

CHAPTER 33: TAKE MY HAND

A few months flew by before they knew it. Malach had been helping Xavion work on his magic almost every single day, though they had very little progress to show for it. Xav was becoming increasingly frustrated with himself as each failed lesson, but Mal always knew how to calm him down with a few encouraging words and gentle touches.

Though today wasn't a day for them to practice their powers. Today was Malach's coronation.

"I look ridiculous," Xav complained as he looked at himself in Mal's bedside mirror. "Are you sure I can't just wear black?"

Malach stood in his connecting bathroom, adjusting his slicked back hair one last time. He was wearing a cream colored ceremonial robe with golden accents around the seams. The ensemble tied together in the front with a matching gold sash, which was a traditional outfit for high ranking angels.

Xavion, on the other hand, had on a white tux with feathered details embroidered along the front. It had taken weeks of convincing and a couple bribes before the demon agreed, eventually succumbing to Malach's wishes. It was his big day as well.

"I think you look gorgeous," Mal murmured as he left the bathroom, eyeing his boyfriend up and down.

Xavion snorted. "Gorgeous? I look like a goose. Who the hell thought putting feathers on a tux was a good idea?"

"It's standard apparel for coronations," Malach chuckled. "Now come on, the ceremony will begin soon."

Xavion followed him outside, almost impressed by all of the fancy decorations. There were ice sculptures, glass chandeliers, foam ornaments, white dahlia centerpiece arrangements - it was all very elaborate and overdone. Xav supposed he shouldn't have been very surprised as well. The angels worshipped Malach like he was the greatest being to ever exist. Begrudgingly, (though never aloud) Xavion had to agree.

They'd been together for nearly six months now, and Malach was essentially perfect. He was always so incredibly sweet and encouraging and kind and, though it used to make Xav want to throw up in his mouth a little, now he couldn't help but feel unconditional adoration for the angel. No one deserved this day more than Malach. So, even if he had to dress up like a bird and talk to a couple snooty angels, it was worth it. For Mal.

Plus, he could catch a glimpse of his sculpted abs through the robe every time the angel leaned at a certain angle, glistening in the sunlight. That also helped.

The two reached the arch where the official ceremony was to be held. Xav let go of Malach's hand he had earlier stolen, nodding his head.

"Good luck," he whispered, "I would kiss you if there weren't a million angels staring at us right now."

Mal laughed, leaning in for a quick kiss anyway. "I'm stealing a kiss anyway," he mumbled against the demon's lips.

As Xavion took his seat, Malach turned around to see that Xav was in fact telling the truth. Rows and rows of angels eagerly watched Mal as he began to walk down the silk rug leading to Yahweh who stood there with a proud smile. Beside him stood Laila and Seraph, holding a luminescent staff in their gloved hands.

Malach confidently walked to the end of the rug, climbing a few cobblestone steps before finally reaching his father. Mal's heart was beating fast, but he didn't feel nervous. He'd been awaiting this day his entire life - even as a child he knew this day would come. He'd rule beside his father and make the universe a better place. All he could feel was excitement. Hopefully, Xav could rule with him once they were married, but he saved that thought for later.

"Welcome angels," Yahweh's voice boomed over the crowd, watching as his people stood to bow. "Today marks a day in history that shall never be forgotten. Today, my son becomes the most powerful angel in all of Heaven."

Laila and Seraph both grinned, handing Yahweh the staff before taking a small step back.

Yahweh held the object in front of him as he looked into Malach's eyes with nothing but pride. "These past decades have not been easy on me, but I'm confident that my son is strong enough to make the change that I could not. And with the council as my witness, I hereby grant Malach my remaining strength to take my position."

Malach's jaw dropped. "Dad—"

Before he could get out another word, Yahweh held out the staff, forcing Mal's hands to take it with his own. He spoke gently so only his son could hear, "I failed the world once, and now it's in your hands to do better than I ever could. I trust that you'll make a better God than I was able."

Malach's eyes began to water. "But I can't rule without you. If you give me the rest of your power, you'll... you'll die!" he whispered, horrified at the thought.

He loved his father. He couldn't imagine life without him. His entire life Malach had pictured ruling Heaven with Yahweh right next to him, the two of them in charge. Malach didn't know if he could even do it without him. He didn't think he was strong enough to.

Yahweh held back tears of his own. "I'm getting old, son. I'm old and tired. That's why I'm handing down my power to you. You need to take it."

A tear ran down Malach's cheek. He didn't know what to say, too shocked by his father's words to stop him when Yahweh reached his hand to the sky. A bright light shone in his palm, his arm shaking as he lowered it until it was right in front of Malach.

"Take my hand, son."

Mal shook his head, choking up. "It'll kill you!"

"Malach, take my hand," Yahweh said firmly as his eyes began to glow white with the power emitting through his body.

Malach's chest felt unbearably tight. He didn't want to lose his father, but Yahweh didn't seem willing to budge. He didn't know what to do.

"Take my hand!" Yahweh demanded, his shoulders begin to shake as the blinding light grew overwhelming.

Before the angel could make a decision, he was interrupted by the crowd screaming in terror. Malach turned his head to see what they were all looking at, seeing their gaze behind him. And when he realized what they were screaming about, all he could do was stare as an eruption of blood stained his robe, Laila's decapitated head sliding off her body before her corpse fell to the floor with a thump.



A/N

Bet y'all weren't expecting that. RIP Laila I never gave you much character depth anyway