

# Seeing Red

## *Jaidanwolf*

Achievement in Mood: Shortlist 2009

The review below may contain spoilers for Dexter up to season 2.

**Brad:** I have a... thing about gore, especially when it comes to children. I just can't handle it. So, knowing the premise of this vid, I fully expected to be disturbed by it.

**Nicky:** Honestly, I'm still surprised that you managed to rewatch Seeing Red enough times to write a review! Which isn't a comment on the vid, of course, but on the fact that the subject matter pushed pretty much all your squick buttons.

**Brad:** I'm surprised as well. But what I didn't expect was how well the vid would use the source imagery and themes to weave a mood that makes a statement about its subject matter. Every choice feels purposeful, never gratuitous. It's rare that a vid - any vid - makes me so strongly identify with its characters, and this is even more impressive because it's from a show I don't watch.

I think the device that makes it so effective for me is the way Jaidanwolf weaves flashbacks and physical parallels to Dexter and Brian as kids sitting in the Room O' Blood throughout the vid, showing us how, mentally, they never left.

**Nicky:** It taps into an uncomfortable understanding that perhaps a lot of us carry that kind of subconscious baggage from childhood. Not as disturbing as Room O' Blood baggage, I hope, but various childhood experiences buried in our subconscious that take years or decades to unravel all the same.

**Brad:** The coloring work is so incredibly effective in pulling you into Dexter and Brian's point of view. The world looks twisted and grotesque, and seems to be sinking into its own sin. It feels at once like a plea and an apology.

**Nicky:** And yet at the same time it seems so beautiful, almost... womblike? Along with the blood and water images, it also seems like a sanctuary. In one sense you could say that they're forever trapped in that shipping container soaked in their mother's blood; in another sense that's the birthplace of Brian and Dexter as we know them - where their characters are stripped down to their barest essentials so that they are not so much "characters" as they are concepts of how monsters are created.

**Brad:** The pulsing, metronomic pace of the vid also adds to the hypnotic feel, and all of the on-beatness kind of clicks forward in a way that's equally pleasing and disturbing. Which makes it a perfect match for the imagery itself.

There's great attention to detail in the motion, and I love how it gets more kinetic, sweeping back and forth across the screen when the music picks up at 0:42 on "things I regret." I also love the dark sense of humor on some of the lyric ties, like "there's a gift that you send" and "there's a game that I play."

**Nicky:** One thing I adored about season 1 in particular was the playfulness and dark sense of humor that both Brian and Dexter shared long before they became officially acquainted with each other. I feel that the kind of lyric use that you point out perfectly encapsulates that feeling.

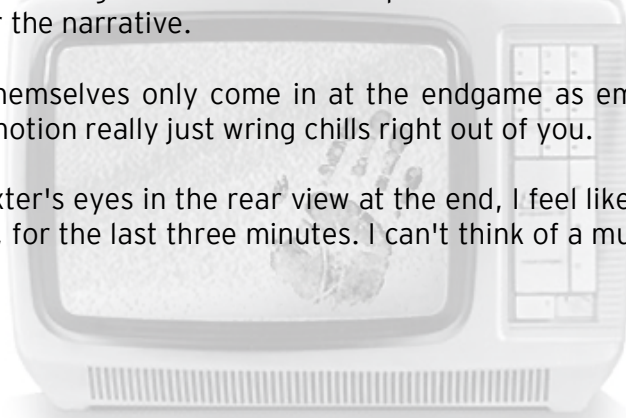
**Brad:** The quick bursts of frenzied external motion and interesting visual devices like the red flash at 1:21 really add layers of tension to the choruses. I love the motion of the hands unfolding at 1:41 on the vocal, and the jarring table slap that starts the next verse.

**Nicky:** One of my favourite moments is right before the table slap, where Dexter's motions match the drum machine skitter beautifully.

**Brad:** There's some really sharp and evocative musicality here, which I think goes a long way toward making the vid so immersive. My favorite example is the added motion on the stills that come in on the strings at 2:47. Such a powerful connection, and it feels like an exclamation point for the narrative.

**Nicky:** The strings themselves only come in at the endgame as emotional punctuation, and the stills and added motion really just wring chills right out of you.

**Brad:** When I see Dexter's eyes in the rear view at the end, I feel like we've been behind those eyes, inside his head, for the last three minutes. I can't think of a much higher compliment for a vid.



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