

record

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by [novadocs](#)

Summary

wilbur soot's recorded existence lasted 10 years, 120 months or 3662 days over the span of ten journals, with various songs, newspaper articles and even legal documents filling in the gaps. it seems like far too less time.

Notes

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wilbur was 14 when phil gifted him his first journal.

arguably, he should have done it sooner, perhaps at age 7 when his overexcited ramblings of the going-ons of his day were met with absent nods and distracted dismissals, or maybe at age 12, when it became clear that he wouldn't be following in phil's steps as an explorer, but rather that he could weave words and music together into songs memorable in a way that would leave phil missing their absence long after the humming had ceased.

so phil caved, and finally gave him a journal. or three. they say one can never be too prepared, right?

wilbur regarded it at first with a blank expression, but it felt judgemental somehow. you see, phil decided to try and make the books himself, as a thoughtful gift (and *maybe* because the bookmaker sassed him a bit too much the other day and *maybe* he was still a bit sore. but he's the great philza, conqueror of worlds, of course he doesn't have a petty streak.)

(he does.)

just watch, he'd beat the bookmakers at their own craft by a country mile, plus it was cheaper. how hard could it possibly be?

...

...hard, but only for him apparently. philza is apparently not suited for the writer's life.

the binding is a bit off for all three books, and the pages are kind of uneven for the first two, but the last one is passable considering his hard work and mental strain, however the time wilbur takes to carefully inspect his handiwork has philza sweating and wondering if this was a good idea at all.

phil shifts in his place. neither of them say a word.

“it's um, for you to write in, mate. you know, your songs and daily events, stuff like that.”

nothing.

phil tries again, not knowing why he's so goddamn nervous. it's his son, for ender's sake.

“you alright, wil? if you don't like it that's fine, i can just find something else to do with—“

wilbur's head snaps up and he grips the journals tighter. “don't you dare. i will cherish this *forever*.
”

phil is taken aback. he didn't quite expect this after the heavy scrutiny, but he's *definitely* not complaining.

“that’s alright mate, just let me know if you want more,” he says, sounding suspiciously choked up, and he turns back towards his shed in the yard before he loses any more semblance of dignity.

if he cries tears of joy from that *truly heartwarming exchange* (his words, not mine) for a while later on, that’s no one’s business but his own.

wilbur is almost never seen without a journal after that. he brings it along with him almost everywhere, silently writing in the fields next to techno while they rest after a brief sparring session, or reading out the lyrics of his next song to tommy in his room, subtly asking for ideas when he thinks tommy isn't noticing (*because he would rather walk into the ocean than admit that he wants help from the gremlin*).

one thing phil's noticed is how he doesn't really mind if people read his writing. he'll leave it out in the open without a care in the world, and doesn't lose his mind over whether anyone reads his *deep, dark secrets*.

if you were to ask phil, he'd say it's probably because wilbur uses the journal simply to jot down whatever's on his mind, and that he doesn't care who sees it. it's a way for him to process his days and ideas, scribbling them mindlessly onto a page where he can get his thoughts all together. he's just being open, and it's a wonderful thing to see.

but it's days where phil peeks into the book, and sees things like “*today i tried eating sand for the first time. it wasn't terrible, would try again,*” when he wonders whether his son *really does* have all his bearings together.

but it's not that worrying, to be honest. part of wilbur's charm is that specific weirdness that you just have to become accustomed to. as long as it isn't hurting anyone, it's bound to be harmless.

but phil will still try and scour through wilbur's room while he's away for any stashes of sand he might be hiding away for a midnight snack. all of a sudden, he feels far too old for things like this.

wilbur and tommy leave for dream's private world at ages 24 and 16 respectively. phil misses them leaving because he was off gathering resources for his next excursion.

it's fine though. at least that's what wil tells him.

speaking of wilbur, he's taken all his extra journals. it's clear he isn't coming back for a long while. this doesn't bother phil. it's very easy to keep himself distracted, almost like falling into routine.

they send letters. tommy's letters are always full of energy, and reading them makes phil feel like tommy is right next to him, yelling each and every word as if his life depended on it..

wilbur's letters are toned down, but still full of the same wry humor he's particularly known for. he'll state incredibly surprising statements conversationally as if he were simply talking about the weather, like the fact that he managed to start a potion (*but drugs are funnier to say*, he can almost hear him whine) monopoly on the land and somehow end up with a sovereign nation that's constantly at war with what seems like *everybody else*.

well, he was known for being a bit ambitious.

phil will chuckle at his sons' antics and put the letters aside to answer later.

if that "*later*" happens to be two months later, then that's no one's slip of mind but his own.

their letters have become infrequent and short, as if written in a hurry. phil doesn't worry too much until the third letter of the same kind. when he asks, wilbur tells him that they're simply in a small scuffle, and they've headed out of l'manburg for a bit.

it should be enough, but wil's shaky scrawl is an indicator that things might not be as okay as they seem. he hasn't been writing too often then. he wonders if the journals are collecting dust.

but it's fine. wilbur is a strong person. he'll be able to handle it, phil is sure.

he still sends techno to the land to check up on them though. he doesn't want to leave them alone completely. a friendly face could help.

but if you asked phil why he couldn't just go himself, he'd go silent, before telling you that he won't go around fixing his children's problems for them.

(oh but if he did, maybe this story wouldn't be as tragic as it is.)

the letters stop. a lot changes, but nothing really does either.

phil no longer knows how his sons are all doing. but it's alright, they've probably sorted things out and are busy with their own administrative duties. although, he should maybe write to techno about when their next journey is, and what things he needs to prepare.

phil still goes into the village to trade items, still fights monsters at night, still spends time perfecting his builds, still goes adventuring every other day. it's routine for him really. none of this ever really changed after his boys left.

(he'll stop by the stationery shop and simply look at the finely bound books they have on display. he'll contemplate something, but then he'll just walk away without a second thought. it's not important, he thinks.

but isn't it?)

it's a slightly chilly evening, when he receives two letters. one from tommy, one from techno. nothing from wilbur.

he's a bit surprised for sure, especially since both letters have a sense of urgency to them. tommy's writing is panicked and rushed, and techno's is neat enough, but it's easy to tell by the way the ink pools at random intervals throughout his writing that he's struggling to get his thoughts in order.

he gets the gist though. *wilbur's going off the deep end and is threatening to destroy everything they've worked for in one large blaze of glory. please come help. please.*

phil's already grabbing his cloak, quickly scribbling a message to dream to let him into the world.

there has to be some hope left. he doesn't know what the guilt would do to him otherwise.

phil is late. it's to be expected though. wilbur and tommy would joke about it often, but he doesn't feel like laughing right now.

phil was given a communicator by dream, who visited him in his own realm. they didn't talk

much, but every word dream said made him feel like he was being mocked.

“finally find the time to check up on your kids? i must say, they’d gotten themselves into quite the situation when they first joined, but i’m sure things will wrap up *quite* nicely now, *with a little bow on top*, don’t you think?”

phil turns to face him. there’s something ominous about his last line, but he can’t figure out what. the unrelenting smile on his mask is unnerving.

"come on then phil, you don't wanna leave 'em hanging like that! it might blow up in your face."

he finally drops his gaze.

he looks for wilbur’s name on the communicator and selects it.

it’s silent. then—

“*what are you doing?*”

“...phil?”

(it's the first time he's heard his voice in years, and he wonders when *dad* turned to *phil*.)

phil is hundreds of years old, but he's never really felt exhausted, until today.

when someone (*tommy? tubbo? who knows anymore—*) points out the obvious fact that he looks like hell warmed over, he can't help but snap, *well, i just got back from murdering my own son at his own wish after watching him destroy everything he's worked so fucking hard for with the most broken smile on his face, so maybe i deserve an iota of rest—*

and of course, that's when it really, *truly* hits him. he just killed his *son. his beloved, most incredible child. his little songbird.* he silenced him forever.

some types of blood just cannot be washed off of one's hands. this is one of them.

he stumbles back, hands shaking, and rushes to the nearest room he can find in this godforsaken ravine. he realises too late that it's wilbur's.

it's spotless, and phil chokes at the implication of why. he sees the l'manburgian uniform sitting neatly on his bed, singed and torn, but still handled with care, like relics of a time long gone. his closet is neatly arranged, and phil stifles a sob at seeing his armor still on its stand.

he spots a book sitting in the corner of the room. it's wilbur's newest journal, but it doesn't look worn out at all. it's in great shape. he opens the book, expecting to find paranoid rambles and crazed ideas, but the book is mostly empty.

the last journal entry is marked 21st september, 2020. the day before the fateful election results were announced.

as he reads wilbur's last entry, he can feel wilbur's overflowing optimism and good nature through the words. how hard he worked to try and keep his land, his *friends* together.

phil tries to think of why it stops dead here, why there's no trace of the current wilbur in these pages. was he too busy leading a revolution to have time for himself? was he in such constant danger that even a minute's rest would lead to them getting caught?

was he so distrusting of the people around him that he couldn't trust anyone, or anything with his thoughts but himself?

phil reads and re-reads and re-reads again and again *and again*, in a vain attempt to try and put the pieces together in his head, to pinpoint where everything went *oh so wrong*, knowing he had the all the power to prevent it. he doesn't find anything. wilbur was always a good actor.

phil crumples to the floor, tears streaming silently down his face.

21st september. 21st september. 21st september.

oh, my stupid, stupid son.

wilbur soot's memory is frozen forever on 21st september, 2020, 7 days after his 24th birthday. his last entry talks about his friends, his family, the election, and the cake he had instead of dinner that day.

wilbur soot's recorded existence lasted 10 years, 120 months or 3662 days over the span of ten journals, with various songs, newspaper articles and even legal documents filling in the gaps. it seems like far too less time.

over the years, phil will read his journals again, expecting to find something new, but he never will.

the ghost of wilbur soot will always be stuck at 21st september, 2020, and phil will always be mentioned in the last paragraph.

“i hope dad will be proud.”

End Notes

thanks for reading :)

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