Demonic struggles

by idothiscrap

Summary

Crowley finds themself in a new situation regarding their needs and the new status of their relationship with Aziraphale

Notes

Rated explicit for what is to come.
It mentions trauma (not explicitly) and dealing with trauma through BDSM.
Everything is and will be always consensual
The want

Chapter Summary

In which we learn about one of many Crowley's struggles

Chapter Notes

This chapter is mostly a commented inner monologue. There will be more action down the line. I hope you like it :)

I edited it because spelling mistakes!! (sorry to all of those whose eyes I made bleed, I wrote it and uploaded from my phone, where I write way worse, and also English is not my native language).

Crowley was grumpy that day. He had that feeling. He didn't like it very much. He actually kinda hated it.

It hadn't happened for a long time now. He hadn't had it in ages, really. But it was back and it was inconvenient.

It all started because their body was sore and it sucked, but that wasn't the problem. They had been sleeping unusually badly lately and their whole body ached slightly: the back, the neck, the sides of their hips, their knees. Not enough to be a proper pain but enough to be really uncomfortable to go through the day. Crowley had even tried to sleep in their snake form but it had been proved useless.

At that point, they didn't want the discomfort gone (they could easily do so with a little miracle): they wanted it increased. It was the source of the pain that was the problem, really. They for sure didn't want mild discomfort from bad nights. What they wanted was to feel like crap. Absolutely wrecked and tore apart from being thoroughly and merciless fucked.

Well, that was an oversimplification. And an extremely inaccurate one, since not many people would think of what Crowley meant by that when hearing the phrase "being fucked" -but they was talking to themselves so that wasn't something to be bothered with-.

What they meant by that, to begin with, was to be tied up for hours in almost impossible -at least for humans-positions. Ropes and knots so tight that the marks would be deep and red and burning at first, and then turn purple, and that their body would complain for days after it.

They wanted their hair pulled and their skin bitten and scratched, and their joints hurting from being restrained for too long. They longed for that weakening yet empowering feeling of having endured so much physical pain that it would take over the emotional one, erasing it: the mind finally calmed, relaxed, peaceful.

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Crowley foolishly thought the want will fade over the next few days, but it didn't, which was very inconvenient as it clouded their mind when they were making out with Aziraphale or holding his hand in the park. It was the first time Crowley didn't act on that need, so the struggle of living with it unfulfilled was brand new. They had their reasons not to act on it, of course, which meant nothing to the need, that kept restlessly pushing in their brain.

One of said reasons was Crowley's new relationship with Aziraphale. Or, better said, the new nature of their very very old relationship. Without the scrutiny from Under and Above, the angel finally found the courage to be his own person and abandoned himself in Crowley's arms to be loved like only his demon loved. They were happy. Crowley was so damn happy they had even once used the word "ineffable" to describe the feeling -only to scoff, growl and make disgusted faces right after, of course-.

Nonetheless, apart from freely acknowledging their feelings and taking many many cuddly naps together, their shared activities had remained more or less the same as before. None of them was generally very interested in sex - at least not in vanilla human standard sex anyway-. They had had it, sure; both with others and together after that certain day in which they both tricked heaven and hell after averting the apocalypse; but they didn't normally wanted it. Which was usually totally a-okay but only made this situation more awkward for the demon. They felt slightly-to-deeply embarrassed for wanting this so strongly, as they didn't thought the angel was going to understand and even less want to get involved.

Of course, they weren't exclusive. They were each other love-of-their-life and they were finally able to show it without fear and to live accordingly, but they both had had their love lives and that hadn't completely disappeared. But it would feel equally awkward to go back to their angel's arms all bruised and sore without some explanation; and even more excruciating to explain the whole thing to him, again, first reason. In the past they didn't see each other as often, so it had been easy to keep this kind of things private, but not anymore. Domesticity had many perks, but this wasn't one of them, Crowley thought.

Living in denial wasn't one of Crowley's defects, but keeping things from Aziraphale that they thought made them unworthy of him, and rise up unnecessary defences trying to avoid getting hurt sure was one of their biggest ones. If their sleep had improved and their body had stopped aching the course of events might had been different. But of course having A Need unsatisfied is not the best way to accomplish restorative nights of sleep. So things were about to go pear shaped.
Crowley had been acting weird for a couple of days, and Aziraphale was starting to notice.

They seem absent minded half of the time they spent together, and flustered suddenly without good reason. But what got Aziraphale really nervous was the demon's refusal to his invitation to drink a bottle -or three- of his ancient and delicious wine in the back of his bookshop, as they did almost every weekend and, to honour the truth, many weekdays lately. The demon had mumbled some incoherences about needing a good night sleep and some demonic deeds in the morning which were obviously not true -how badly Crowley lied, specially for being a demon, won't ever cease to amaze the angel-, but he cut him some slack and pretended to buy it.

Something was definitely off with them, and Aziraphale knew by now that they wasn't going to make him participant of it unless he forced it a little bit.

In the past he used to do his best to ignore Crowley's moods. They came, they went away, and it's not that he was fine with it, but he didn't feel entitled to expect any explanation from the demon. After all, he was the one putting up high walls between them both. And, to be fair, he had had his moods too, and the demon always took them with style (oh, the pleasure Crowley would get from knowing he thought of them in that manner, Aziraphale chuckled lightly in his own head). But as time passed after the Armaggedon, the two of them got closer and opened a bit more to each other -well mostly the angel, as he had a longer distance to cover- so he wasn't feeling like taking this kind of misunderstandings anymore.

“I'll ask them tomorrow first thing when they comes to the shop, there is no gain in putting it off until it somehow explodes like we always do” he told himself, mostly to summon the courage to really do it. It's always easier said than done, isn't it? But the next day there was no sign of Crowley. The tension from waiting for the opportunity to face the demon was too much for the angel by 5 in the afternoon -he wasn't accustomed to being confrontational, so it was taking a lot of his considerable amount of mental strength. Also, it was tea time and he was getting a little
peckish, which wasn't helping his mood at all. He went to the back of the bookshop to reach the phone, anxiously playing the conversation in his head to practise. “Hello, dear, I call you because you have been acting very strangely lately, and I am a tad worried about you, you see? I was going to bring the topic today when you came as always, but the fact that you didn't made me worry even more, so I have decided to call you. Shall we meet for a walk? Maybe that will be easier for you, since you seem to be a little claustrophobic in the bookshop this days...” The inner monologue continued as he dialled the number and waited for them to answer. But it was all in vain because, instead, the obnoxious answering machine started it's tune “Hey, this is Anthony Crowley. You know what to do. Do it with style”. Oh! No! No that again! He was absolutely not taking that again. The only time he had had that the world was ending and he ended up discorporated. He was quite sure that wasn't happening again, but the anger at being ignored got mixed with a mild-to-proper anxiety as he rushed through the door putting on his coat. “He better not be ignoring me” angrily pumped in his head instantly followed by a panicking “He better not be in real trouble” and surrounded by a cloud of of the sort thoughts all the way to Mayfair. By the time he got to knock on Crowley's door, he was properly enraged and deeply in panic. The best possible combination for a difficult conversation with a difficult demon.

Aziraphale rang the doorbell furiously once. Twice. Three times. No answer. Panic overruling anger, the angel miracled the door open -not without difficulty- and raced into the living room, cold sweat running down his spine, only to find everything in place. No sign of struggle. No sign of Crowley. As he stopped to catch breath and re compose himself, he heard a soft and distant snore. Oh! No! Not that again! He was absolutely not taking that again either. Not another avoiding-the-awkwardness-ten-year-nap. Nu-hu. Not when he still needed to know what on Somewhere was going on with them. As the panic relinquished, a rightful anger took charge and guided him through the flat to the bedroom, and made him slam the door open. Of course, he instantly regretted it: he was angry, not a brute. Anyway it didn't dramatically woke up the demon as some part of his brain wished, who kept peacefully snoring after a brief pause.

They looked so beautiful in their sleep, Aziraphale thought, almost second thinking about waking them up and made them explain themself. But no. This was important. He wasn't going to give them the chance to duck out from this as he usually did. This was a new stage of their relationship and he was going to make sure of that, if nothing else. He called their name a number of times, rising his voice with each of them, but it was equally ineffective. Reluctantly, he approached the bedside and put a halting hand on the demon's shoulder. They was warm. The kind of warm that feels like home but also burns you with desire. The kind that makes you want to cuddle in their arms and do unspeakable things at the same time. The angel liked their warm, but like this, in their bed, it felt too intimate, specially for the current mood. Crowley got up startled by the touch, their eyes briefly widening in panic before setting on the angel, momentarily relieved, and finally squinting with concern when they processed Aziraphale's facial expression -and probably recalled the reason they went to nap in the first place-.

“Crowley, dear, we need to talk”. They heard his voice from a distance, still only half awaken, and groaned at the words the voice was saying. “...’S nothing to talk about, Angel...” they tried to lie. But Aziraphale had his taking-no-shit-today face on, so they gave up quickly. They dramatically groaned a bit more before sheepishly looking to their Angel, asking for some slack. “Can I at least get dressed and discuss whatever this is over a drink?”. “You know better than I do what this is about, Crowley; but sure, get dressed, I'll be waiting outside”. Five minutes later they both were sat, drink in hand, on the comfy -yet minimalistic and smart looking- sofa Aziraphale miracled the first time he stayed in the flat.

-Spit it out- it was extremely unlike Aziraphale to use this tone and words, but his patience had been running thin for about 2 hours now, and he still hadn't eaten.
-I don't wanna tell y'about it, Angel, 'm sorry I've been acting weird, I needed some distance to process, that's all...- time for lies had passed, they realised, so they tried to brush it off as quickly as possible.

-Ooh! Indeed you have been acting weird, my dear. Extremely, as a matter of fact. I know something has been concerning you and I am not leaving your flat until you tell me. I am fully aware that it's difficult for you to open your heart, but we are on our side now, aren't we? So you always say... so prove it to me.

It was a bit of a low blow to quote them like that, really, but Aziraphale was right. It was just too engrained in their being to hide from others and from themself. Mostly, they was embarrassed. Utterly embarrassed to talk about their kinks to Aziraphale -you don't walk the Earth and mingle with humans for millennia without getting some of their annoying habits, and kink felt too demonic to discuss with their angelic partner-. They had practised all kinds of kink with all kinds of humans with not a shadow of shame but this... this was different. It was Aziraphale. Even after everything that happened they was still afraid of scaring him off if they showed him their dark corners. Fear of rejection doesn't go away easily, specially after experiencing the biggest rejection of all.

More than a few drinks went down in silence while Aziraphale fidgety waited for them to summon the courage to start talking. As they drank, Crowley's annoyance cleared enough to miracle some finger sandwiches for the angel, who gratefully shook off his own irritable mood. Hemming and hawing at first, the demon started talking about different types of intimacy and the many ways in which that can be performed, which lead to talking about BDSM and its many forms as they got drunker and more confident. The angel listened in a silence broken only by some aha's and ahum's and oh-I-see's to encourage the flustered demon in the beginning, but it soon become unnecessary, as they got invested in their own monologue. After a while, the angel had learnt a lot about many peculiar activities that humans perform -not that he was oblivious to all of them- but wasn't much closer to know where the conversation was leading.

“Crowley, dear... where are we getting with all this? I know you had your life, as I had mine, and I am not to judge in which human pleasures you indulged, really. What are you so concerned about? You don't owe me any explanations, although of course I am delighted to listen to you rambling about any topic that you enjoy”. The demon suddenly shut, with a panicky look in their eyes. They had thought their point was being made clear, and had read Aziraphales silence as understanding. They had relaxed. They had overshared. And now the angel needed clarification. Of course, of course he needed so. Why on Earth would he not? They tried to find a way to fly the situation, but the angel's face told them there was none.

Aziraphale was starting to make sense of where the rambling was headed at the sight of terror and shame on his favourite demon's face. But he still needed some answers. He was a kind soul, though, and he knew he had pushed Crowley way over his fortress that night, so very softly and very reassuringly he started again. “Oh, I see. It's OK, dear, let me play some guessing. Only tell me if I'm wrong. Is that alright?”. A nod. “Your recent distress was related to your experiences with BDSM dynamics”. Nothing. Well, I said tell me if I'm wrong- he thought- so I'll take this as a yes. “You have had a bad experience lately regarding this”. A shook of their head. It was working. “You are wanting to take part in some of this dynamics”. Nothing. OK, so that was it. But what was the problem? Hadn't they always do so in the past, according to what they just said?. Oh! A sudden inspiration came to Aziraphale. Helpless romantic, his demon... “You are worried that I might get jealous or hurt if you do?”. Crowley's eyes widened in confusion as they shook. Jealous? What? Oh! Shoot. Of course. The angel thought they wanted to do a session with one of their lovers. Of course he wouldn't think they wanted him to get involved in that. The demon covered
their face with their hands, in utter embarrassment, as the angel squished his brains to keep fishing answers. Another flash of enlightenment hit him after a few seconds. “Do you want me to do it with you?” Nothing. Oh, well, we are getting somewhere. To do what, however? They had gone on and on about maybe a fifty of activities, not having a better way to call them. There was no way he was going to list them. Crowley will need to talk.

“OK, dear, you have mentioned many things tonight, I am not even sure I can recall them all. So I'm going to need you to tell me exactly what you want us to do”. A myriad of grunts, hufs, growls, scoffs and two more dozens of angsty noises came out from the ball of arms and legs that Crowley had become in the corner of the sofa. Finally, something similar to a yes came out too. A few more minutes and “shibari” was blurted out of the angsty ball of demon.

“So, what I am hearing -please correct me, dear, if I got it wrong”-he softly recalled- “is that you would like the both of us to engage in this shibari thing”. Aziraphales tone was soothing enough to make Crowley uncover their face and peak over their knees, unfurling a bit. A very dry and low “yes” came out of their mouth.

“Okay”-continued the angel-”and you want to tie me up?”. “What?! No!!” The idea seemed to be appalling enough for the demon to end their mutism. The angel hid his surprise. A wrong step now and they would be back into a limb ball. “So- he adventured- you want me to tie you up?”. Crowley was feeling too exposed, the alcohol fog was wearing thin, and suddenly they needed to end the conversation quickly. They was starting to wish for another Armageddon will that prevent from this to develop any further. “Ng...eh...Ss ok, Angel, nevermind. You don't need to do it. I don't expect you to do it. I just told you so you'd stop chasing me about it. Can we leave it? Please?”. Aziraphale had many questions, but Crowley very rarely said please, so he decided to let go before the demon turned into snake form and hibernated for a decade in some hole in the walls were he couldn't follow. “OK, dear, as you wish”. Crowley grunted something, but they seemed much more at ease. They hanged up for a bit longer, drinking again in a familiar silence until the angel was assured enough to leave his demon alone, with the promise of calling in for lunch the next day. “Don't forget to sober up before going to bed, my dear, you hate hangovers” he said as he did so himself and headed towards the door. Crowley growled but nodded, so he left almost in peace.
The unexpected

Chapter Summary

In which Aziraphale asks for something Crowley couldn't have anticipated and all ends well because I'm soft as a ripe banana.

Chapter Notes

This didn't go as I expected. I planned for more angst and action but I guess this is what I got. Next chapter will be short but have some action and -I think- illustrations! I hope you don't hate it!

Well, of course this is how this conversation went. What did you expected, big idiot? That he jumped into a catsuit the minute you opened your filthy mouth about BDSM? It's good enough that he was as well mannered as anyone can be and didn't act disgusted by it. He probably is, anyway, but he's such a big hearted angel that he still loves you, so don't push it again.

Crowley conveniently forgot that they wasn't the one who pushed the conversation in order to better torment themself. The angel had left about half an hour ago and they was immersed in the darkest self pity. The warm reassurance of the angel presence had dissipated already, and they was drunk enough to fall into a depressive mood but not enough to dull their embarrassment that was replacing it. They kept ruminating for quite a long time until they went to bed, trying to find some comfort in the fact that the angel promised to come for lunch the next day.

The piercing sound of the doorbell travelled through the flat and punched Crowley's brain merciless. Of course, they didn't sober up last night, in the self pity party they hosted for themself so they were, above everything else, terribly hangover. Any other day the sole idea of their angel coming to pick them up would make them jump out of bed happier than they would ever confess. But today was not a day in which they felt able to be seen through by those even more piercing eyes of him. They briefly toyed with the idea of ignoring the noise and continue sleeping but they were nothing if not a fast learner and the previous day events had made clear that Aziraphale was not going to be stopped by that. Thinking about the need of negotiating some new boundaries, they gave in and snapped their fingers. The terrible rang stopped, and the muttered sound of the door was followed by the quirky steps they knew so well. Soon enough, there was also a timid knock on their bedroom door. “My dear Crowley, are you not ready for lunch?” “Hmmpffffffffffff” “Oh! You sound terrible! You didn't sober up, did you? You silly serpent!” Aziraphale's softly admonishing voice came through the door. “I’ give you ten minutes to get out of bed. I'll be in the
kitchen making tea”. “HHHHHmmmmPPHHHHhhhhfnmkkkkkkk.....'kay Angel”. Bossing them around about getting out of bed was becoming a habit of the angel, they thought, with a pleasant shiver, before remembering again that they was in a bit of trouble.

Exactly nine minutes later they were both sitting round the kitchen isle with a mug in their hands. Aziraphale was looking fresh and perky, and had a satisfied look that would had made Crowley wary, had they been in any condition to notice it. As for the demon, they had more resemblance with a weasel rolled over by a truck -and marinated in whiskey- than with a person. They would had fit right in in Hell, had they landed there that moment- which fortunately didn't-. “Drink your tea, dear, it will make you feel better”. They grunted but obeyed, covering their face with their free hand. The angel must had performed some small curative miracle to the tea, as they was, indeed, starting to feel better by the time Aziraphale started talking.

“I did some research last night, dear”. Crowley flinched but the angel didn't stop. He had to use his momentum. “There is way too much information, however, and I think some of the things I read are not in the spirit of what I understood from your speech last night. Of course I could be wrong, certainly, I mean...” He started to babble and the demon was becoming restless, so he quickly resolved to say what he wanted to say in the first place: “Oh, sorry, I lost my point. What I aimed to say is that I would really want to meet your rigger, dear boy”.

“You WHAT?!” Their eyes got as open and yellow as they could get before the sound of their own voice perforated their brain making them squint immediately. “Oh! Is it not called that?... I thought...” Crowley's mouth was moving up and down, lips parting and eyebrows doing a crazy dance over the narrowed eyes. “Yes they are called so. That is not the problem, Angel!!” - they finally got to say – or more accurately, to shriek. “Oh, I see.” - but in fact he didn't quite see. “Why on Earth do you think I have a rigger?? And why on the three realms would you want to meet them?” the demon continued, gesturing abundantly in panic and outrage. “Well, I was hoping they could explain to me what they do to you and how does it feel, and maybe teach me to do it... It depends, I guess... on how I feel about the whole thing... I mean, I don't want to make promises I won't be able to keep”. The last bits of Crowley's hangover instantly vanished as they became still as stone. The angel words twirled at full speed in their head as they tried to process them and find something to say in a conversation-wise reasonable amount of time. They, of course, failed miserably.

After some minutes Crowley was reassured that they was, in fact, notdreaming and also not being teased -it was very unlike the angel to tease on serious matters, that had always had been Crowley's field, but it was equally unlikely of him to do show interest in kink so it was really hard to balance the odds out.

“I love you, my dear, and I want to know about what makes you happy”. “You make me happy Angel” they said, their voice coming out from very far away, still flabbergasted. “I know, my dear boy, and you make me the happiest, but you have been learning about what makes me happy and providing it for me for millennia. I would like very much to try and return your kindness”. “It's not a kindness!!”- they hissed out of habit. And after a second they continued in a softer tone -“Making you happy gives me so much joy, Angel. I don't want you to “return” anything or do me any favours out of pity or debt” their voice turned dry and cutting again by the end of the sentence. They had become very comfortable with telling Aziraphale their feelings and declaring their love. Kisses, sure, cuddling and naps, also easy by now. But this felt too vulnerable and they didn't like it. They trusted the angel with their life, but it was still painful to talk to him about their needs.

“My dear demon, you can be absolutely certain that this doesn't come from pity or a sense of debt. I am so sorry that I guarded myself so much over the time that you can't yet feel how much I enjoy the things I do with and for you. There is none of them that I don't enjoy immensely” - he kept
talking as he went round the isle and hugged the grumpy demon from behind. “Also, I am not saying that I will do it. I just want to know more, see if I like it. I would be very happy to discover it by your hand, my dear, but I have the feeling that it is just too much for you to share right now”. The demon grunted half-heartedly, melting a little into the embrace. “Of course, if it is inappropriate, I will do some more research on my own. Or, I guess, we could never discuss this again if you really don't want us too. But I just want to make clear that in the 6000 years I've known you, I have never found anything about you to be shameful, and your... erhm... bodily indulgences are not going to be a first”. Crowley lifted their eyebrows, fighting very hard not to make a remark on the “bodily indulgences” thing. They liked being petty but stakes were too high in this conversation. Aziraphale's flowery speech had given them some time to process and was finally realising what the angel was offering. And they was not by any means going to lose this opportunity.

“'Key' they said after a silence. Aziraphale was still hugging them, holding them from behind and breathing on their crown, exuding warm waves of love and comfort despite having been taken apart from his lunch plans to take care of the hungover demon. Shit, he really is the best of angels, Crowley thought. “I do have a rigger. And I will give you their contact if they'sss okay with it...”. They could bet they will be. In fact, they was quite sure they would be thrilled to finally meet Aziraphale. But one thing was meeting him and a very different one walking him through the practice and their shared privacy, so they had to check. “I will tell them to share with you as much as they is comfortable with, and no more” -though they will tell him everything, they thought, being perfectly aware of the effect the angel had on humans. They immediately trusted him and would give him their account information shall he ask. They had always wandered if that was the reason Aziraphale rarely engaged with humans in a personal level. But they was derailing. “And I want to know when you are going to meet them and your decision about this when you make it”. They really hoped it was a yes, but mostly they really hoped he made the decision quickly, as they didn't think they could bear the uncertainty.

The demon could feel the grin in the angel's face before he loosed his embrace to do his characteristic happy clapping. “Oh! Wonderful, dear!!”. The demon took his hand and kissed it with a shy smile lingering in their lips. “Now, Angel, shall I take you out for lunch, what did you have in mind?”. “Actually, my beloved, I ordered something, it must be about to arrive” -the bell rang before Aziraphale could even finish the sentence, and Crowley's mouth curved into a playful sneer- “Really, Angel, so much for not using lazy miracles!!” they chuckled. “Oh, shush, you serpent!! You really don't want to push your luck today!! I could have eaten at a proper time if you hadn't forgotten to sober up and had actually be ready to go out when I came here!” “Oh! Oh! So you were ready to drop that bomb in a restaurant, really?” - they paid and tipped the confused delivery girl as they pretended to argue, happy to have an excuse to catch some air after the previous intensity.

“May I tell you about the time when I learned how to dance the gavotte?” They had already eaten the delicious food, just as fresh as served in the restaurant -There is no use in spending a miracle half-way, dear demon, don't you dare laugh!- and were enjoying a cup of tea, Crowley's courtesy this time. The demon lifted his head from Aziraphale's shoulder to look at him evalutive. “You know how to dance? Oh! You really are one of a kind, Angel”, they smiled. “Well, yes, I do, or I did, just the gavotte anyway, not that it's in fashion anymore. But dancing was not my main goal when I enrolled the lessons, you know...?”. The angel's intonation took an interesting ring. “Oh, juicy! Tell me all about it, my naughty Angel” -Crowley said as they settled in his lap, cradling their face against his belly. They knew what he was doing. He was about to share some of his lustful memories to ease Crowley's mind from the fear of being judged for their kinks. “Thank you, Aziraphale, I love you” they put the thought in the angel's mind as he stopped to sip from his cup. They got a hand squeeze in response, after which they prepared to enjoy what was undoubtedly
going to be a delighting story.
The conversation

Chapter Summary

In which Aziraphale meets Crowley's rigger, and we learn a couple of things. Still little action, but bear with me.

Chapter Notes

Ok ok ok so this chapter is ... ILLUSTRATED!! I've been hoarding bdsm fanart for this chapter for months, therefore style changes are to be seen. I really hope you enjoy them because it has caused me actual pain not to share them until now.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

(Crowley's phone)

'sssup mate!

hey there!

long time Crowley

yeah

been busy lately

and...

oh fuck ur cunning really

haha

spit
you remember Aziraphale

how could I not

nee

well we're kinda together

ur always together,

I don't know of two other adults that don't live together and see each other that much

gmfp

together together

I mean

shut up! finally

congrats, doll! I'm so happy for you!

just don't tell me ur going vanilla

* offended emoji *

good

keep spitting haha

* eye roll emoji *

he wants to meet you

he what?

my reaction exactly

anyway

he wants to know more about shibari

and what I like

and I guess you are being a coward

and handling me the dirty work

why do I let you talk to me like that again?

cuz u know I'm right

and I am older than you

at least in emotional development years

* eye roll emoji *
kinda yes

knew it

kay

so what can't I tell him?

there's nothing off limits on my end Lilith

anything you feel like sharing, your limits only

k

pictures?

shit

hadn't thought of that

well may as well... if it goes well he'll see me

anyway

and if it goes pear shaped I rather it not

happen at that point

wow you may actually be growing

i'm jealous

nkgh

so can I give him your contact?

sure

but my conversation with him is private

at least on this end

ngk

k

am I seeing you anytime soon?

we'll see

kinda need to settle this first for good or bad

may be best yes

see you around doll

cant wait to meet your angel
“So...does they know about you?” -he panicked a little - “and about me???”

“Relax, Angel, they doesn't know, know. I've known them for fifteen years, though, and I haven't aged a tad. And they're not stupid, so they kinda know something is off. Also I had to make sure the setting was safe so I had to share some...phobias”.

“Fifteen years?”

“Well, when you find a good one you kinda stick to them” -they shrugged.

“You like them!!!” -he beamed.

“I don't like humans, Angel” - they glared trying hard to fill their words with venom.

Their phone rang. That was odd. They always had it in silence and no one that they knew ever called. “Aziraphale”. They took the call while wandering when had they added his number to contacts. “Hello?”, “Oh! Hello, am I speaking to Lilith?” – “Yes you are” – “Oh, excellent, my name is Aziraphale, I'm Crowley's... ehm... well I guess Crowley put you up to date about me” – Lilith chuckled, amused. They already kinda liked the guy. “Yes, yes, I know who you are, petal, I guess you wanted to set a date to discuss your questions about my practice. Is that it?” – a relieved sigh was audible on the other side of the line. “Yes, exactly, that is my resolution, yes”. They accorded on a day and time and hanged up, Lilith still chuckling lightly. Oh, well, it was going to be interesting.

On the agreed day and exactly two minutes before the agreed time, the bell rang two short times. Lilith opened the door in their working clothes to a slightly flustered middle-aged man who looked exactly as an antiquary should look and offered his hand as a greeting with a shy but warm smile. Crowley had never lavished in giving information about his physical appearance, apart from an occasional praise to his thighs and belly or to his white curls, so Lilith could not for their fine life had imagined that Aziraphale would look like that. When one thought they knew Crowley... What a curious view they must be when put side by side.

They shook their inappropriate thoughts away and welcomed the man into her living room while offering him a cuppa, that was gladly accepted. They sat across the table in silence as they both sipped and carefully studied each other trying to be subtle and failing. “Crowley told me this is not something people do, I don't quite see why if I have to be completely honest, it sounds like a tip-toe solution, but I do apologise for any inconvenience this puts you under”. Lilith dropped a cackle
“No, it is not a common thing. Other bunnies are not as emotionally impaired as yours and speak to their partners, but well, Crowley is Crowley... Also, don't tell him I called them a bunny, they get quite up in arms...” they finished with a mischievous smile. The angel chuckled, amused; he was starting to get why Crowley had got attached. The human had a very compatible rogery energy with his demon's – for a human, that is – and their eyes showed a similar kind of inner softness. He also took good note about the bunny thing, for his own devilry purposes. “Just enough of a bastard”, clearly Crowley had a type.

After finishing the tea, and not without some initial stammering on Aziraphale's side, they got to it and were soon engaged in a lively conversation. Lilith was used to explain much of their practice since they gave the occasional talk on kink, and their mutual knowledge of the demon -despite coming from very different types of intimacy- made things roll quite smoothly. The talk went on for nearly two hours, after which it turned into an improvised workshop. It was a good thing that Lilith had freed all their afternoon, because they suddenly found themself teaching the highly invested middle-aged bookshop owner how to make some basic knots. Soon enough it lead to playing tutorials on their computer for him, who clapped and beamed excited with each new piece of knowledge.

The conversation had turned emotional at many points before, and Aziraphale's eyes had covered in tears more than once. The rigger suspected the man sitting primly in their rug had deep knowledge of his partner's trauma, and it was obvious he was a bit surprised but grateful that Crowley had found a way to deal with some of it. Lilith was certainly getting were the “angel” pet name came from. They knew many non-kinky partners that supported their significant other's kink, so that was not it. But the light, warm, and fondness that emanated from him anytime they reached a complicated corner of the narrative was quite outerworldly.

But the knot practice had lighten the mood a little, and Aziraphale had a very curious nature – they had learned that already – so it was not at all surprising when he lifted his blue eyes from the screen and asked. “Is that what it looks like when you tie Crowley up? It's rather beautiful” - he was pointing at an image that looked impressive but was nonetheless quite simple. “Oh, no. Well, we do a bit of everything, of course, depending on the mood, but they have a taste for suspensions and their flexibility is just too good not to indulge in it” -Lilith smiled. Aziraphale nodded. He was well aware of the many ways in which Crowley's anatomy defied human body normal functioning. He lingered on that thought for a bit too long, causing him to lose some of the words the human was saying before he was able to refocus. – “It's a good thing I'm still as strong as I used to, I always thought arthrosis would be an issue by now. Runs in the family, you know... but I am healthy as a horse to my surprise, from which I am not at all complaining!!” – it was the angel's turn to smile. Oh, his sweet demon. – “But sorry, I am nattering again, ain't I? Back to your actual question: no, it's not normally like this, no. We normally keep it functional and quite simple in looks”. “I don't suppose you can show me how it looks... It doesn't matter much, anyway, and I don't know if maybe it's something I shouldn't ask for... It's just... well, I'm curious...”. “Oh, petal, I can show you! He keeps most of the pictures, but I have a few and their explicit permission to do it, so let's dig in!”. The man's eyes glazed at the mention of his partner specific consent to him seeing the pictures, and breathed out an almost inaudible “oh” followed by the brightest smile Lilith had ever seen. What a pair of fortunate little fuckers, they thought happily in their way to retrieve the box with the photographs. They made another batch of tea and went through it together.

In most of them Crowley wasn't naked, which came as a surprise to Aziraphale. “They seem so... artistic...” he commented.

d. Lilith smiled knowingly “well, yes, I like to keep this ones, they prefer to keep the others. Also Crowley is incredibly beautiful, which helps the aesthetic. That hair... I'm still mad at them for chopping it!”, they laughed. “¿The others?”. “The after ones, with all the bruising”. “Oh!!” he
exclaimed, slightly alarmed. It was somehow funny to the rigger that he hadn't thought of that at any point while being told Crowley remained tied up for hours. Although to be honest – and cut him some slack –, any regular human being would end up badly injured if put under their routines. It had taken Lilith a great deal of time to feel comfortable with it themself, but now it was their normal. “It's alright, no long-term harm, mostly just very flashy marks and some soreness for a few days. Many people find it grounding and relaxing, they is just a bit extra about it”. Their gazes met, their expressions making clear both were well aware that was not the only thing Crowley was a bit extra about, and they giggled in cahoots.
“I specially like this one” - Lilith took a very small polaroid-looking picture of Crowley on their
knees, in a traditional Japanese woman attire. The only telling it was Crowley was their gorgeous mane tied in a loose low bun. “Oh! Is this yours too? The background looks very different”. “Well spotted. It's not mine, no. It was a gift from them, actually. I don't know where it was taken or by whom, I just told them I liked it once, and found it in my mail a couple years later”. “It's beautiful”. “Hmmm”.

More tea was consumed as they chatted amicably until dusk, long after the pictures were carefully tucked back in their place. Before parting, Lilith saw a little hesitance in Aziraphale. “You can call me anytime if you need to talk further”, they said. The man's face lit noticeably and he smiled, “Oh! Wonderful! Thank you so very much, dear, it's very generous of you, and this has been lovely!”. The rigger smiled back. “Anytime, petal, I'm very happy to have finally met you after so many years. Take care”. They closed the door and sprawled in their sofa, surprisingly not tired after such an intense day, and smiling to themself at the thought of how soon that soft middle-aged man was going to be knees-deep into bondage.

A few days later, in effect, Lilith's phone rang again – they was very sure it was silenced, really – and Aziraphale greeted them warmly once they picked up. They exchanged some cordialities before Lilith decided to ask him about the purpose of his call. There was a short silence and a slightly flustered angel started to mumble some apologies for the ramble. “No need to apologise, petal, it's a pleasure talking to you, but I guess you had something in mind”. “Oh, yes, yes, of course I had, yes. Well, you see... I have been practicing the knots you taught me, just, well, you know, to see how it was. But I find nonetheless that I am still very far to grasp the appeal in all this. It seems enticing, I have to say, and, well, Crowley looked so relaxed in the pictures. It's not easy for them to relax, so I wondered... well, if I may give it a go to be tied up myself... To -to understand, you see...” – Lilith grinned from ear to ear, pleased to be right one more time about their kink radar – “Oh, that is absolutely wonderful, petal! Why don't you come tomorrow so we can talk about what you have in mind over some tea? Is it OK for you?”. Relief was palpable at the
other side of the line. “Yes, wonderful, dear, thank you. I'll close the shop early and bring some pastries. Three o'clock?”.

When they opened the door, Aziraphale smiled and handed them a little bundle wrapped in pink waxed paper. Once tea and sweets were consumed around a pleasant chat about Crowley, the bookshop, and the new book Lilith is writing, they got to the aim of the visit. Aziraphale had thought a lot since the last time, and spends some time explaining them how he wants to learn all about safety and techniques, and also to experiment how he feels tying a body instead of a bedpost before offering Crowley the possibility of doing it together. Interested “ahas” and “uhums” from Lilith spot his speech for a long while. They had predicted correctly what this was going to be about from the phone call, but they wanted him to finish before saying anything else. And then, very primly, he continued to the second part of his research methods: he had thought maybe he could ask them to tie him up just once; only to know how it feels from that end, and understand the appeal of it. Crowley seemed to need it as much as enjoy it – he said – and there weren't many things his partner was really into, so he was naturally curious, of course. And there it was, the ask Lilith had been wary of since the call.

“You know, most people just buy a set of ropes in a sex shop and tie their partners to the headboard” Lilith chuckles. “Well, we are not most people, dear, I think you already know that pretty well” – he answers with a wink, which earns him a cackle – “And jumping into things without proper research is certainly not my style”. “Well, I can see that” Lilith concedes, amused. After a brief silence, they takes a deep breath and warmly, but determined, starts the speech they had prepared beforehand. “OK, I am going to be very straightforward with this, because that's my style, and because I have found it's best for everyone. Oh, don't get tense, petal, I am so glad that you came to me with this, but practice is about boundaries, and I just have to set mine, yes? I like you very much, Aziraphale, and I'll be very glad if we keep seeing each other, but I can't be your rigger” – It's entirely a good thing that they had rehearsed this, because the sudden hopelessness in the face of that soft man sitting on their sofa is not easy to bare. Lilith taps his hand with a reassuring smile and continues – “Tying is a very intimate thing for me, which is mostly the reason why I left even the teaching business. Also, I don't like getting in the middle of couples or partners of any kind unless everybody is on the same page and I feel the connection I need”. Now he looks terribly embarrassed, which doesn't make it easier. “Oh, dear!! I am so sorry, I hadn't thought of any of that!! I am so sorry to have even asked, it was utterly thoughtless of me...” – Lilith smiles at the candidness of the man – “It's OK, Aziraphale, I completely understand that you did, and I am happy for having your trust. I still think that you and Crowley should talk about this, but it's not my place to push you into anything, and I know how they can be” – Aziraphale smiled at the eyeroll that accompanied the end of that sentence – “I have someone for you, if you want, though” – and Aziraphale's eyes lighten up but their brows furrow a bit. It's obvious that he isn't a big fan of meeting new people – “I think you are going to like him, and he is a wonderful teacher and a beautiful person. Maybe I can introduce you one day, if it helps, instead of just giving you his contact” - the furrow in the man's face vanishes and it's replaced with a slightly relieved smile. “Oh, that would be lovely, Lilith, thank you”. “Would you like to go over his profile? I promise you it's going to be your type” the rigger smirked at Aziraphale's huff on that remark. “We all have types, petal, and you and I share at least one, don't we?” – Aziraphale laughed, visibly releasing the tension from the previous conversation – “That's better! Pass me my laptop, it's there on your right, let's peek on Jack's profile”. They got closer on the sofa so they could both see the screen, Lilith making pointed comments on the pictures just for the fun of making their new friend giggle and blush like a teenager next to them. More tea was drank and sweets were eaten, and a date was set for meeting Jack before the angel excused himself and left to pick up Crowley for their dinner date at some fancy little restaurant that had just opened in Islington.
Chapter End Notes

The pictures are resized so they don't come up as offensively big. You can click on "view image" for full size detail and all. <3
Okay fixed the convo. Sorry to PC readers, but it was a NIGHTMARE in phone version. Ngk.
Please feel free to leave comments, I live on attention <3

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!