

## Interview with LYNX ONYX (July 2023)

### 1. Tell me about your journey in the leather and kink community. How did it begin?

\*Laughs\* Well, it was quite by accident. In 2015, I was on A4A and was hit up by someone who later became a surrogate father in my journey. Initially that chat was mostly small talk, some flirting, but mostly chit-chat. Over time the conversation turned to leather. At that time my only reference to anything leather-related was what I saw on porn. A bunch of white men doing (what I thought at the time) awfully disturbing things to each other. So when it was brought up I said ...” No. I’m good. That’s not my thing.” After some more chat and conversation, and a bit of arm twisting, I had agreed to attend an ONYX Bar Night in Chicago. Back then, they were held in The Hole of Jackhammer. I went. I saw lots of mostly naked men in a dark damp room, and again, having no previous knowledge or experience with of any of this, I was initially “underwhelmed”—but as the night went on and I met the guy that had invited me, and was subsequently introduced to others, I was educated on what ONYX was about. What its purpose is and how I could use it to inform my own growth into something I never knew I was interested in. Several weeks and a couple of months go by, and I’m invited to apply for membership to the Midwest Chapter in Chicago. 16 of us formed the Predator Line in the winter (I believe) of 2015/2016 and that’s how I found myself on a journey into a culture that would eventually alter the course of my entire life.



### 2. Why did you choose ONYX?

I didn't. Quite frankly, ONYX chose me. Remember, I had no reference point on anything leather-related so ONYX was the very first organization I was ever made aware of. It was a fit because the brothers looked like me. They were receptive to me and my “innocence” and over time poured into me so that I could develop and become whatever it was I was meant to ... become, I suppose. But I will say, I said “Yes” to the opportunity because...”what do I have to lose?” I’ve always been a man who asks himself “why not?” instead of “Why?” — for some reason, it’s harder for me to come up with an excuse to NOT do something than it is TO do something. So, I chose “Yes.” And I’m so glad I did.

### 3. What is the most fulfilling part of being in the leather and kink community?

\*pauses\* Hm, I think looking back, it’s probably been the ability to engage and socialize with people who look like me, but also have a desire for an exploration of their own radical sexuality. To grow a skill set that creates moments that connect men beyond the normal every day monotony of “regular sex” and “hanging out.” The community is broad and comprised of many types of people with just as many types of interests (if not more) but I think ONYX stands as a safe space for people of color to exist without getting lost in the maze. To... (how do I say this?) to live out loud in their sexual exploration without fear of being looked at as a thing to conquer or fetishize or use. It’s also a space to come together with people to merely shoot the breeze and catch up on life shit over food and beverage at someone’s home or backyard, etc. The

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community is a culture. ONYX takes that culture and puts fellowship on top of it and that, in my mind, created the chosen family.

### 4. **Did you have a mentor? Tell us a little about your mentor.**

I have several mentors. I won't mention names because they know who they are. They really do. But I will say, all of these men have contributed to my growth in a way that I can't really write about, or we'd be here all day. Let me just say I am eternally grateful for these select men that took time and opportunity to teach me skills, offer me comfort, provide wisdom and a shoulder to cry on when I was afraid or weary. None of them ever breached the contract of Mentor/Mentee with a hidden agenda. None of them ever tried to coax me into some secret play session or conversation about dynamic. They all truly were there to guide me and support me along my path and I'll be forever grateful. Again, they know exactly who they are and will not have to question it.

### 5. **Are you a mentor? If so, why?**

Hm, technically? No. At least I don't consider myself a mentor to any one person or people specifically. But I do have a sharing spirit and helping heart. I like to think that I am approachable to anyone who has questions or interests in either the Club, the scene, my skill set, or their own journey. I try to offer my perspective on what has worked for me over the years. And I believe that that may serve as some sort of mentorship-like behavior.

### 6. **What is your favorite kink or fetish and why?**

\*Evil grin\* It's always been Fire. And probably always will be. Because each and every experience with fire is different. Although the methodology and execution of the work is structured and performed the same way...every flame is different. Every stroke of the wand is different. Every reaction to the heat is different and it's that unpredictable Release that gets my attention. I don't get off on doing the fire play. I get off on watching how WHAT I do affects the person on the other side of the slash. I wouldn't say — well, yes I will...it strokes my ego to see responses to what I'm doing. The breath, the moans, the sighs of pleasure and desire, the relaxing of tense muscles. All of that really turns me on. And once it's over, watching my scene partner leave my table renewed in some way, makes me feel like I have tapped into a special part of their own experience just by being present to them in the moment. That's hot to me.

### 7. **What was the hardest lesson you have learned since joining this community?**

This lesson was hard. And late and honestly, I'm still wrestling with it. Not everyone is going to cheer for your success. Not everyone is going to understand your truth. And not everyone is going to like you. Sadly, none of that has anything to do with me per se, but it is something I've had to come to terms with. For whatever reason, some people will just not get it. But the best part of that lesson has been to tell myself (often)... "Hey, that's ok!" I'll admit, some days are easier than others.

### 8. **Tell me what non-kink things you bring to a scene. (first aid kit, scissors to deal with rope-play mishaps in a hurry, H2O, snacks for aftercare etc.)**

It really depends on the scene, doesn't it? I always have comfort blankets, water, cleaning towelettes, an emergency first aid kit and large bath towels. I've never thought about snacks. That's a great idea! But yes, it really depends on what we're doing. I try to plan for

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everything in advance and think of all the possible outcomes that “could” transpire...thankfully... it’s been smooth sailing for 8 or 9 years.

### 9. Tell me 5 non-sexual things you would incorporate into your kink play?

Always negotiation. What are we doing? Why? How long? What are safe words (if needed)? While IN the scene, there is always a check-in. How are they? WHERE are they (RE: headspace)? Is the intensity too high/low? Also, a hand on the body to alert them that I am there. That they are safe and all is well. I always ALWAYS end our scenes with a very real hug. It’s long. It’s close. It’s personal. It’s one of the ways I thank my scene partner for the usage of their body and for loaning me their trust. That is probably the most important part of the entire experience for me. That moment of thanks and gratitude.

### 10. What do you see for ONYX in the future?

GROWTH! Every year, the Chapters are ushering in more and more members. We are spreading out even farther across the country with the founding of new chapters. We are opening our access to people with an even broader sense of expression. And we are welcoming ALL types of sexual identity. That’s a great thing to see. I hope that we continue to keep our mission and values at the core of this growth. I hope we are able to champion new leadership and I hope we are able to trust that the people who say they want to belong are committed to seeing the organization (and themselves) thrive because of their contributions.

### 11. What words of wisdom do you have for future black and brown kinksters?

The same words one of my mentors gave me when I crossed. “Play. Play hard and play often.” I’d also say be bold in your development. Become the best YOU that you can be and along the way, ignore the noise. There will be lots of noise. Tune it out and remember why you came here at the start.

### 12. If you could go back in time, what words of advice would you give yourself about leather and kink that would help you the most?

Not everyone is going to want to see you succeed. Do it anyway. Take risks. Be brave and don’t take things too personally. Remain humble. Thank people often. Stand up for your beliefs and lastly...it’s ok to step back when you feel that your voice isn’t being heard. You know what you know. Own it but remain open to advice, difference of opinion and healthy debate.

### 13. What is your favorite leather or kink event to go to and why?

It’s hard to choose between IML and MAL for the top spot because they both hold very important places in my journey for different reasons. I feel that the “Family Reunion” feel of IML is great. The suite. The lobby. The halls. The Dance. The stairwells! Oh my! But then there’s MAL, a bit more intimate but just as important because it’s... the suite. The gear show. The lobby. The halls. But both really do offer an opportunity for ONYX Nation to come together as a force and celebrate one another. And create memories that could last a lifetime.