Shaken, Not Stirred

by astudyinfic

Summary

After an explosive coming out at the Institute, Alec seeks refuge at the Hunter's Moon where he befriends a motley crew of Downworlders.

When Bat calls in sick, Maia recruits him to help at the bar.

It goes as well as can be expected.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes.
When Alec finally snapped, it was an explosive event few were likely to forget. Too much pressure, too many disparaging remarks. He couldn't take it anymore. So everything came out in a violent outburst. He was gay! He hated having to cover for his siblings all the time! He just wanted to be able to live his own life on occasion! As everyone stared on in shock, he grabbed his coat and was out the door before he had any idea where he was going.

Unsure where else to go, he stomped around the city until he ended up at the Hunter’s Moon, in search of some distraction from the events of the evening. He ended up sat at the bar nursing a drink and a bad attitude.

"What's wrong, Shadowhunter? No one to beat up?" the bartender joked, sending a flirty smile in his direction.

He tried to answer it with a smile of his own, but could only manage the smallest of smirks. "That sounds like a good idea. But no. I came out tonight. Well, more like exploded out. There was yelling, all on my side, and then I stormed out before anyone could respond. I'm supposed to be the Head of the Institute someday. I guess I just ruined that."

The bartender smiled and took the glass from him, before sliding a different one over to him. "Alright, after the night you've had, you need something stronger. I'm Maia, by the way."

"Alec." He smiled and lifted his glass in a toast.

And so a friendship was born.

Alec spent at least one night a week at the Hunter’s Moon, talking with Maia, having a drink, and just being himself with no pressure to be a Lightwood. No pressure to be a protective older brother. No pressure to pretend to be straight. It was refreshing, and Alec realized sadly that Maia was the first friend he'd ever had that wasn't a Shadowhunter. How could he ever be an effective leader in the Shadow World if he never talked to anyone but his own people?

But while Maia might have been his first friend, she was far from his last. Maia introduced him to the pack. Bat, the soft-spoken new wolf who helped Maia tend the bar. Luke, their alpha, who was one of the best men Alec ever met. Maia introduced him to Lily, a vampire from the local clan with a tongue as sharp as her teeth, and to Raphael, who mostly glared, but that was something Alec understood. Alec himself often had that look when someone new was interacting with his siblings,
and he had no doubt that this was a family.

Unconventional, perhaps, but a family nonetheless.

Alec became a regular, and he would sit there, talking with Maia and anyone else who happened to be around. The din of the crowded bar didn't bother him the way it might have in other situations, because he was with friends. Werewolves and vampires who were friends with a Shadowhunter. The Clave would’ve been horrified, but they were already horrified by him so Alec didn't see how this made things any worse.

One night, he arrived for his usual drink, but there was more chaos than he was used to. Maia looked ready to start throwing punches and when he sat down, she spun to glare at him. "What do you want?" she demanded before softening when she saw who it was. "Sorry, Alec. Bat wolfed out earlier today, so he's at home licking his wounds, so to speak."

"Is he alright?" That didn't sound good. While he didn't understand how the transformation from human to wolf worked, it always looked painful and Alec felt bad for him.

She nodded and smiled. "He's fine. Mostly just embarrassed. But he left me here and I'm swamped." A terrifying light came to her eyes, and Alec was shaking his head before she could even speak. "All I need you to do is stand here and glare at people. I can make the drinks but if you can keep them in line, that would be great."

His eyes wide, Alec continued to shake his head, terrified by the very thought. "The only job I've ever had is demon-hunter, Maia. I can't tend bar. I don't know how to make anything."

"You've been here long enough, you can pour drafts and keep people away from me until I can get to them. Come on." She tossed an apron to him and that was that.

Alec found it hard to say no to Maia. She reminded him of Izzy; strong and passionate, a woman who knew what she wanted and had Alec wrapped around her little finger. If they ever met, he'd be screwed.

"Fine, but don't blame me when this turns out to be an absolute disaster." He stepped around to the other side of the bar, shifting awkwardly on his feet. The bar looked different from here, bigger since he spent all of his time with his back to most of it. "You promise I don't have to make drinks."

"On my honor as a wolf," she vowed and grinned at him before going to mix some drinks for a couple of Seelies at the other end of the bar. Alec got the feeling that he was being played, but had no idea what he was supposed to do about that.

Instead, he stood there like Maia told him and glared out at the customers, who looked sufficiently intimidated, their eyes darting away whenever they met his gaze. Focused on his glaring, Alec didn’t notice the man sitting in front of him until he cleared his throat and asked, “Pretty boy, are you new here?”

When Alec thought about the possible disasters that could occur with him taking over Bat's job, a heart attack due to coming face to face with the most gorgeous man he'd ever seen was not one of them. And yet, here he was, the most beautiful man in the world. Smooth, tan skin. Dark, soulful eyes that pulled him in from the moment they met. Makeup that only served to accentuate his beauty, something he expected from his sister but never thought would work for a man. But it really did.

It took a moment for him to realize that the man was waiting for a reply, staring at him with a bemused grin. "Um, no? Not really. Bat's out sick, so Maia is having me fill in."
The man pursed his lips and Alec did his best not to shrink under the appraising gaze. He knew he was being sized up, but couldn't see what the man could possibly want to look at with him. Compared to the way people stared at his brother and sister, no one ever gave him a second glance. He was okay with that most of the time, but Alec surprised himself by hoping this customer would care to talk to him.

"So, no offense to our good friend Bartholomew, but I am rather thankful for his unfortunate turn of health." the man smiled. "Because I am grateful for the fact that I get to look at your beautiful face tonight. You’re a friend of Maia’s?"

Alec nodded, thankful for a question he could answer without much thought. Because the idea that the beautiful man wanted to look at him caused a chain reaction that led to his brain shutting down completely. He managed one entire word despite his brain going offline. "Yes."

"I didn't realize she was friends with a Shadowhunter. Doesn't seem much like her." The man frowned and then shrugged. "Though I've never seen a Shadowhunter here at the Moon before, let alone one willing to tend bar. So, what is your name?"

"Alec. Alec Lightwood," he choked out, trying to understand if this was some sort of joke. Looking at the shock on the other man's face, it seemed he wasn't expecting that answer. "Lightwood," the man repeated softly. "You must be Maryse's son."

Alec groaned, rubbing the back of his neck and hoping he wasn't blushing too badly. "Don't hold that against me? Trust me, I'm not the son she wanted. Apparently, a gay Shadowhunter who’s friends with Downworlders is a bit of a disappointment to a former Circle member. Can't imagine why."

The man smiled and extended his hand. "In that case, it's a pleasure to meet you, Alexander. I'm Magnus Bane, High Warlock of Brooklyn."

This time, Alec knew the blush covered his face and probably halfway down his neck. Not only had he just come out to a stranger, trash talked his own mother, and made a fool of himself, he’d done it in front of one of the most powerful people in the Shadow World. Only he could be this much of a disaster. "Mr. Bane, I'm so sorry. You really didn't need to hear me ranting like that. I... I should go. I'm sure Maia can handle this without me."

“Nonsense, Alexander. It’s refreshing to know you all are human. And really, nothing you said makes me want to know you less. Quite the opposite, if I’m honest.” Magnus’ smile was the thing dreams were made of. And Alec should know because he knew it would haunt his dreams for the rest of time. “Please, call me Magnus.”

Alec nodded, working his bottom lip with his teeth while butterflies threw a rave inside his chest. Was it even possible that this beautiful, powerful, awe-inspiring man was actually flirting with him?

“Can I, um, get you anything?” he asked, realizing that Maia was still busy with the Seelies and Magnus was probably here for a drink and not just to flirt with the substitute bartender.

“I'll have a martini, dry.”

Alec blinked. He’d seen Maia make a ton of martinis during his time here in the Moon, but that was new. Maybe because he’d never heard anyone order it before. But he started to pull out the things that he always saw Maia use when she made a martini for other customers.

Gin. Vermouth.
Both in bottles. Clearly liquid.

So, by the angel, how was he supposed to make one dry?

Alec held up the two bottles and stared at Magnus, praying the other man didn’t think he was an idiot. “I don’t know how to tell you this...? I don’t think I can make a dry one. The only ingredients I know are wet.”

Magnus stared at him, face void of all emotion for so long that Alec began to wonder if perhaps he’d broken the man with his question. Maybe he was upset that Alec couldn’t dry out his martini? But then the edges of his eyes started to crinkle and Alec was met with the most blinding smile he had ever seen. “You, Alexander Lightwood, are the most adorably man I’ve ever met. Do you mind if I help you?”

Relief flooded Alec’s chest and he nodded. "Thank you. I told her I had no idea what I was doing. I was rather hoping you just wanted a glass of wine. I know how to pour that. But once you start mixing things, I get confused."

Magnus made his way around to the other side of the bar and smiled, patting Alec on the shoulder. "No need to worry, darling. I’ve been mixing drinks for hundreds of years. I own Pandemonium, the club downtown, after all. And while I am not one to turn down a good glass of wine, making a martini is a skill I think everyone should have."

As he spoke, Magnus grabbed shakers and glasses, the alcohol and the garnishes and started to mix everything together. Alec watched Magnus’ fingers, ring-clad and nails polished, with more gusto that was probably necessary, his mind slipping to places that were inappropriate when dealing with the High Warlock of Brooklyn.

Magnus poured out the drink and grinned, showing it to Alec. "And there you have a dry martini."

"But it's liquid, Magnus. That is the absolute opposite of dry." That still didn't make any sense to him, even if Magnus insisted that the glass of alcohol in his hand was 'dry'.

"It's talking about how sweet it is, not if it is wet or not. Most drinks are, by definition, liquid. So it is just a matter of if it is sweet or not. For me, I prefer the dry. Gives it a bit more of a bite that I think a good martini needs. Want to try and make one now?"

Alec didn’t want to admit that he hadn’t been paying attention to what exactly Magnus was doing, more the way he looked while doing it. But telling him that would be letting Magnus know how attractive Alec found him, which was unacceptable. The embarrassment alone would probably kill him, angel blood or no. Which meant there was nothing for him to do but to try and recreate what Magnus did.

Staring at everything in front of him and trying to remember what Magnus had in his hands at each step of the way, Alec started to mix everything together. He thought that maybe he was doing okay. His drink looked identical to the one Magnus made, but the way Magnus pursed his lips while watching made Alec nervous. He was probably doing something wrong, but he had no idea what it was.

Finally, he poured the drink into a glass and presented it to Magnus proudly. “I think I did it. Looks the same as yours, right?”

“That it does, Alexander. Almost exactly the same appearance.” Alec failed to notice that everything that went into the drink was clear, so of course, they looked the same. “Think you’re
Alec looked at the drink and shrugged. “Maybe. I mean, being Head of Institute is probably out for me, so why not. They must like me, or they’d have fired me by now.”

As Magnus took a sip of the drink Alec handed him, his face scrunched up adorably. Or it would have been adorable if it didn’t mean that Alec’s drink was awful. Magnus set the drink down and shook his head. “Nah, they need the staff. I’m sure everyone here loves you, Alexander. You are delightful. But I don’t think mixology is your calling. Besides, don’t give up on being Head of the Institute. You never know what might happen if you put your mind to it. Stranger things have happened.”

Emboldened by Magnus’ words, Alec took a chance. “Know what would be stranger? If you went on a date with me. I mean, if you wanted. If not, I understand.”

Magnus’ warm smile gave him hope as Magnus took his hand. “Alexander, I would like nothing more. There’s nothing strange about that.”

Alec realized that as they’d been talking, the bar had emptied out so there were only a few of the regulars left. Maia was watching them with a grin. “You boys get out of here. I can handle it for the rest of the night.” Turning to Magnus, she glared. “Be nice to him or I will kick your ass, Bane. Don’t try me.”

Magnus nodded and gave a little salute. “No need to worry about that, Maia, my dear.”

She nodded and then turned to look at Alec. “Be nice to him or I will kick your ass, Lightwood. Don’t try me.”

Alec saw the shock on Magnus’ face, as if he were surprised that someone would stand up for him, and vowed that he would never need to be shocked by that again. He squeezed Magnus’ hand and smiled. “Why would I do anything to hurt him? Thanks, Maia. Sorry about being a terrible bartender.”

She laughed and shooed them out the door. “Oh, I knew you’d be terrible. Why do you think I sent Bat home right before you got here? Magnus told me he was coming by tonight and he always orders a martini. Honestly, you two are almost too predictable. Now, go have fun before I make you clean up your mess.”

They hurried out the door, sharing smiles between them.

“So, we were just set up.” Alec laughed, stating the obvious but considering how hilarious the whole thing was, he couldn’t help it.

“Yes, we were. Remind me to thank Maia later.”

The butterflies in Alec’s stomach fluttered. The thought that Magnus was as delighted by this turn of events as he was did funny things to his heart. “I think we both owe her thanks. But until then, you want to go get a drink sometime? Like now?”

“I thought you’d never ask, Alexander.” Magnus and Alec smiled at each other for a moment more, before turning to head down the street and into their shared future, hand in hand.
Considering the amount of time I've spent on twitter the last few days, it shouldn't come as a surprise that this is based off a twitter post.

Mainly, this one.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!