

CHAPTER 4: FIRST AND LAST

Seventeen-year-old Xavion narrowed his eyes at Malach as the angel threw a tunnel of wind at Cyfrin, who jumped to the side with a yelp. Cyfrin held his hands inches apart and slowly formed wind between them, though much weaker than the force of Malach's. The angel didn't hesitate to shield himself with an invisible force field that caused the air to blow right past him. Not wasting another second, Cyfrin was flown backward into the cushioned ball pit as the class cheered.

"Another job well done!" the kinetics coach congratulated Malach who was wearing a proud grin across his handsome features.

Cyfrin groaned sadly as he crawled out of the pit. Zisa laughed as he accidentally stumbled to the side a er standing. "Why would you even volunteer to go against him? He's the best in the class!" she snickered.

"But I've been practicing," Cyfrin mumbled with a pout. He paused for a second before a wicked smile grew on his face. "Coach! Coach!"

The coach turned to Cyfrin with an unamused look. "What is it?"

"Zisa wants to go next!" he shouted childishly.

Her jaw dropped. "I did not—"

"Ah, a volunteer! Come on up!" Coach grinned, motioning for Zisa to walk forward to challenge Malach. Unlike her usual confidence, her face paled. She was strong and everyone knew that—but her powers were nothing compared to Malach's.

Xavion watched as she gulped and took a hesitant step forward. Their eyes locked, her nervous gaze making his guts twist into knots. Xavion hated just about everyone on the planet, but he had a soft spot for her and Cyfrin, even if he'd never admit it.

Despite his instincts screaming no, Xavion gripped her forearm and stepped in front of the scared demon. "I'll go."

Everyone was surprised as Xavion wordlessly pushed past the students to meet Malach in the middle of the court. Xavion was the silent but deadly type of guy. Rarely did he participate in school. He preferred to be on his own and spent all his free time practicing instead, too afraid to embarrass himself in front of the other students.

Malach raised a brow as he shook the demon's hand. "Don't worry, I'll go easy on you," the angel teased with a smirk.

Xavion's grip turned tight, almost painful as he scowled. "Do your worst," he snarled viciously before stepping back.

"Oh boy. This isn't going to end well," Cyfrin sighed as Coach whistled into his bell for the match to start.

Xavion immediately tossed a bawl of wind with one hand toward Malach to distract him and threw another with his opposite hand. The second gust knocked the angel back a few steps, though he quickly recovered and created a tunnel that surrounded Xavion.

The demon's heart rate spiked as his feet were no longer on the ground but persevered. Likewise he led Malach on the ground with another tunnel of wind until they were both high in the air. The angel pushed forward so that the two of them were closer, another smirk prevalent on his face.

"Scared?" he teased, tilting his head to the side.

"Not at all," Xavion sneered in retaliation.

Malach laughed before startling the demon by pulling him even closer. They stared each other down, Xavion pissed and Malach amused. Their gazes were almost more powerful than the energy flowing around them.

The angel leaned his head merely an inch closer. "Well you should be."

Xavion gasped as the wind suddenly pushed him backward before he could process it. Malach was about to knock him into the ball pit before hesitating, heart twisting at the fearful expression the demon had. He was considering changing his mind and just letting Xavion win when another gust of wind pushed him to the side. It caused him to lose his grip he had on the demon's wind chamber, making Xavion drop into the pit as Malach shakily landed on the ground.

The whole class was staring at Malach, shocked from how brutal the fight was. Never had they seen anything like it.

Xavion angrily pulled himself out of the ball pit as the students cheered and congratulated Malach. The demon felt humiliated and quickly stormed out of the gymnasium.

No one noticed his exit except for Malach who was riddled with guilt. He only wanted to tease the stubborn demon. The last thing he wanted was to hurt his feelings.

Though that's all he ever seemed to do.

Xavion was fuming the entire walk from the classroom to his dorm. He slammed the door behind him as he flung himself on his bed, burning with a mixture of embarrassment and rage. He wanted to crack Malach's skull open and cry himself to sleep at the same time.

Burying his face in his pillow, he silently begged himself to shed at least a tear or two. He hadn't been about to in years. He was so detached from his emotions that he could barely tell them apart anymore.

A knock on his door startled him. He furiously blinked until the redness in his eyes disappeared before begrudgingly opening the door.

"Xavion," Zisa sighed in relief. "We were worried about you. Are you alright?" she asked, Cyfrin awkwardly standing behind her.

"I'm fine. What do you want?" he bluntly responded, already wishing they'd leave. He didn't want their pity. He wanted to be alone. Things were better o that way.

Zisa rolled her eyes and invited herself in. "At least try to sound convincing."

Cyfrin, whom he shared the room with, plopped down on his bed that was across from Xavion's while warily eyeing the angry demon. "You don't look too fine to me, pal."

"Either stay quiet or leave," Xavion spat, aggressively tugging his blankets down to situation himself underneath them and covering his face with a pillow.

Zisa turned to Cyfrin who sat on his bed stupidly. She aggressively motioned toward Xavion as a silent message for him to do something.

"What the hell are you doing?" Cyfrin asked in confusion, blinking at Zisa who facepalmed.

"You really have no brain cells, do you?" She shook her head as he scooped.

"What's that supposed to mean!" he spluttered, thoroughly ended as he stood up from the bed to face her.

Zisa rolled her eyes. "It means you're completely fucking oblivious. I was trying to tell you to comfort Xavion! What else would this mean?" she ranted, exaggerating as she once more motioned toward Xavion who was hidden under the covers. "Some goddamn friend you are."

"Well it wouldn't be a problem if you just spoke fucking English!" Cyfrin sassily retorted. His fists clenched as he peered down at the smaller demon who was boiling with fury.

Zisa scowled, shoving him back when he stepped too close to her. "If you had half a damn brain it wouldn't be a problem either!"

His gaze darkened and he pushed her back with the same force she used. "Why do you have to be so bitchy all the time! Are you on your period or something?"

Her anger slowly began to force her demon form out as sharp claws extended from her once manicured fingernails. Her voice came out low and gravely. "Say it again," she snarled threateningly. "I dare you. Say it again."

"Okay," he casually shrugged. "Are you on your—"

Xavion suddenly shot up from the bed, terrifying Zisa and Cyfrin by the sight of his full demon form. Their previous anger was quickly replaced by fear as fire heated his skin. Two thick horns sprouted from his head as his flesh morphed into a dark red shade with eyes that looked like a bottomless pit of darkness.

In an instant Xavion had them both pinned against the wall, holding them by their throats. He hadn't ever shied unintentionally before. He wasn't in control of his own body anymore. The evil, heartless demon in him was.

"X-Xav—" Cyfrin choked as he desperately tried to pry away the hand crushing his windpipes.

"No. No his talking," Xavion hissed, his voice so deep it practically rattled their eardrums.

Naturally, being demons, Zisa and Cyfrin were stronger than most creatures. If it were any other person they'd be able to flip the situation in a heartbeat. But Xavion's strength mixed with the rage sizzling through him was more than a hundred times more powerful than theirs combined.

"No talking no fighting" he seethed as his grip tightened even more. "No breathing"

Zisa's frantic movements slowed as her oxygen cut o. Cyfrin too was close to falling unconscious when the screeching fire alarms suddenly flooded the building. The noise sent Xavion out of his fit of rage. Zisa and Cyfrin dropped to the floor, greedily gulping air into their lungs while Xavion turned around to see the room on fire. The flames emitting from his flesh had caught on the linen bedsheets and spread until everything was burning.

"Fuck. Shit. Oh fuck."

Panic swelled up in his chest. Hydrokinesis was a basic lesson they had learned years ago—he should've been able to stop the fire in an instant. But the terror made him lightheaded and his brain stopped working as his hands trembled. Demon skin was thick and immune to fire, but the change in emotions caused him to shiver into human form and he couldn't switch back either.

His ears were ringing as students ran out of the building to safety. The piercing sound reminded him that he was supposed to escape too. He looked toward the door and paled when he saw the flames burning the wood. Fast! If he made a run for it he'd be able to get out in time. And he almost did before hearing Zisa coughing from the smoke fumes.

"Zisa, Cyfrin," he breathed out shakily. He shook his head and swallowed down his fear as he brought himself back to reality. They were too weak to escape themselves. He had to do this on his own.

Not wasting another second, he grabbed Zisa and burst through the door. He set her down on the floor and went to get Cyfrin when he noticed her jacket had caught on fire.

"Fuck!" he cried out, desperately tugging her jacket o and blindly flinging it away.

The fabric hit the old chandelier hanging above them. It hadn't been cleaned in years and the lint on it quickly burst into flames before crashing onto the floor.

Xavion spluttered as the fire spread even faster. Zisa stared at it in shock as she tried to process what was happening.

"Go! Run!" he shouted at her.

"But Cyfrin—"

"I'll get him," he interrupted. "Fucking run."

Her normal fierce nature vanished and was instead replaced by fright. Her nose hesitant to leave but was more scared of Xavion than the fire by then. One more look from him had her nodding before quickly running toward the stairs.

Before he could go back inside, a voice cut o his thoughts. The last yet first voice he wanted to hear.

"Xav?"

