

CHAPTER 1: THE ENEMY

Néο κόσμο Academy was composed of solely supernatural beings that Yahweh brought together. His goal was to keep peace among all species, bringing them a state of everlasting equality in the way he was never able to with humans. Though that proved to be another task he could not achieve.

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Just like humans, they split themselves into categories. Angels and demons were considered the popular kids. They sat at the top of the food chain, always fighting to prove which specie was better. Vampires were like the stereotypical gothic group with their dark clothes and depressing aura. Werewolves were viewed as troublemakers, always looking for the next prank to pull. Faeries were considered nerds, witches the weird kids, incubi labeled sluts, the others perceived as outsiders with no box to fit them into.

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Five-year-old Xavion wasn't aware of this yet and was excited for his first day of school. Though a demon, he was still innocent due to his age. The children didn't move to Earth until they were older so it was his first time leaving Hell and the boy was too curious for his own good. He also hadn't made any friends since Lucifer mostly kept him isolated from the others.

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Xavion tugged on Lucifer's sleeve, looking up at the gigantic man with wide eyes. "Father, will you come with me?" he asked hopefully. He was awfully nervous and didn't want to go alone.

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They stood in front of the portal to Earth. Xavion had on a backpack with a lunchbox in hand, wearing his school uniform. It was a white button-up with a small, red tie that led down to his black dress pants. Qarinah, the demon Lucifer put in charge of Xavion, had helped him put it on and slicked his dark hair back with gel.

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The devil scooped, pulling away from his son's touch. "No, Xavion. You must learn to do these things on your own. No one will hold your hand when it's your turn to lead Hell. Do you understand?"

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The demon deflated a little but slowly nodded. "Yes, father. I understand," he answered in a small voice as he shuffled his feet together, sadly bringing his gaze to the ground.

"Look me in the eyes when you speak," Lucifer said in a disapproving tone that had Xavion snapping his head up immediately. "You mustn't let the others think you're weaker than them. Hold your head high, stand your ground and prove you're worthy of taking my rule."

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Xavion nodded in determination. He squared out his shoulders, straightened his back and pushed his chest out with his lips in a firm line. "I will, I promise."

Lucifer hummed before glancing over his son's appearance. His eyes narrowed as he tried to smooth Xavion's hair so that the gel didn't make him look so classy and proper. After messing with the strands, he roughly loosened the red tie.

"I must tell Qarinah not to dress you so idiotically again." He scowled. "You look like a damn church boy. No more of this."

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Xavion's throat tightened and he wanted to cower back but instead he remained composed.

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Look him in the eyes. Hold your head high. Don't show weakness.

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"There," Lucifer said as he finished ruining Qarinah's hard work. He glanced down to see how fierce his son was holding himself and felt satisfied. "Good. Now go through the portal before it closes. You know they can only stay open for so long."

"Yes father." Xavion approached the gateway and ignored the nerves bubbling in his stomach.

"Xavion," Lucifer stopped him with a hand on his shoulder. The boy looked at it with wide eyes. His father rarely initiated contact with him. "They will teach you many things in that school. No matter what they tell you, remember who your roots. You're a demon. Don't spare any other specie any ounce of remorse. Whatever brainless lessons those foolish angels muster up cannot make you forget that."

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The demon's nose scrunched up in disgust at the mention of angels. He didn't understand why he was supposed to hate them, only that he must. Father taught him that they were revolting creatures that could never be trusted. He despised them.

"I would never listen to the words of an angel," he spat out the word with abhorrent distaste.

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Lucifer was pleased with his answer and nudged Xavion forward. "I've taught you well. Do not let me down."

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Xavion furiously nodded. "I won't, father."

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And he intended to keep that promise. His fear was replaced with determination to prove his worth to his father. He would do whatever it took to please Lucifer. So he stepped through the portal without a second thought as he teleported to the school.

It was big, huge even. The older kids were already grouped with their friends, talking and laughing as they walked inside. Xavion glanced around to see what the students his age were doing. He felt a pang in his chest when he saw the other kindergartners crying and clinging to their parents' legs while they comforted them. Not a single one of them were alone. Only Xavion.

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Instead of dwelling on the heavy feeling in his chest, he stood confidently on his own. He didn't need anyone else. He didn't need someone to go crying to whenever he felt fear. It was his destiny to lead Hell one day. It made sense that he was the only child to be given such responsibility.

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He watched each child cry with a sour expression on his face. Such an act was considered weak, according to his father's influence. Xavion knew he could never act the way the others were. Part of him felt empty from the lack of comfort at such a young age, though he was unable to recognize that feeling yet. The other part of him that he did understand was the disgust he felt toward their feeble behavior. He instantly knew none of them would ever be capable of ruling Hell the way he was. It made him feel strong.

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As he silently judged them all, there was one child in particular that caught his eye. He was the only other kindergartener who wasn't crying. He stood beside his father, giving him a hug before chatting away as if he had no care in the world.

Xavion hadn't ever seen any other specie in person before, but he could tell that this boy was an angel. His hair was a golden color that dipped into his pale blue eyes. His red tie was wrapped neatly around his neck that was tucked into his freshly ironed button-up. He radiated a kind of energy that belated Xavion. The boy was so different compared to any other person he'd seen.

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For a split second, the demon wondered what about angels was so bad. Lucifer always warned him what filthy creatures they are, but the one Xavion was looking at didn't seem nearly as appalling as the others made it seem. If anything, Xavion was intrigued.

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Then his thoughts came to a halt—the angel was clearly the only other child who wasn't a weakling. His eyes narrowed at him as realization hit him and he instantly saw the boy in a completely different light. This was his competition. This was the boy he had to outdo. This was who he had to defeat at all costs. This was his enemy.

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Hesitantly, Xavion left his spot to approach the mysterious boy. He wanted to know more about him and what made him so different than the others.

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Xavion tapped him on the shoulder, feigning confidence the way Lucifer instructed him to do so. The stranger turned around and met his gaze with a curious look in his eye.

"Hi" the angel greeted with such enthusiasm that shocked Xavion.

Xavion's brows drew together as he stared at the boy, confused. "Who are you?" he bluntly asked.

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"I'm Malach! What's your name?" he chirped with a wide smile, holding his hand out for Xavion to shake.

"I'm... Xavion," the demon skeptically answered, ignoring Malach's outreached hand before continuing to stare at him like he had three heads.

Due to his lack of socialization, Xavion didn't have very good social skills. This made him prone to being overly blunt and asking inappropriate questions at the worst of times.

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"Why aren't you crying?" he quizzed, utterly belated by the angel's behavior.

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Malach's grin faltered as he lowered his hand and glanced at his father who looked equally confused. "What?"

"I said why aren't you crying?" Xavion repeated before motioning toward the rest of the children. "Everyone else is."

"You're not," Malach pointed out.

He bitterly spat, "Because I'm not weak."

The angel shrugged. "Well I'm not weak either, so I'm not crying."

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Xavion's nostrils flared as anger boiled in the pit of his stomach. He considered Malach's statement a challenge. No one could be stronger than him. He wouldn't allow it.

Malach's father interrupted the demon's small fit of rage, "Your name sounds familiar. Aren't you Lucifer's son?" he asked.

"Yes," Xavion proudly declared as he pushed his chest out. "I'm going to be the next ruler of Hell one day."

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The young demon loved to flaunt his status. He knew the others would be intimidated by him and he expected nothing less from Malach. But instead he was filled with dread from the angel's response.

"That's cool. I'm ruling Heaven once I'm old enough too."

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Xavion's jaw dropped at the same moment the bell rang, signaling the start of school. He couldn't believe the news he was hearing. It suddenly all made sense why Malach stood out from the others.

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"I need to go to class before I'm late, but it was nice meeting you, Xav!" Malach said in a cheery voice, hugging his father once more before excitedly rushing off to line up.

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"Don't call me that," the demon bitterly grumbled. He watched Malach immediately start talking to the other kids and how easily he fit in with everyone. Jealously, a feeling he wasn't familiar with, swirled in his gut. He knew he'd have a much harder time making friends. How come Malach got to be so good at it?

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"I'm Yahweh," Malach's father introduced to Xavion before he could go. "If you have any trouble making friends, stick with Malach. He's a good kid though he might talk your ear off," he chuckled.

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"Why would I be friends with an angel?" Xavion rudely scooped.

Yahweh frowned, pondering over the abrupt question. "Well, what's so wrong with angels?"

"They're disgusting creatures! They're bad and awful and I want nothing to do with them! Never mind Malach!" the naive demon hissed back. He didn't really understand what he was even saying. All he knew was to recite what Lucifer had taught him.

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"Why?"

Though only one word, it took Xavion aback. His fists curled as he struggled to formulate a response. He didn't know the reason behind why his father thought angels were so terrible, only that that's the way it was.

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"They just are!" he snapped, his demon tendencies whirling within him. He was too young to be able to shi yet, though he developed a lot faster than normal due to his power, meaning he had the urge to shi on.

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Yahweh sighed as he looked down at Xavion with pity. He assumed Lucifer would've taught the young demon better beliefs considering their peace treaty - though Xavion seemed set on the ancient ways of thinking.

Xavion ran off to line up with everyone else without another word. He had no interest in talking to angels and Yahweh wouldn't be an exception.

Everyone was whispering to each other as the teacher went over some rules he didn't care about. He felt slightly embarrassed that he had no one to talk to but he didn't let it show. Instead he strode right into Néο κόσμο Academy, reminding himself that he didn't need anyone else. He was on his own and he liked it that way.

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At least he was supposed to.

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