

# Tartan

Von CruxisLyrica

Humans really are a curious bunch. Leave them alone to their own devices and they came up with the most bizarre ideas. Torture techniques? Hah, almost all of them were created by human hands and needed absolutely no demonic influence whatsoever.

The Iron Maiden? Humans.

The Guillotine? Humans.

The Spanish Donkey? Bloody *humans*. Sometimes Crowley wondered if these mortals were secretly demons in disguise.

Well, all things aside humans also invented a lot of ridiculous and random stuff. Honestly, the language of flowers? Complete and utter nonsense. Or—

“The history of Tartan??” Crowley studied the brochure in his hand of some small and rural museum situated on the outskirts of London. He mindlessly accepted the pamphlet of some helpless university student (who was either forced to do charity work or was desperately trying to make *any* kind of money) with the intention to throw it away in the first available waste bin, however, thanks to the four words written on the front, the paper enjoyed his full attention now.

Apparently, Tartan etiquette was an actual thing. Different styles were used to express their affiliation with clans, orders or families and sometimes it was even forbidden to wear a specific tartan style without the permission of whoever was in charge of said group.

Crowley's stomach dropped.

Family. *Clan*.

Aziraphale was still wearing the same Tartan style since... well, since he first picked up that stupid bow-tie. He had never changed it, not even once and *especially* not since Armageddon.

“Ngk.” Crowley ripped the paper into tiny pieces and threw them to the ground

because *littering is what demons do*. He snapped his fingers and found himself in front of the bookshop almost immediately. The door flew open (and nearly send the little bell flying as well), heeding the "Closed" sign absolutely no mind.

"*Angel!*" Crowley shouted, "Aziraphale! I don't care *what* you are doing right now, drop it, we're going shopping!"

"Crowley, dear." Aziraphale appeared from the back room, a cup of his favorite cocoa in his hand. "What upsets you, my dear? And what is this about shopping?"

"You," the demon vaguely pointed at Aziraphale's clothes. "Need an update. Your whole wardrobe does. It's the 21st bloody century, angel."

"I am quite happy with my choice of clothing, thank you very much." Aziraphale put his mug down in safe distance to his books and eyed Crowley suspiciously. Something must have caused this frantic attitude, something beyond Aziraphale's choice of style.

"Crowley," His voice was calm but firm, "Whatever it is, it has clearly upset you and don't you even try to deny it. Now be a dear and please talk to me."

The universe had several rules set in stone. Rules as simple as 'as soon as you say it out loud, something bad will happen' and 'Crowley will under no circumstances stay strong when Aziraphale shoots *that look* at him'.

And that was exactly what was happening right now.

"Tartan." The demon growled. "It's Heav—"

"It is *Heaven's Dress Tartan*, yes." Aziraphale interrupted. "I had it commissioned back in the days. Such a bright and talented young man! A little mischief-maker but his heart was in the right place. Oh, you two would have gotten along just fine, I'm sure."

That got Crowley stopped in his tracks. Aziraphale had it... *commissioned*?

"So it is... one of a kind?" Crowley asked, his voice close to a whisper.

"Of course it is, my dear. I have standards, you know?"

"And it is human-made? No affiliation with Heaven?"

"Oh dear." Aziraphale smiled. Crowley's behavior finally made sense and the angel was more than happy to ease his partner's worries. "No affiliation whatsoever. Not to Heaven."

Crowley's expression softens visibly. Aziraphale closed the distance between them cupped Crowley's face in his hands. "It's always been us, remember?" Their foreheads touched ever so lightly. "Our side."

Crowley closed his eyes and took the touch and warmth of his angel in. *Us*, he said.

*Always had been.* He remembered the thermos (Tartan), the bike rack on his Bentley (Tartan as well) and—

The demon's eyes snapped open. "Wait a moment. When we— when we swapped bodies. The collar. The *Tartan* collar—?"

"Was mine, of course."

"You---", Crowley paused for a moment and took a deep breath to calm his nerves. His brain was *this close* to short-circuiting. "You went to hell – *as me* – took a bath in Holy Water – *for me* – and basically told everyone in hell that I'm *yours* in *Tartan language*!?"

"Oh, I thought it was only appropriate, given our side and all."

"You---", oh bless it all, why was he consistently speechless around his angel? "You *absolute* bastard. I love you, you know that?"

"I am quite aware, yes. Hard to forget when you're reminded daily."

*Bastard*, Crowley repeated in his mind and stole a kiss from Aziraphale's lips. "Bed, *now*."

"But what about the lovely museum?" Aziraphale sounded genuinely disappointed and Crowley was more than ready to throw in a couple of complaints, even going so far as to 'having another moment' because *angel please, how the heaven can you say no when I am just moments away to drag you to bed and no I'm not talking about sleeping part*, however, a tiny detail struck the demon as... odd.

"Wait... you *knew*!?"

Aziraphale looked away sheepishly like a child caught in the act of stealing candy. "I might have had a hand in this?"

Crowley probably had the same stupid look on his face he had back in Eden when a flustered Angel confessed that he gave away his one and only divine weapon (assigned by God *Herself*) to the pair of cast-out humans.

And then the demon lost it. He laughed, sincere and wholeheartedly and in a way only his angel could make him laugh. After a minute or two he finally calmed down enough to catch a glimpse of a pouting angel beside him.

"You don't have to laugh that much."

"Sorry," Crowley managed to say between chuckles. "We go there tomorrow, promise."

"Fine." Aziraphale smiled, a hint of mischief was hidden in his pale blue eyes. "I forgive you."

Crowley groaned. "Angel, *really*?!"

The bookshop was once again filled with cheerful laughter, a now familiar and welcome sight since the world had failed to end.

[2019.09.29]