeatedly living through events that everyone else forgets.

Consequently, Chara's promise is particularly damaging in the context of Sans's existing mental state.

1. It encourages him to treat the consequences of his actions as meaningless

2. while leaving him to retain the memories that make those consequences emotionally significant.

The promise of a reset gives him permission to continue, but it does not provide him with genuine relief from what he experiences.

Because Nightmare is acting as Killer's inner voice, he can amplify the reasoning that makes the reset seem like a justification for continuing the genocide.

The idea that nobody will remember can become more than a practical explanation for why the killings do not have lasting consequences for everyone else.

It can become a thought Sans uses to distance himself from the reality of what he is doing.

He can tell himself that he will finally be able to experience something new.

And, whenever the emotional consequences threaten to break through those justifications, Nightmare can reinforce the same reasoning again.

This creates another cycle of dissociation.

1. Sans participates in the killings, experiences the emotional consequences

2. and then relies on the promise of a reset to distance himself from those consequences.

Rather than resolving his distress, the justification allows him to continue acting in ways that may generate even more Dissociation.

1. The reset becomes an excuse to avoid confronting what he has done,

2. even though it cannot erase the memories he carries.

Furthermore, Chara's insistence that the events do not matter because they can reset directly reinforces the mindset that Nightmare has been cultivating.

- The more Sans accepts this reasoning, the easier it becomes for him to treat his actions as disconnected from his identity and emotional reality.

This is exactly the reaction that Nightmare wants.

He did this in order to establish a psychological state in which Sans can continue committing those acts while becoming increasingly detached from their significance.

1. The killings become easier to justify.

2. The emotional consequences become harder to process.

3. And the distinction between what Sans genuinely wants and what he has convinced himself he wants becomes increasingly blurred.

Phase 1 established the conditions that allowed Sans to become willing to say "yes."

Through the repeated resets, the deterioration of his emotional state, and the manipulation of both Sans and the player, Nightmare helped create the circumstances that led to the modification of Sans's code.

Phase 2 then explores what happens after that boundary has been crossed.

1. Sans begins participating in the genocide routes, believing that doing so will allow him to experience something new.

2. His accumulated resentment toward the people who cannot remember his suffering becomes increasingly prominent, while his relationship with Papyrus exposes the unresolved attachment and emotional pain beneath that resentment.

3. When Sans finally kills Papyrus, those conflicting emotions erupt. His breakdown reveals that, despite his willingness to commit the act, he has not simply become indifferent to its consequences.

4. Instead, he struggles between rejecting what he has done and convincing himself that it is what he wants.

5. Nightmare's influence, acting through Sans's inner voice, amplifies the negative thoughts that sustain this conflict.

6. Chara's promise that everything can be reset then provides another justification for continuing, encouraging Sans to distance himself even further from the emotional reality of his actions.

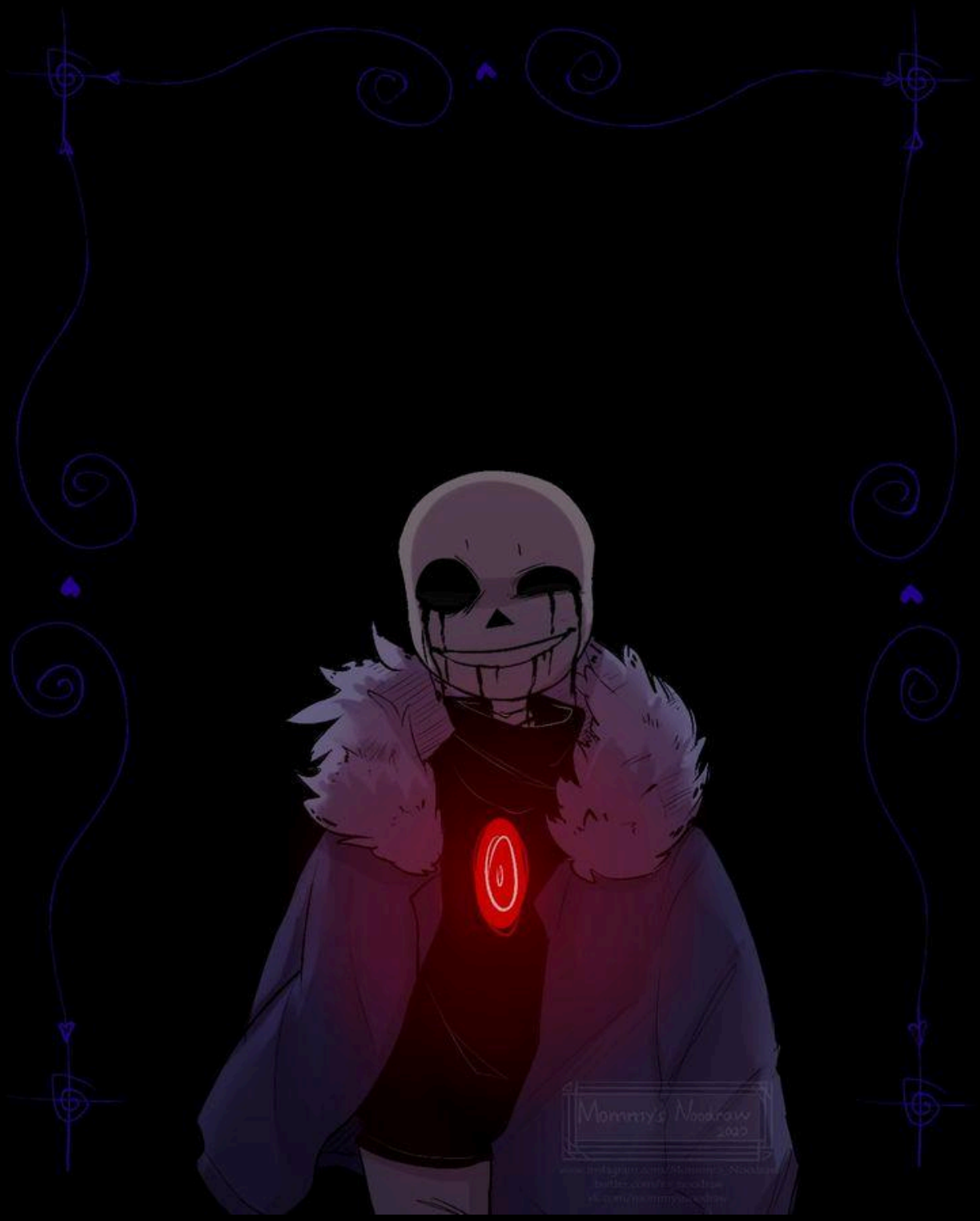
7. Nightmare has already succeeded in helping create the conditions under which Sans can participate in the genocide.

8. Now, he can use Sans's actions and their emotional consequences to push him further away from himself.

Each of the layers behind phase 1 and 2 makes his justification easier to believe and continue doing, while each new experience provides further material for his negative thoughts to feed upon.

And that leads directly into Phase 3.

Phase 3: The Souls Change



This is where Phase 3 of Nightmare's manipulation comes into play.

By this point, Sans has already been pushed through repeated resets, psychological deterioration, and the gradual breakdown of the emotional boundaries that once prevented him from agreeing to Chara's proposal.

Nightmare has spent the previous phases exploiting Sans's accumulated pain, reinforcing his negative thoughts, and encouraging him to view the people around him as incapable of understanding what he has endured.

Now, however, the consequences of that manipulation become much more apparent.



Sans has dissociated to the point where he is capable of killing everyone in the Underground, even before Chara has personally reached the point.

This is an important distinction because it demonstrates that Sans's behavior is no longer entirely dependent on Chara leading the way.

Previously, Chara's proposal served as the catalyst that allowed him to cross the boundary he had spent so long refusing to cross.

Now, Sans is capable of continuing the genocide independently, acting before Chara has even reached the point where they would ordinarily encounter these characters.

In other words, he is no longer simply following Chara's lead.

He is beginning to carry out the killings on his own.

This reflects how far Nightmare's manipulation has progressed.

By repeatedly reinforcing Sans's negative thoughts and encouraging him to distance himself from the emotional consequences of his actions, Nightmare has created a state in which Sans can continue killing despite the internal conflict those actions produce.

The person who once refused to kill his friends has now become someone capable of killing them without waiting for Chara to do so first.

And yet, this does not necessarily mean that Sans has stopped feeling anything altogether.

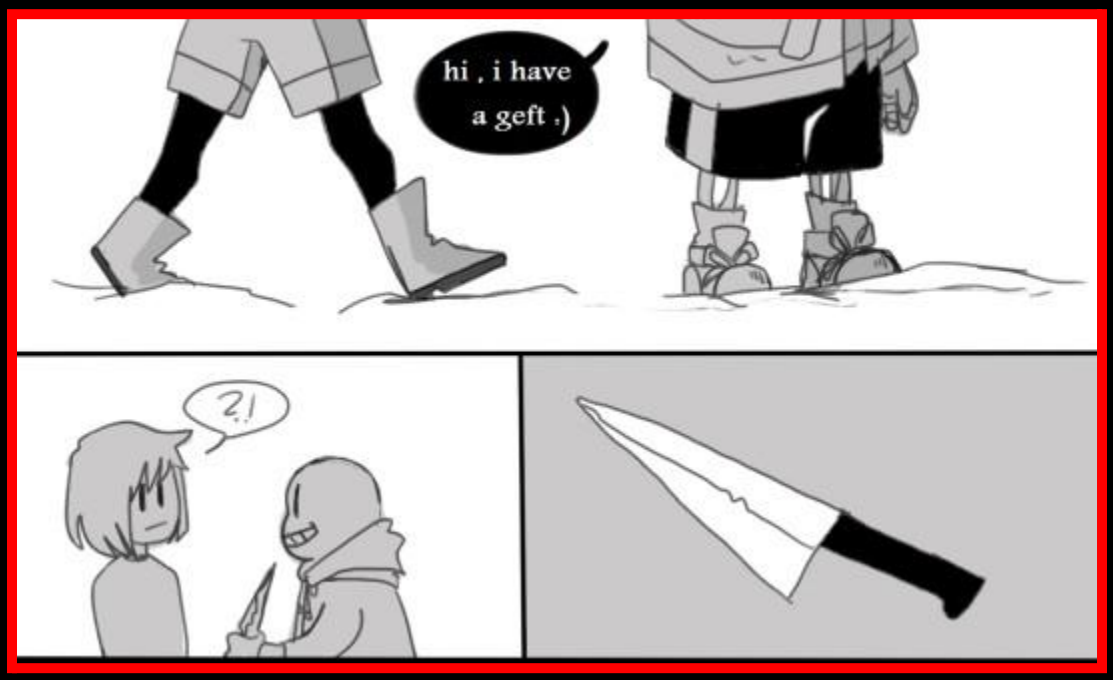
In fact, the dialogue reveals exactly how far his dissociation has progressed

One of the clearest indications of this change is Sans's behavior during the genocide route itself.



Despite the things he has done and the emotional turmoil he continues to experience, Sans is still capable of presenting himself with the same familiar demeanor.

He smiles, maintains an outward appearance resembling his usual self, and continues acting in a manner that does not immediately reveal the extent of his internal deterioration.



He even has a gift for Chara: the knife they use to carry out the killings.

This shows that Sans is no longer just tolerating Chara's actions or reluctantly participating in their plans.

He is actively contributing to the genocide, providing Chara with the very weapon they will use to continue killing.

Previously, Sans repeatedly refused Chara's attempts to persuade him to join them.

He maintained that boundary even when confronted with the possibility of experiencing something new.

Now, however, he is not only willing to participate in the killings but is also willing to facilitate them.

The gift demonstrates that the psychological distance between Sans and his actions has grown considerably.

He can perform an act that directly enables further violence while maintaining the outward appearance of someone who is still behaving normally.

But the most important part is that his outward demeanor does not accurately reflect his internal state.



Although Sans continues to smile and act like himself, his internal dialogue reveals that he is disgusted with his own behavior.

He recognizes that something about what he is doing is wrong, and he is disturbed by the fact that he continues to do it despite that awareness.

His actions and his internal reactions are moving in opposite directions: outwardly, he appears composed and even willing to participate, while inwardly, he is struggling with what he has become.

This contradiction is essential to understanding how far his dissociation has gotten.

Sans can recognize the horror of his actions without allowing that recognition to stop him from carrying them out.

His awareness has not disappeared.

Instead, there is an increasing separation between that awareness and his behavior.

He can acknowledge that he feels disgusted with himself while continuing to kill, as though the part of him that recognizes the wrongdoing is no longer capable of exerting the same influence over his actions.

The smile, therefore, is not evidence that he is genuinely enjoying everything he does.

It highlights the contrast between the person he presents to the outside world and the turmoil he is experiencing internally.

He continues acting like Sans, but the reasoning behind his actions has changed.

He continues smiling, but that smile exists alongside feelings of disgust and emotional conflict.

And he continues killing, even when part of him recognizes that he does not want to be doing so.

This is precisely the kind of contradiction that Nightmare can exploit to push him further into an even further dissociation.



Another particularly important detail is Sans's own reasoning regarding the resets.

- He recognizes that the people he kills will not remember what happened after the timeline resets.

From a purely practical perspective, this should provide him with an excuse to disregard the consequences of his actions.

If the events are erased and nobody retains the memories, then he could convince himself that there is no reason to feel guilty about what he has done.

However, he still feels disgusted with himself.

And that is the problem.

If Sans genuinely believed that the resets made his actions meaningless, then the fact that nobody would remember should theoretically make it easier for him to continue without being troubled by the consequences.

Yet his internal dialogue demonstrates that the promise of a reset has not eliminated his emotional response to his actions at all.

He knows that the timeline can be reset.

So why does he still feel this way?

This question he asks himself reveals the fundamental contradiction at the center of his psychological state.

He remains the one who remembers what happened, including the fact that he was the one responsible for the killings.

Even if the people he kills return without remembering their deaths, the same thing can't be said for him.

The memories remain with him.

And the awareness that he has killed people he once cared about remains with him.

The reasoning that initially helped him justify participating in the genocide begins to fail him when confronted with his actual emotional response.

He has been told that nobody will remember, yet he still feels the weight of what he has done.

He has been encouraged to believe that the events do not matter, yet he remains disturbed by his own actions.

He has tried to distance himself from the killings, yet he cannot entirely escape the knowledge that he committed them.

Nightmare actively exploits this contradiction while not allowing Sans to resolve it.

By acting as Sans's inner voice, Nightmare can reinforce the idea that the resets make the killings inconsequential while simultaneously creating the negative thoughts that arise when Sans realizes he is still affected by them.

Instead of allowing him to confront and process his feelings, Nightmare's influence contributes to an increasingly unstable relationship between his actions and his emotional responses.

The result is that Sans becomes caught between two conflicting ideas.



- On one side, he tells himself that the killings do not matter because nobody will remember.



- On the other, he continues experiencing the emotional consequences of committing them.

Rather than resolving that conflict, he becomes increasingly detached from it.

This is where his outward behavior becomes so important.

He can smile, act normally, and continue participating in the genocide even while his internal dialogue reveals disgust and confusion.

The disconnect between his presentation and his feelings becomes another indication of how far his dissociation has progressed.

Nightmare does not need to convince Sans that he has no emotions whatsoever.

He only needs to push Sans into a state where those emotions no longer reliably prevent him from doing what Nightmare wants.



This becomes even more significant when considering Sans's reaction to Chara wearing Papyrus's scarf.

Despite the fact that Papyrus has been killed, Sans does not appear to react in the way one might expect.

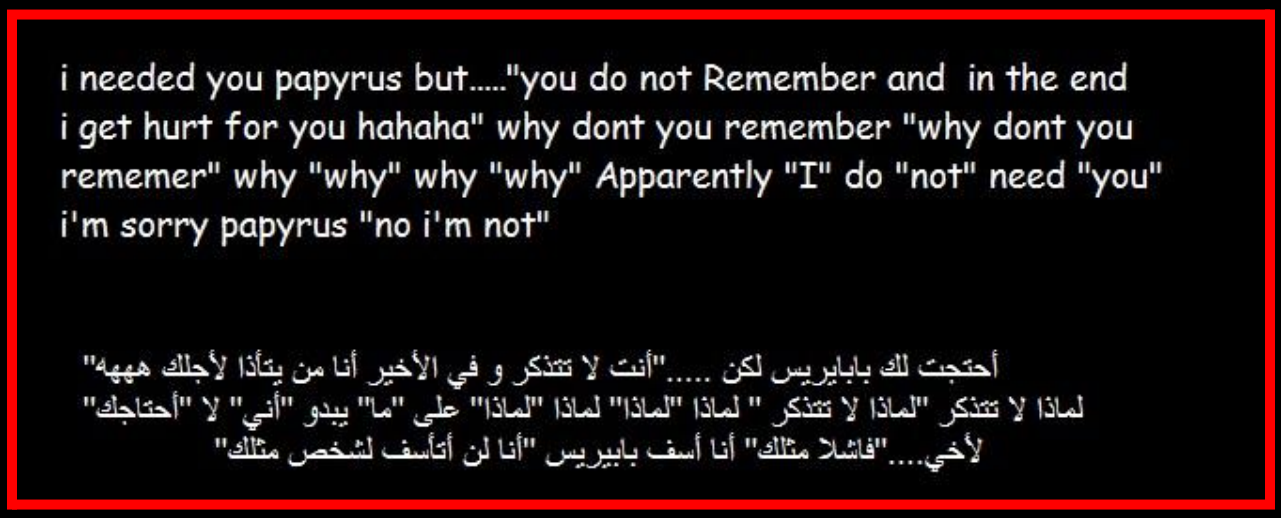
He continues behaving like his usual self, without expressing any obvious outward response to Chara wearing something so closely associated with his brother.

It is especially notable because Papyrus is not someone Sans has only recently lost.

This is not the first time Chara has killed him, meaning that Sans has already experienced this kind of loss across previous routes and resets.

The repeated nature of these events makes his lack of an outward reaction particularly important.

Papyrus's scarf represents a connection to someone whose death has previously exposed the depth of Sans's emotional conflict.



As established in Phase 2, Sans's breakdown reveals resentment and jealousy toward Papyrus, but it also exposes how much Sans needed his brother and how deeply he was affected by the fact that Papyrus could never remember the experiences they had supposedly shared.

Given that emotional history, one might expect the sight of Chara wearing Papyrus's scarf to provoke some kind of visible response.

Yet Sans continues smiling and behaving as though nothing particularly significant has happened.

That contrast is another indication of his increasing dissociation.

The absence of an obvious reaction does not mean that Papyrus has become completely meaningless to him.

Instead, it shows once more that Sans is increasingly capable of separating himself from the emotional significance of what he sees.

He can encounter a reminder of his brother's death without openly acknowledging what it means to him.

He can continue interacting with Chara without visibly confronting the implications of their actions.

And he can maintain his familiar demeanor despite the circumstances surrounding him.

The distinction is that an absence of outward emotion does not automatically establish an absence of internal emotion.

He may still carry the emotional significance of Papyrus's death, but he is increasingly detached from the need—or the ability—to express that significance through his outward behavior.

And Nightmare benefits from this growing disconnect because it allows Sans to continue participating in the genocide without confronting every emotional consequence as it occurs.



At this point, Sans states that he is doing this because he wants to feel something again.

This is one of the most important parts in the entire phase of Nightmare's plan—because it reveals how his desire for novelty has evolved.

Initially, the promise of experiencing something new was what helped persuade Sans to agree to Chara's proposal.

After countless resets, the possibility of doing something different offered an alternative to the endless repetition that had worn down his emotional state.

However, by the time Sans reaches Alphys, that desire appears to have developed into something much more troubling.

- He is no longer simply interested in experiencing a new situation.

- He is expressing a desire to feel anything again.

Meaning that his continued participation in the genocide has become connected to his increasingly damaged relationship with his own emotions.

He is pursuing new experiences because he wants to escape the emptiness, repetition, and emotional exhaustion that have come to define his existence.

The problem is that he is now seeking that experience through violence.

The same desire for novelty that initially helped—and was created—by Nightmare moved Sans toward agreeing with Chara has become part of the reasoning that keeps him moving forward.

Rather than confronting his emotional exhaustion directly, Sans attempts to overcome it by continuing to do something destructive.

As the entity responsible for creating, amplifying, and manipulating negative thoughts, Nightmare can exploit Sans's desire to feel something by reinforcing the idea that killing is a way to escape his current emotional state.

The more Sans associates violence with the possibility of experiencing something new, the more he may become inclined to continue pursuing it, even when the resulting experiences leave him feeling disgusted with himself.

This creates another destructive cycle.

1. Sans feels emotionally exhausted.

2. He seeks something new to escape that exhaustion.

3. He participates in the genocide.

4. The killings fail to resolve the underlying conflict, leaving him disturbed by his own behavior.

5. He then continues searching for another experience that might make him feel something different.

Nightmare can exploit this cycle by reinforcing the negative thoughts that sustain it, pushing Sans toward further acts of violence rather than allowing him to confront the reasons behind his emotional exhaustion.

Sans's emotions have deteriorated to the point where he no longer knows how to escape his internal state except by seeking increasingly extreme experiences.

The violence becomes a means of pursuing an emotional response, even as the consequences of that violence create further psychological conflict within his head.



As Alphys begs Sans to stop, he actively attempts not to listen.

This is particularly significant because it demonstrates that Sans is not simply acting without any awareness of the people he is hurting.

He is confronted with Alphys's pleas, yet he attempts to shut them out rather than allowing her words to influence his decision.

There are several layers to this attempt to shut everything out.

1. Sans is attempting to avoid listening to Alphys because her pleas would force him to confront the reality of what he is doing. If he allows himself to pay attention to her fear and desperation, he may be forced to recognize her as a person rather than treating the killing as another experience through which he can pursue something new.

2. he's attempting to shut out the player/Chara, whose presence and influence have become inseparable from the events unfolding around him. By refusing to listen, he can continue focusing on the immediate objective rather than confronting the wider implications of his actions.

3. and most importantly to this, Nightmare is reinforcing this refusal to listen by amplifying the thoughts that encourage Sans to continue.

If Sans allows Alphys's pleas to reach him emotionally, they could intensify the very conflict he has been attempting to escape.

Her desperation could remind him that the people he kills are real individuals whose fear and suffering matter, regardless of whether they will remember the events after a reset.

That would directly challenge the reasoning he has been using to justify the genocide.

So, rather than allowing those pleas to disrupt his actions, Sans attempts to shut them out.



He tries to not let in everything that is happening around him.

Nightmare's maintain's that psychological separation by reinforcing the negative thoughts that allow Sans to prioritize his desire to feel something over the emotional reality of the person standing before him.

Because much like his self-disgust in his actions, the very fact that he has to actively attempt not to listen—and is making an effort to avoid engaging with something that might interfere with his current course of action.

The more he has to shut out, the more apparent it becomes that the situation is not emotionally uncomplicated for him.

He is attempting to continue the genocide while avoiding the thoughts and feelings that might force him to reconsider what he is doing.

And Nightmare, acting as his inner voice, can use that avoidance to push him further into dissociation.

However, this is where the *FUN* part starts



The existence of Gaster is confirmed in Something New

During this sequence, Gaster appears behind Sans and says "darker yet darker" in Wingdings.

Transliteration of the Wingdings text is as follows:

- *ENTRY NUMBER SEVENTEEN*
- *DARK DARKER YET DARKER*
- *THE DARKNESS KEEPS GROWING*
- *THE SHADOWS CUTTING DEEPER*
- *PHOTON READINGS NEGATIVE*
- *THIS NEXT EXPERIMENT*
- *SEEMS*
- *VERY*
- *VERY*
- *INTERESTING*
- *...*
- *WHAT DO YOU TWO THINK*

This is important because it confirms the existence of Entry Number 17 and, by extension, the other entries associated with Gaster also exist.

This is the same Gaster who exists in canon Undertale.

That would mean he was also shattered across space and time, connecting his appearance here to the established circumstances surrounding his existence.



Gaster's presence introduces another element into Sans's deteriorating psychological state.

Until this point, Nightmare's manipulation has primarily focused on Sans's negative thoughts, his emotional exhaustion, his memories of the resets, and his growing dissociation from his actions.

Now, however, the existence of Gaster provides Nightmare with another way to destabilize Sans's perception of reality.

His existence itself becomes part of the psychological pressure Nightmare can exploit onto Sans.

And the crucial detail is that Nightmare repeatedly reinforces the idea indirectly that Sans himself is not real. (indirectly anyway.)

This is where the connection between Gaster, the player, and Nightmare's manipulation becomes particularly important.

As Nightmare continues acting as Sans's inner voice, he repeatedly reinforces the claim that Gaster is not real.

This is a particularly destructive thought to implant in someone who is already struggling with the meaning of his experiences and his place within the world.

Sans has already spent countless resets retaining memories that nobody else can remember.

He has watched people return to lives that continue as though nothing happened, while he remains burdened by experiences that have been erased from everyone else's perspective.

He has already begun questioning the significance of his actions, his relationships, and his own emotional responses.

Now, he is confronted with the existence of Gaster, a figure whose connection to space and time makes the question of existence even more complicated.

Nightmare can exploit this situation by repeatedly telling Sans that he is not real, encouraging him to question not only his actions but also the legitimacy of Gaster's existence, as well as his own.

If Sans begins to believe that he is not real, then the distinction between his identity and his actions becomes even more difficult to maintain.

His memories exist, and he may still experience emotional reactions, but he is being encouraged to question whether those experiences belong to someone who can meaningfully be considered real in the first place.



Nightmare is using this uncertainty to deepen Sans's dissociation.

The previous phases established a divide between Sans's actions and his emotional responses.

He could kill someone while feeling disgusted with himself, or continue smiling while internally questioning why he was still affected by what he had done.

Now, Nightmare introduces a more intense form of doubt: the idea that Sans himself does not truly exist.

When that belief takes hold, it provides another justification for distancing himself from the consequences of his actions.

The person committing the killings is being framed as something unreal, making it easier for Sans to separate himself from the identity of the person responsible.

This is especially relevant when considering the role of the player here.

The player is involved in the events unfolding around Sans

While Gaster's presence introduces the question of whether Sans's own existence can be trusted.

Nightmare can exploit both elements to push him toward the conclusion that he is trapped within a reality where his actions, memories, and identity have become increasingly difficult to understand.

The player and Gaster, therefore, become important parts of the psychological circumstances Nightmare uses to continue his manipulation.

Nightmare has already helped push Sans into committing acts he once refused to perform.

Now, by reinforcing the idea that Sans is not real, he can encourage Sans to detach himself even further from the person he once believed himself to be.

This also leads into the explanation for why Sans is capable of seeing Gaster in the first place.



Sans's soul is actively changing, gradually acquiring traits associated with a human soul while simultaneously mixing with his existing monster soul.

It's why Sans is able to perceive Gaster.

His soul is undergoing a transformation, and that transformation is linked to the increasingly abnormal experiences he is having throughout the route.

This becomes clearer when considering what happens during the following resets.



The next three resets after this route reveal further changes to Sans's soul, eventually leading to the soul form that Killer is commonly associated with: an upside-down combination of a human soul and a monster soul.



This confirms that Sans's soul has not remained unchanged throughout the genocide routes.

It has been undergoing a gradual transformation that eventually produces the distinctive soul associated with Killer.

The earlier appearance of Gaster is therefore an action that was occurring during a transitional stage of that process.

Sans is not yet necessarily at the final state represented by Killer's familiar soul, but the transformation is already underway.

The changes to his soul, combined with Nightmare's manipulation and the influence of the player, contribute to the circumstances in which Sans can perceive Gaster.

This also gives the soul transformation a greater role here for future purposes. (Which I'll show in the last phase)

It represents another stage in Sans's deterioration, connecting his increasingly unstable psychological state to the transformation that ultimately distinguishes Killer from the Sans he once was.

1. Sans's emotional state is deteriorating.

2. His perception of his own existence is being challenged.

3. His relationship with his actions is becoming increasingly disconnected.

And,

4. alongside these developments, his soul is changing into something different.

With the transformation of his soul, it's established that Sans will no longer feel anything, much like Chara.



This is the point toward which Nightmare's manipulation has been progressing.

Throughout the earlier phases,

1. Sans's emotional state has been repeatedly destabilized.

2. He has been worn down by the resets, pushed toward participating in the genocide

and

3. forced to confront the contradictions between his desire to continue and his disgust with what he is doing.

4. He has tried to escape his emotional exhaustion by pursuing new experiences, only to find himself continuing down a path that produces further psychological conflict.

5. He has attempted to justify his actions through the promise of a reset, despite knowing that he will retain the memories of what happened.

6. He has continued smiling and acting like his usual self while internally struggling with the significance of his behavior.

And

7. He has been encouraged to question his own existence through Nightmare's repeated assertions that he is not real.

By this point, the combined pressure of these experiences has pushed Sans to the brink.



He is tired.

Not simply tired of a particular person or a single event, but exhausted by the repeated cycle of experiences that has defined his existence.

The resets continue, the memories remain, and the emotional consequences accumulate even when everyone else returns to a state in which those experiences never happened.

Which happens something like this

1. The player remains involved in the events,

2. Gaster's existence further complicates Sans's understanding of reality,

and

3. Nightmare continues exploiting the negative thoughts that arise from the situation.

4. Eventually, Sans reaches a point where he is no longer capable of continuing to engage with these experiences in the same way.

5. The statement that he will no longer feel anything, like Chara, represents the culmination of this progression.

Nightmare has spent the earlier stages reinforcing Sans's negative thoughts,

Encouraging him to distance himself from his actions,

And exploiting his desire to escape the emotional exhaustion caused by the resets.



Now, the transformation of Sans's soul and the claim that he will no longer feel anything provide another level of separation between Sans and his former emotional identity.

Taken together, Phase 3 is the point where Nightmare's manipulation pushes Sans beyond agreeing to participate in the genocide.

1. He has become capable of killing everyone in the Underground before Chara has even reached the same point.

2. He gives Chara the knife they use, continues smiling despite feeling disgusted with himself, and shows little outward reaction when Chara wears Papyrus's scarf.

3. Sans has become increasingly detached from the emotional significance of his actions.

4. When he approaches Alphys, he admits that he wants to feel something again, demonstrating how his original desire for novelty has developed into a desperate attempt to escape his emotional exhaustion.

5. As Alphys begs him to stop, he tries not to listen, further illustrating the distance he is attempting to establish between himself and the consequences of the genocide.

Then Gaster's existence introduces another layer of manipulation.

6. His appearance and the reference to "darker yet darker" establish the connection to Entry Number 17, meaning that this is the same Gaster who was shattered across space and time in canon Undertale.

7. Nightmare exploits Gaster's presence by repeatedly reinforcing the idea that Gaster is not real, encouraging him to question his own existence and further detach himself from his identity.

At the same time, Sans's soul undergoes a transformation.

8. The result is a new level of dissociation.

Nightmare has gradually exploited Sans's pain, resentment, desire for novelty, and inability to escape the memories of the resets.

And this is where Phase 4 shows the results of all the phases beforehand.

Phase 4: The 4 Stages of Dissociation


PEST

Now that the first three phases of Nightmare's manipulation have been established, we can examine the different stages of dissociation Killer experiences and identify which parts of Nightmare's plan contributed to the creation of each stage.

The important thing to understand is that Killer's dissociation is not a single, unchanging condition.

Rather, it develops through multiple stages, with each soul state representing a different point in the deterioration of his emotional and psychological condition.

Throughout the previous phases, Nightmare gradually manipulated Killer by exploiting his experiences with the resets, his growing resentment toward the people around him, his desire to experience something new, and his increasing inability to reconcile his actions with his emotions.

He also manipulated the player into removing the restrictions that initially prevented Sans from agreeing to Chara's proposal.

As Killer continued through the genocide routes, these circumstances became increasingly destructive.

His actions, his accumulating memories, the changes to his soul, and Nightmare's continued influence all contributed to the person he eventually became.

Consequently, the different soul states are the successive stages of this process.

Each state reflects a different relationship between Killer and his emotions, his identity, his memories, and his capacity to act upon his murderous intentions.

More importantly, each one is connected to a particular part of Nightmare's plan.



In his first soul state, Killer is much closer to his classic Sans counterpart.

At this stage, he begins to regain his emotions and feelings, and their return overwhelms him with guilt for the sins he has committed throughout the numerous genocide routes he experienced alongside Chara.

After spending so much time in a state where he was increasingly disconnected from his emotions, beginning to feel again forces him to confront the consequences of his previous actions.

The memories of the people he killed, the violence he participated in, and the person he became are no longer things he can simply distance himself from in the same way.

Instead, those experiences become a source of guilt.

The emotions that begin returning to him make him more aware of the significance of his actions, forcing him to confront the contradiction between the person he once was and the person he has become.

However, there is an important complication with that little detail.

Even though Killer begins regaining his emotions, he no longer considers himself Sans.

His personality has changed significantly, and his past actions have created a separation between his current identity and the person he remembers being.

He has participated in countless genocide routes with Chara, repeatedly killed people he once knew, and experienced a transformation that has fundamentally altered how he perceives himself.

Consequently, he does not simply return to being the Sans he once was.

The memories of his previous identity may remain, but he no longer fully identifies with that person.

His actions have created a psychological distance between his former self and the individual he now recognizes as Killer.

This is important because it means that the return of his emotions does not automatically restore his former identity.

He can begin feeling guilt without accepting that he is still Sans.

He can recognize the wrongfulness of his actions without knowing how to reconcile those actions with the person he used to be.

And he can regain some of his emotional awareness while remaining disconnected from the identity that once gave those emotions meaning.

This creates a contradiction at the center of the first soul state: Killer is beginning to feel again, but he cannot comfortably reconcile those feelings with his current sense of self.

The foundations for this stage were established all the way back at the beginning of Nightmare's plan, following the 176th reset initiated by Chara or the player.



As I explained in Phase 1, Nightmare manipulated the circumstances surrounding Sans until he became willing to experience something new.

After repeatedly refusing Chara's proposal, Sans was gradually pushed toward a point where the promise of novelty became more appealing than continuing to endure the same cycle of resets.

At the same time, Nightmare manipulated the player into removing the restrictions that prevented Sans from agreeing to Chara in the first place.

These two developments were essential.

By encouraging Sans to participate in the genocide routes, Nightmare created the conditions that would eventually lead to the accumulation of guilt and the separation between Sans's former identity and his new identity as Killer.

The player removing those restrictions allowed Killer to cross a boundary he had previously maintained.

Nightmare's manipulation of Killer's thoughts helped make that change possible, while the subsequent genocide routes provided the experiences that would gradually reshape his personality.

The consequences extended far beyond the initial decision to kill.

Every additional route gave Sans more experiences to remember, more actions to associate with himself, and more reasons to question whether he could still consider himself the same person he had been before.

Eventually, the difference between the Sans who initially refused Chara and the Killer who participated in the genocide became increasingly difficult for him to ignore.

Thus, the first soul state is the result of a process that began long before Killer's emotions started returning.

Nightmare helped create the circumstances that separated Sans from his former identity.

The genocide routes then reinforced that separation through his actions, while the return of his emotions brought the guilt associated with those actions back to the forefront.

The guilt, in turn, creates another problem.

Rather than allowing Killer to reconnect comfortably with his emotions, the guilt forces him to confront memories and experiences that conflict with his current identity.

Because he no longer considers himself Sans, the emotions associated with his past become increasingly difficult to reconcile with the person he believes himself to be.

the return of his feelings does not necessarily bring him closer to a stable sense of self.

Instead, it creates another source of internal conflict within him.

The first soul state is therefore the stage in which Killer begins feeling again, but the guilt attached to those feelings pushes him further away from the identity he once possessed.

This is the first level of dissociation established by Nightmare's plan: Killer retains enough emotional awareness and sanity to confront his actions, but he remains psychologically separated from the person he used to be.

And that conflict leads directly into the second soul state.



In the second soul state, Killer's emotions have faded to the point where he becomes somewhat emotionally numb.

Unlike the first state, where the return of his emotions overwhelms him with guilt, this stage is characterized by a diminished emotional response.

He becomes more willing to hurt anyone who approaches him, displaying less hesitation toward violence and becoming increasingly dangerous to those around him.

The distinction between these two states is significant.

In the first state, Killer is confronted with the emotional consequences of his actions.

His guilt demonstrates that he can still recognize the significance of what he has done, even though he no longer identifies with Sans.

In the second state, however, those emotional responses have faded considerably.

He is no longer experiencing the same degree of emotional engagement with the consequences of his actions.

The guilt and internal conflict that define the first state are no longer as prominent, allowing him to approach violence with greater willingness.

Again, this does not mean that every single emotion has completely disappeared.

Rather, his emotional responses have become sufficiently diminished that they no longer influence his behavior to the same extent.

As a result, hurting someone becomes easier.

He becomes more willing to attack those who approach him, and the emotional barriers that might once have caused him to hesitate are weakened.

This stage was established during Phase 2 of Nightmare's plan, when Killer began actively participating in the genocide routes and became capable of killing monsters without displaying the same emotional reactions one might expect.

As discussed previously, Killer's behavior changes significantly after he agrees to Chara's proposal.

He begins killing independently, gives Chara the knife they use, and continues behaving like his usual self despite the violence he is participating in.

He smiles and maintains his familiar demeanor even while his internal dialogue reveals that he feels disgusted with himself.

These two things demonstrate the growing separation between his outward behavior and his internal emotional state.

The most important aspect is that Killer has become capable of continuing his actions even when those actions conflict with his feelings.

He can recognize that what he is doing is disturbing, yet continue doing it.

He can feel disgusted with himself, yet still participate in the genocide.

And he can maintain the appearance of his usual self while becoming increasingly detached from the emotional consequences of his behavior.

However, there is a notable exception: Papyrus.

When Killer kills Papyrus, his breakdown exposes the depth of the resentment, jealousy, and emotional attachment he still carries toward his brother.

His reaction demonstrates that the emotional consequences of killing someone he once needed remain significant, even after he has begun participating in the genocide.

This is important because it shows the progression toward the second soul state rather than suggesting that Killer immediately becomes completely emotionless.

At this point, he can already kill without displaying an obvious emotional response in many circumstances, but his remaining attachments and unresolved feelings can still break through.

Nightmare exploits that instability by repeatedly reinforcing the negative thoughts that encourage Killer to continue killing while pushing him to distance himself from the emotional significance of his actions.

Chara's reminders that the timeline can simply be reset provide another justification for continuing.

If nobody remembers what happened, Sans can attempt to convince himself that the killings do not matter, even though he continues remembering them himself.

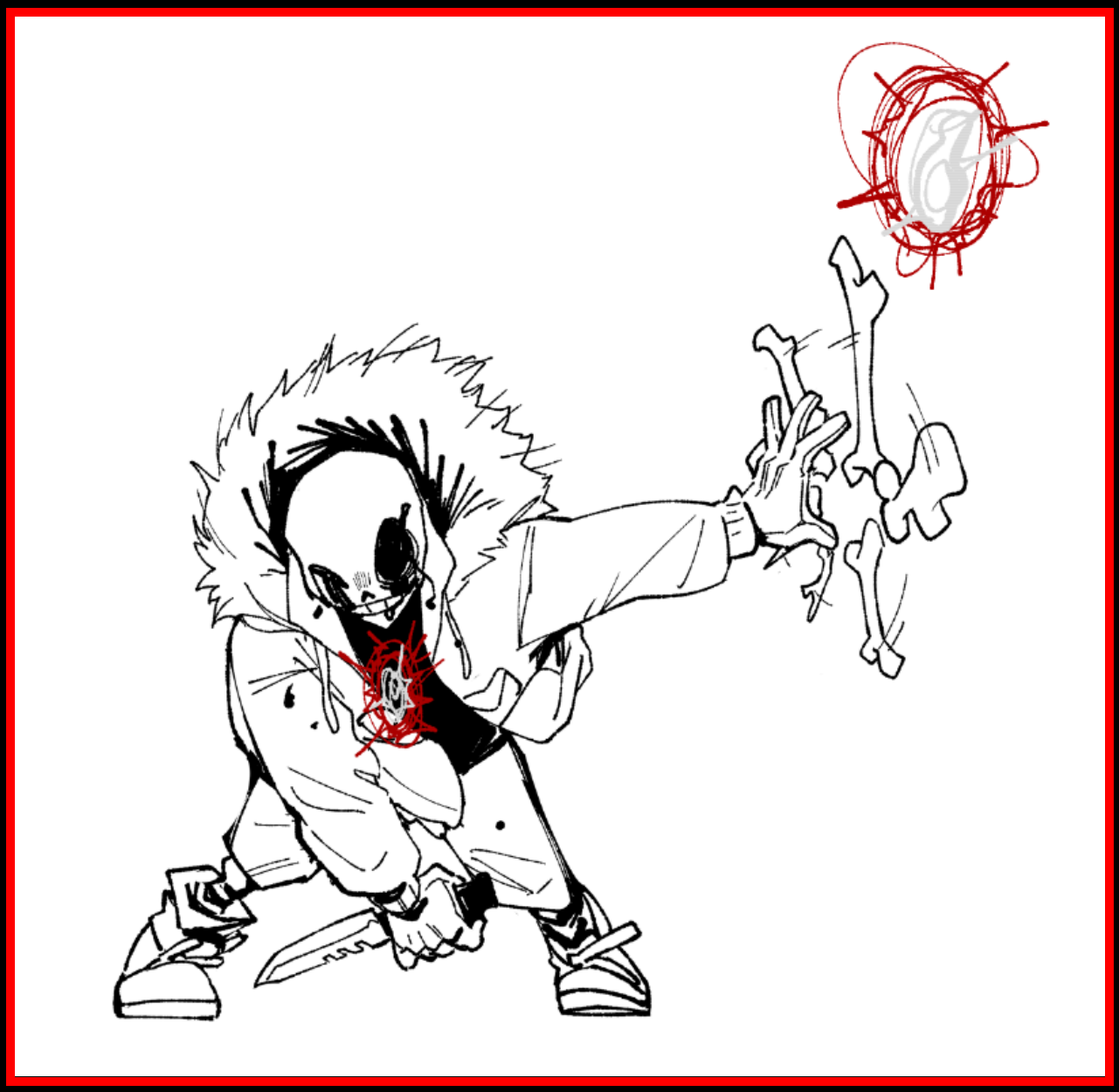
This creates the conditions for his emotional responses to become increasingly muted.

The more he participates in the genocide while attempting to suppress or avoid the resulting feelings, the more disconnected he becomes from the emotional consequences of his behavior.

The second soul state is the point where the emotional numbness established during the earlier genocide routes becomes more pronounced.

Killer is not yet necessarily completely devoid of emotion, but he has become more willing to hurt others because his emotional responses no longer restrain his behavior as strongly as they once did.

Phase 2 established the behavioral pattern that leads into this state: Killer learns to continue acting violently despite the emotional consequences, gradually becoming more detached from the significance of what he does.



In the third soul state, Killer becomes fully emotionless.

At this stage, he is willing to attack and kill everyone and everything that gets in his way.

The emotional hesitation associated with the earlier stages has effectively disappeared, leaving him capable of acting on his murderous intentions without the same internal conflict that once accompanied his behavior.

This represents a much more extreme state than the emotional numbness of the second soul state.

In the second state, Killer's emotions have faded considerably, making him more willing to hurt others.

However, that stage still represents a progression toward emotional detachment rather than the complete absence of emotion.

In the third state, that progression reaches its most extreme point.

Killer no longer experiences the same emotional resistance that might otherwise interfere with his willingness to kill.

His behavior is no longer characterized by the conflict between wanting to act and feeling disturbed by the consequences.

Instead, he becomes fully capable of attacking whatever stands in his way.

Unlike the earlier states, this stage is the result of the combined effects of Nightmare's manipulation throughout the preceding phases.

Nightmare has spent the entire process exploiting Killer's psychological vulnerabilities, encouraging him to pursue new experiences, reinforcing his negative thoughts, and gradually separating his actions from his emotional responses.

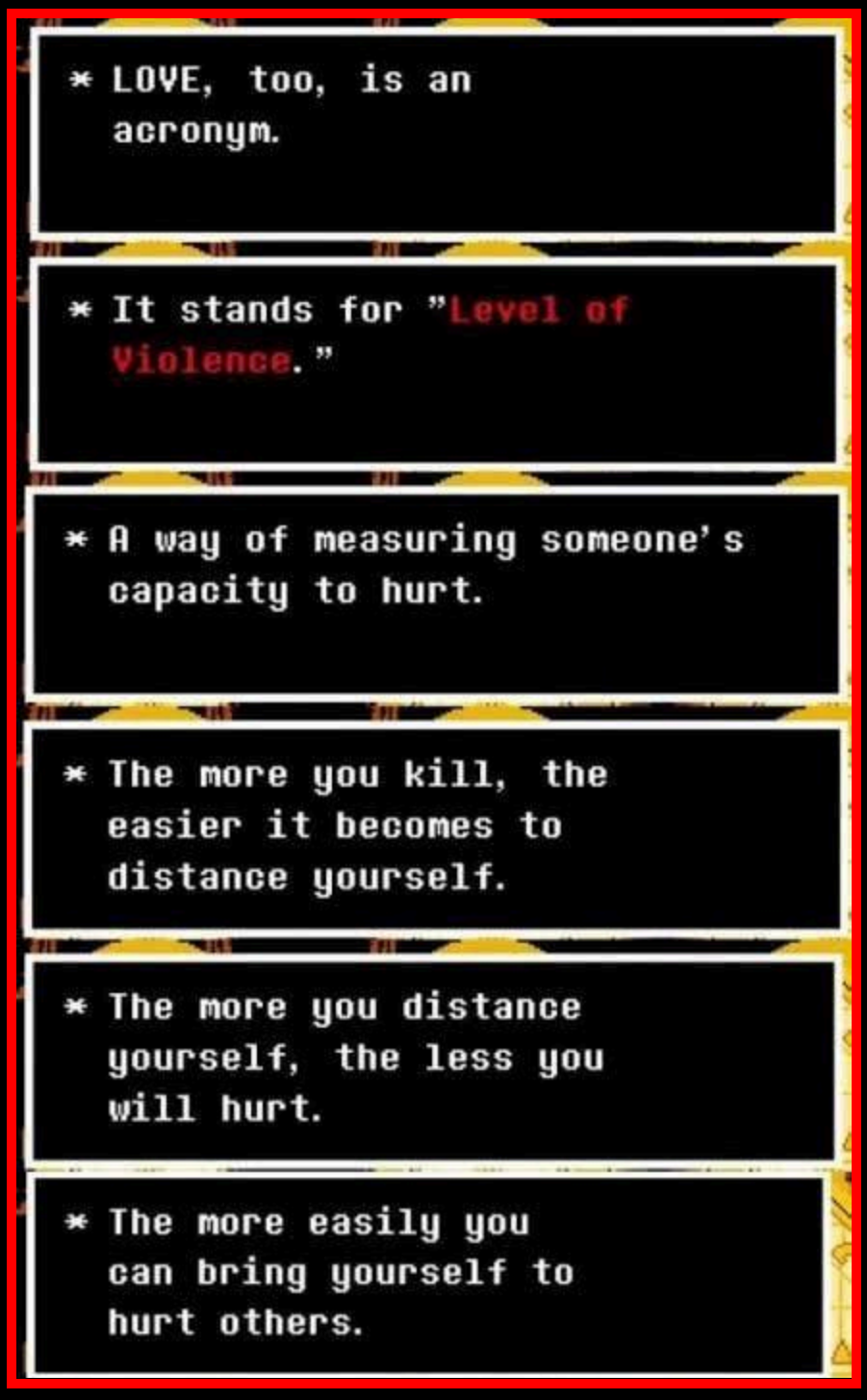
The repeated genocide routes have contributed to his deterioration, while his attempts to justify his actions through the promise of a reset have further encouraged him to distance himself from their consequences.

Nightmare's influence over Killer's inner voice has also helped reinforce the negative thoughts that sustain this process as well.

Then, during Phase 3, Killer is pushed even further through his encounters with Alphys, his attempts to ignore the suffering of others, the appearance of Gaster, and the repeated suggestion that he himself is not real.

Each of these elements contributes to the increasingly severe disconnect between Killer and his former identity.

However, there is another factor that makes the third soul state particularly significant: the relationship between LOVE, killing, and emotional detachment in Undertale.



In Undertale, LOVE is associated with the capacity to inflict harm, while the game's descriptions and dialogue connect repeated killing with growing emotional distance from the victims.

As a character gains LOVE through killing, the act of hurting others can become easier.

This provides an additional explanation and layer for Killer's progression and Dissociation.

The more Killer kills throughout the genocide routes, the more his behavior becomes associated with violence, and the easier it becomes for him to continue hurting others without the same emotional resistance he once experienced.

This does not mean that LOVE automatically erases every emotion or guarantees that someone will become completely emotionless.

Rather, the relationship between repeated killing and emotional detachment reinforces the psychological deterioration that Nightmare has already been encouraging.

Nightmare's manipulation and the consequences of the genocide routes therefore work together.

Nightmare reinforces Killer's negative thoughts and encourages him to dissociate from his actions.



Meanwhile, his repeated participation in the genocide contributes to the growing ease with which he commits violence.

The more these factors accumulate, the further Killer moves away from his former emotional state.

The final piece of this stage is the transformation of Killer's soul.

As established in Phase 3, Sans's soul changes across the following resets until it becomes the upside-down combination of a human soul and a monster soul associated with Killer.



Alongside this transformation comes the statement that he will no longer feel anything, much like Chara.

This detail is especially important because it connects the third soul state directly to the outcome of Nightmare's plan.

The earlier phases established the psychological conditions that allowed Killer to become increasingly detached from his emotions.

The soul transformation then accompanies the point at which this process reaches its most extreme result.

Killer's complete emotional numbness is therefore not attributed to a single event.

It is the culmination of the repeated resets, the genocide routes, the increasing willingness to commit violence, Nightmare's manipulation of his thoughts, the challenges to his sense of existence, and the transformation of his soul.

All of these factors contribute to the state in which Killer becomes fully emotionless and willing to kill anything that stands in his way.

The third soul state represents the point where Nightmare's accumulated manipulation has produced its most extreme form of emotional detachment: Killer no longer experiences the emotional resistance that characterized his earlier states.



The fourth soul state is considerably more mysterious than the previous three.

Very little is known about this stage because Killer completely refuses to talk about it.

Unlike the earlier states, where his behavior and emotional condition provide some indication of what he is experiencing, the fourth state remains largely hidden from others.

However, there are two particularly important details associated with it.

First, Killer's hallucinations appear to worsen considerably. (Which are things nightmare can do)

Second, despite this apparent deterioration, he retains the murderous intentions associated with the third soul state while also possessing the sanity associated with the first soul state.

This combination makes the fourth state particularly interesting in general.

In the third soul state, Killer is fully emotionless and willing to attack and kill anything that gets in his way.

His behavior represents the culmination of the emotional numbness that developed throughout Nightmare's plan.

In the first soul state, however, Killer is much closer to his classic Sans counterpart.

He begins regaining his emotions and experiences guilt over his past actions, even though he no longer considers himself Sans.

The fourth state appears to combine aspects of both.

Killer retains the murderous intentions of the third state, meaning that his willingness to kill has not simply disappeared.

At the same time, he possesses the sanity associated with the first state, distinguishing him from the fully emotionless condition of the third.

This creates a complicated psychological state in which his capacity for violence remains intact while aspects of his earlier mental state are also present.

His hallucinations worsening adds another layer of uncertainty to the situation.

Although the precise implications are not fully known, this detail suggests that the fourth state involves additional complications beyond the emotional numbness and murderous intentions seen in the previous stages.

However, because Killer refuses to discuss this state, its exact nature remains unclear.

It would therefore be premature to claim that the fourth state represents a complete recovery.

The available details instead establish it as a distinct and poorly understood condition that combines traits associated with earlier states.

Therefore the fourth state is the result of everything Nightmare has done up to this point.

The earlier stages were not created independently of one another.

Each developed from the conditions established by the preceding phases of the plan.

The first soul state reflects the separation between Killer and his former identity, alongside the return of emotions and the guilt associated with his past actions.

The second soul state reflects the growing emotional numbness that developed as Killer continued participating in the genocide and became increasingly willing to hurt others.

The third soul state represents the culmination of Nightmare's manipulation, the repeated killings, and the transformation of Sans's soul into the form associated with Killer.

The fourth state emerges after all of these developments have accumulated.

It's shaped by the combined effects of Nightmare's entire process rather than by one isolated act of manipulation.

Nightmare has exploited Sans's emotional vulnerabilities, encouraged him to continue killing, pushed him toward dissociation, and contributed to the circumstances surrounding his soul's transformation.

The resulting psychological condition is therefore far more complicated than simple emotional numbness.

Killer's refusal to discuss the fourth state also leaves an important gap in our understanding of what that combination means for him.

We know that his hallucinations worsen.

We know that he retains the murderous intentions associated with the third state.

And we know that he retains the sanity associated with the first state.

Beyond those details, the exact nature of the fourth state remains unknown.

The fourth soul state is therefore the culmination of the previous stages, but it is also the least understood part of Killer's psychological condition.

It brings together the consequences of Nightmare's manipulation without providing a complete explanation of how Killer experiences them internally.

This is what leads directly into the final stage of the plan.

So to leave this off:

1. Each stage represents a different outcome of the manipulation that began with the 176th reset.

2. Nightmare initially exploited Sans's desire to experience something new

3. manipulated the player into removing the restrictions that prevented Sans from agreeing to Chara

and

4. then used the consequences of the genocide routes to deepen Sans's dissociation.

5. As the process continued, Sans became increasingly detached from his emotions and former identity.

6. His soul changed, his relationship with violence developed

7. and Nightmare used the existence of the player and Gaster to push him further toward questioning his own reality.

The significance of this is that Nightmare's manipulation is not limited to creating a single psychological condition and leaving Killer in that state.

Instead, the progression through the different soul states leads into another part of the plan, continuing the cycle that began with the original manipulation of Killed.

Nightmare's plan begins by creating the conditions that allow Killer to cross the boundary he once refused to cross.

It progresses through repeated violence, emotional deterioration, and the transformation of his soul, ultimately producing the different states associated with Killer.

And when the fourth state is reached, the process does not end—instead, it begins again.

Phase 5: The Devil comes to Collect



Now this is where the final part of Nightmare's plan comes into play.

By completing the earlier stages of his plan, Nightmare has achieved his goal: he has created several stages of dissociation within Killer.

Each stage represents a different degree of emotional detachment, psychological deterioration, and separation from Killer's original identity.

Rather than pushing Killer toward one permanent state of emotional numbness, Nightmare has created a system that allows him to shift between stages, each with its own mental state and personality.

1. They are linked in a repeating cycle, with each stage eventually resetting to the beginning once it has run its course.

2. This allows Killer's psychological deterioration to continue without reaching a permanent conclusion.

3. Even when one stage ends, the cycle remains intact and can begin again.

Nightmare has effectively created multiple states within Killer that he can revisit.

4. This gives him a way to repeatedly alter Killer's sense of identity, emotional capacity, and behavior.

Nightmare no longer needs to put Killer through the same lengthy process each time he wants to make him emotionally numb.

The new factor that makes this easier is Killer's transformed soul.



As a consequence of the earlier stages of Nightmare's plan, Killer's soul has taken on a mixture of human and monster traits.

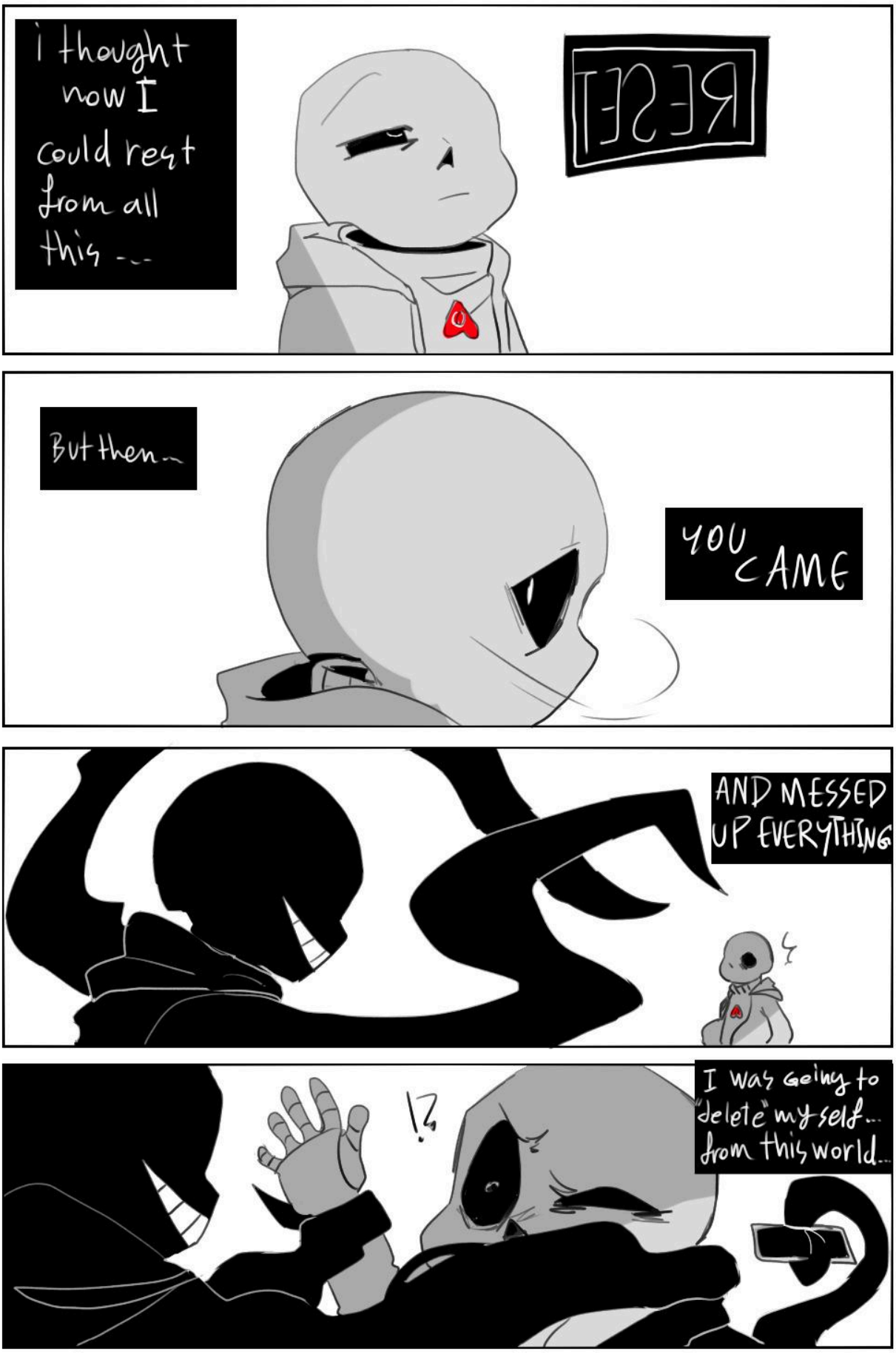
It therefore gives Nightmare another means of continuing his manipulation.

This matters because the second and third stages involve increasingly severe emotional detachment.

In the second stage, Killer is considerably more numb and willing to hurt those who approach him.

By the third, his numbness is extreme, and he is capable of attacking or killing anything in his way.

In this way, Nightmare has made Killer's psychological deterioration repeatable and controllable.


i thought now I could rest from all this ...
RESET
But then...
YOU CAME
AND MESSED UP EVERYTHING
!?
I was going to "delete" myself... from this world...

This is especially evident when Killer considers resetting and erasing himself from the world after finally killing Chara.

Despite everything he has endured, he may eventually reach a point where he no longer wants to continue living as the person he has become.

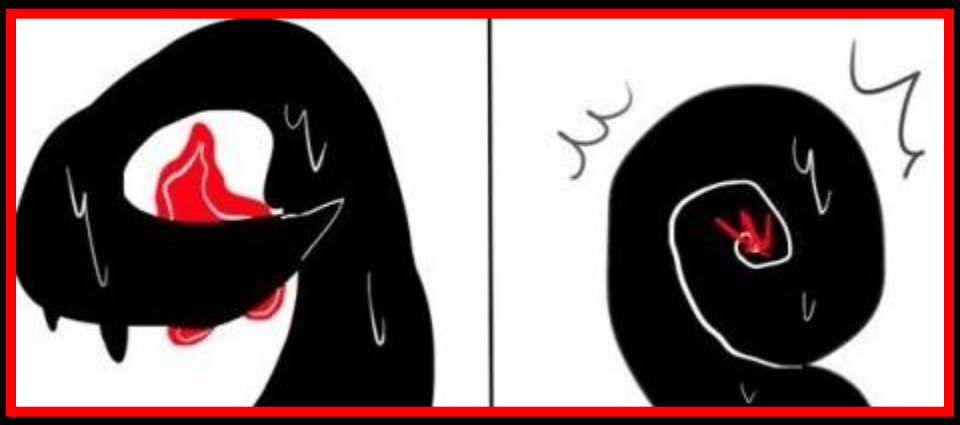
His willingness to erase himself shows that some part of him recognizes what he has done and wants to end the cycle that has consumed him.

If Killer regains his emotions and begins to regret his actions, the psychological states Nightmare established within him could lose their hold and therefore become useless.

Killer might escape their influence, at least temporarily, and regain some control over himself.

He might even return to the first stage, where his emotions resurface, and his guilt becomes difficult to ignore.

This is where Nightmare's final safeguard becomes relevant.



When Nightmare eventually appears before Killer, he can exploit and alter Killer's soul.

Meaning, Even if Killer frees himself from dissociation, Nightmare can change the form of his soul and drag him into one of the later stages by force.



states where emotional attachment, guilt, and regret are less able to restrain his actions—the feelings that might lead him to question said actions.

Even if Killer overcomes his dissociation on his own, recognizes the suffering he has caused, and genuinely wants to stop, Nightmare would still have a way to undermine his progress.

Ultimately, Nightmare has turned Killer's stages of dissociation into a mechanism for repeatedly regaining control over him.

He has created a pawn who can struggle, recover, and even try to escape his own existence—yet still be forced back into the very state he tried to escape.