Boxed In

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Boxed In

by Duraragon

Summary

Izaya is delivered to Shizuo in a shipping package, essentially gift-wrapped, as he's bound and gagged.

Notes

Originally posted on AO3 back on April 4, 2022.

Izaya woke up in darkness.

He wasn't sure what woke him up, but when he looked around, he could see thin streams of light filtering in around him, just barely illuminating the fact that he was apparently being held in a large, cardboard box.

He was going to try to push open the box, but something was restricting him from moving. He soon found that his arms were bound to his torso with ropes, and they wouldn't budge no matter how hard he tried. He made a slight noise of confusion, but the sound was muffled, as it turned out there was also a piece of cloth in his mouth, effectively gagging him.

Well... that probably wasn't good.

He jolted when he suddenly heard a loud, insistent knocking on what sounded like a door, and he tried to peek out of the small holes poked into the side of the box, but he couldn't see anything of note before he heard footsteps that quickly receded. Did someone just knock on a door and abandon him here?

In less than a minute, he had his answer.

He heard the sound of a door opening, followed by a long silence. Izaya wasn't sure who this was, so while he could probably make enough noise through the gag to get their attention, he wasn't sure if he even *wanted* their attention. He'd try to piece together where he was first so he could try to come up with a plan in the highly likely event that they actually open the box.

Not that there would be much he could do in this state anyway...

He suddenly felt the box being lifted, and he was presumably carried inside. Whoever picked up the box must have been pretty strong if they lifted it up that easily with a person still inside it.

The box was set down carefully, to Izaya's relief, and he heard a door closing, followed by footsteps as they walked away. After a couple of minutes, the footsteps came back, and he could hear what sounded like a knife or a box cutter running along the seams of the box. There was a small clatter as the cutting tool was dropped to the side, its job apparently done.

The box was finally opened, and Izaya saw a familiar face.

* * * * *

It was Shizuo's day off, and he just wanted to sit and relax on his couch, maybe watch some TV.

He soon heard a knocking on his door. It was very loud, and annoyingly persistent. He was half-annoyed, but he was also concerned by how urgent the knocking seemed to be, so he got up to answer the door.

When he opened the door, he saw an unusually large package on his doorstep. There was no one else in sight, so they must have just dropped off the package and left, but he already knew that he didn't order anything, so he immediately thought that it must have been delivered by mistake.

He checked the label, but it did indeed have his address on it. Shizuo saw some odd-looking holes on the side of the package, which he would have thought was just the result of being damaged during delivery, but they were so uniform and consistent that they looked intentional for some reason. He was about to pick it up before he saw the word, 'Fragile,' written on it in large letters, so he decided to be careful with it.

He gingerly picked it up, trying not to jostle it too much in case it was full of glass or something, and gently set it down inside. He closed his front door and went to find a box cutter. In theory, he could have just opened it with his hands, but since it was fragile, he worried that he may damage the contents in the process.

He eventually found a box cutter and started work on opening the package. When he was done, he set the box cutter down, and opened the package to see what was inside.

"...!"

Why was there a person in the box? Wait a second...

"Izaya?" Shizuo asked incredulously.

Shizuo hadn't seen Izaya in years; not since their last fight when Shizuo had nearly killed him. For a while, Shizuo thought he *had* killed him, but now, it was clear that Izaya was *very* much alive, albeit bound and gagged for some bizarre reason. When Shizuo first opened the box, Izaya had somehow even managed to pull off his typical sly expression despite the gag in his mouth. It was the expression that he always wore whenever he was plotting something, almost as if he had planned this entire thing.

...But there was no trace of that expression now.

The instant he laid eyes on Shizuo, Izaya's eyes had widened in shock, his face growing steadily paler with every passing second. They stared at each other in surprise for a moment. "What the hell are you doing in there?" Shizuo finally asked him.

Shizuo could only see Izaya swallow nervously in response. Well, given the piece of fabric in Izaya's mouth, it wasn't like he was in any position to answer him. Honestly, he wasn't even mad about the fact that Izaya was right here in front of him — the situation was just too weird.

Shizuo then decided that he should probably take the gag out of Izaya's mouth so he can explain the situation to him, and Shizuo reached out a hand to remove it. But Izaya, however,

had apparently misinterpreted Shizuo's intentions, because Izaya then gave a muffled scream and started struggling fiercely against the ropes that were tying his arms down.

Shizuo instantly flinched his hand back. He really wasn't expecting that response; he had never once seen Izaya show any degree of fear towards him at all — not even when Shizuo was only seconds away from killing him at the end of their last fight. It was certainly a jarring change from what he was used to.

But he really didn't intend to hurt him this time.

"Hey..." Shizuo said gently. "I'm just trying to take the gag out of your mouth."

But it didn't look like Izaya could hear him at all, because he was still frantically trying to slip out of the ropes pinning his arms down, and when Shizuo reached out for him again, Izaya kept ducking away from his hand, turning and hunching his shoulders in a way that blocked access to his face.

Well, *this* wasn't working.

Shizuo gave up on trying to do it while Izaya was still in the box, so he just grabbed the back of Izaya's coat and yanked him out of the box, eliciting another muffled scream from Izaya.

"Will you calm down, already?" Shizuo said impatiently.

Ignoring his protests, Shizuo firmly held Izaya in place by the front of his shirt, and pulled the cloth out from his mouth. He should be able to talk now.

"GET AWAY FROM ME!" Izaya shrieked, leaning as far away from him as physically possible. In fact, he was leaning so far back that if Shizuo let go of him now, he'd just fall to the floor, so Shizuo kept a firm hold of the front of Izaya's shirt.

Shizuo was still thoroughly baffled by the situation, but he couldn't help but feel exasperated. "I'd love to," Shizuo deadpanned, "but you're currently tied up in my house with no way to move, so I'll need to take the ropes off first so you can leave on your own two feet."

Izaya yelped when Shizuo suddenly picked him up, who then set him down on the couch so he could work on undoing the ropes. Izaya made no further objections, but Shizuo could now feel Izaya shaking under his touch, and heard Izaya's breaths coming in a little too fast for his liking. What the hell was wrong with him?

To his surprise, Izaya didn't run off the second that Shizuo took the last of the ropes off; he just tucked his arms and legs closer to himself. He didn't seem any calmer despite having just been freed. Shizuo tried taking a few steps back, but Izaya still made no move to leave, nor did he say anything.

Well, if Izaya wasn't going to leave, then Shizuo supposed he could just ask him how he wound up in this situation. Shizuo sat down in the chair opposite to Izaya, who looked at him warily. "So..." Shizuo started deliberately, "Why the hell were you tied up in a box?"

Izaya swallowed and looked away from him. "I don't know. Probably... an enemy of mine..." Izaya said quietly. He honestly didn't even sound like Izaya by this point.

"...Why are you acting so weird?" Shizuo asked him.

Izaya gave a little moan of discomfort, but said nothing, still avoiding eye contact.

"A lot of people thought you were dead, you know," Shizuo continued on. "Though, after that interview, I figured you must be alive somewhere, or else why would someone be asking around about you?"

An interviewer had approached Shizuo a while back and asked him what his opinion on Izaya was. Since Izaya had already been gone and presumed dead for a while by that point, Shizuo had concluded — apparently correctly — that Izaya was probably still alive if there was a sudden interest in finding out more about him.

Finally, Izaya spoke, "...I was staying out of Ikebukuro. It wasn't my idea to come here."

Shizuo couldn't help but snort in amusement. "Yeah, I kinda figured, given how tied up you were. Anyway..." Shizuo stood up, and he didn't miss the fact that Izaya had flinched violently at the movement. Why was he so damn jumpy? Regardless, Shizuo ignored it and said, "You're free to go. Just don't come back to Ikebukuro."

Izaya gave a small nod of assent, and moved to stand up. He pushed himself up with his arms, and seemed to have some difficulty standing. This was only just getting weirder...

Shizuo wasn't going to say anything, but Izaya just kept leaning on anything and everything he could for support as he walked, almost like he'd fall over if he didn't. Surprisingly, Shizuo didn't find the flea touching all of his stuff to be as annoying as he thought it would be, and curiosity simply got the better of him. "Why the hell are you walking like that?"

Izaya froze, cringing at Shizuo's harsh tone, almost like he was expecting Shizuo to hit him. Izaya seemed to hesitate, before he finally admitted, "I usually use a wheelchair..."

It felt like somebody had punched Shizuo in the gut. He just couldn't associate the two images; 'Izaya' and 'wheelchair' just didn't go together. Izaya runs, he jumps, he leaps across tall buildings. He wasn't... *this.*

"Wheelchair...?" Shizuo said in disbelief.

"Yeah," Izaya replied, still staring at Shizuo warily, waiting to see his response.

"Was that... because of our fight?"

"...Yeah," Izaya said slowly. "Turns out that steel beam did more damage than I thought it did."

Ah, yes. Shizuo had swung a steel beam and hit Izaya with it like he was a baseball. But wasn't he running afterwards?

As if sensing Shizuo's unspoken question, Izaya continued on, "I was only able to run as much as I did because the adrenaline blocked out the pain."

"...Ah."

That explained a lot, actually, both why he seemed 'normal' during the fight and why he hadn't been back since. If he was wheelchair-bound, he couldn't exactly come back to Ikebukuro and expect to survive another encounter with Shizuo.

"How about your arms?" Shizuo asked.

"Mostly healed. They aren't back to being 100% normal, but maybe they never will be."

"Ah. So is the same true for your legs?"

Izaya hesitated. "That depends."

"On...?" Shizuo prompted.

"Whether or not I go to physical therapy. My doctors keep telling me that if I did, I could probably run and jump like I used to do."

"Then, why does it sound like you're not doing that?" Shizuo asked curiously.

"Well, it's not like I deserve to, right?"

Shizuo was shocked. Wait, did he... feel *guilty?*

"This is my punishment," Izaya added.

So he *was* punishing himself? Okay, that was definitely a 'yes' on the 'feeling guilty' thing.

"Anyway, I should probably get out of your hair," Izaya said. "I'm sure we've interacted more than you'd like already."

"Oh... right," Shizuo said.

Izaya went to the door, and was almost outside when Shizuo decided he had something else to say. "Hey, Izaya?"

"...Yeah?"

Shizuo grinned at him. "Go to physical therapy already, you flea."

Izaya gave a weak little chuckle. "I'll think about it."

* * * * *

"So, how did it go?"

"How did *what* go?"

"What else? Your visit with Shizuo!"

"Wha— Wait, how did you hear about that?"

"I was the one who set it up! You're both friends now, so it all worked out, right?"

"Wait, you—?!"

"...?"

"DAMN IT, SHINRA!"

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