

King of Crushes
By Angelus

It was a couple hours past lunchtime at Chaldea, and Zanna could feel the hunger setting in. A meeting with DaVinci and Roman had gone on longer than the three of them had expected, but Zanna was too engaged in the conversation to notice how late it was until the meeting was over. They weren't starving, but they also weren't keen on just waiting until dinner, so they made their way around Chaldea's halls, headed for the cafeteria.

Zanna's long ears perked up, tuning into sounds from up ahead. Around the coming corner, they could hear footsteps, the sound of metal boots against the metal floor, but more importantly, they could hear something like wind chimes, which meant there was only one Servant who could be approaching.

Archer Gilgamesh turned the corner and stopped when he spotted Zanna. He blinked in surprise, standing in place. He was shirtless today, showing the red lines that were tattooed across his upper body. His lower half was still armored in gold and red though, making him gleam under the white LED hall lights, though not as brightly as when he was in his full golden regalia.

Gilgamesh grinned, his face brightening as he processed that he had run into his Master. "Ah, there you are Master, I've been looking for you!" Gilgamesh spoke as if he was announcing something, and his voice echoed down the metal hall. "Behold!" He snapped his fingers, and a gleaming, golden portal opened above Zanna's head. The cold, white light in the hallway was overshadowed by the warm, golden glow of the portal's light. Zanna looked up at it without fear. Fickle as Gil could be, they knew he wouldn't attack them. The portal rippled like the water's surface, and from it emerged a single green branch, like from a bush or tree. It certainly wasn't what Zanna was expecting.

"Uh. Did you... get into gardening lately?" they asked, looking up at the small branch poking out from the portal.

"Of course not! The king does not garden. It is a mistletoe branch that I had Moolah retrieve for me." Gilgamesh said, referring to the fox-eared Servant that was always eager to run errands for Gil, provided she could charge an exorbitant price for her services. In any case, he seemed proud of what he had paid someone else to do for him.

"Mistletoe huh? Uh, what about it?" Zanna looked back to Gilgamesh with a quizzical look.

Gilgamesh returned their puzzled look and approached. The chimes in his earrings rang with every step, and his red waist cape fluttered behind him. Zanna could feel his Servant aura press against them as he approached. It wasn't something he could help, it was just a product of how strong he was as a Servant. All the same, Zanna had to make a concentrated effort not to lean back from the spiritual pressure.

"I hear it is custom for this branch to be used in a holiday ritual that involves kissing beneath it," he explained, leaning forward so that he was under the mistletoe with Zanna. "Is that not the case, Master?" Gilgamesh asked.

Zanna leaned back and their ears folded down as Gil leaned in. Aura or no, he standing very close. "Well, you're right, but it's not a holiday," they managed to explain, barely able to keep eye contact with Gil.

Gilgamesh audibly gasped and retreated back a step, looking wounded by their words. "Not a holiday? Not a holiday?! Has this world truly fallen so far that it has forgotten the traditions of my Uruk?" He recovered and crossed his arms over his bare chest. "Listen closely!" he barked, making his messy, golden hair fall over the bridge of his nose. His slit pupils narrowed with determination.

"It is nearly the spring equinox! It is a time to celebrate the planting of crops and fertile soil. A time of hard work, followed by festival and relaxation, with the hope of a bountiful harvest in the seasons to come." Gilgamesh beamed with pride as he recalled his time as king of the world. His red eyes glimmered like gems. "Thus! You cannot possibly mean to say that this is not a holiday worthy of your mistletoe traditions. You will abide by your modern laws and kiss me beneath this branch!" He stomped his foot for emphasis, and it clattered against the metal floor.

Zanna was grinning. Gilgamesh sure sounded serious, he had put a lot of passion into that speech, and they were feeling inspired even though he was incorrect about mistletoe being in season. "I get where you're coming from Gil, but mistletoe is for the winter holidays, Christmas. Around the Winter Solstice, as you might put it."

Gilgamesh paused before speaking. "I... see. Several months from now. I see." The mistletoe retreated into the portal, which vanished. The overhead lights filled the hall with a cool, white light again.

"Yeah. Sorry to be the one to break the news to you. Anyways, I has headed to the cafeteria to get some lunch. Did you want to join me?" Zanna leisurely circled around Gilgamesh with a farewell wave.

Before they knew what was happening, wall of golden portals sprung open in Zanna's path, and the hallway was filled with the pointed ends of a dozen sharp weapons. They stopped mid-step and turned back to look at Gilgamesh, who was visibly bristling. His armor clattered against itself from his shaking.

"No one who wants to live would turn down the opportunity to kiss the king. Do you want to die, mongrel?" Gilgamesh stood tall and turned to glare down his nose at his Master.

Zanna turned back to look at Gilgamesh. Despite the ferocity of that glare, they couldn't feel any malice behind it. "Of course not, I just thought that you were joking?" They couldn't quite make out the vibe that Gilgamesh was giving off.

"The king does not jest."

"What are you talking about, you make bad jokes all the- er." Zanna stopped as Gilgamesh frowned a little harder. "Nevermind. Fine. If the king desires it, he shall have it," Zanna said, deciding to play along.

"Hmph! I do not desire it, fool. It would simply be ridiculous for anyone to pass this up. Now come here and give me that which I deserve!" He uncrossed his arms and held them outstretched and welcoming. His frown turned into a cocky grin as he bent his knees just a little, to be closer to eye-level with Zanna.

Zanna approached and placed a hand on his cheek, stroking it, feeling how soft his skin was. They stepped in close, and gave him a quick kiss on the cheek before ducking under his arm and sliding away from him. "Happy now, King of Heroes?"

"Ghk!" Gilgamesh blushed, flustered from the peck on his cheek, but upset that he didn't receive a *real* kiss. He stood up straight, but kept his back to Zanna to hide his rosey cheeks. "I... Is that all that you can muster? I expected more from someone I would call my Master!"

Zanna stopped of their own volition this time. It was starting to sink in. Gil was too embarrassed, prideful, or both, to ask for a kiss outright, so he was trying to goad them into it, to make Zanna take the initiative. The only thing that didn't make sense was Archer Gil being that into Zanna, or anyone for that matter. It seemed almost out of character for him to want that kind of attention, but the way he was asking for it was very Gilgamesh indeed. A small test was in order, to see if he was just messing with them, or if he was serious.

"Sorry Gil, I'm just a little low on energy since I missed lunch a couple hours ago. If you really want that kiss..." Zanna grinned. "You can grace my lunch with your presence, and then I can give you a kiss fitting of the King of Heroes." They knew they were laying it on a bit thick, but it would make things go smoother if he was truly flustered. If he was bluffing, he'd take his leave.

"Hmph! Fine, I shall accompany you. I forget that food is necessary for you non-Servants. Come, Master." Gilgamesh walked straight ahead, still hiding his fading blush as he led Zanna to the cafeteria.

Zanna was surprised, but was starting to understand that Gil was actually serious about this. They wondered if he could really have a crush on them. It was so unlike him to be smitten with someone in that way. They felt their face heat up, and caught themselves blushing at the thought. Gilgamesh hadn't backed down yet, and he wasn't the type to keep a joke going for *this* long.

They arrived at the cafeteria shortly, as Zanna had been on the way there anyways. It was quiet due to it being a couple of hours after the normal lunch hour, and only a handful of Servants and staff members were eating at the large tables. Most of them turned to look as Gilgamesh entered, either because of the noise of his armor and chime earrings, or because of the strength of his Servant presence. They all returned to their meals without a word; Gilgamesh was a common sight since he had been summoned after all.

The Man In Red was behind the counter as usual, and his expression soured as he saw Gilgamesh, though it returned to at least neutral when Zanna walked in behind him. "Good afternoon Archer, Master." A pair of kitchen knives materialized in his hands, and he swiped them together, looking ready to cook in his red coat and white apron.

"Ah, other Archer. I'm happy to see you in the kitchen today!" Gilgamesh sounded unusually pleased to see him.

Archer sighed and shook his head behind the counter. "We can't both call each other 'Archer,' you can just call me Em-"

"Nevermind that now Archer, our Master requires lunch! Prepare something they would like right away!" Gilgamesh ordered, cutting Archer off.

Archer shrugged in defeat. "I'll prepare a sushi platter right away, Master."

As the Man In Red worked on lunch, Zanna and Gilgamesh took a seat at one of the empty tables, sitting next to one another. Gil was sitting as close as he could to Zanna without touching them, and he was looking straight ahead to avoid eye contact. Zanna looked him up and down and had to stifle a chuckle, but they were sitting too close for Gil to not hear it.

"What's so funny, Master?" he asked, looking at them and meeting Zanna's eyes. Sitting down they were about the same height.

"Nothing! You wanted that kiss, right?" Zanna leaned in ever so slightly.

Gilgamesh didn't lean away, but didn't lean in either. He looked like he was frozen in place. "Hardly! Y-you wanted it!" he insisted. "Besides, you've yet to eat. Do you think you can kiss me properly?"

"Well, let me know if this satisfies you." Zanna leaned in the rest of the way and kissed Gilgamesh on the lips. They were warm and quite soft, but Zanna could feel the hesitation in the twitch of his lips as he tried to decide to pull away or push in.

Finally he made up his mind, and he met Zanna's kiss, pressing in and closing his eyes to enjoy the moment. It was a quick kiss, lasting only a second or two, with each of them keeping their hands to themselves. Zanna finally pulled away, leaving both of them blushing. "So... How was that, King of Heroes?"

Gilgamesh swallowed and regained his composure, mostly, keeping his sharp, red eyes locked on Zanna's own eyes. "It was... Acceptable. Hrmph. I hope you're satisfied, Master. I may even get used to doing this." He was doing a poor job of keeping to his usual attitude, but there was hardly anyone around to notice it anyways.

"Yeah? I suppose I could get used to it too." Zanna's tail swished behind them, and they smirked, keeping near Gilgamesh as their sushi was finally served. It was good to know that Gilgamesh had a thing for them. After all, the feeling was mutual.