

## CHAPTER 7: BLAME

"What for goodness' sake is the meaning of this?!" Mrs. Sapphire exclaimed as she threw her arms around wildly. Her eyes narrowed at the sight of Xavion guiltily looking at the ground, confirming her suspicion that he was the culprit.

"We were practicing our magic in the dormitory and I accidentally set the curtain on fire. It was an accident," Malach swi ly answered for him. It physically pained the angel to lie but it was for Xav's sake so he managed to power through.

Xavion's lips parted as he gave Malach a confused look. He opened his mouth to protest but the angel gripped his forearm, gently squeezing as a sign to keep quiet. The blonde would do the talking himself. He knew Xavion on his own would end up arguing Mrs. Sapphire and get himself in even more trouble.

The woman's brows knitted together tightly. "You set a curtain on fire?" she slowly repeated, ba led when the two of them nodded. "You are very capable of using your hydrokinesis, Malach. Why didn't you just put it out? And since when do angels have pyrokinesis?"

Malach's confidence faltered, only then realizing the fault in his plan. Angels didn't have fire magic. That was a power exclusively demons withheld.

"I um—I pushed him," he told her unsurely. "Not on purpose of course! I would never do that. Again, it was a complete accident."

Mrs. Sapphire gave him an unimpressed look but didn't think the God-to-be would lie. "Is that so?"

Malach nodded but Xavion didn't move a muscle. He didn't want someone else to take the blame for him. He didn't want to owe anyone favors. Especially Malach of all people.

"Xavion?" she called when he didn't give her a proper answer. The angel squeezed his forearm again with a pleading expression on his face. He was silently begging Xav to go along with the lie, but demons weren't known for their cooperation skills.

"No," he said simply, tugging his arm out of Malach's hold. "My friends pissed me o and it got out of hand. I did it myself."

The blonde facepalmed. Of course things could never be so easy when it came to Xav.

"Malach?" she then said, waiting for an explanation on why he lied about the incident.

He panicked. "It really was my fault! Xavion didn't do anything wrong. I'll take whatever punishment n—"

"Oh here we go again, hero." The demon was mocking his kindness. "Meddling in everybody's goddamn business and trying to fix everything."

Malach inhaled, irritated by Xavion's words. All he wanted was to mend things between them, yet the angry demon never seemed to bat an eye at any of his attempts. Why couldn't he just accept some help?

"I'm not trying to be a hero," he quietly murmured to Xavion, trying to keep his patience.

The brunette snickered as he pointed at Malach, looking at Mrs. Sapphire. "Are you hearing this guy right now? Did he really just say he isn't trying to play the hero act?"

She frowned, confused. "Malach very much isa hero. He's an example you should aspire to follow a er, not criticize."

"Forget it," he groaned. "I forgot all of you blind assholes are the same."

"Xavion!" Mrs. Sapphire scolded, utterly appalled by his lack of respect. "Even as an angel my patience with you is wearing thin! If you don't appreciate the kindness others like Malach and I give to you, then you're running out of luck. I'm tired of tolerating your poor behavior without any attempt from you to change it."

"You're the tired one? I'm tired of being treated like some criminal! And I'm especially tired of everyone acting like this fucker is better than me," he viciously spat as he glanced at Malach with his burning gaze. He could feel the need to shi licing at his skin again, but that would only prove what the school thought of him true. He refused to let them be right.

All the students waiting outside had drawn their eyes toward the fuming demon a er hearing his outburst. Their judgng stares made him uncomfortable yet there was nothing he could do about it. They would always judge him no matter what he did. Learning not to care was the only option he had.

Malach felt a harsh jab in his chest a er hearing Xavion's words. The hate behind his words stung, though he was more concerned by the insecurity Xav was subtly admitting. He doubted anyone else even noticed the vulnerability behind the demon's words. No one probably cared enough to, though Malach definitely did. And it was heartbreaking.

"Fuck you, and fuck this!" Xavion shouted at the woman who was now furious. He knew that she would definitely call Lucifer and tattle about what had happened, but he was too pissed to care at the moment.

Mrs. Sapphire called a er the demon as he stormed away though he unsurprisingly ignored her. Malach's heart hurt and he could practically feel the brunette's distress himself. His instincts pushed him to follow Xavion but he had to clear things up with the principal. There was also the possibility of the demon setting him on fire if Malach followed a er him again

He glanced back at Mrs. Sapphire and did his best to ignore the heavy feeling in his chest. "I'm sorry for him," he said quietly, unsure of how to fix the mess Xav had created.

"Apologies are far past cutting it a er what that boy has done," she replied with gritted teeth. Blatantly disrespecting her in front of the entire school was almost worse than the fire part. "No more exceptions. I need to have a word with his father."

The blonde gulped, knowing that was a sore subject for Xavion. "Are you sure that's necessary?" he tried but immediately shut his mouth a er seeing Mrs. Sapphire's angry expression. "Okay, I agree that his words weren't... ideal. But I should still take at least half the blame for the fire."

She waved her hand, too exhausted and stressed to argue. "If you're so determined to do so, then fine. I suppose you would be a good influence on him a er all."

"Really?" he grinned giddily. The woman was confused why someone would be so happy about being punished but shrugged.

"Yes, really. You two can help rebuild the mess he created, once it's safe of course. We'll need the help by the looks of it." She sighed as she looked up at the massive school.

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Cyfrin, being the loyal friend he is, raced a er Xavion as fast as he could with carbon dioxide still lingering in his lungs. He coughed again a er he finally slowed down to the picnic table in front of the school Xav was sitting at, not having any place to go since their dorm was no longer an option.

"Dude," Cyfrin sighed in relief. He slightly leant down with his hands on his thighs as he caught his breath. "That was insane! I can't believe you said that stu to Sapphire. Well, actually I can, but it was still wild to see."

Xavion looked at him tiredly. "I'm really not in the mood to talk."

"Friends comfort friends when they're sad," Cyfrin shrugged as he sat down next to the demon.

"I'm not sad!" Xav quietly grumbled but didn't resist the arm Cyfrin tossed over his shoulder.

"Well you look pretty darn sad to me."

Xavion's response was cut o by Zisa. Her expression held fury as she approached them and yanked Cyfrin o the bench.

"What are you doing?" he whined a er he was upright. He looked back at Xavion who's eyes were void of any emotion. "We're kind of in the middle of something here."

"Are you serious, Cy?" she said in exasperation. "He literally strangled us and you're still here comforting him?"

Guilt quickly flooded Xavion. He'd forgotten what had caused the whole fiasco in the first place. Instead of apologizing like he should've, he focused on the pavement. It was childish not to say he was sorry but couldn't help it.

"Well, you do have a point there," Cyfrin awkwardly answered as he scratched the back of his head.

"We could've died!" Zisa exclaimed.

They both turned to the other demon yet he couldn't bring himself to meet their gazes. Zisa sco ed in disbelief while Cyfrin felt more conflicted than he ever had before. He didn't know whose side to choose. He didn't want to pick one at all despite knowing what Xavion did was appalling.

"Are you seriously not going to say anything?" Zisa questioned a er the pause of silence.

A headache was pounding in Xavion's skull from the day's stress and he just wanted to sleep o all of his suppressed emotions. He knew he wouldn't be able to apologize and don't want to make Cyfrin pick between them, so instead the brunette stood up without a word to walk away.

"Xavion, come on dude! We can work things out!" Cyfrin yelled a er him while Zisa glared.

He didn't turn around. No, he walked until his legs ached. The woods nearby the school surrounded him as he sulked forward. His heart felt like it had been cut in half and his stomach churned with immense guilt. How was he supposed to rule Hell when he couldn't do something as simple as contain his emotions? He couldn't even perform a simple hydro spell under pressure. Never in his life had he felt so utterly worthless and alone.

No wonder everyone was so disappointed in him all the time.

