

Pretty Things

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Pretty Things

by [ros_is_writing](#)

Summary

Laying facedown on the bed was his partner Ashswag, the only other person with keys to Red's apartment. When he heard Red come into the room he rolled over onto his back and sat up, dark braid flipping over his shoulder at the change of gravity.

"Welcome home," Ash grinned, eyes crinkling in laughter.

"This is my house," Red noted. He put a hand on his hip and looked at Ash over his sunglasses, a joking form of their normal rivalry.

"Yeah, but I was here first," Ash rolled his eyes and scooted off the bed. He casually strolled across the room like he wasn't the highlight of Red's day and dropped a kiss into his hair.

Notes

This has so much damn exposition in it, I don't even know how I wrote it like that. It's 90% describing setting and 10% character interaction which is a weird ratio for me hmm

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Red has always been a sucker for pretty things, just look at the base he's built; all dramatic lifted ceilings and delicate architecture. It fits him, he thinks, appealing, but with an edge that implies power. For example, the archway that he walked under now. It was held up by two pristine quartz pillars that added to the illusion of height, but each pillar was roped with imposing blackstone enforcements. The arch itself was patterned with heavy chunks of blackstone that appeared to be

suspended in the air, both beautiful and strong.

Red had also rigged those to fall if he needed them to, but that wasn't important to the appearance of the architecture.

On either side of the hallway there were similar pillar supports to the archway about every 5 feet. The parallel lines that they created were quite elegant, but also daunting. Red was rather proud of their effect when he made them.

Unlike other members of Lifesteal, Red was able to put actual focus and effort into his base. This was in part because he didn't bother himself with raiding other peoples bases, choosing to simply gather every resource himself. But also due to the reputation he had around the server, no one wanted to mess with him simply because he wasn't a guy that you messed with.

Because he ignored trivial conflicts and was thankfully left in peace during most of them, he had the time to make the gorgeous base that he walked through now.

But that wasn't the only thing he had the luxury to make. It was extremely uncommon for members of Lifesteal -or any pvp server player at all- to have a bedroom in their base. So of course, that's what Red made.

His bedroom wasn't hidden, but wasn't in an obvious location either. From the archway that he just passed under, the first sharp left led him to another smaller hallway. That hallway took him down a short flight of stairs to a simple white door. Red fished the keys to the door out of his pocket, unlocked the door and stepped inside.

Red's living space was made to look like an apartment, something familiar in the world of Lifesteal. When waking in, he was immediately met with a small living room, adjacent to a mini-kitchen. Red had another, fully equipped kitchen upstairs in his main base, but he kept one here too for convenience.

Brushing past the open rooms, Red walked through the only other door in the living room to his bedroom. Before he even turned the corner he could see a pair of purple socks sticking off the bed. Instead of a sharp flash of fear that he would normally experience when finding someone in his base, loving familiarity seeped through him.

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apartment. When he heard Red come into the room he rolled over onto his back and sat up, dark braid flipping over his shoulder at the change of gravity.

“Welcome home,” Ash grinned, eyes crinkling in laughter.

“This is my house,” Red noted. He put a hand on his hip and looked at Ash over his sunglasses, a joking version of their normal rivalry.

“Yeah, but I was here first,” Ash rolled his eyes and scooted off the bed. He casually strolled across the room like he wasn’t the highlight of Red’s day and dropped a kiss into his hair.

“Oh ew, you smell bad,” Ash observed, leaning back but keeping a hand on Red’s shoulder.

“Yeah, yeah, I know,” Red sighed and then laughed as he was pushed towards the bathroom. “Fixing that now.”

Another pretty thing that he liked, Red considered while he got ready to take a shower, was Ash. Sure he was baseline pretty. Long, dark hair, smooth brown skin, irises the color of muted hyacinths. Ash was conventional pretty, that was a fact. But Red noticed details that most people didn’t, his eyelashes, his fingers, the shape of his lower leg. Every part of Ash was pretty, and Red knew every part of Ash.

Barely audible over the running water of the shower, Red heard Ash laughing to himself in the bedroom. Another slightly louder laugh was followed by a thump, both of which were quickly silenced.

“Ash, you better not be setting explosives in my room again!” Red shouted through the wall.

“Oh no,” Ash shouted back sarcastically. “You caught me.”

Red smiled and rinsed the last of the shampoo out of his hair. Hopefully, after a quick clean, he wouldn’t smell bad anymore. As much as smells bothered Ash, they bothered Red twice as much. He couldn’t stand people smelling bad, especially if it was himself. He believed that if your first impression was your scent, then you might as well not make first impressions. So much was judged and decided based solely on first meetings, and he was not going to let his smell ruin that for him.

While he was toweling himself off, Ash cracked the door open and tossed a pair of pajamas inside, hopefully what he had been banging around for previously. Red's thanks was met with a nod and a gentle close of the bathroom door. He was glad that Ash realized that he shoved Red in the bathroom without clothes to change into. Though he knew that Ash wasn't above making him pitifully wrap himself in a towel to try to conserve heat while he dug through his dresser.

After putting on clothes and drying his hair as best he could, Red reached for the bottle of saline that he kept under the sink. Using a q-tip, he gently cleaned the piercings in his earlobes, swabbing the front and then the back. They weren't the first piercings he ever had, in fact, they sat directly over where his previous piercings had been. During high school, he kept a small stud in each ear, framing his face. However, after he graduated, he took them out, figuring piercings wouldn't do him very well in the adult world. Present day, on Lifesteal, he decided that no one cared what he looked like, and that he missed the piercings more than he'd like to admit. They were pretty.

By the time he realized this thought, his previous holes had long since closed up. So he had no choice but to pierce them again. Now, a few weeks later, he was taking good care of them in an effort to not get them infected in an environment where he might not be able to heal them.

Piercings sufficiently cleaned, Red stepped out of the bathroom to see Ash once again rifling through his dresser drawers.

"When am I gonna find incriminating evidence in one of these?" Ash asked over his shoulder, referring to Red's sock drawer, because of course he thought that Red would keep "incriminating evidence" in there.

"You say that every time," Red reminded him. Any time Ash had the opportunity to, he liked to look through Red's clothes. Red still wasn't sure why, but he didn't mind as long as Ash didn't set bombs in his dresser. Sometimes Ash takes his clothes out of a drawer and resorts them all, sometimes he puts them on and sends Red's heart through the ceiling. But most of the time he just jokes about Red using his dresser as a hiding spot for illegal items.

"And you don't want to leave me a little surprise in here?" Ash pouted, "just a little bit of blackmail... as a treat?"

"In my sock drawer?"

"Or your shirt drawer. I'm not being picky here." Ash winked at him and then turned dramatically

to take his turn in the bathroom, a small pile of clothes in his hand. A few seconds later Red heard the sink turn on as Ash presumably washed his face.

Red moved to the bed and sat down, he assumed Ash would be staying here tonight instead of his own base since he was getting ready for bed. Ash's base was currently a small cabin in the woods, where the only way in was clipping through the walls, something only Ash could do. There was also a small back door way in that was less of a door and more of a trapdoor from a crawlspace, but only Red knew about that.

While he waited for Ash, -because surely he would want to move Red around before he laid down- Red fidgeted with his piercings. The studs that he currently has in weren't anything special, just small opal domes. Red wasn't quite sure if the white color worked on him, but they were the only studs he could get at the time.

Previously in high school, he wore black square studs about the radius of a pencil eraser. Yes, he knew that because he measured them once when bored in class. He liked those better than what he wore now, but there was no way to get them back. Plus, he'd been thinking about switching his earrings to something a little bit bigger once they were ready. Maybe small hoops or studs with a larger back.

Since he did his current piercings with a needle instead of a gun, he was able to twist them without resistance, and that's what he was doing when Ash walked out of the bathroom wearing some of his clothes that he kept in Red's apartment.

"How long have those been in?" Ash asked about Red's earrings conversationally as he tossed his extra clothes to the side.

Red thought for a second, "about a month and a half?" Ash hummed at his answer and sat himself in front of Red.

"So can you change them now?"

"Yeah, they should be good," Red answered. "I don't have any other earrings to change them with though." His left hand absentmindedly messed with one of his studs, twisting the butterfly clasp to the end of the stud and then back to his earlobe.

Ash reached up and grabbed his hand, then reached into his inventory and pulled out a piece of

cardboard.

“How about these?” He pressed the earring holder into Red's hand with a grin.

Red gasped in delight and immediately held up the cardboard to see the two pieces of jewelry clasped to it. The earrings were shaped like rectangular hoops, small enough to not get in the way, but large enough to be noticeable, unlike studs. They were a polished black color that reflected in the dim light of the bedroom. Red immediately loved them.

“Ash, these are lovely,” Red told him, eyes still on the earrings. “They're so-“

“Pretty?” Ash finished his sentence for him. He cackled at Red's disappointed but not surprised expression and leaned back in amusement.

“What the fuck,” Red deadpanned. “Unprovoked,” he declared.

“Completely provoked, completely valid,” Ash returned and grabbed the earring holder back from Red.

“Can you change them yourself or should I do it?” Ash asked as he unclasped one of the earrings.

“Umm,” Red thought about his experience with changing earrings, which was none. In high school he never bothered to change his studs, he didn't even own more than one pair of earrings. He assumed he could learn, it didn't seem that hard anyway, but without a mirror he didn't really trust himself.

“You change them,” he decided, turning his right ear towards Ash. Ash laughed at his eagerness and scooted closer. He set both of the unclasped earrings on the bed next to his knee and reached for Red's ear.

“It is gonna be all crusty?” Ash asked, fingers barely brushing Red's ear.

“I just cleaned them,” Red reassured him. “But if they are, just ignore it.” Ash scoffed and rolled his eyes but popped the clasp off the back of the stud anyway. He gently pulled the stud out of

Reds earlobe and deposited both the stud and the clasp in Red's palm. While Ash worked to fit the new earring in Red's ear, Red reconnected the stud and the clasp to make sure he didn't lose them. That was the benefit of hoops, they didn't require two separate pieces to stay on.

With a small click Ash closed the clasp on the earring and moved his hands away so Red could feel it. It was a little bit heavier than the studs that he was used to, but the weight just made him excited that he had actual earrings on. The space between the bottom of his earlobe and the bottom line of the rectangle wasn't big enough for him to put a finger through, but he could slide his fingernail in. It was cool to tug a little on the earring and feel the tug on the inside of his earlobe.

"Okay, okay, other side," Ash motioned Red to angle himself the other way and stop messing with his new earrings.

Red complied and felt Ash move to repeat the previous process on his other ear. It felt really weird when Ash pulled the stud out, none of Red's skin was attached to it, but there was still resistance somehow. Red had cleaned the blood out of it as best he could after waiting a couple days after piercing them, but maybe there was still some there. Ash didn't say anything about his ears being dirty though, so it was probably nothing.

"Done," Ash announced, placing the second stud in Red's hand. Red turned to face Ash directly and Ash's hands came up to cradle his face. His eyes flicked back and forth across Red's face, observing the earrings.

"Do they look good?" Red asked, trying to read the analytical expression on Ash's face. Ash broke into a grin at Red's question and leaned in to kiss him once before going back to have Red's face in his entire line of sight. His smile was lopsided and his eyes were pinched at the corners, an loving expression that Red recognized very well.

"Yes," Ash replied. "Very pretty." Red laughed at his use of the word and flopped backwards on the bed, pulling Ash with him. Ash grunted and rearranged his legs so he was more comfortably laying on Red.

"How do they feel?" Ash asked once he was settled. One of his hands reached over to flick one of Red's new earrings. Red dodged Ash's hand and playfully glared at him, prompting Ash to only flick his ear again.

"Heavy," Red answered. "But not in a bad way."

“Oh yeah, you’d know all about that,” Ash grinned from where he was laying his full weight completely on Red. The both laughed and Red rolled Ash off of him to disprove his point. Eventually the laughter and shuffling of blankets faded away and they were left gently looking at each other, this time from their sides.

“Thank you,” Red murmured. “They’re very nice.”

Ash poked him in the cheek expectantly. “And?” he prompted.

Red rolled his eyes, said what Ash wanted anyway, “and they’re very pretty.”

End Notes

This fic is brought to you by someone desperately waiting for their second piercings to heal :)

ALSO I have made myself a tumblr!! You can find me at [ros-is-writing](#) (same user)!

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!