

He felt like they'd had this same song and dance a thousand times before; Oona's jaw set in a stubborn line, his own face the picture of exasperation.

"Murder isn't *justified*," he tries again, but is quickly cut off by Oona's derisive snort.

"Stupid!" The insult is thrown out easily, to the point that Edgeworth isn't sure if she actually knows the meaning of the word; was it just another human word for her to toss out, knowing vaguely it as an insult of some kind, but lacking the right context? Everything was 'stupid.' The laws were stupid, his stance against homicide was stupid, his cravat was stupid (that he'd been told on more than one occasion, typically when Oona was losing whatever vague argument had started between them). The word had started to lose all meaning to Edgeworth. Honestly, if she started calling him something else he might actually get worried.

Instead he eases back some, waiting to see just where she'd lead them next. Oona points to him dramatically (Edgeworth made a mental note that maybe, just maybe, Oona was spending too much time around him and/or Phoenix and probably that should be remedied somehow before she started imprinting too much) and huffs.

"I am not human. Why should I be subject to human laws?"

"And how would your laws handle this?"

Oona pauses for a long moment, hand dropping to her side again as visible discomfort slides over her face. 'Treat it as a murder, probably' is likely what she would say if she had to. She didn't lie-- Edgeworth believed her in that, and it was honestly refreshing to know that if nothing else he could trust that everything she said was true-- or, at least, she believed it to be.

After a few tense seconds, Oona changes the subject--if she can't lie to get out of the situation (and she wouldn't), she'd avoid. "There is nothing you could do anyhow, stupid. I am not human, like said. Do not have 'human rights.' Would you put scientists on trial for testing animals?"

He would and he has-- Well, not him personally, but trials have gone to court on similar accounts. He wants to point out that she may not have human rights, but she'd have animal rights, maybe. But that's insulting on every level and they both know it. Edgeworth's brow furrows as Oona turns away, arms crossed over her chest in a smug superiority for her apparent win.

The silence stretches between them, seconds ticking by as Edgeworth weighs each potential response carefully against a preconceived script of likely responses from her--for the most part, his predicted responses were less than friendly, if only because Oona was volatile by nature. And though Edgeworth does not--would probably never--consider himself a physical person, he knows that Oona *is*. Stupid, she calls him, but he watches and he learns quicker than Oona

gives credit for. So he reaches out and rests a hand lightly on top of her head; the gesture is only a little less awkward to him than he initially thought it'd be.

Blue eyes turn on him curiously, but she makes no move to push the hand away. Whether it's out of curiosity at what he's doing or because she honestly enjoys the touch, Edgeworth can't be sure.

"What--"

"I would," Edgeworth interrupts quickly before he can lose his nerve, "have fought for you."

He watches her eyebrows raise, then furrow in confusion. It takes another second for her to understand what he means. "In court? The laws?"

"Yes," he confirms, despite the fact that...Well, he's not really one of those kinds of lawyers--that's not his area, but he confirms it all the same. She doesn't know better, after all, but besides that he means it. He still would have fought for her to get the justice she deserved after her horrific treatment.

For a long moment nothing is said, and Edgeworth feels the awkwardness grow as he slowly stiffens under the intense scrutiny of her eyes. He begins to retract his hand, but she catches it quickly in both of her own. Like everything else about her, they're small as they grip his own, but there's a strength behind them as she gives him a light squeeze.

"Stupid," she says, but there's a warmth there that usually *isn't*, and a smile that tugs the corner of her mouth before she lets him go and turns away.

Nothing more is said about it that night.