It's You and Me

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It's You and Me

by real_fanta_sea

Summary

It felt like yesterday when they played in the grassy fields behind Pallete Town. Crowley threw a Caterpie behind Aziraphale's shirt. Aziraphale tricked Crowley into sticking his hand into a Rattatta lair. Then, they sat silently in a tree and watched Butterfrees mingle in the sunset, holding hands. Why were they so adamant about staying rivals? Why did they so desperately cling to training for battles and useless glory? Everything felt chosen for them, not by them, and the burden's weight distorted them into people they never wanted to be.

Notes

TW: mentions of blood, harsh Pokémon battle

See the end of the work for more notes

“You're late.”

The smug tilt of Crowley's hips was irritating just as much as his juggling a shiny black pokéball in one hand.

“I’m not. I hereby challenge you to battle!”

“You want to be defeated by me so bad it's embarrassing.” The cocked-up eyebrow was infuriating too. "Gotta admit it's cute how you always waddle one step behind."

“This has only so much to do with you that you are the champion.” Aziraphale glared, stone cold. “For now.”

“Very well then,” Crowley stretched, yawning theatrically. ”But don't come crying to me when I beat your ass.”

“Tsk, don't you wish?” Aziraphale yanked the peak of his cap and turned it around so a flash of white curls appeared. With a quick tug on his belt, he held a pearly white pokéball.

Crowley grinned. "Let's make it interesting. The best of yours against the best of mine, hm?"

After a determined nod, the arena lights dimmed, and a single spotlight illuminated the centre of the battleground. The air was thick and thrummed with far-off music.

“DRAGONAIR, I CHOOSE YOU!”

Both trainers looked at each other, wide-eyed, their Pokémon materialising from a laser outline. One pearly white, one black with a gash instead of a yellow eye.

“Seriously? You copied my team?”

“Don't be ridiculous.” Aziraphale scoffed.

“Yeah, ‘cause you totally aren’t a damned Ditto.”

“Shut up!” Aziraphale angrily pointed to Crowley's dragon. “Astra, use Ice Beam!”

The bright blue eyes narrowed, and the dragon twirled before blasting the opponent with a stream of ice. The black dragon shrieked and whipped its tail, scales shining with a thin frosty crust.

“Pyro, use Dragon Rush!”

In the dim light, the black monster almost disappeared. Astra twitched its head around, crying out the moment the other dragon’s body collided with its side. The air grew heavy and vibrated before Astra shook and schooled its aura, a couple of opal scales falling into the arena dust. Aziraphale flinched.

A tremble in Crowley's voice caught Aziraphale's ear. In between shouted directions and the two dragons charging in an agonising dance, his cocky confidence gave way to something strained. If Aziraphale didn't know him better, he would think Crowley was afraid.

If he didn't know him better... But did he really know?

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A pained shriek shook him to full alert. Astra hovered above Pyro, growling. The tip of its tail shook above its opponent's head, and it blinked back toward Aziraphale for permission to deliver the final blow. Pyro merely breathed, trembling, the scar on its face adorned with a couple more slashes that dripped blood into the dust below.

“Astra, stop!”

Crowley's hand grasped his as Aziraphale pulled a small flask from his vest. When their eyes met, it was just like when Aziraphale nursed his bitten fingers. A bit of fear, a bit of hesitation, and the familiar sting of vulnerability. Azi turned his hand around to show him what he held. Crowley then cradled his dragon's head instead, letting Aziraphale heal it.

“You don’t want to be a champion anymore?”

Aziraphale patted the scales around Pyro’s scar carefully. They were damp and warm under his touch.

“Not if it means killing Pokémon.”

Crowley tapped the tip of Pyro’s nose. It giggled and wagged its tail, its wounds healing rapidly. For once, he dared to look at Aziraphale without the smug mask and gave him a tentative smile.

“So... I should probably say thank you?”

“Only if you mean it.”

End Notes

Written for GOAD GTA September prompt Rivals

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