

CHAPTER 2: JEALOUSY

Ten-year-old Xavion sat with his brows scrunched up as he glared at the sapling resting upon his desk. Fifth grade was the designated age for the students to start learning their magical abilities in depth. Each specie was known for having simple powers like agility, strength, immortality, the basics. Though everyone also had their individualistic magic that was unique to them. It typically wasn't discovered until their late teenage years and there was no telling what abilities they'd have in advance.

The first lesson was on florakinesis—the power to control plants. It was a mostly harmless activity which was safe for the young children to experiment with.

"I don't understand how to do this," Cyfrin whispered to Xavion. Their seats had been assigned next to each other for a month and Cyfrin took that as a sign that the two were friends, despite Xavion's wishes.

"Shut up, I'm trying to focus," Xavion grumbled, staring hard at the plant on his desk.

Cyfrin groaned before turning the girl next to him. "Lisa, do you get how to do this?"

She scowled at him. "My name is Zisa. How many times do I have to tell you that?"

"Oops. I suffer from short-term memory loss," Cyfrin said with a shrug. "Now can you explain? I've been staring at this stupid plant for ten minutes and it hasn't even budged!"

"Maybe if you stopped talking for two frickin' seconds I'd be able to figure it out," she hissed, glaring daggers at Cyfrin who was entertained her irritation.

"Well maybe if you had half a brain you'd know how to!" he sassed back, trying to annoy her more out of boredom.

"You don't know how to do it either!" Zisa scolded as she angrily crossed her arms.

"You don't know how to do it either," Cyfrin mimicked in an overly high-pitched voice.

Xavion stared at the sapling intensely. The point was to grow it into a small tree and the thought seemed easy enough. He was determined to finish the lesson first to show off his powers but the task turned out to be more difficult than he had anticipated. After boiling in his veins as nothing happened, Cyfrin and Zisa's bickering just pissing him off even more.

"Could you both just shut the hell up!" he suddenly shouted, cutting them both off and grabbing the entire room's attention.

"Xavion!" Mrs Uriel scolded the young demon with a disapproving look on her face.

Xavion clenched his fists but didn't say anything. No matter how badly he wanted to explode, he couldn't. Not when they'd call father and tell on him. The last thing he wanted to do was disappoint Lucifer. He turned back to the sapling, muttering empty threats under his breath.

Cyfrin began to repeatedly poke Xavion's shoulder. "Are you mad at me? I'm sorry if you are," he said with a sad pout.

Xavion glared at him from the corner of his eye, slapping Cyfrin's hand away. "Touch me again and you die."

Zisa burst into hysterical laughter when Cyfrin's face paled. Neither of them would be surprised if Xavion went through with his threat. It was typical behavior for him.

Xavion took a deep breath and squeezed his eyes shut. The class was still talking amongst themselves, but this time he wasn't listening. All he felt was himself and the sapling. His hands raised until they were hovering over it. They began to slightly shake as he transferred his power into the plant.

More leaves sprouted from the stem which grew a few inches taller until it was the size of a basketball. His eyes wrenched open, a wide smile growing on his face as he realized he really did it. It was his first time using his magic and the power flowing through him was exhilarating.

"Cyfrin! Zisa!" he said giddily, acting like a completely different person compared to only moments ago. His anger and bitterness melted away as excitement swarmed through him.

Xavion looked up when neither of them responded, confused when he noticed they both weren't there. He checked the tables behind him and they were deserted as well. He was taken aback until he checked the front table, his heart dropping to his stomach.

Everyone was surrounding Malach who's sapling had grown into a full blown tree. The leaves prodded against the ceiling as the bark thickened. It was a hundred times larger than the one Xavion grew. All the students were drowning Malach in compliments and words of encouragement who proudly stood next to his tree.

"How did you do that?!" Cyfrin choked as he stared at the tree in awe.

"That was amazing!" even Zisa chimed in. "Can you teach us how?"

Xavion's smile slowly fell from his face before plummeting into the ground. Rather than the pride he felt seconds ago, he was filled with embarrassment instead. His work looked pathetic now.

His throat felt tight as Cyfrin guided Malach toward their table so that the angel could teach them how to grow their saplings too. Xavion quickly grabbed his small tree and rushed over to the trash, tossing it into the can before anyone could see and rushed into the bathroom.

"Hold your hands like this," Malach instructed Cyfrin who eagerly complied. "Good. Now focus all your attention onto it and imagine what you want it to look like."

Cyfrin twisted his face together as he tried his hardest to grow his sapling. A few moments the leaves began to move. The demon's excitement grew too quickly, making him lose focus and causing the plant to wither until it was even smaller than before.

"What the hell was that?" Zisa laughed, enjoying the disappointment across Cyfrin's features.

"I'd like to see you do better!" he angrily snarled.

She scolded. "Okay, then watch."

Malach's attention turned to Xavion as the bathroom door opened. The angel frowned at the sight of Xavion's eyes that were slightly tinted red. He'd been crying.

"Is Xav okay?" Malach whispered to Cyfrin who was barely listening, instead gawking as Zisa began to grow her tree.

"Xavion? Yeah, he's fine," Cyfrin answered, waving it off.

Malach wasn't satisfied with that answer but didn't say anything since Xavion was walking back to the table. Before Malach could get a word out, the demon had already grabbed his backpack and moved to a seat in the back of the room without acknowledging him.

Unable to resist his good-natured instincts, Malach grabbed one of the extra saplings and followed him. The angel casually plopped down into the seat beside him.

"Mind if I sit here?" he asked, fumbling with the plant in his hand.

"Yes," Xavion spat venomously.

Malach hesitated but didn't move. He'd known since kindergarten that Xavion wasn't his biggest fan, though he never knew why. The demon always seemed to hate him for no reason.

"Where's your sapling?" he tried instead. Xavion shifted his gaze, staring at the ground in shame but didn't say a word. "I can teach you how to do it if you don't know how."

"I know how to do it," Xavion growled, "I don't need your goddamn help!"

Malach blinked, surprised by the sudden aggression. "I know you don't need it, but you have it if you want," he offered.

"Well I don't!" Xavion snapped as he glared at the angel as hard as he could, wishing he'd disappear.

Sighing in defeat, Malach glanced down at the sapling one last time. He held one of the leaves in his palm and harnessed his energy into it until a flower blossomed. He plucked it from the tree and gently took Xavion's hand, placing the flower in his palm.

"Let me know if you change your mind. I know you can do it by yourself, but getting help once in a while won't do you any harm," he said simply before standing up and pushing the chair in behind him, leaving to sit with his friends.

Xavion's shocked eyes were locked on the flower in his hand. The petals were so soft against his skin, each thin and a beautiful shade of purple. His heart twisted in his chest as his cheeks heated up.

Malach just gave me a flower.

Xavion's eyes hesitantly traveled toward Malach who was helping another girl with her sapling. He stood close to her, positioning her hands over the leaves as they began to grow. Her cheeks were red while she giggled at Malach like he was the greatest thing she'd ever seen.

The fluttery feeling he had quickly drained away as he realized Malach was just showing off. How Malach was only showing off. His fists curled into balls, wanting nothing more than to destroy everything in sight as his heart broke all over again.

Malach, now fourteen, sat at his usual lunch table with his friends. He pushed his food around his plate as they all talked. Despite being the most popular guy in school, he didn't have anyone that really cared about him. He knew they all only wanted him for his status.

"Hey Mal," Haven, another angel, greeted him with wide smile. She sat down next to him as she slipped her backpack off to get out her lunch.

"Hey," he murmured quietly, not even bothering to look at her.

"How are you doing? It's so beautiful out today!" she said, tilting her head when he still didn't make eye contact.

Malach nodded and hummed, staring across the cafeteria. He'd been staring at Xavion for a total of ten minutes without paying mind to any of the people trying to talk to him. He sighed, watching as Cyfrin said something to Xavion that actually made him laugh. The demon's lips curled up as the sound poured out of him and Malach wished he was close enough to hear. Xavion rarely smiled, so you had to appreciate it while it lasted. And he only laughed harder when Zisa threw a grape at Cyfrin that ended up hitting him in the eye.

Malach found laughter bubbling up in his stomach as Cyfrin dramatically cupped his eye while Xavion covered his mouth with his hand as if he were embarrassed of merely smiling. The angel sighed as Haven kept speaking. He wanted the kind of friends Xavion had. They were genuine while all his were using him.

"What the hell was that?" Lycus, a werewolf, blurted out the second Haven left. Malach didn't know where she went but he didn't care either.

"What was what?" he asked, finally taking his eyes off Xavion to see Lycus silently judging him.

"You just ignored the prettiest girl in school practically offering herself to you on a silver platter!" Aiolos exclaimed, bewildered by Malach's behavior.

Malach gave them both an unimpressed look. "Who are you talking about? Haven?"

"This is hopeless," Lycus groaned as he facepalmed. "I swear you're going to die a virgin. So many girls are after you, yet you've never even had a girlfriend before. It's an abuse of power!"

"You're one to talk. You've never had a girlfriend either," Malach said with an eye roll.

"That's because I'm waiting for my mate. What's your excuse?" Lycus sassed.

Malach just shook his head, eyes slowly focusing on Xavion again. Except this time there was another guy at their table. The angel was confused, considering the three of them never hung out with anyone else, until the guy slid his arm around Xavion's shoulder before kissing him.

A feeling Malach couldn't explain burst in his chest. His gut wrenched in the pit of his stomach as he stared at the two of them. He watched their lips connect as Xavion kissed the guy, sturdily holding onto his waist. The angel felt like he was going to throw up.

He wasn't stupid. He understood fairly quickly what made him feel so queasy all of a sudden. It made sense why he was never interested in any of the girls that would flirt with him.

The bell rang and Malach didn't hesitate to jump out of his seat. Without having any clue what he was doing, he darted after Xavion who was on his way toward the cafeteria exit.

