

.riggs peaceroot.

DID I HEAR A THUNDER? DID I HEAR YOU BREAK?



FULLNAME. riggs peaceroot. **FC.** mahershala
ali. **AGE.** 45. **HEIGHT.** 6'2''. **DISTRICT.**
district 11 (agriculture). **GAMES.**
forty-seventh. **GENDER.** non-binary
(they/he). **SEXUALITY.** bisexual. **ALLEGIANCE.**
anti-capitol. **PENNED BY.** del (she/they).

the story so far.

I CAN'T QUITE REMEMBER JUST WHAT GUIDED ME THIS WAY

01. *planting seeds*

Laughter was never all that common in your home, not at the beginning at least, and certainly not at its end. But there was a middle, and that middle was good. It was light, and full, and beautiful. Not out there — not in the fields — but in your home, it was flooded with laughter.

You didn't understand it then, what had caused the switch, but one day your parents came home to you and your younger siblings with food unlike any you had ever seen. They told you to stay quiet about the food — it was your family's little secret — and you didn't want to seem like you were bragging to the other kids in the district did you? Of course not, so you nodded your head and helped serve your siblings before serving yourself.

They would tease you: about how it never seemed like you could get enough of the food in yourself fast enough, about the speckling of crumbs, grease, and remaining dirt from the days out in the field that made you look like some capitol person trying out a new makeup routine, or the way you could never seem to go one meal without dropping something on the ground (though you never let it go to waste, of course). But it had always been out of love, and so you didn't mind. You would laugh right along with them, even tease them back (although your jokes never hit), and it was okay. It was good because there was love, and love couldn't hurt. They promised you that love couldn't hurt.

02. *pull the roots*

TRIGGER/CONTENT WARNING: murder, police brutality, death

If someone were to ask you now about that night, you wouldn't be able to tell them just how it happened. Only bits and pieces remain. There had been a shout, maybe it was your mother, or maybe it was your little brother. You were shoved to the ground in a panic, told to go out the back. Their hands, your siblings' hands were in yours, and you were leading them. Where to? You weren't sure. Just away. Away from the yelling, the pleading, the resounding ringing through the air when the shots were fired, and your parents bodies hit the ground.

Your younger siblings once asked you why you did it, why you couldn't just keep the secret. It was such a simple instruction, and yet you couldn't even handle that. Just like how you couldn't even handle working in the fields with the others. Just like how

you couldn't handle the smacking of their guns on the back of your head when you picked a plant thinking it was a weed and almost lost the one job they thought you couldn't mess up.

They separated you all after that night, told you it was an act of mercy. That or death, you all could've been just as involved as your parents, then again — it was *you* they were talking about. *That sure got some laughs didn't it?*

You rarely saw your siblings after that, and you learned quite quickly it was better that way. Their love — or rather the absence of it — hurt, and since you couldn't get to the source of this problem and right your wrongs, you did the next best thing. Moved along.

03. *empty plots*

TRIGGER/CONTENT WARNING: murder, death, injury, vomit, hospital.

When the reaping after your 17th birthday came and your name was read out along with that of Autumn, you weren't even all that shocked. Nor were you shocked when, upon making your way up onto the stage, you tripped and fell, fracturing your arm. Too nervous about being automatically marked as the weakest among the tributes, you started laughing and making jokes about how it's a good thing it's not a dancing competition, what with your two left feet. No one laughed. No one thought it was funny. They just looked at you with a mixture of uneasiness and pity.

District Eleven hadn't seen a victor in quite some years, and you never really got a confirmation with what happened to the last one — just some vague explanation that they passed away young (they said the same thing about your parents), and so you and Autumn were handed one of the Academy's star students and told to just think of it as a return to tradition.

You didn't really think too much of it all. You weren't going to make it out. There was no way you'd make it out. You looked awkward at the parade, dressed up in something your stylist put on you that just made you look like a hay bail with arms and legs. You barely pulled away with a score of 4 during training because all you could do was demonstrate a brief knowledge of plants and weeds (while knocking over the display at the end). You kept making Flickerman uncomfortable with your awkwardly timed jokes about your arm and your abnormally low training score. By the time the games came around, you figured you'd be lucky if you even made it out of the bloodbath.

What you didn't expect was that the other victors would almost be as accident prone as you. You barely had enough time to look around the arena they had chosen for this year when you heard what sounded like an explosion and then another. It wasn't until after the games that you learned one of the career tributes had tried sneaking

in an item from home, and when trying to shove it back and away, they had dropped it and set off the explosion. The tribute next to them, in shock and out of fear, had stumbled and fell, setting off their own explosion. The rest of you were left staring out at each other, uncertain of what to do because you all still hadn't heard the sound go off marking the start but didn't know if you had missed it entirely with the explosions. Someone even started yelling at you, telling you to test it out, but it wasn't until Flickerman himself went over the loudspeaker to tell you all to start that anyone stepped off their pad.

The rest of the games were somewhat the same. It was supposed to be a tribute to the way things were before Panem emerged from the rubble of war — some nuclear wasteland theme —, but it just ended up being a massive minefield that more aggressive tributes got swept up into, leaving the weakest for last. The more you moved, the more you risked falling into some vat of nuclear waste or radiation mutated zombie of the Gamemaker's imagination, so you stayed put, and you protected yourself when you needed to. Which — only happened once —, and to this day, you're not sure how you got so lucky, but the kill, it was yours. Something you're supposed to be proud of (then again, you're not sure anyone would be proud of accidentally tripping someone and causing their death).

When a week came and passed, you had somehow survived off of the few edible flowers and weeds that you could find, but that was when the gas kicked in. It was probably supposed to be something to pull you into the remaining tributes, but when trying to wiggle your way out of the abandoned home you had holed up in, you were already too weak and ended up retching until you blacked out.

That was the last thing you remembered from the games.

You woke up in the hospital two weeks later with your stomach still being pumped and were declared the victor. Congratulations.

04. *watch them grow*

TRIGGER/CONTENT WARNING: death, poisoning, injury, smoking (implied drug usage).

It wasn't until a few days after waking that you found out just how you won. The fight between the other two had been, what you were told, the best battle of your entire games. The Gamemakers just hadn't predicted that the poisoning from the gas would result in a slower death than bleeding out. Now, that was *actually* funny to you. You just couldn't even die correctly could you? You had the audacity to live.

And live you did, not exactly the flashy life of a victor that the Capitol liked to rant about, but you were still living. The doctors had done the best they could to wipe out the poison from your stomach and liver, but you still had symptoms and an underlying pain that just wouldn't go away. They gave you some seeds for various

plants, figured you'd know just how to take care of them given you grew up in Eleven, and showed you how to make them into something that could help ease the flare ups you endured. And then that was it. They were done doing you anymore favors.

Life went on as something of a cycle after that. You were the butt of every joke during your victory tour. It took you some time, but you learned how to make it stop. Just as you had with the weeds back in Eleven, you found the root of the jokes and made them first, got straight to the point and ripped it out, so no one else could use it against you again.

Of course, it's not perfect, and you still have quite a tendency for making a mess of situations, but it helps, and that's all that matters at the end of the day to you.

You just wish you could help those kids. At least with this, you know it's not your fault. They're all too underfed, tired, and beaten down from working all day in the fields under the Peacekeepers' thumbs. Every year you try to give them a little comfort, something to help ease their minds before they enter the arena. You make jokes at your own expense, make sure they're fed well and get the care that they never had in 11, but at the end of the day it's never enough.

They die. You mourn. It starts all over again.

That's how it went for 16 years straight, with no sign of it ever changing. Until, it did. You got Aldera out, which — really, is quite generous to your hand in their win — but they got out. You say now that you could tell back then that something about those games felt different, but really, you're not too sure.

They reminded you of you though —at least in the games—, and that's got to count for something. They just wouldn't die, and so they got out, and now, not only are you being tasked with mentoring kids that'll probably die anyway, but you also have to find a way to make sure they don't crumble under the weight of this all too. Now that they've gotten out though, something's different with them, and you're not sure if it's your failings as a mentor or just the way the capitol seems to suck people up only to spit them back out again.

Despite what some people might think, you're not unintelligent. You've heard the whispers. You've seen the sparks of something growing. You also know no one will think to give you any more information until things are in full swing, not after what you did the last time you were given a secret to protect. You're just hoping that when it comes time to overthrow, they go straight to the root and don't stop pulling until there's nothing left.

extra

You can find their pinterest [here](#) and their playlist [here](#).

In terms of *Riggs' personality*, there's no denying the fact that they're cynical amidst some of the oddball joking. Sure, it's a coping mechanism in some ways and a defense mechanism in others, but he'll never pretend that things are all fine and dandy. There's a simplicity with which they see the world. If there's a problem, that's that, no room for nuance. If they can't find the source of what is causing it and directly fix it, there's no need to beat around the bush nor is there any need to try to put it into an optimistic lens, that's just how it is, and they move along.

As they're seen as mostly a joke by the capitol, if they're not in the midst of mentoring, *Riggs spends most of their time back in District 11*. They're not exactly popular back home either, and there's no need for them to continue pulling up weeds, so his loneliness does tend to sting a bit more, and you will find him almost clinging onto the small moments of interactions with others that they can get. This usually tends to be Riggs' nephew who has been allowed to see them since their win, due to the additional funds and food that could feed their brother's kid.

Given the injuries he sustained during his games, Riggs has a very regimented diet to help control the spikes of pain that tend to come and go. They do not drink nor do they use any drugs outside of the one's given to them by the capitol, which Riggs will often jokingly say is a blessing in disguise if they get themselves into a mess during capitol parties (*Can you imagine the mess if I had been drinking?*).

... MAY I STAND UNSHAKEN ...

connections.


AMIDST A CRASHING WORLD.

i. you know i've got you

INSPIRATION:  

[open to: anyone] you're someone who, for one reason or another, riggs' has developed a bit of a protective streak over. they check in frequently, make sure you're not indulging too much at parties and if you are, they'll be the first person to offer to help you out. it's not perfect, they've never been the best at knowing just how to comfort someone, but they try, and you—in turn—try too.

ii. tom & greg

INSPIRATION:  



[open to: anyone] you two are likely the last two people that others would ever think to become friends, and yet here you are. it didn't start out that way, in fact, it was a bit toxic at first (still is in many ways), but the two of you can't seem to keep away from one another.

iii. frog & toad

INSPIRATION: 

[open to: 35+] in simplest terms, riggs considers you their best friend. it's hard given the fact that riggs is only ever in the capitol once a year, and unless one of you wins, that's the only time you see each other, but the connection and deep platonic love and care remains.

iv. thin ice

INSPIRATION:  

[open to: anyone] you might not look at them simply as a joke, but you also don't exactly find them charming either. riggs irritates you, and you have absolutely no problem letting them know.

v. petrichor

INSPIRATION:  

[open to: anyone] you wouldn't say you're close, but the two of you shared a moment of unique vulnerability and intimacy that riggs doesn't easily expose to others. whether a moment of defeat after being ridiculed, the period of time after losing both tributes which no coping mechanism can ever seem to amend, or something else entirely, the two of you sat in it together, and that moment can't be taken away.

vi. admire from afar

INSPIRATION: 

[open to: 37+] call it something of an unrequited crush, interest, whatever — riggs has had a bit of a soft spot for you for a while now, but being who they are, they know they're not exactly in a place to pursue anything. instead, they admire you from a distance and assume you know nothing of it.

•snapshot•

WHO DO YOU LOVE? (trigger warnings: drug usage, murder)

Chamomile, ginger, peppermint are the staples of your regimen. The taste always seemed to help cut the intensity of the stronger stuff.

If it's your nephew that's visiting, you'll add in a sprig of lavender because he used to say it smelled like summer. You'd add in mustard seed and suffer the burn in your lungs if that's what he'd enjoy. There's no question that the only reason your younger brother let's you see him is because you have extra money and, therefore, food from your win, but you'll take it.

You never thought you'd be one for kids, especially not when your job is preparing kids to be sent to their death, but there's a certain kind of calm that comes over you when listening to him talk about his day, seeing him grow and turn into the type of person you might have been if everything hadn't gone so terribly wrong.

As he's grown older, you've taken note of the way he seems to increasingly take so much after your father and mother, his grandparents, and with it, your concern over it all has increased as well.

You couldn't blame him: the day he came in and started unfolding some of his grand plans for you. He thought the most recent games had been significant, a sign to start putting the wrench into things for the capitol — slow production, lower their morale, show them that they don't own you. And to his point, sure, you could tell the girl wasn't only pulling the berry stunt out of deep love, but as a mark for revolution?

You took another deep inhale, letting the mixture of your medicinals bring the burning in your stomach into a low hum. “ And here I was thinking we might be having our next Panem power couple... guess they really got more of their venom into me than I originally thought, huh? ” It's meant to be a joke, but your eyes don't meet his. He's nineteen now, no chance of being thrown into the games himself, but already given a lifetime of pain to fuel this hatred and grasp at anything that might mean vengeance. It's dangerous, impulsive, and you can already see how it might get himself killed.

But he's already standing up and grabbing his things, mumbling something about how you can never take anything seriously. You rise to meet him, facial features drawing together as the pain in your gut spikes, but you're slow and clumsy. You knock into the dinner table, your fingers too shaky to properly grab the door handle to make him stop. Nearly three decades of trying to counsel kids, and you can't even find something to say to your nephew, who might just very well be signing his own death ticket.