

## four-star review

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## four-star review

by [orphan\\_account](#)

### Summary

The moss sat in his arms, feeling almost kind of damp against his skin. It made him nostalgic for the mossy hoodie Bdubs used to wear. Part of him wondered if he still had the hoodie, if it was tucked away in a drawer somewhere, or if it was one of the many things the two left behind; back when the crisp smell of the start of winter never quite seemed to drown out the smell of blood, and no matter how many times he washed his hands in the river or in melted snow, the soul sand never quite got out from under his fingernails.

(or: bdubs delivers the hugs and kisses promised in the moss shop)

### Notes

hi yes hello this was inspired by @bdoubleds on tumblr if you're reading this ty for the prompt, this was fucking adorable to write

local man slowly becomes more and more comfortable making content that is less ambiguous and more romantic. enjoy :)

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

The moss sat in his arms, feeling almost kind of damp against his skin, as Etho glanced at the back of the build, pipes raining down various discardable pieces. The sticks of the azalea bushes prodded his arms, likely leaving a couple scratches since he didn't have his longer-sleeved shirt on, but the softness of the moss helped to cushion it.

It made him nostalgic for the mossy hoodie Bdubs used to wear. Etho knew he had the cloak, but part of him wondered if he still had the hoodie specifically, if it was tucked away in a drawer somewhere, or if it was one of the many things the two left behind; back when the crisp smell of the start of winter never quite seemed to drown out the smell of blood, and no matter how many times he washed his hands in the river or in melted snow, the soul sand never quite got out from under his fingernails.

His pinkie finger slid into the ring sat around his neck, twirling it around absentmindedly as he maneuvered the moss out of his arms and into his pockets. The shop Bdubs set up was— well, first of all, it was beautiful. He was definitely the builder between the two of them (if it weren't obvious, judging by the fact that Etho was staying in his basement.) It was also a very fun system, the bone — err, *Brone Meal (TM)*, that Bdubs set up, even if it were a little confusing to figure out how to get to. A solid 4/5 star experience, if Etho were to say himself.

*I should leave a review*, he thought. More shops needed places to leave reviews, like some sort of server-wide Yelp. Etho looked through his pockets, searching through both his pants and the pockets of the jacket tied around his waist, knowing he had some sort of notebook to tear a page out of.

He eventually found both a pen and some paper (hidden between shulker shells and bread, for some reason). Etho doodled five stars onto it, but only coloring in four. "4/5 stars. Moss is fantastic, excellent deals, didn't get the hugs or kisses I was promised :("

*A wonderfully worded review*, he thought. The only question now was where he should leave it.

The option for it to be seen easily was in one of the barrels, or pinned to the wall. However, what was arguably the funnier option was to sneak upstairs and to hide it in the machinery, solely because Etho knew if Bdubs ever found it he'd be mad. He could hear it already, Bdubs yelling "Why'd you go up there? You could've messed up my perfect redstone." And then Etho would remind Bdubs who was the one to design that specific moss farm, which would probably have been retorted with the ever-so powerful comeback of "Shut up."

He snickered a bit at the thought. Bdubs was so predictable sometimes.

Well, maybe it was less of his predictability and more of the fact that Etho knew him so well. He would say that he knew Bdubs like the back of his hand, but in all honesty, he doesn't take off his gloves enough to have memorized every crevice, unlike with Bdubs, where Etho could precisely pinpoint the location of at least half of his freckles. Normally that's a sign of something, but Etho preferred to claim that he's just observant.

Etho climbed upstairs and made his way to the machine, grabbing a copper pipe to ensure it was safe before fully letting it bear his weight. *At least I taught him something, he's not using the cheap stuff.* Nothing was worse than having to maneuver through complicated redstone in which the cheapest possible pipes were used to hold it, leading to things caving in the split second you put anything heavier than a comparator on it. Almost as bad as feeling like the obsidian in incomplete nether portals was going to cave in on him. He learned that one the hard way.

He wrapped his legs and arms around various pipes, inching his way through the mechanics as he slowly made his way towards the heart of the machine. Etho spotted a small nook where the note could hang, easily visible, but hard to read or grab from a distance, one would have to work their way up here to do so. Perfect. He slotted the note into place, grabbed a copper pipe and let himself hang down, before gracefully dropping back down onto the floor. *My work here is done.*

Footsteps echoed through the empty hallways, only slightly buffered behind the stone walls of Etho's basement. His ears perked up, as part of him wondered who it could be. Could be Bdubs, could be Tango or Scar having left something behind earlier, could be Impulse coming to talk to him about the warden he stashed away in Etho's base, could even be Ren— er, King Ren, apparently.

Etho's money was on Bdubs though, and thankfully if he were to have been betting, he would have won. The harsh grinding of the stone door revealed a set of wide eyes behind, as the smaller man exclaimed "Etho!"

"Hey, Bdubs," he responded, not looking up from the crafting bench he was working at. "What's up?"

"Was this you?" He asked, holding a slip of paper with handwriting that was unmistakably Etho's.

Etho made a face of amusement under his mask, "Noooooo—" he trailed off, failing to hide the smile in his voice.

"It was you! This is your handwriting, it's even in all caps. You didn't even try to disguise it, don't play dumb with me, mister," he teased.

"I don't know what you're talking about," he protested. He didn't even know what he was planning with the review he left, but it certainly wasn't ever Bdubs confronting him about it.

"If you wanted a hug you could've just asked, Etho. You didn't have to leave a bad review."

"Four stars isn't bad! That's 80%. A solid B."

But his response came too late. Surely enough, before he could even finish his statement, Bdubs had wrapped his arms around him, holding him. It wasn't one of his incredibly tight hugs where Etho felt like he couldn't breathe, but not necessarily a loose one either. But it was warm.

He let out a small sigh, feeling the tenseness in his shoulders sink. It was one of those hugs where Etho couldn't help but melt a little, leaning into it and slotting his head on top of Bdubs, as the part of his chin that wasn't covered by the mask bumped into the mossy hood he wore.

And so, it was the two of them. Arms around each other, standing close in the dim lantern-lit light of the basement that Etho claimed as his home, swaying softly. He could feel the rise and fall of Bdubs' chest against his own, and he wondered if he was lower down, if he'd feel the other man's heartbeat. He wondered if Bdubs could feel his.

"Better?" Bdubs asked.

Etho only hummed in acknowledgement, closing his eyes. He hadn't realized how touch-starved he'd been until this moment. The welcome-home hugs he had been given when he showed up a few months late were nice, but often brief. The last time he really got anything like this were the nights back at a snowy fortress, where the two shared one tiny bed, sleeping as close as possible for warmth on the particular windy nights.

"You gonna change the review to five stars now?" he asked.

Etho gave a small chuckle, of course that was his concern. "Hmm...maybe, maybe," he responded. To be fair, Bdubs did deliver on the hugs, which was an act of excellent customer service.

"C'mon, four stars? Being my only review? It'll drive so many customers away," Bdubs protested.

“Can’t believe you’re only doing this for the good reviews.” Etho teased.

Bdubs stuttered over his words for a second. “Well— no,” he started, not knowing what to say next.

The thing about both him and Bdubs, is that neither of them tended to talk about their feelings about the other. At least, not verbally.

Instead of saying “*I like having you around,*” it would instead look more like chasing down any way to return to each other, using gifting lives as the currency of love. Instead of saying “*I missed you,*” it sounded more like a lack of protest when he moved into the basement, no rent, no questions. Instead of saying “*I’d like a hug,*” it instead was a long drawn-out game involving leaving a less-than-perfect review in the shop of a perfectionist. It was easier that way for both of them.

Long story short, it was funny to Etho, watching Bdubs squirm as he racked his brain for a good response.

“C’mon, I won’t judge,” Etho teased.

“You liar, you’re always judging,” he responded, chucking softly, “Really gonna make me say it out loud, aren’t ‘cha.”

Bdubs took a deep breath, and clung a little closer to Etho, “I missed having you around, and I kind of also miss whatever we had going on in Last Life.”

“Friends with benefits but the benefits were cuddling, being married exclusively for tax benefits, and occasionally making out?”

“Yeah.”

Etho gave a quiet hum. He’d be lying if he said he didn’t agree. Something about the world of Last Life seemingly amplified every emotion he had: fear, bloodlust, and apparently whatever he felt about Bdubs was thrown into the mix. Ever since returning, even after all the other feelings went back to normal, even long after the world where nobody else spoke about it and it felt like everyone but him forgot, those feelings had never quite died down again.

“Do you uhh...want that back?” He offered.

Bdubs took a step back, breaking the embrace, and for a second Etho worried that he shouldn’t have offered.

That is, until Bdubs slid his finger into the ring that sat around Etho’s neck, and gave it a small tug, pulling Etho down so the two were at eye level. Etho felt a slight flush against his cheeks and the tips of his ears, and hoped it was hard to see in the dim basement.

Bdubs leaned to the side, and gave a quick kiss onto Etho’s cheek, “Thought you’d never ask,” he responded in a whisper. (A whisper by Bdubs’ standards wasn’t much of a whisper, but it was enough of one to send chills throughout Etho’s body.)

Etho looked back at the other man, memorizing the freckles across his cheeks once again, the faint white scar on his left eyebrow, leftover from a world long gone.

“C’mon, take that mask off so I can kiss you better,” Bdubs complained, hooking a finger around one of the strings that sat around Etho’s ear, slowly pulling it off.

And so, Etho obliged.

## End Notes

i feel like the fact that i'm writing gay minecraft youtube fanfiction 3 hours before my appointment to start hrt accurately summarizes just. everything about me

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