Fandom: Cracked (CBC)
Title: Making Choices
Author: tj_teejay (AO3 – Tumblr – Instagram – Reddit – E-Mail)
Genre: Gen
Characters/Pairings: Aidan, Daniella
Rating: PG-13
Warning: Spoilers for 1x10 "Inquest"
Summary: The inquest turned out a witch hunt against Aidan, and the aftermath of a certain revelation leaves a gaping hole in the relationship between Aidan and Daniella in its wake.
Author's Note: Thanks to ratherastory for the beta! Please do not share or upload this fic anywhere without the author's permission.

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"Aidan…"

"What?" he spat at her in a sharp voice, swiveling his desk chair around, meeting Daniella's eyes with a glare that was as warm as an ice cube.

She tried not to flinch. "Are we gonna talk about this?"

"I don't know what there is to talk about."

"Aidan, I'm sorry."

"Oh, that's hilarious."

"Look, it wasn't that sim—"

"Stop," he interrupted her. "You can save your 'I didn't have a choice' crap, cause I've heard it all."

"Well, I *didn't*."

"Oh no? You always have a choice."

"What—like you did when you shot that kid on the bus?"

The sudden silence in the room could have easily matched that of outer space, and none of them said a word for what seemed the eternity of ten seconds.

"Shit," Daniella finally conceded. "That just came out. I didn't mean that."

"Yes, you did," he said in a bitter voice. "And you know what? Yes, I *had* a choice. And I made it. God only knows if it was the right one, but I made it. And so did you when Caligra asked you to spy on me."

"*Spy* on you? Come on, now you're blowing this out of proportion."

"That was what you did, wasn't it? Watch my every move, report back on every little slip of my sanity, just waiting for that one moment where koo-koo crazy cop fucks up badly enough to suspend him. Is that it?"

"No, that's not it!" she shot back, a touch of anger swinging in her voice. "Caligra, she was concerned. And I *hated* it. I hated it every time she would ask me into her office to ask how you were doing. I was *this* close to saying no." She underlined it with a gesture of her thumb and forefinger.

"Oh yeah? And why didn't you?"

"Come on, you know what that would have meant. It was either that, or saying goodbye to a job I've grown to love."

He contemplated his next statement before he said, “My shrink, she asked me if I trusted you. And you know what? I said yes.” The derisive chuckle he let out was accompanied by a disbelieving shake of his head. “At least now I know where your priorities are. I’m such an idiot.”

She drew in a shaky breath, closing her eyes for a long two seconds. There was true regret in her voice. “I really wish I could go back and do it over. I want to be your partner, not your… your whistleblower. I used to think we made a great team.”

“Yeah, well, not anymore.”

The statement hung in the air, and her pain and disappointment showed for a brief moment in her creasing brow. “Do you really mean that?” she said just above a whisper.

He rubbed his forehead, letting out a long breath. “I don’t know,” he finally admitted. “But I think it may be better if I partnered with Beckett for the time being. Or, you know, whatever little scheme Caligra has in mind for me.”

“Yeah,” she said in a resigned voice.

It seemed that everything that could be said was said, and he turned his chair back around to face his computer screen.

“Aidan?” Daniella said into the room after a long moment. Not waiting for his answer, she asked, “Do you think we can be okay again?”

Perhaps his reply wasn’t the most encouraging, but at least it spoke of possibilities and promise.

“I really don’t know, but I hope so.”

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THE END.