

You'll never see the reasons I had

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You'll never see the reasons I had

by [13001](#)

Summary

“Get out.” Ash growled, but Red stood frozen, staring. He took a step into the room, and Ash raised his sword, trying to hide his wince of pain.

“Are you alright?” Red, who normally kept his tone disinterested, seemed to have a bit of concern hiding in his voice.

“I’m fine.” This time Ash couldn’t hide the pain in his voice. “Fuck off.”

Red decided to do the opposite of that, stepping fully into the room and closing the door. Ash twisted around to watch him, irritated, as he made his way over to him. “What are you doing?”

“Helping.”

or: wingfic

Notes

I'm alive!! I impulsively wrote this one night instead of finishing one of my other many drafts that I've had for a while.

Hope you enjoy!

Title from Never Love an Anchor by The Crane Wives

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

Ash stumbled into the room, slamming the door behind him. He had just barely escaped a fight with his hearts, but had taken one too many arrows, and now his wings were killing him.

Collapsing to the floor, Ash undid his armor clasps, throwing the chestplate across the floor. It was basically broken now, so it wouldn't offer him much protection even if he was wearing it. He unbound his wings and let them unfurl, stretching out his scarred left one with a sigh, as the right one had an arrow embedded in it. It was most likely a harming arrow, due to the pain burning through his wing.

With a wince, Ash tried to twist his arm to reach the arrow, caught somewhere between his tertials and coverts, but it was no use. His armor had helped a bit, it hadn't gone completely through his wing, but it was deep enough to hurt like hell.

Ash knew that keeping his wings bound and hidden was a bad idea, they were a mess currently, but it was helpful in hiding the fact that he had them. On this server, trust was earned through blood and hearts, and it was kill or be killed. Any weakness would be used against you.

Ash let out a hiss of pain as his fingers brushed the area around the injury, but not the arrow.

"Ash?" A voice cut through the fog of pain, and Ash snapped his head to the door as he heard someone's footsteps approaching. Fumbling for his sword, he tried to push himself to his feet, but failed. The door opened, and he saw Red standing there, eyes hidden behind sunglasses.

"Get out." Ash growled, but Red stood frozen, staring. He took a step into the room, and Ash raised his sword, trying to hide his wince of pain.

"Are you alright?" Red, who normally kept his tone disinterested, seemed to have a bit of concern hiding in his voice.

"I'm fine." This time Ash couldn't hide the pain in his voice. "Fuck off."

Red decided to do the opposite of that, stepping fully into the room and closing the door. Ash twisted around to watch him, irritated, as he made his way over to him. "What are you doing?"

"Helping." Red sat down behind Ash, although slightly out of arm's reach. "You don't want that to become a permanent injury, now do you?"

Ash scowled, dropping his head so he wouldn't have to look at the man sitting behind him. "I don't need your help."

"Don't need or don't want?"

"Leave me alone you fucking asshole." Ash grit his teeth against another wave of pain as he moved his wings, trying to curl them closer to himself.

"After we take care of that." Red's words left no room for argument. "I can't have my teammates dying on me, now can I?" Ash heard him move closer, and instinctively tightened his grip on his sword. Red sighed. "Here." There was the shuffling of fabric, the sound of clicking metal behind him, and he slowly relaxed his grip. "I've taken off my armor. Now put the blade down." Ash hesitantly put his sword down, fingers lingering on the hilt.

He did feel a little bit safer, now that Red was no longer wearing armor, even if he had to have his back to him. Ash heard the sound of an enderchest behind him, and tensed, but with one glance

over his shoulder he saw Red was just grabbing potions.

Ash didn't want to let Red help him, to show weakness around him, but he knew that without help, he would probably have more permanent damage to his wings.

Red's fingers brushed his feathers lightly, and Ash's wing reflexively jerked away, causing another influx of pain. Red sighed again, leaning back to grab something. "I'm going to need you to cooperate, so I can do this properly."

"I don't need your help." Ash said again, this time with less bite. "What do you even plan to gain from this? You already passed up the opportunity for a free heart."

"Maybe I just want to help you. We are teammates after all." He could hear Red uncork a bottle, and then move closer. And then, quietly: "There are things more valuable than hearts."

Any response Ash could think of died in his throat as he felt a wet cloth press against his wing. With a swift tug, Red removed the arrow, evoking a pained gasp from the shorter man. Then there was a cool cloth running gently through his feathers, wiping away blood, that felt surprisingly soothing.

After a second the cloth was removed and Ash heard the sound of another bottle being opened, most likely a potion. Red placed a steadying hand on his back, and continued running the cloth over his wing. He was as gentle as possible, but still got a few pained noises from Ash.

Ash could feel the wound knitting itself back together, meaning that Red had probably used regen.

"Drink this." Red had reached over his shoulder and was shoving a small vial filled with bright red liquid into his hands.

Ash hesitantly took it, his voice shaky. "This isn't going to do shit." Health potions didn't do that much in the first place, especially in small amounts.

"It's got glowstone dust. Health two." Red seemed to be putting things away now. "Since you just came from a fight, I don't think it's a good idea for you to have more potions than necessary."

Somewhere in the back of his mind, Ash supposed that was smart. The combination of strength, speed, regen, and gapples right after each other, not to mention poison from enemies, wasn't healthy, especially considering how much blazepowder and netherwart is being consumed.

Popping open the vial, Ash drank it, tasting the sweetness of melons mixed with the spice and burn of the Nether ingredients. A faint warmth crawled through his body, smaller cuts and sore muscles slowly healing.

Ash sighed, relishing the absence of pain, until another issue came to his attention: his wings.

Anyone with feathered wings knew the rules to their upkeep, even though many ignored them. Thankfully he wasn't an avian, which meant he didn't need to preen every few days, but he probably should. Ash hated having wings. They were a side effect of an unsavory deal from when he was younger, and he still had no way to get rid of them. They were bulky, got in the way, were a hassle to take care of, sensitive and delicate, and overall had no pros whatsoever.

So he bound them up and hid them under his armor, which resulted in him being able to forget they existed for a while, which consequently meant no preening them.

Ash was startled out of his thoughts by Red touching his wing again, this time straightening out

one of his feathers. He tried his best to muffle a noise as the taller man continued to run his fingers slowly through his feathers.

“Do you want me to stop?” Red’s voice was soft, and his hands slowed to a stop. Ash didn’t want him to stop, it had been so long since he’d preened, and even longer since someone had helped him.

Red seemed to take his silence as a yes, and removed his hands, moving to stand up.

“Wait—” Ash managed to gasp, against his better will. “I—” He hated how weak his voice sounded. “Stay.”

Red didn’t say anything, but resumed running his hands through Ash’s coverts, careful of the ragged edges. His hands were gentle, his fingers straightening feathers with a practiced ease. After a bit, he moved on to his primaries, even though there was no need, and Ash had to grit his teeth to stop a pathetic noise from escaping his throat. It just felt so good to have someone be nice to him, even if it was someone like Red, who he had a complicated relationship with.

“How—” Ash struggled to form words as a distraction. “How do you know how to do this?”

Red hesitated for a second. “I hav— *had* a good friend who was an avian.” Ash pretended to not notice the stumble in his voice.

He must’ve zoned out for a while, all of the potions he’d consumed in the past hour were making his head fuzzy. Letting someone else touch his wings was something that required trust, letting someone else preen them was a whole other thing.

As he was sitting there, feeling safe for the first time in months, it suddenly hit him just how tired he was.

“Do you want me to pull this one?”

“Huh?” Ash blinked his eyes open, not realizing he had closed them. Red’s fingers had stilled, and gathering his thoughts, Ash realized he was asking about a feather. “No,” He mumbled. “It’ll fall out on its own.”

Red made a noise of acknowledgement, then moved his hands to examine the area that had been injured previously, probably checking to make sure it healed all the way. It was sore, and still hurt a bit when Red fingers pressed gently, but the regen and healing potions had done their work.

Red removed his hands, and Ash tried his best to ignore the disappointment. Then he moved to his left wing, this time starting at his coverts, working his way down. Between the warmth from his fingers and exhaustion, Ash was fighting to keep his eyes open.

Then he got to the end of his primaries, where his wing had taken the blast of a TNT trap. The feathers were burned and scarred, having been deemed non-lethal by respawn, so now it was permanent. Red lightly touched them, and Ash twitched his wing back. It didn’t hurt, but it was an instinctive thing. The taller man murmured an apology, keeping his hands away from the damaged feathers.

Ash started to lean forward unconsciously, until a warm hand gripped his shoulder, gently pulling him back.

Red tapped his shoulder. “Can you turn around?” Ash blinked, his brain taking a second to process the request. Slowly, he drew in his wings and shuffled around, so that he was face to face with Red.

The taller man had taken off his sunglasses, a rare occurrence, and Ash could see his dark amber eyes focused on his wings. After a moment, Red glanced up, and their eyes met for a second before they both quickly looked away. Ash had to choke back a noise that was most definitely not a sob as Red's fingers brushed through the feathers on the underside of his wings.

"You okay?" Red's hands stilled, and after Ash didn't respond, one of his hands raised to brush against the shorter man's jaw, angling his head so that he was staring into his eyes again.

"Fine," Ash managed to choke out. Red didn't move, his eyes searching for something. "It's just—" He broke off, trying to find the right words. "Difficult—" He took a breath. "You. Trust."

Red didn't say anything for a second, but then nodded, dropping his hand from his face. Ash sighed, closing his eyes and allowing himself to drift off slightly, which ended up causing him to tip forward. Red caught him with a noise of surprise, but Ash just moved closer, resting his head on the taller man's shoulder, hiding his face in his neck and arms wrapping loosely around him.

Red froze, seemingly caught off-guard, as one of Ash's wings raised and curled around the both of them. After a moment, he resumed preening his other wing, doing his best not to disturb the man half asleep against him.

Preening was a relaxing activity for Ash, so combined with his exhaustion and the feeling of safety, he probably fell asleep, or reached the threshold of it. He was only pulled back to a somewhat aware state when Red moved, wrapping one arm around the shorter man's lower back and hooking one under his legs as he stood up. Ash ended up slipping into a position where he had his head pressed against Red's chest, and his arms around his neck.

Ash felt himself being carried somewhere, although he didn't open his eyes. After the sound of a door being closed, Red sat down on something, a bed most likely, and moved his arms to try to gently remove the other man's arms from around his neck. Ash made a quiet noise of protest, wrapping his arms tighter.

Red tried again, but upon receiving the same result, he just sighed and leaned back, propped up against the pillows. From where Ash was curled up on top of him, his wings blanketing them both, he could hear Red's heartbeat, and feel the steady rise and fall of his chest as he breathed. It was calming.

A hand was slowly combing through his hair, adding to the relaxing feeling. Just as he was on the verge of falling back into sleep, Ash thought he heard the other man murmur something. And it might've been his sleep-addled imagination, but he swore he felt Red lean down and press a kiss to the top of his head.

It didn't matter. Both of them knew, somewhere in the back of their minds, that neither of them would mention it in the morning.

End Notes

Not sure how I feel about the ending, but it's fine. Going to disappear to try to finish another fic! /hj

Kudos/comments are greatly appreciated!

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