

the wisp sings

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by Anonymous

Summary

Ash takes in a shaky breath. On another day, he might've been able to pretend the flutter in his throat was from fear.

- Inspired by [fault lines](#) by [garlic_sauc3](#)

In a kinder world, Ash would've let Redd take him back to his base. In a kinder world, Redd could've helped him walk back home and *stayed*.

In Lifesteal, showing a part of himself like that was as good as offering up all of his lives on a silver platter.

A part of him almost wants to. It would be easy - and the most terrifying thing in the world - to put his heart in Redd's hands and hope that he would cradle it gently, carefully, the same way he was holding Ash's hands in his own. In a world of violence and blood, didn't it mean something to try and have faith in kindness?

Wishful thinking, of course.

He watches as Redd presses down firmly on the joints of his fingers, smoothing out the skin and putting pressure on the aching muscle. He could have this at least.

The ground is unforgivingly cold, an uncomfortable contrast against the burning in his legs and crawling up his spine. At some point - time was a thick, hazy thing - Redd had given him a health pot. Whether it hadn't kicked in yet or it just wasn't effective enough, Ash couldn't tell.

Redd shifts from in front of him to Ash's side - still holding his hands like a delicate weave of string. Closer, closer, until Ash is sprawled halfway on top of Redd's lap and leaning his entire weight against him. His neck twinges when he places his head on Redd's shoulder. Trying to move it the other way hurts just about the same amount so Ash huffs, tired and frustrated and struggling to think, then just leaves it there.

"Is that better?" Redd asks. Ash can feel the movement of his jaw and the echo of vibrations in his throat. It's oddly soothing.

"Not really," he winces, shifting slightly when inhaling makes the skin around his ribcage feel like it's tightening, a burn-ache that flares and goes. On another day, he might've been able to ignore it.

Today, every part of him aches - from the fight, from the weight of his inventory and the air pressing down on him.

"Anything we can do about it?"

We, he thinks. "No. No, just—" *Stay with me*, he almost blurts out, with a longing so intense the words catch and tear at his throat. He swallows, squirming to relieve the growing ache along his neck. "The health pot should start working eventually. I'll be able to walk back then."

Redd hums in acknowledgement. He hesitates, fingers going still around Ash's hands, then leans down and presses a kiss into Ash's hair, lingering for a moment.

Ash takes in a shaky breath. On another day, he might've been able to pretend the flutter in his throat was from fear and paranoia. His fingers squeeze around Redd's, still trembling slightly. Redd squeezes back.

Around them, spawn is a wide open space. They're tucked away to the side, barely out of sight - It would be easy enough for someone else to come and find them.

Despite that, it feels safer than Ash ever had managed to be tucked away in his own base.

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