

CHAPTER 10: THE UNIVERSE

Malach tried focusing on the book in front of him. He reread the lines over and over again, hoping to get something out of the class, but it felt impossible with Xavion just a few feet away. The demon stood in the back of the room, alone. A scowl was prominent on his face as he crossed his arms. Cyfrin and Zisa were on the other side of the room, presumably still angry with Xavion.

It irked Malach that the two le Xav all on his lonesome, but it was obvious that the demon wasn't looking for company by the way he was glaring at everyone who walked by. There was also the fact that the demon almost killed them. Mal supposed their anger might've been justified a er all, though that didn't make him any less bothered a er seeing the glum expression laying beneath the demon's dark features.

"Are you ready to practice?" Haven asked Malach, taking his attention o of Xavion for the first time since class had started.

He cleared his throat with a slight nod. "Who first?"

Their newest lesson was about empathy. It was one of the hardest abilities to master—feeling another's emotions. Even Malach hadn't perfected his power in the area, though he was better o than the rest.

"You can try it first. That way you can teach me what to do," Haven answered with a shy smile, taking his hands in hers.

Malach, bored, accidentally snuck another glance at Xavion who quickly averted his gaze. The angel grinned like an idiot as his heart sped up.

Xav had been staring at him.

"Mal?" Haven questioned when the blonde didn't move.

"Oh, right," he said a bit sheepishly before raising their interlocked hands and grasping onto them tightly.

His brows furrowed in deep concentration as he tried to identify her feelings but couldn't. He was too distracted by eyes on them, and he didn't even have to check to see who's eyes they were. Maybe the angel was having di iculty picking up on Haven's emotions, but he could feel Xavion's from across the room without any magic required.

"Do you feel it?" Haven asked in a small, timid voice. It came out nervous, though Malach was barely paying her any mind. "Uh, Malach?"

"How about you give it a go?" he suggested instead. He knew he wouldn't be able to focus and wanted to savor Xavion's reaction to tease him later.

Haven paused, confused by the blonde's actions but not questioning him. Instead she tightly squeezed his hands as she concentrated.

Malach couldn't stop himself from smiling at the demon when he caught his gaze again. It seemed like Xavion was pretending he had never been staring, instead flipping the angel o with a harsh glare.

The angel almost laughed, his lips curling up impossibly higher. He shamelessly checked out Xav, fully aware of the brunette watching. Xavion's dark hair sat messily atop his head, a few strands dipping into his eyes. Even far away his jawline looked sharp and was lined with stubble the demon didn't time to shave that morning. Then Malach's eyes darted toward the lips he had almost kissed. Desire pooled in his stomach just thinking about it.

Haven abruptly pulled away from Malach. Her jaw wrenched open as she looked back and forth between the angel and demon. Unlike Mal, she didn't have anything to distract her from completing the task.

The two angels stared at each other in shock. Malach was too busy ogling Xav to realize his emotions were prominent and not di icult to identify when so strong.

"You feel desire... for Xavion?" she whispered, bewildered as she anxiously looked around to make sure no one was listening.

Malach's face burned red, knowing Xavion could probably hear them. He peered over to where the brunette previously was, his gut filling with dread when he noticed Xav was gone.

"It's not what it looks like!" he aimlessly insisted, desperate to run a er the demon but having to resolve yet another issue.

Her eyes opened even wider. "It's true!"

"It isn't," Mal said again. His tongue burned from the blatant lie he was telling.

It wasn't that Malach was embarrassed of liking Xavion, a demon. It was their statures that interfered with that. It was rare for di erent species to fall in love, but not unheard of. What was unheard was a God-to-be crushing on a Satan-to-be. Their worlds were finally at peace, but in no universe could good and evil so strong unite. The possibilities of chaos were endless.

On the flip side, the angel bet Xavion was most definitely embarrassed of sharing those feelings. It saddened him but he understood where he was coming from.

"Malach, I could feel it," Haven said knowingly. "You like him. There's no denying it."

He guiltily stared at the ground. He was to be their leader one day, so he doubted that anyone would directly target him, but wasn't sure if they'd pay Xavion the same courtesy. First Malach tried to kiss the demon too soon, and now he was tampering with the brunette's status.

For someone supposed to be perfect, he really was making many mistakes.

"I won't tell anyone," she murmured, feeling bad a er seeing the sadness in the blonde's handsome features. "I'm sorry if I upset you, Mal. I was just a bit surprised. That's all," she said half-truthfully. She was holding back her disappointment as to not upset her leader even more than she already had.

"Thank you," he sighed gratefully. "No one else can know. The consequences would be..."

"Disastrous," she answered for him before cautiously glancing from side to side. "We should go somewhere private. There are too many people here."

Loud chatter filled the room as students went over the lessons, all trying their hardest but few succeeding. It was too dangerous to be discussing such a controversial matter in front of so many open ears. Even Haven knowing was a risk. Malach couldn't a ord anyone else overhearing.

He bit his lip, eyes darting toward the exit where Xavion had le. "Do you think we could do this some other time? I... I have to do something," he said awkwardly, hoping she didn't connect the dots despite it being so obvious.

"I don't know if that's a good idea, Mal. If you really feel that strongly about—" She paused, voice lowering to almost an inaudible level.

"About him leaving it be is the best option. You know you two could never really be together. It would never work."

Her words made him inhale, his heart heavily thudding in his chest. He knew she was right. He just didn't think hearing it out loud would hurt so bad.

He wordlessly grabbed her wrist and led the girl outside for some privacy. She followed behind, feeling guilty but wanting the best for him. As her leader and her crush.

Once they reached the hallway, he guided Haven out to the back doors of the school. Not many people would be there considering the time of day, so it was a suitable spot for them to talk.

"Listen," Malach started with a glum look on his face. "I know it's a bad idea. I just can't help this feeling inside my chest whenever I see him. There's just something inside I can't explain. It's impossible to stay away," he muttered, not that he'd ever tried it. He didn't want to.

Haven frowned, seeing him upset making her gut tighten painfully. "I don't think you're quite understanding the severity of the situation, Malach," she murmured while their eyes locked together. "Do you know what Lucifer would do? How the Council would react? What your father would think?"

Malach swallowed. Of course he has considered all of the possibilities. He thought about it every morning, every night, every second and didn't have a distraction. Though, a er Lucifer had shown up and intimidated Xavion into a shell of himself, the angel's worries only increased.

What would Lucifer really do if he found out?

Fortunately—yet also unfortunately—there wasn't much going on between the two. Malach wished there was and knew Xavion had to feel something back, but there wasn't anything for Lucifer to find out about. At least not yet.

"I know," he muttered under his breath, feeling defeated and heartbroken. "It's complicated. You wouldn't understand."

"I understand enough to know you can't continue down this path." She placed her hand on his shoulder and squeezed comfortingly, tilting her head to the side as she spoke quietly, "I'm always here if you need someone to talk to about how you're feeling, but that's all it is and all it can ever be. A feeling. You know that, don't you?"

He didn't say anything. He didn't know what to or how to when his heart hurt so badly.

Instead of responding, he gave a single, sad and gentle nod. Haven smiled at him bittersweetly before pulling away.

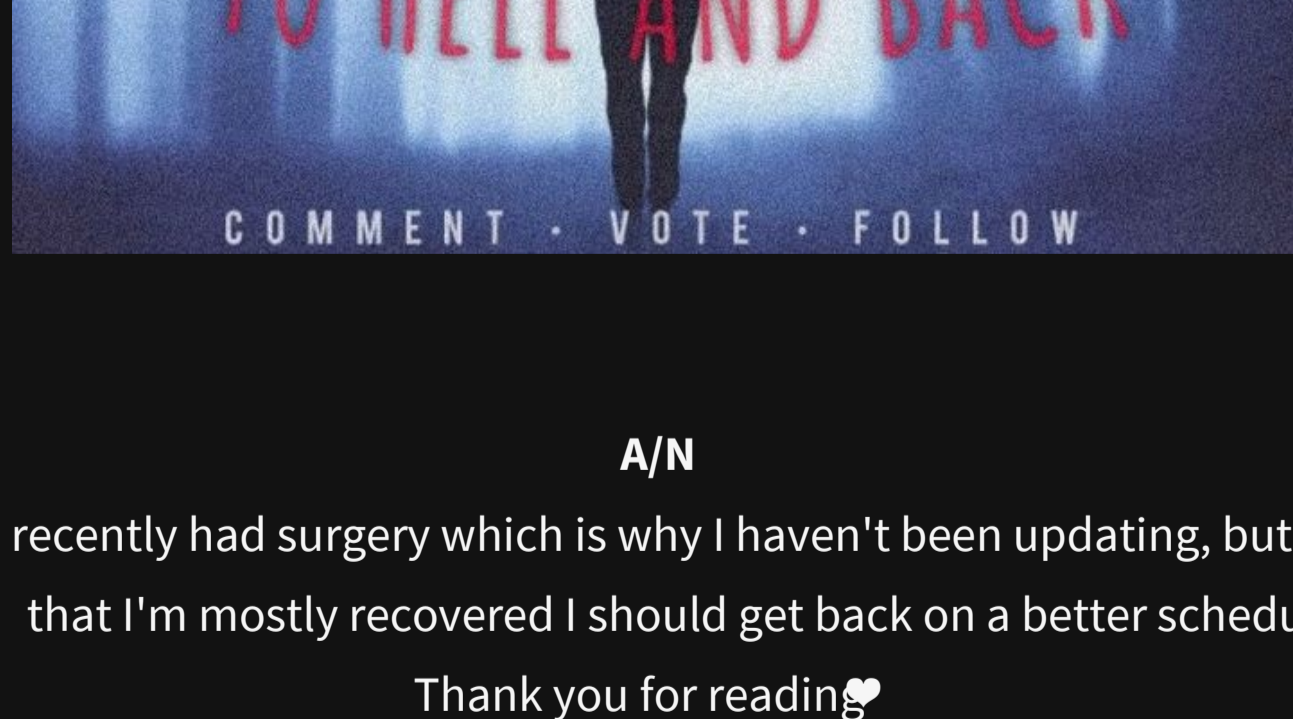
"I'm so sorry it has to be this way. If it were up to me, it wouldn't matter," she said in a so voice. "If only the universe would allow it."

Malach appreciated her honest and blunt approach while still being kind. He knew she liked him but was still trying to help him out anyway. His unfortunate circumstances weren't her fault. She was just enforcing them.

"Thank you," he so ly replied, sounding so dejected it was painful. He cleared his throat before blinking away the light layer of tears forming in his eyes. "I'm going to go now. My next class starts soon."

Haven nodded, patting his shoulder one last time before parting ways. She turned right, and he turned le, not hesitating to search for a certain demon.

"To heck with the universe," he grumbled to himself.



A/N

I recently had surgery which is why I haven't been updating, but now that I'm mostly recovered I should get back on a better schedule.

Thank you for reading!❤️

Comment any character or questions about this book you might have, I miss interacting with you guys. I might eventually do a Q&A but for now I'll just respond in the comment section!