

predictable shows

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by [Felix_J](#)

Summary

"I'm rewatching the footage for the auditions, yeah." Red nods, slack. He considers picking the remote from his hands to push unpause, but doesn't think Ash won't find it a serious offence and make it end up on the floor in a corner at all.

or, "one of them is lying" boosfer + swagdoons swap.

roses and smoke week, day 2: **swap** | horror

Notes

so imagine it went like this: i wrote goddoons for the week already (erm. youll see him one day.) & so didn't want to make a swagdoons power swap -> what if swagdoons but they both swap with boosfer -> swagdoons as commentators of an experiment boosfer's in -> why? hunger games. hope that helps

Ash pokes his chin with the remote he picked up from the sofa, already stretched out on it like he's

feelin' like home.

He has to say, this *is* his apartment, as much as it is Red's, too.

It's dark, and so he can't really see much of him anyway until the silence stretches too long and someone has no choice but to break it. It's never comfortable, is it, silence.

"Is this a third rerun now?" Ash leans forward, points at the pixels in the giant screen. Presses a button in, and the picture pauses, on a light moment so Red can actually see his face.

"Huh. I guess not." The screen's focused in on his own face.

"I'm rewatching the footage for the auditions, yeah." Red nods, slack. He considers picking the remote from his hands to push unpause, but doesn't think Ash won't find it a serious offence and make it end up on the floor in a corner at all.

Ash stares, leans closer as much as he can with still an open hand of space in between them, the sofa's wide enough. It shouldn't be strange for Red to see him without makeup. It always is anyway, for some reason, like the licks of purple and gold and whatever color the stylists, or him, it's probably still him — Ash joked they're not there yet where he lets Red watch it all applied — like they're all grown into his body. He's always *strange*, but it's like he's always supposed to be inhuman, too. It's his image. Red supposes he's caught him in it, too. Oh, well.

"Don't we always..." He holds on, breathes in-out. Makes a show of a small shrug, finally.

"Whatever with it."

They *will* rewatch it tomorrow, together, on a clearer mind, as they do once a year. The *tomorrow* already might be today.

"I couldn't sleep." Red says flatly. It's an explanation, not an apology.

"Fun thing. I could say the same." Ash goes slack again, but doesn't let go of the remote, nor does he put the record back on, so the screen's just stuck on his face. Red watches as his skin turns blue and purple and pink, and then burns down to gold in all the different flecks, in one still picture. Red could say the stylists did a great job, but he knows Ash's naturally prettier, clean, even when he's tired, right here.

"So, Reddoons." Ash grins, and his voice feels... different, not *off*, with its inherent show runner *flair* gone, just trying to imitate one without trying. "What do you got to say on the fact that you and your *partner*, Ashswag, bet on the same player in the nearing season of the Hunger Games?" It just turns into a giggle at the end, as he taps Red on the chest, almost misses.

Red huffs. "You can't disagree Boosfer doesn't have *potential*." It works easier for him than Ash, he thinks. He's easy, he's an image of that battered guy who's long grown out of the grey tribute cloth and been *given* everything he is by the Capitol. Ash... Ash's just so fucking *much*. Red thinks it's why they balance each other out that well.

"Yeah. I have to admit, I bet on him as well." Ash lowers his voice to a whisper. "Sorry for lowering your share too."

Like a play, empty one-off to an empty one-off. "It's fine, I secretly put more on another tribute." He mutters. His head's already leant back on the sofa, he watches Ash leisurely and thinks, maybe he could finally fall asleep like this.

"Smart." Ash mumbles. "That's smart play, Reddoons, damn." His voice jumps there, the way it

never does when he's being genuine, and on the wave he continues easily. "What're the nightmares about, your game?"

Red flinches. That should be enough for him to *know*.

"I understand it, you know." He sounds bitter now, not the fake offended kind. Red raises an eyebrow. He's not sure Ash sees that much, he turns away for a minute, as if looking sideways between his own face and the wall makes it easier for him. "You... you keep... fuck it. Fuck it, fuck it." The remote finally clatters to the floor, and the screen starts moving with the mute icon fading in front first, silently. The Ash in there blinks his long, long fake eyelashes and smiles.

"Can I say something right now." Ash mutters, and his head finally turns on the couch. Red tilts his too, until his neck feels wrong. "That won't... change anything, and that we can pretend to forget about when we fall asleep? Preferably... no, definitely forever." His hand slips off, and the lights dance on his face like the licks of fire, like he's back in the studio, except he's not at all. It... really was the smartest, and a very much bold idea to force them to live together.

Red thinks it was right the time when he figured out not everything in Ash is a shiny Capitol trinket, keeping in mind that so much of him *is*.

"I could do that." He manages. "Ash, you want..."

"I'm from District 1, you know, right." He's frantic, talking over him, so Red just... stops, bites his tongue. Ash almost makes a move for the pillow between them to send against the screen anyway, stops himself with force. "I got called out once. My name was. I kept thinking today, you know I kept *thinking*, what if there was no one to volunteer... for me?" He gulps. "And, and. I *know* what you're gonna say, it's there *would* be, when there is ever not." It's on the tip of Red's tongue, because it's the truth. He would never say it, though. "And I *know* what you're gonna think, they've trained us well enough for that one. It's not about it. It's not about... it *is* about me. What I keep thinking about, is you always think of me as... someone lower than you, because I've never been through what you have."

He has both his hands down pressing into the couch, and he pushes himself on them forward, close enough now for a touch with more than a flick of a finger. Red moves, just a bit, and Ash registers it as him trying to take his hands, he thinks, and isn't sure if he wants to flinch away or give them to him. He's still muttering, almost obsessive, no, really so. "And I can't *have* it, that's stupid, that would be, but I can't do anything. Red, I can't do anything about it." When Red does touch one of his hands, he just... *folds*. Show's over, the puppet falls on the stage.

It doesn't feel comfortable to try and embrace him.

Ash holds up a finger and jams it against his temple. "That's why I can't sleep." He shares, husky and low. "A lot of thoughts in that box."

"Ash." He forces out. "Do you think I'd want for someone to relive that thing?"

Ash doesn't move.

"I'm fucking *glad* that you're not one of those... poor fucking bastards that have to *train* the new kids before they're off to their Arena, it's... I'm so glad they didn't break you like *that*." Well, his own hands shake now, but at least that makes it easier to hug Ash, he thinks, and it's so *hard* to figure out if Ash's more of a semi-willing colleague, or one of those people he jokingly made the category of *rivals* for, or really just it. A friend.

He thinks he is, that, now.

"And you're not saying it... you're not saying it so I shut it up." It loses the questioning notes somewhere in the middle, and turns to a rasp. He's silent for a few seconds, then. "...Okay." He pushes it out like it hurts him. "Okay."

Red rocks him, just for a few seconds, then lets go, just doesn't move him away. "No recordings of this are ending up on the wrong tables, I hope." He says, more into the air than to Ash.

Ash cackles, wet. "I'm not that stupid." As he... half-expected, in the very back of his head, of Ash to mess with the cameras.

He turns his head, and on the screen Boosfer stands up with his hands wide, bowing slightly. The crowd's clapping, and so are the figures in the mismatched colored chairs — Red on purple, Ash on red.

Out the flat image Ash is in his lap — *purple on red too* — and his eyes are wide, not scared-wide but like he can't stop *looking*.

"Found something better than you down here?" Red tells him in an undertone.

It's not *easy*. Ash is nowhere close to that.

"No." Ash answers, casual. "It seems not." He bites Red's lips. It feels like not enough.

Red files away *wanting to kiss him* into his oversized list of all things Ash is, does, and wishes, and it doesn't look out of place there.

"Is this gonna count..." The air catches in his throat, slightly, and it's hard to talk. "As one of those things we need to forget?"

Ash stills and looks at him for a second too long.

"No." He says, still hushed. "No. Please."

Red humors him by kissing him back.

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