

## CHAPTER 8: A MISTAKE

After the fire was put out, the students in that dorm building were transferred to another for the time being. It wouldn't take too long to clean up the mess, thanks to everyone's powers, but it was still a pain. And most of the students' belongings had been burned or damaged because of the flames.

It was safe to say that people weren't very happy with Xavion.

Cyfrin and Zisa weren't talking to him. He didn't have any other friends (since no one else could tolerate his temper) so he'd been spending his time alone. It didn't help that he was constantly anxious. Mrs. Sapphire had called Lucifer. He knew she did, though he hadn't heard back from his father yet. Only three days had gone by, but he was a nervous wreck through it all.

The worst part was that he didn't have anyone to distract him. He even missed Cyfrin and Zisa's constant bickering.

"Something on your mind?"

Xavion looked up at Malach with a scowl. Well, maybe he did have one distraction.

Part of his punishment for causing the fire was to help clean some of the classrooms that'd been tampered with. Luckily there wasn't too much work since it was mainly the dorms that were affected.

"Fuck o," Xavion grunted in response, not sparing the angel a glance as he used a broom to clear the floor of debris. To make the punishment worse, they weren't allowed to use any magic to clean faster. It was torture.

Malach sighed but grabbed the second broom, silently cleaning next to him. Xavion's movements were harsh as he aggressively swept away the fallen pieces of wood. His head snapped up when he heard a chuckle coming from the wretched angel.

"What's so funny?" Xavion glared.

Shaking his head, Malach shook his head and went back to work, though the smile tugging at his lips didn't disappear. He found Xavion's actions... cute.

"Fine. I don't care anyway," Xavion lied, even more irritated than before as he cleaned. His movements grew more rough with each accidental glance at Malach's wide, amused grin.

The broomstick finally snapped in half when he heard a laugh. That was it.

Xavion threw the broken stick across the room, seething. The wood collided with the wall and left an indent of its shape from the impact.

"I swear to Lucifer, the next one is going straight through your skull if you laugh one more time," the demon threatened.

Malach grinned even wider before inspecting Xavion's dastardly expression. "Do you want to know why I'm laughing that badly?" he asked, seeing right through Xavion's fit.

"As if I gave a shit," the demon scoffed. "You're giving me a headache. Finish sweeping while I paint the sealant. The faster we finish, the sooner I can get away from you."

Xavion brushed past him without another word, picking up the sealant he needed to paint the walls. It was a clear, protective layer of paint that would prevent damage against the metal during lessons if any magic went haywire.

Malach's smile turned into a frown as Xavion walked away from him. He immediately got bored of sweeping and instead subtly watched the angry demon begin painting the tungsten.

Because the laborious work would make them sweat, Xavion was dressed in shorts and a black tank top. It revealed the muscles in his biceps and upper back nicely. Malach's staring quickly became much less discreet.

Xavion felt eyes on him but did his best to focus on the task. He figured Malach was just trying to irritate him and didn't want to let the angel win.

Dipping the thick brush in sealant, Xavion dragged it over the wall in one long, vertical line before repeating the action. He only got a small portion of the wall covered before Malach was standing beside him, grabbing a brush of his own.

The demon shakily inhaled. "I thought I told you to sweep."

"You aren't in charge of me," Malach retorted cheekily. "Now pass the paint. I'll pour some out and you can keep the bucket a er."

Xavion held onto the paint tighter and moved it out of Malach's reach. "I'm still perfectly capable of impaling you with the broomstick. That wasn't an empty threat."

The angel snorted, watching as Xavion continued to paint as if Malach didn't exist. Unfortunately for Xavion, Malach was craving attention. His attention, specifically.

"I'll tell you why I was laughing earlier if you let me paint with you," Malach taunted, feeling rather bold. His voice came across teasing and playful.

The demon's hand stopped midair as he considered it. He eyed Malach skeptically, wondering if he should give in to his curiosity or not. He was about to agree but he changed his mind as he saw how close Malach was to him.

"I already told you I don't care," Xavion said a little less confidently than he intended. Malach's arm brushed against his and he instinctively jerked back, causing a bit of paint to splash onto the angel's shirt.

Malach glanced down at the splatter. He didn't really mind, considering it was Xavion, but he wiped off the small glob with the pads of his fingers before childishly brushing it onto the demon's nose.

Xavion blinked blankly for a few seconds as he processed what Malach did. It was merely an innocent, playful gesture on the angel's part. It wasn't intended with ill harm, though Xavion didn't exactly see it that way.

In an instant, the demon was pouring the entire bucket over Malach's head in retaliation. Once it was empty he threw it to the side and watched the sealant drip down the angel's face.

Malach's blonde hair and school clothes were drenched. His face was scrunched up to prevent the paint from getting in his eyes. The feeling was uncomfortable and he would've been annoyed if it weren't for the laughter he then heard coming from Xavion.

The demon doubled over laughing at the sight of Malach's dripping form and the displeased look on his face. He full on wheezed as Malach tried wiping the paint off his face but only spread it around more.

"Well that was a bit much," the angel grumbled, trying to hide the giddy feeling in his chest so that Xavion wouldn't detect it and retreat.

"You deserved it," Xavion snarked back, feeling no remorse.

Malach sighed as the paint that clung to his skin felt wet and uncomfortable. "I strongly disagree, but either way, now we're out of paint."

"Oh please. I know you can get that off with a simple spell," Xavion said as he rolled his eyes. It would be easy for Malach to absorb the sealant from his clothes and transfer it back into the bucket.

Malach smiled as he got a new idea, paint dripping down his chin.

"Well, I could. But how about you try?"

Xavion looked at him weirdly. "You want me to do it?" He seemed even more confused when Malach eagerly nodded. "Why me? You could easily do it yourself."

"I want to help you practice."

The demon was at a loss for words. Malach wanted to help him with his magic? His enemy? The two were quite literally enemies, standing in Heaven and Hell. Why would Malach want to help him?

He didn't believe that the angel would be so kind while not expecting anything in return. Nobody ever did kind acts for the sake of being kind. Especially to Xavion. There were always ulterior motives behind everyone's actions.

"I don't want your help. Do it yourself," Xavion said plainly. He didn't want to owe Malach any favors, never mind that it was embarrassing.

The angel frowned, disappointed. "What's good for us is almost never what we want. That doesn't mean you should pass up the opportunity anyway."

"No need to get so deep. I can practice on my own," Xavion said without leaving room for argument. Well, at least that's what he was going for.

He paused when Malach grabbed his wrists to pull his hands in front of him. The blonde's palms rested against the back of his hands as he stood just a little too close to just be friendly.

"Just relax," Malach instructed in a soft voice.

Instead of blowing up or pushing him away like Xavion would've in his right mind, he stood there like an idiot, having no idea what was going on and nervous by their proximity. Why he was nervous, he didn't know. He just was. It was an odd feeling.

"Good, good," Malach murmured as he felt Xavion's hands begin to heat up. The demon halted his actions as he heard the unfamiliar praise, making the power that was swirling through him come to an abrupt stop. "Focus, Xav. Do exactly what you were doing before. I know you can do it."

Still unsure of what was going on, Xavion did his best to listen to Malach's instructions. It was completely against the demon's nature to listen to an angel, but Malach sounded so soft and kind as he spoke. For once the brunette didn't feel like he'd be judged for making a mistake. He felt comfortable, almost.

Xavion's hands were shaking as he slowly absorbed the paint from Malach's form. The droplets morphed together in the air between them, swirling around while the demon worked his magic.

"Just like that," Malach grinned and whispered to him gently, "I told you you could do it."

The brunette's face heated up considerably. His eyes moved from the paint to the angel's gaze. He didn't know how to describe the way Malach was looking at him. He didn't know whether he liked it or not either. It made him feel weird inside, his stomach turning into heavy knots.

"There," Malach said as all the paint was off. "That was perfect. Now just put it back into the bucket."

This time, Xavion was too fixated on the blonde's state to listen. His heart was beating too fast to do anything really.

"Xav?" Malach called gently, tilting his head to the side. He accidentally glanced down at the demon's parted lips.

The sight made his throat feel uncomfortably tight as he nervously gulped. Slowly, his eyes reconnected with Xavion's again. This time Malach was the one blushing as the brunette repeated the action, looking shocked and confused.

Desire welled up in Malach's chest. The need to kiss Xavion was overwhelming. Being so close to the boy made his mind that much stronger. It was borderline painful to just stand there.

Not wanting to regret wasting their moment, the angel made a move to lean in, but then a flash beside them made Xavion jump back in shock as he accidentally threw the blob of paint at the intruder.

Xavion's heart sank into his gut as he saw Lucifer glaring at him, soaked in paint.

