All Things Shadowhunters

by katikat

Summary

All my Shadowhunters/TMI fics and ficlets in one place. Most of these stories are either Malec or gen, with Alec being the main player, one way or another. Later on, some Jalec, too.

Discontinued.

Notes

Translation into Russian: here.
The Wedding

Chapter Summary

Spoilers for the (as of yet unaired) TV show: Alec and Lydia's wedding, Lydia's POV.

His hands were ice cold and shaking, but you wouldn’t know it from looking at him.

Alec… No, Alexander, that was a better fit for the stoic, pale man standing before her, holding her hands in front of the Angel, their families, friends and the Clave representative. His face was unmoving, frozen rather than calm, and his eyes, glued to her collarbone and avoiding looking directly at her, were hooded. It didn’t take a genius to recognize how unhappy he was about the whole affair.

Lydia, because that’s who she was, Lydia Branwell, his… fiancée, soon to be wife actually, felt like a heel for participating in this farce, even though it was not her idea, even though she had as much choice in this matter as he had. Still… the despair that radiated from him made her unhappy… well, unhappier that she already was.

She sneaked a look at the pews, a church-full of people, his family to the right, her to the left, the Clave members come to witness this ridiculous spectacle farther back. She didn’t pay attention to her parents, she had already had words with them; strong, harsh words that fell on deaf ears. She looked at Alec’s family…

His parabatai, Jace, right in the front, he looked grim, his eyes blazing and fists clenched tight on his thighs; it seemed as if he wanted to punch something. Alec’s sister, Isabelle, sat next to him, pale as her brother; she bit her lip and blinked rapidly, as if fighting tears. Even Alec’s little brother, Max, looked subdued, sensing that something was wrong. And then there were Maryse and Robert, jaws tight, backs rigid, not looking at their son or each other, but instead at the large painting of Raziel, hanging above the altar.

The priest kept droning on and on in the background, preaching about love and devotion, and Lydia almost laughed. If only he knew. Or did he know and he simply didn’t care?

There was a movement in the back of the church, in the shadows of the stone pilars. Lydia was sure she was the only one who caught it, the only one paying attention to what was going on in the back, rather than in the front of the church. She stifled a gasp, her eyes widening slightly.

Magnus Bane. It was Magnus Bane who was sneaking around the church, for once looking solemn in somber, black clothes, all the glitter and gleam gone, his hair, usually spiked like a hedgehog’s spines, framing his pale face. He looked utterly, completely destroyed.

Lydia swallowed, lowering her eyes to her hands that held Alec’s tightly. This was wrong. This wasn’t what a wedding should look… no, feel like. When she got married before, it was just her, her lover and a mundane official and they giggled and laughed and smooched even before the words, “You may now kiss the bride,” left the clerk’s mouth. This… this was wrong and it made her feel ugly and slimy.

“I can’t do it,” Lydia whispered, her voice barely heard.
“I… I beg your pardon?” the priest stuttered.

She could feel Alec freezing, she could see his eyes going wide, when she looked at him. “I’m sorry, but I can’t do it,” she repeated, louder this time. Then she looked at the people gathered in the church, her voice booming off the stone walls, as she stated loud and clear, “This is wrong. We don’t live in some Victorian novel, this is not the 19th century.”

Her mother stood up. “Lydia!” Her voice was harsh, scolding.

But Lydia frowned at her. She could feel Alec starting to tremble even harder, she could see the look of wild hope on Magnus’ face in the back, and that gave her the strength to continue. “No, mother,” she said, her voice perfectly calm, but firm and determined. “Enough is enough. I allowed you to guilt trip me into this farce because of what I had done, because I chose my lover over my family. You convinced me that what I did was wrong - but it wasn’t. This - this is wrong.

"All you care about is prestige and power.” Lydia looked at Maryse and Robert. “Just like them. If the Lightwoods set their issues aside for a moment, if they stopped caring about politics for just one moment and actually looked at what their scheming is doing to their son, they would see that they’re killing him! But they don’t even care,” she said softly, when Maryse pressed her lips together and Robert looked down, silently.

“Well. Someone needs to stop this and it looks like I’m set to be the bad guy,” Lydia finished, then looked at Alec who was breathing harshly now, squeezing her hands so tight that her fingers were all pins and needles. “Or maybe the good guy, that depends,” she added softly, then she stepped closer to her soon to be ex-fiancé, pulled herself up on her tiptoes and kissed him on the cheek. “Go to him, he’s in the back,” she whispered very quietly in his ear and smiled, when Alec jerked and looked around, cheeks flushing, eyes shining with hope.

Letting go of his hands, Lydia turned to the assembly and with a lofty, “That’s that. Enjoy the feast, folks, it’s been paid for,” she pulled up her skirts, stepped down from the rostrum, and strode down the aisle, the clicking of her heels on the marble floor accompanied by her mother’s angry sputtering and Izzy and Jace’s sharp whistling and clapping. Everybody else was pretty much stunned into silence.

Lydia stopped only once, by the heavy wooden door leading outside, and looked to the side, where Magnus Bane was hiding in the shadows, looking… well, shocked, hopeful, delighted, his whole body almost vibrating, hands clutched and pressed to his lips.

“He will need you, now more than ever,” Lydia whispered softly, looking into his cat-like eyes.

And when Magnus nodded, she smiled brightly and stepped outside, into the sunlit morning, the church door closing behind her with a loud bang.
Wedding Gift

Chapter Summary

My rumination about a “proper Shadowhunter wedding” and Alec gaining immortality via the wedding rune over on Tumblr, squeezed this ficlet outta me. So there! *dusts off her hands *

It was a wedding gift from Clary, a brand new rune created just for them.

“Hm, Clary, dear, you do remember that I’m a Downworlder, so I can’t actually draw runes, right?” Magnus asked awkwardly, peering at the squiggly thing on the snow white luxury paper she gave them in a cutesy handmade envelope, covered with cooing doves.

Clary waved her hand dismissively. “Don’t worry about it. I based the rune on the alliance rune and combined it with the wedding rune.”

“But why?” Alec said uncertainly, looking over Magnus’ shoulder with his eyebrows raised.

Clary set her hands firmly on her hips. “Well, I think it shouldn’t just be Shadowhunter couples that benefit from a wedding bond. Just imagine the potential!”

Magnus’ eyes sparkled with mischief. “So, we’re to be your guinea pigs, let’s see what happens and all that jazz?”

Clearing her throat, Clary shuffled her feet and looked away. “Well…”

Magnus bounced on his tiptoes. “I love it! Let’s do it!”

Alec just rolled his eyes.

~♥~

When they drew the runes over each other’s heart during the wedding ceremony, there was some lightning, yes, and a bit of a boom, but everyone survived with only a little bit of sneezing and some frazzled hair.

Clary would never admit she was worried.

~♥~

It was only 20 years later that they actually noticed some strange side effects.

They were celebrating Blueberry’s (yes, the nickname stuck, thanks to Jace, of course) 21st birthday by getting him thoroughly drunk and pretending it was a Shadowhunter tradition. So, they were in Pandemonium, Max, Alec and Jace, their little party of three, courtesy of Jace, naturally.

And it was then that a very sloshed Max squinted at Jace and his dad and slurred, “Uncle Jace, you look really old!”

Jace straightened up indignantly, almost falling off the barstool. “I do not, brat!”
Squinting some more, Max nodded and kept nodding. “You kinda do. You kinda look like my dad’s dad. Or a much, much, much older brother,” he stated solemnly.

Which, of course, ended in fisticuffs between Alec’s son and his parabatai, while Alec himself, letting his loved ones get it out of their system, studied his reflection in the mirror above the bar.

“Huh,” Alec said in the end, and went to separate the two brawlers before they demolished the club.

~♥~

Having tucked Max into his bed and having listened to a thorough dressing down from Magnus about how it was not wise to get a child drunk - “Magnus, he’s not a child! He’s older now than I was when we had sex for the first time!” to which Magnus reacted with a gasp of horror and a hand pressed to his chest in a very Victorian lady fashion - Alec closed the door to his son’s room and went searching for his huffy husband. He found him in their bedroom, sulking.

Maybe it could wait, but since Alec was rather freaked out, and now that his son and his parabatai were both sleeping off their bender in the safety of their respective homes, he was actually allowed to freak out freely, he blurted out, “Magnus, you remember that rune? That alliance wedding rune that Clary created for us?”

Lifting his eyes from the oversized cup of hot cocoa, his “I’m sulking, don’t touch” beverage of choice, Magnus asked, narrowing his eyes suspiciously, “Yeeees?”

Alec wrung his hands anxiously. “Well, the thing is…”

The End
Go Home, Cinderella

Chapter Summary

Missing scene from City of Fallen Angels.

Alec stood in front of the window in his room at the Institute, watching the sun slowly disappear behind the skyline. He still had his tuxedo on, the suit Magnus bought for him just this morning in some fancy shop in Vienna. It seemed like years had passed since then.

He could almost see his own reflection in the glass. Tall, dark-haired, blue-eyed… an average man. An average Shadowhunter. An average child, always passing under the radar, never making waves, never of any interest, to anybody…

And apparently just one lover of many, with hundreds gone before him and hundreds soon to follow, a passing novelty for the High Warlock of Brooklyn.

The depth of his hurt surprised Alec. After all, he had always wondered what Magnus saw in him. He had known, always, that he was nothing special, growing up with Jace and Izzy made that quite clear to him early on. He was not the fighter Jace was, he was not as flashy and confident as Izzy… He remembered how shocked he had been when Jace actually agreed to be his parabatai; plain, average Alec’s parabatai…

Nonetheless he had hoped that with Magnus it would be different, that he would finally matter to someone as a person, not because of what he was or what advantage he could give them, but because of who he was. Simply as Alexander Gideon Lightwood.

Alec shook his head. By the Angel, what a fool he had been.

_I live forever_, Magnus had said. _Would you rather I spent all of eternity alone?_

No, he would not. Alec would never want that, for anyone, and especially not for someone as bright and alive as Magnus. But the way Magnus said it, the way he looked at Alec as if Alec should have known better… Nobody, not his parents, not the Clave… not even Jace as he had chased after Clary to the exclusion of everybody else, his parabatai included, made him feel more insignificant than Magnus did in that moment.

_What did you expect, you fool?_

Pulling at his bow tie sharply, Alec let it drop to the floor, his expensive tuxedo and crisp white shirt following, soon replaced with his customary black jeans and a ratty old sweater so stretched out it covered the tips of his fingers. He looked at his reflection again: pale and disheveled as always. No pretense.

_Time to go home, Cinderella. The ball is over. The prince has gone to bed._
Sweaters

Chapter Summary

Just give me one good reason for why you insist on insulting my closet with this… this… (Unbeta'd)

Chapter Notes

Translation into Polish by Pomyluna here.

“Don’t you dare!” Alec barks, stomping into the room.

Magnus freezes for a second like the proverbial deer in the headlights, but then he turns around slowly and lifts the… thing he was about to quietly and definitely rid them of. “This isn’t a sweater, it’s a rag that something big, ugly and toothy chewed on and then spit out in disgust!”

“Gimme that!” Alec snatches it back and cradles it protectively.

Magnus throws up his hands. “I give up. Just give me one good reason for why you insist on insulting my closet with this… this…” He finds no fitting words.

Alec narrows his eyes and says, “Fine. Come here.” Then he grabs Magnus and starts manhandling the faintly protesting warlock around like rag doll, until he manages to pull the tattered, greenish-grey thing over his head and stuff his slender arms through the loose sleeves.

When Alec turns his lover towards the full length mirror in the corner of their bedroom, Magnus almost recoils in horror. “Dear God, what ever did I do to you?”

Alec snorts, then he winds his arms around Magnus from behind and props his chin on Magnus’ shoulder. “Shh. Now, close your eyes for a second and just feel. Come on,” Alec prompts gently when Magnus glares at him.

With a put upon sigh, Magnus complies. And okay, the cotton is soft, worn smooth and comfortable, he admits as he runs his hands up and down the holey sleeves. The sensation makes him want to… snuggle.

“Oh,” Magnus whispers and when he opens his eyes, he finds Alec looking at him in the mirror.

Alec smiles, eyes crinkling at the corners, and kisses Magnus’ ear. “Yeah, oh…” he agrees and pulls Magnus tighter to him, his warmth loosening something in the warlock’s chest.

And years later, when the ugly, tattered sweaters are the only thing Magnus has left of Alec, they still feel like his husband’s embrace.
“You look… startled,” Catarina notes as she follows Magnus into the kitchen.

Magnus, who’s standing by the counter that separates the kitchen corner from the open space living room, waves his hand dazedly. “When did this happen?”

There’s a gathering of people in the living room and they’re laughing and talking animatedly and there are vampires and fairies and warlocks among them, Max and his sisters… and these are not just party guests, they are his friends! He has never had so many friends!

“Ah,” Catarina says with a secretive smile. “You finally noticed. You’ve always been a bit slow when you were in love, and now, with Alec, it’s worse than ever.”

Magnus frowns at her. “What are you talking about?”

“Alec… it’s all his doing.” She waves her blue hand at the laughing group of people in the living room. “Your friends.”

Magnus looks as confused as before. “No clue what you’re talking about.”

Catarina sighs. “He’s making sure you have friends, good, loyal, trusted friends… immortal friends.” She raises an eyebrow, then rolls her eyes when he still doesn’t get it, but her voice is kind and soft when she says, “He doesn’t want you to be alone after he dies, Magnus. He wants to make sure you’ll be alright without him.”

Magnus draws in a sharp breath and leans against the counter for support. His eyes burn when he seeks out his husband in the crowd with his look. There, by the window, silver hair gleaming in the fading sunlight. In Magnus’ eyes, Alec’s as beautiful as ever, despite the six decades of age that bent his shoulders and wrinkled his brow.

“Does he still not understand?” Magnus rasps, his throat tight. “Without him, I will never be alright again…”
Chapter Summary

My family, he thinks, something warm, almost fluffy fluttering in his chest. (Unbeta'd)

It’s the voices coming from the kitchen that wake Magnus up. Sleepily, he drags himself out of bed and follows them…

“… but the knife’s very sharp, so you have to be very careful,” Alec’s saying as Magnus stops in the doorway and leans against the frame, crossing his arms on his chest and smiling. Alec’s cooking breakfast, something delicious from the smell of it, and Max is sitting on the counter next to him, hands in his lap, feet dangling.

“I can heal now, daddy, papa showed me how,” Max proclaims proudly, pushing the bangs off his forehead to show Alec his unblemished skin. “That’s where Uncle Jace’s ball hit me.”

Alec leans closer and kisses the spot. “Yes, you’re a clever boy, but chopped off tentacles don’t grow back, you little monster, so watch your fingers around knives.”

Max giggles, then opens his mouth to accept a carrot stick. Munching happily, he watches Alec dice vegetables for a moment, then comments, “Papa just snaps his fingers and the food’s there.”

Alec stirs something in a pan. “Yes, that he does. And that’s also how he gave himself food poisoning last month, while we were in Idris. So no finger snapping for food. Unless we’re too tired to cook,” he allows.

“Or too lazy,” Max adds.

Alec laughs, Max giggles, and Magnus’ smile widens at the happy tableau. My family, he thinks, something warm, almost fluffy fluttering in his chest. And then he goes and joins them.
Magnus knew he shouldn’t eavesdrop; eavesdroppers rarely got to hear things they liked, but when he heard Isabelle ask Alec about their “immortality issue” as she called it, he couldn’t help himself. Not that he didn’t trust Alec, that wasn’t it, but… if there was an issue, it would be better to know about it and deal with it before it festered and blew in their faces. Like the thing with Camille.

But what he got to hear…

“… he loves me, I know that, his love is… it’s like a physical thing,” Alec was saying while calmly chopping onions in the kitchen, “and when I die, I know he will grieve for me. But then he will move on, Izzy, as he should. He doesn’t think so, he insists that he won’t - and I love him for it, by the Angel, I do - and I believe he believes that he won’t, but he will.” He took a green pepper from a bowl and continued chopping. “One day, he’ll wake up and it won’t hurt as much, thinking of me, and he’ll put on glitter and go clubbing and he’ll meet someone who will take his breath away… And then he’ll put me in his box of treasures, together with memories of Will Herondale and other people who were dear to him - and that’s where I will belong.” Alec set his knife aside, leaned against the counter and looked at his sister. “He once asked me if I would prefer him to spend eternity alone. Back then, my knee-jerk reaction would’ve been ‘Yes!’ But now? Now I would prefer to be just one memory of many rather than know he’s suffering. He deserves to be happy, even if it’s not with me…”

… and that was why Magnus was hiding in the bathroom at the moment.

He sat on the edge of the bathtub, actually holding back tears. He hadn’t felt like crying since… Hell, he couldn’t remember the last time. But knowing Alec felt like this… It was sad and frustrating and Magnus wanted to grab Alec and shake him!

For Magnus, Alec was *irreplaceable*, but it seemed like Alec still saw himself as *trivial*, loved, yes, but only as one of many and Magnus… Magnus didn’t know how to convince him, how to make him understand, that Alec was *his* for him. For all of his 400 years, he didn’t know how to make Alec see…

But he would find a way. He had to. Because to let Alec believe he was anything but exceptional was not an option.
“Alexander,” Magnus calls as he heads down the beach, his pace fast, his expression thunderous.

Alec stands with his hands in his pockets, the waves only just licking his bare toes. “The moon’s amazing tonight, isn’t it?”

Magnus barely glances up at the cloudless night sky as he stops in front of his husband, ankle deep in the gentle surf. “Why does the resort manager think you’re my father?” he demands.

Alec sighs, his serenity leeching out of him. “He assumed. And I didn’t correct him.”

Narrowing his eyes, Magnus throws up his hands. “I got that. But why?”

There’s so much sadness in Alec’s smile as he gently settles his hands on Magnus’ shoulders that all the anger leaves Magnus. “Either he sees us as a happy family or me as some lecherous pervert praying on young men. I would rather not be the latter, if you don’t mind.”

“But…”

Alec runs his hands up and down Magnus’ upper arms soothingly. “I know that you don’t care about what others think of you, it’s one of the things I love and admire about you, but I’m not like that. I do care. And even though I know the truth, that you could be my grandfather several times over, it doesn’t change the fact that you’re ageless - and I’m growing old.”

“You’re not old!” Magnus protests and grips Alec’s hips tightly. “You are not!”

Still smiling with infinite gentleness, Alec tucks a strand of hair behind Magnus’ ear. “I have made my peace with our reality a long time ago. And I don’t regret anything, but… Allow me to do it my way? Help me keep my dignity?”

And seeing the heartbreak in his husband’s eyes, how could Magnus refuse?
“Your friends are down by the wall, watching the fireworks. Don’t you want to join them?” Magnus asks when he finally finds Alec sitting in the grass at the edge of the dark woods.

Alec shakes his head, as he watches bright colors light up the night sky. “No. I needed a little peace and quiet.”

“Should I go, then?” Magnus offers, though he would rather not.

With a smile, Alec shakes his head again and pats the grass next to him. Magnus takes it as the invitation it’s meant to be. He sits down and their shoulders brush.

After a moment of companionable silence, Magnus dares to remark quietly without looking at Alec, “I saw you talking to your parents…”

Alec sighs and pulls his knees to his chest, hugging them. “You want to know how they’re taking my illicit - and by now infamous - affair with a male warlock? Not well. They don’t shun me, not exactly, but I don’t think it’s because of me precisely. They’re still in shock because of what happened to Max and I’m now the only son they have left, related by blood, I mean. It wouldn’t be proper to disown me without trying to ‘save’ me first.”

Magnus winces. “Did they say so?”

“Outright? No. But I could see it in their eyes. They’re all about appearances, all they care about is what the Clave will think” Alec shakes his head sadly. “My mom… I think she could come to terms with it, eventually. But dad…” He sighs again, deeply, heavily.

For a moment, they fall silent. Then Magnus says, “Maybe you just need to spend some time apart.” When Alec looks at him quizzically, Magnus perks up, grins and claps his hands. “Oh, I know. How about a holiday?” He leans in and grabs Alec’s hands in his. “Just you and me and all the wonders of the wide, wide world out there! Please, Alexander, let me show them to you!”

And in the face of his lover’s enthusiasm, Alec can only agree.
“Up and at them,” Magnus says fondly, as he tugs at Alec’s arm which is hanging limply from their overstuffed couch.

Alec raises his head slightly and looks around blearily. “… re we goin’?”

Smiling, Magnus tugs and pushes and heaves until he finally has his lover vertical. “To bed. If you sleep on the couch again, you’ll feel like a herd of llamas ran you over in the morning.”

Alec frowns but allows himself to be led towards their bedroom, stumbling clumsily over his bow lying discarded on the floor. “Llamas? Here?”

Carefully steering Alec around the doorjamb, Magnus grins. “Yes, honey, llamas. Dangerous beasts, those llamas.”

“Oh.” Then Alec perks up slightly when their bed comes in sight. “Bed now?”

“Yes, bed now,” agrees Magnus and lets go of his lover’s arm. “But first, we need to get you out of your gear.”

Alec blinks at him owlishly for a moment, then he tries - very unsuccessfullly so - to get out of his ichor stained jacket. Magnus watches him struggle for a few seconds, then he rolls his eyes, snaps his fingers and lets Alec’s clothes - all except for his underwear - disappear.

“Woah!” Alec yelps, flailing when he meets a sudden lack of resistance. In an attempt not to fall he grabs at Magnus who yelps just as indignantly, when he ends up buried under the near nakedness of his lover as they both fall into their bed.

Sighing, Alec curls around Magnus like a giant octopus and goes limp. “Nice…” he breathes out.

Magnus blinks, then tries to wriggle and squirm out of his lover’s arms. To no avail. Alec’s deeply asleep, hanging on like a limpet.

“Erm… Alec? Dear? This is not what I meant. Could you just… Alec?”
“Did you know my parents were in the Circle?”

It’s the first thing Alec says when Magnus finds him sitting on the stairs leading up to his apartment, dark and foreboding in his black Shadowhunter gear. But he looks somehow… smaller, broken, defeated.

Magnus watches him carefully for a moment from the landing below, the bare bulb on the dark green wall behind his back flickering slightly. “Yes. Yes, I was aware.”

Alec’s eyes are haunted when he asks, “Why didn’t you tell me?”


“I did not know,” Alec whispers, hunching his shoulders even more.

Magnus’ heart aches because he knows how much Alec has idolized his parents, he knows that Alec has always measured his illusive deficiency against their equally illusive perfection and always found himself lacking.

That’s why he says, “Well, Valentine Morgenstern was a very charismatic man…” And he must be really smitten if he’s defending the Lightwoods, of all people.

Alec shakes his head. “Don’t.” His voice is quiet, but firm. “Just… don’t. There’s right and then there’s wrong - and what Valentine did… what my…” His voice breaks and he looks away. “What my parents did was wrong, pure and simple. No amount of charisma can justify that.”

For all of his 400 years, Magnus has no idea what to say to that. Maybe there’s nothing he can say. And so he simply sits down next to Alec, his silk pants be damned, and when the young Shadowhunter leans into him, Magnus lays an arm around his shoulders and kisses the top of his head. And holds him.
Walking up to Magnus, Jace says, “Alec mentioned you wanted to talk to me?”

“Yes, James,” Magnus responds tartly but doesn’t turn to look at him.

He leans against the door frame of his and Alec’s bedroom, watching his lover dress in his hunting gear. With a disapproving frown he notices that Alec has his hand pressed surreptitiously to his stomach, to the barely healed wound he sustained just three days ago. And yes, Magnus is a powerful warlock who has made it his life’s mission to learn as many healing spells as possible since he has fallen in love with a stupid, risk loving Shadowhunter, but he’s still not an omnipotent miracle worker. It’ll be a few days till Alec’s shredded insides fully heal.

“Well?” Jace asks peevishly.

Magnus finally turns to him and regards him with narrowed eyes. “Well, Jack, I thought it wise to inform you that I’m holding you personally responsible for any harm that should come to Alexander on this idiotic mission of yours, because he should be in bed, resting, not gallivanting through Central Park, hunting pixies!”

“He wanted to come!” Jace protests.

“Yes, and you could have said no. So, my dear Angel Boy, if he comes back with so much as a scratch, I swear I’ll turn you into a frog and keep you in a pond until he heals.” Magnus lifts his hand, blue sparks dancing around his fingers, while his cat’s eyes flash with power. “Do we understand each other?”

Jace swallows. “Perfectly.”
Chapter Summary

Based on Shadowhunters, episode s01e03. Isabelle, Jace and Alec’s secret... (Unbeta'd)

“Hey, did you see Alec?” Jace asks as he leans into Isabelle’s room.

Izzy rolls her eyes, quite a feat while applying mascara. “Not that I’m his keeper, but did you try the shooting range? You know how he is when he broods. Won’t stop till the bullseye looks like a porcupine!”

“Great, thanks.” Jace nods and turns to leave, then hesitates. After a moment, he comes to a decision and steps inside Izzy’s room, closing the door.

“What now?” Isabelle huffs, annoyed.

Jace puts his hands on his hips. “Do you know what crawled up Alec’s butt and died there? He’s been unbearable since Clary came to us, and I have no idea what’s going on.”

Isabelle sets her make-up down, turns away from her vanity table and looks at Jace with her eyebrows raised. “You really have no idea?” she asks as if he were completely dense.

He grimaces. “If I had, I wouldn’t be asking now, would I? I tried asking him but he keeps shutting me out. So please, please, if you know, tell me, so that I can fix it! This... this thing between us is throwing me off!”

Izzy sighs. “Yes, yes, I know what’s bothering Alec, but I can’t tell you.” When he starts to protest, she raises a hand to silence him. “I can’t tell you because it’s not my secret to tell.”

Jace snorts in disbelief. “You want to tell me that Alec, our Alec, I-do-everything-by-the-book Alec, has some deep, dark secret?”

“You really don’t know him at all, do you?” Izzy shakes her head sadly. “What a pity. But I still can’t help you. I might love poking fun at Alec, but I would never, ever betray his trust.” She looks at him hard. “Not even for you.”

Jace throws up his hands in frustration. “So what should I do?”

Izzy rolls her eyes again. “I don’t know. Talk to him? He’s your parabatai. He won’t deny you anything. Unfortunately,” she adds under her breath and turns away.

Thus dismissed, Jace takes his leave, the realization that Alec has a secret Jace knows nothing about ringing in his mind with an alarmingly hollow sound.
“Does he never laugh? Or at least smile like he means it, not like he just murdered someone and buried them in the garden?” Clary huffs as she stomps into the weapons room and throws her training blade on the table.

Jace looks up from the rune he just finished re-applying on his forearm and frowns. “Who? Alec?” he guesses haphazardly.

“Yes, Alec! Who else? Do I just rub him wrong or was he born that way?” she asks angrily, grabs her things and starts stuffing them into her bag without care.

Still frowning, Jace thinks. “Well, I have known him for… 11 years now? And I can’t really remember the last time he laughed,” he admits a bit startled.

Zipping up her bag, Clary straightens. “Then there’s something seriously wrong with that guy!”

“There’s nothing wrong with Alec!” Jace protests automatically, bristling.

“No, Jace, I mean it. I know that he’s your… your parabatai, but there’s something not right with him. Maybe you don’t know him as well as you think or maybe you’re just willfully blind, I don’t know. And I don’t care. But I will not let him talk to me like that!” With that she grabs her bag and stomps out again, heels clicking loudly on the tiles.

Jace looks after her, stunned. He knows that Alec’s rather… difficult to get used to, but Jace has always thought that it’s just Alec being… Alec, cantankerous but loyal to a fault, but…

Is he really being blind? Has there been something bothering Alec and Jace just never noticed? Has he somehow failed his parabatai?

That thought doesn’t sit well with him at all…
Grief

Chapter Summary

You seem... sad. (Unbeta'd)

There’s a blue tortoise crawling across the bed towards him.

Alec follows it with his eyes, then raises his eyebrows, when said tortoise turns into a puppy, all floppy ears and big paws, that bounds towards him eagerly and licks his nose once - before turning into a shower of blue hearts.

Alec laughs softly, then whispers without turning around, “I’m okay, Magnus, don’t worry.” He lays on his side, his back to the bright sunshine streaming in through the giant bedroom windows.

Magnus pads across the hardwood floor and climbs into the bed, under the silk sheets, and hugs Alec from behind, the big spoon to his little one. “Really?” he asks with deep concern and kisses the nape of Alec’s neck. “You seem... sad.”

Alec sighs and presses one of Magnus’ hands to his chest, against his beating heart. “A year ago today, Max died,” Alec says softly, voice heavy with grief.

Magnus pulls Alec even closer and wraps himself around him as if to shield Alec from all that’s bad in the world. “I’m so very, very sorry, love. What can I do? Tell me…”

Alec turns in his arms and smiles sadly. He runs his fingers over Magnus’ cheek, then buries them in his hair and scratches gently, the way he knows can make Magnus almost purr like a big cat. “Can you stay and hold me? Just for a little while?”

“For you, anything, love,” Magnus whispers and presses a chaste kiss to his lover’s lips. “Anything you wish...”
Chapter Summary

Jace hated it when Alec was angry with him. (Unbeta'd)

He had been hammering at the bag for an hour now, trying to beat it into submission and simultaneously rid himself of his deep rooted frustration. Alas. The hollowness that opened up inside him every time Alec was angry with him refused to dissipate.

Jace hated it when Alec was angry with him. He hated it with all of his heart. He felt awful every time Alec was sad or hurt, it made him want to punch people - and it was a thousand time worse when it was he who was the cause of his parabatai’s distress. Especially when he did not know, what he had done wrong in the first place.

Jace would be the first to admit that he was emotionally unreachable, aloof even, but Alec had always been an exception to his rule to keep everyone at arm’s length, ever since he had asked Alec to be his parabatai and Alec accepted. He had always tried to do right by Alec, be more… open with him, despite his own past.

But in the last few years… It was as if the tables had turned while he wasn’t looking and now it was he, Jace, on the outside, looking in. While he wasn’t looking, Alec had built walls around himself, thick and impenetrable, so that he didn’t even remotely resemble the bright, happy boy he used to be anymore. And Jace often wondered, if it was somehow his fault, if his own darkness somehow… damaged his parabatai through their bond.

And now, now there was Clary and she was making Jace feel so… well, she was making him feel. But at the same time, the closer he became with her, the wider the cleft between him and Alec opened, until it resembled nothing less than an abyss…

Jace punched the bag one last time, then hugged it breathlessly, pressing his sweaty forehead to the warm leather and closing his eyes tiredly. He felt as if by keeping one, he would lose the other, as if he had to choose, Alec or Clary, and it was tearing him apart. Because it was an impossible choice to make.
Leaving

Chapter Summary

I really don’t have any reason to stay. (Spoilers for the TV show!) (Unbeta'd)

“… not that it matters,” Alec says as he steps out of the elevator, “after the wedding, I’m leaving anyway.”

“What?” Isabelle quickens her steps to catch up and grabs his arm to stop him. “What do you mean?”

Alec sighs. “Lydia isn’t here to stay, Izzy. And once her work’s done, she’ll leave - and I’ll be going with her,” he added gently.

“But… but…” she stutters. “What about… what about Jace? You’re his parabatai!”

Alec snorts and starts walking again. “I doubt very much he’ll even notice I’m gone the way he has been acting lately.”

Isabelle catches his arm again. “Fine, then what about Magnus Bane?”

Alec opens his mouth to deny his involvement with the warlock as always, then he realizes it doesn’t matter anymore. He shakes his head. “When I told him about the wedding…” He swallows hard, the pain still raw. “He wished me good luck.”

Izzy stares. “That’s it?” she asks, shocked and angry.

“Yeah,” he whispers. “So, you see, I really don’t have any reason to stay.”

She looks at him. “What about me?”

Alec smiles fondly and touches her cheek. “You don’t need me, Iz. You’re the strongest person I’ve ever known. Besides, I’m not dying, I’ll be just a phone call away, where ever we go, I promise.”

Isabelle throws her arms around her big brother and hugs him tight, resting her head on his chest. “Don’t go, please, just don’t…”

Alec hugs her back and kisses the top of her head. “I have to, sis. I can’t stay. I just can’t…”
“Why are you wearing a t-shirt to bed?” Magnus asks suspiciously.

Alec shrugs, trying to act casual and failing miserably. “It’s cold.”

Magnus narrows his eyes and crawls across the bed like a large cat to kneel in front of Alec. “No, it’s not cold. And if it were cold, I would make it warm. I made it warm many times in the past, when it was cold. Now it’s not cold, or I would have made it warm. So.” He looks up at Alec. “I’ll ask again, why are you wearing a t-shirt to bed?”

After a moment of hesitation, Alec sighs, pulls his t-shirt off and lets it drop to the floor. He doesn’t meet Magnus’ eyes. And Magnus just stares.

There’s an ugly scar on Alec’s chest, running down from his collarbone to his stomach. Right over his heart. And despite several iratzes still fading on his skin, the scar is angry, blazing red.

Breathing hard, Magnus raises his hand and runs his trembling fingers over the hideous reminder of Alec’s mortality. “Alexander…”

Alec catches his hand and squeezes it tight. “I didn’t want to worry you. I was being careful, I swear. I promised you I would be and I was. But the demon snuck up on me and…”

Magnus doesn’t say a word, he doesn’t look at Alec, he just leans forward and slumps against his lover. He pulls his hand out of Alec’s and winds his arms around him, his ear pressed to Alec’s chest, listening to his heartbeat.

One day, Magnus knows, one day they won’t be so lucky. One day, Alec won’t come home…
"Will dad be alright?" Max asks softly, standing in the doorway of his fathers’ bedroom.

Magnus doesn’t turn around. “Yes, a spider demon stung him. The injury itself’s not serious, but it’ll be a few days before the poison works itself out of his system.”

He runs a cold, wet washcloth gently over Alec’s sweaty brow and dabs at his flushed cheeks, while Max shuffles his feet anxiously. They haven’t really seen eye to eye lately, not without Alec’s calming presence acting as a buffer; father and son warlocks too much alike despite not sharing a single drop of blood.

“Do you want me to show you how to treat such a wound?” Magnus asks with studied casualness, not making a big deal out of it. “Just so you know how to help your dad if I’m not there…”

After a second of hesitation, Max walks closer and drops to his knees by the right side of the bed while Magnus sits on the edge on the left. He takes Alec’s hand carefully in his blue ones and after a quick, uncertain glance at Magnus, he fixes his eyes on Alec’s unconscious face and clears his throat quietly. “I… I would like that. For dad. To help him,” he adds unnecessarily.

Magnus hides a smile. “Yes, for Alexander…”

Will dad be alright? (Unbeta'd)
“I need you to draw a rune for me,” Izzy announced as she barged into Alec’s room, waving her stele like a sword.

Looking up from the book he was reading, Alec frowned. “O-kay… Which one and where?”

“The Angelic one,” Izzy said, then she grinned and pulled her blouse open, showing her big brother her black lacy bra and tapping her chest with her stele. “And right here.”

“By the Angel!” Alec yelped, jumping out of his bed and slapping a hand over his eyes. “That’s something I really, really, really don’t want to see! Please! And besides,” he added peevishly, “you already have the Angelic Rune, what do you need another for?”

Izzy rolled her eyes. “As a decoration! It’s pretty! And it will look fantastic between my breasts, don’t you think?”

Alec groaned. “Seriously, I don’t want to think of your breasts or go anywhere near them! Now shoo!” He waved his free hand emphatically.

Izzy huffed. “Fine! Then I will have to ask Jace.”

That made Alec drop his hand and look at her in disbelief. “Jace?”

“Yes, Jace! You don’t expect me to draw the rune myself, do you? It would end up all… squiggly…”

His disbelief grew. “And so you want to ask Jace? His runes are appalling! I should know.”

Izzy glared at him. “Well, I can’t very well ask mom or dad now, can I?”

Alec’s eyes widened with horror. “By the Angel, please, no.” He then sighed in resignation. “Fine, gimme that!” He snatched her stele, frowning darkly when she grinned.

“I knew I could count on you, big brother!”

Alec grumbled. “I hope you will properly appreciate what an awesome brother I am.”

Izzy almost bounced on her toes. “Anything for you, bro.”
Alec huffed. “Not having to have to ever talk or even *think* of your breasts will be enough, thank you very much. Now stop squirming…”
“What do you need?” Magnus asks as he climbs on their bed and straddles his lover’s pajama clad buttocks.

“My back hurts,” Alec groans, face mashed into his pillow.

Leaning forward with a smile, Magnus runs his hands up Alec’s scarred back, along his spine, kneading his knotted muscles with dexterous fingers.

“You shouldn’t slouch so much,” Magnus admonishes, “or you’ll end up looking like the Hunchback of Notre Dame!”

Alec moans and arches his back contently. “Well, if you all weren’t so tiny, I wouldn’t have to slouch to actually look you in the eyes!”

Magnus snorts.

“Besides,” Alec peers at him over his shoulder, “you would love me anyway.”

Smiling fondly, Magnus kisses his shoulder blade. “Yeah. Yeah, I would.”
“You can’t be seriously considering marrying her!” Jace yelled as he barged into Alec’s room.

Alec, who had been standing by the window until then, watching the ugly gray sleet sliding down the glass, turned to him and crossed his arms. “Yes, I am,” he answered, his tone flat and calm.

Jace was so furious he could barely speak. “You’ll ruin your life! And for what? For Maryse and Robert? Because of their damned pride? For the…”

Alec interrupted him softly, “For you.” When Jace gaped at him in disbelief, he continued, “For you and for Izzy, for Max. If I marry Lydia, our family will gain back its good standing with the Clave. Our situation has been much direr than you know. And it’s been only made worse by…” He fell silent and looked away.

But Jace guessed correctly. “Clary.”

Taking a deep breath, Alec turned back to him. “To be perfectly blunt, yes. Her appearance put us in a tight spot. The Clave already watched us with distrust. And now they found out that we’ve been harboring Valentine’s daughter, that I knew who she was and didn’t report it.”

Jace swallowed hard. “Maryse and Robert - they’re blaming you for this mess, aren’t they?” When Alec didn’t respond, Jace exploded, “But that’s bull! If someone’s to blame, it’s me!”

“No,” Alec said and shook his head. “I was left in charge. You were all my responsibility. I told them so, and I will tell the Clave, too, when the Inquisitor arrives.”

“Alec…” Jace whispered helplessly. “Alec, don’t do this. Just… don’t. You don’t love her, you don’t even know her. If you’re doing it for me and Izzy, then don’t. We wouldn’t want you to do it. We don’t want you to do it!”

Alec looked at him steadily, not allowing any of his emotions to show. “My marriage with Lydia will gain us back the Clave’s favor, it’ll return us to a position of power. And that means, less strict rules for you and Isabelle, less scrutiny. And for Max, too.”

Jace stepped closer and gripped his parabatai’s shoulders hard. “But at what price? Do you think any of us will be able to live with it? Enjoy what you managed to secure for us at the expense of your own happiness?”

A shudder went through Alec, the only outward sign of his despair. “It’s either all of us or just me carrying the consequences,” he said, keeping his voice calm and measured. “I can’t refuse mother’s request. I won’t refuse it.”

“Alec…” Jace whispered and squeezed Alec’s shoulders even tighter. “Don’t.” He moved his hand to the back of Alec’s head and brought him closer until their foreheads touched, then he closed his eyes. “Please, don’t.”
Alec let his hands drop and finally leaned into his *parabatai*, closing his eyes, too, and resting for a moment, his shoulders drooping with fatigue. “I have to. By the Angel, I have to, I have to, *I have to*…”
The Other

Chapter Summary

In this post (http://drakamena.tumblr.com/post/138660744687), I pondered what would’ve Jace been like if he and Alec never became parabatai. Let’s see: What if our Jace, show!Jace, was transported to another universe where exactly that happened… (Unbeta'd)

Jace stares at his scarred, sneering self from this world in disbelief. “You… you never asked Alec to become your parabatai?”

The Other scoffs, his voice full of derision when he answers, “No. And lucky me. He killed himself when he was 18. Couldn’t handle being a warrior, the spineless coward!”

Jace can’t breathe. For a moment, all he can hear is a loud buzzing sound in his ears, all he can see is red, a sea of red. Alec’s dead. This world’s Alec died because… because…

He punches the Other so hard the man hits the ground, but only for a second, then he’s back on his feet again, snarling like a wild animal. But Jace doesn’t let it stop him. Quick as lightning, he avoids a left hook, then he punches the Other again, dropping him.

“You bastard!” Jace roars in the Other’s face as he grabs him by the front of his leather jacket and shakes him. “You know why he killed himself? You know why? He was gay, you piece of shit! He was gay and he thought he was in love with you! He was so scared, so fucking scared that you would hate him! And what did you do?” Jace hits the Other again. “What did you do?”

“Nothing!” the Other spits through bleeding lips, eyes blazing. “And if I knew he was a pervert, I would’ve helped him along! There’s no place for people like him among the Nephilim!”

Jace stares at the Other in horror, sick to his stomach. “By the Angel…” he whispers. He wants to kill the man. He will kill him. He can’t save this world’s Alec anymore, but he can stop this… monster.

Jace reaches for his knife.

But then the air around him shimmers and he’s plunged into darkness, magic ripping him out of that strange world and sweeping him back home.
Chapter Summary

I was asked to write a sequel to the previous ficlet. Tadaa! (Unbeta'd)

Jace gasps, feeling like a diver coming up for air. He sits up straight, black spots dancing in front of his wide open eyes. There are small hands on his back, propping him up… *Clary.*

“It’s okay, Jace, you’re okay now, you’re fine…” she keeps repeating.


Jace’s vision finally clears, his breath still going hard and fast, though, and there - *Alec,* crouching down and touching Jace’s knee for balance. He’s glaring at his lover, but Jace’s heart still seizes at the sight of him.

Magnus waves a hand and says breezily, “You make it sound like such a thing never happened to me before.”

Alec’s frown deepens. “Somehow, I don’t find this comment as reassuring as you probably thought I would, you know… *Hey!*”

Jace grabs Alec by his t-shirt and pulls him into a hug. Alec flails, trying to keep his balance and Clary, kneeling behind Jace, yelps in surprise.

Only Alec’s lightning fast reflexes save them all from crashing to the ground in one undignified heap. He straddles Jace’s thighs, arms going quickly around his *pabatai’s* back, and straightens up, pulling Jace with him.

“Hey,” Alec whispers when Jace refuses to let go, hanging on desperately. “Hey, it’s okay, it’s okay, *Jace*…”

“Well, that’s quite hot, considering…” Magnus comments dryly above them, and Alec shushes him.

But Jace doesn’t listen. He feels Alec shrug, probably in response to Clary’s look, but he doesn’t pay that any mind either. All he knows is that he’s back where he belongs. And his *parabatai* is safe. Alec is safe. Alec is alive. *Alive.*
The Jacket

Chapter Summary

In the sneak peek from episode 105, Jace mentioned that Alec once ruined his leather jacket when he put it into a washing machine. I was asked to write about that incident.
(Unbeta'd)

He will murder Alec Lightwood, Jace decides as he gingerly picks up the sticky, gooey… thing that’s all that’s left of his favorite leather jacket. He knew that the jacket might be a goner considering all the blood he got on it, but this… this is just wrong. You don’t stick leather into a washing machine!

A quick tracking spell tells Jace that he will find his wayward parabatai in the conservatory - seriously? - and when he barges in, he locates Alec way in the back, planting something… well, green. Unless they're poisonous, Jace doesn’t care about plants.

“Hey!” he barks, making Alec jump a foot high. “Care to explain this?” He shakes the ruined piece of leather in Alec’s face.

Jace is angry. He just spent a week in the infirmary - some injuries need their time to heal, no matter how many iratzes one applies or how much the Silent Brothers apply themselves - and finding his favorite piece of clothing ruined first thing, was the last straw. He feels like throwing punches.

But Alec’s reaction isn’t at all what he expected. His parabatai doesn’t try to talk himself out of this mishap, he doesn’t try to make excuses - he just stares at the unwearable rag, eyes wide. And then he turns white as a sheet, so much so that all the anger drains from Jace, replaced with a suddenly influx of worry.

Jace reaches out. “Alec? Are you okay?” he asks softly and when Alec doesn’t respond, he adds quickly, “I’m not that mad. I mean, sure I am… miffed but…”

“There was so much blood,” Alec interrupts him faintly, his bloodless lips barely moving. “I couldn’t get it out. I couldn’t. I tried to be careful, but the blood was still there and I couldn’t get it out.”

He swallows and looks Jace in the eye. “So much, you lost so much blood. I could… I could feel my parabatai rune burn. It burned, Jace! You were dying and I couldn't stop it, I tried, I tried so hard, but you were bleeding out… And then I couldn’t get the blood out of the jacket. I had to wash it. I had to…”

Jace looks at Alec in shock for a moment, then he drops the jacket carelessly to the floor and draws his parabatai into a hug, heart seizing when he feels him tremble. “I’m fine, Alec, I’m here. It’s alright…”

And when Alec slumps against him, finally returning the hug, Jace sighs and holds him up, the ruined jacket already forgotten.
“Hey, wait up!” Jace calls after his parabatai; Alec’s headed down the hallway, his cane tap-tap-tapping softly on the tiled floor.

Jace catches up with him at the top of the stairs and drops his hand on Alec’s shoulder to stop him. Almost immediately he curses himself for his stupidity, though. After so many years he really should know better.

Because Alec startles and jerks away, turning towards Jace with frightening speed. His wide brown eyes, expressive despite their blindness, roam around anxiously. He also brings up his cane, so heavily runed it can break concrete with a strong rap. Jace knows that both ends hide stiletto-like daggers, too, easily extended and wickedly sharp. Startling his parabatai is not a good idea.

“Sorry, sorry,” Jace apologizes quickly, lifting his hands, even though Alec can’t see them. “Bad move. Sorry. I just wanted you to stop, been running after you since we left mom’s office. What’s gotten into you?”

Alec straightens up, shoulders relaxing, and lowers his cane. “Nothing. Nothing at all. I’m on my way to your girlfriend’s room to… watch over her, as mom ordered,” he says bitterly, then snorts. “As if I can watch anything.”

Jace frowns. “You know she didn’t mean it like that,” he soothes. “And you are good at this, at defense, especially in a familiar environment. Remember the time Abaddon attacked the Institute? You kicked her back to Hell, Greater Demon or not. You! Not me or mom.”

Alec ducks his head, the tips of his ears growing pink. But there’s a little smile on his lips that pleases Jace immensely. He knows he didn’t exaggerate Alec’s assets. Jace’s proud of the fact that Alec can take anyone in a fight, his other Shadowhunter senses easily compensating for his lack of sight.

“There isn’t anyone I would rather have guarding Clary,” Jace adds softly. “It would take a huge weight off my shoulders if I knew you were there, keeping her safe…”

A strange expression flickers across Alec’s face, too fast for Jace to catch it, but then Alec nods slowly. “Okay,” he says quietly. “Anything for you.”
“And remember our first meeting?” Magnus asks, carding his fingers through his lover’s hair. Alec makes a frowny face. “You mean at the club? When I saved your life?” “No, later on, in my lair,” Magnus corrects him. Alec rolls his eyes. “I can’t believe you call it that. By the way, I still don’t understand the joke.” Magnus lifts his head from his pillow to look down at his lover who’s lying sideways on their bed, feet dangling over the edge, head propped on Magnus’ stomach. “Which one? I told many that night. You were a hard nut to crack.” He tugs at Alec’s hair gently. “Hey!” Alec exclaims softly and pokes Magnus in the ribs. “Who are you calling a nut?” Magnus laughs, making Alec’s head bounce. “You’re a very, very lovely nut. The joke?” he adds. “Oh, right. The one with the dirty lair? You said yours was downright sloppy.” Magnus guffaws so hard that Alec sits up to save himself from head injury. “You innocent lamb, you!” he wheezes out breathlessly. Alec frowns down at him. “What?” he asks. And when Magnus laughs even harder, curling up on himself, Alec pokes him in the ribs again. “What? Explain it to me. Magnus! Why are you laughing like a loon? Magnus?”
The Scar

Chapter Summary

Matthew Daddario has a scar bisecting his left eyebrow. I was asked to write a ficlet about how ALEC got his scar... (Unbeta'd)

“Jace…” Alec calls after the other boy, running to catch up.

“No!” Jace yells without stopping. “Maybe your family can force me to stay here, but I don’t have to like it! My father…” His breath hitches. “My father’s dead and everybody’s all, ‘Hey, no big deal, here. Have a new family!’”

“That’s not true. Jace, stop!”

Jace is angry. And sad - no, desperate! Grieving. His dad died and nobody seems to care; all that matters to them is to stash Jace somewhere, out of sight, out of mind! But mainly he’s angry, furious even, because it’s just not fair! After everything he endured, his father just up and dies on him!

And so, when Alec grips his arm to make him stop, Jace reacts on instinct, the way his father taught him, the way he was forced to learn - or suffer the consequences. He turns around in a flash and punches the other boy hard.

Alec doesn’t duck - he didn’t expect this reaction from Jace at all. He stumbles back and twists, tripping over his own feet. He hits the wooden paneling with a sickening smack and slides down to sit on the ground, leaving a bloody smear on dark wood.

Jace is horrified. He stares at the dazed boy, at the rivulets of blood running down his pale face from the deep cut in his left eyebrow. Immediately, he’s overwhelmed with memories of his own father hitting him, punishing him. He swore he would never be like Michael Wayland, he swore. And yet…

He drops to his knees next to Alec and lifts his hands to… to prop Alec up, to hold him, to help him. But in the end, he just leaves them hovering over his shoulders, too afraid to touch Alec, too afraid of hurting him again.

“I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to. I’m sorry,” he keeps babbling frantically.

Alec blinks at him slowly for a moment, blood dripping into his left eye, then lifts his right hand. “Help me?” he asks simply.

And Jace does, he helps Alec up, he brings him to the infirmary, he lowers his eyes and hides his bruised knuckles when Alec lies about how he was injured, and he holds Alec’s hand tight while an iratze is applied to the other boy’s skin, the minor injury leaving only a small white scar bisecting his eyebrow.

A scar that changes everything, because every time Jace looks at it, he’s reminded of a hawk with a twisted neck and of a little boy bleeding - of the price those who want to be his friends pay.
Alec and Magnus discuss the afterlife. (Unbeta'd)

“You know I’ll wait for you, right?” Alec says softly, chin balanced on the fist that he has propped up on his lover’s naked sternum.

Magnus looks down at him, running his fingers through Alec’s hair. “Wait for me where?” he asks, smiling.

“In the afterlife. No matter where it is or how long it takes you to get there,” Alec answers simply.

Magnus’ smile turns sad. “Oh, darling. You realize I’m half-demon, right? When I eventually die - and all things do die, just ask Ragnor or Raphael - I won’t end up in the same place as you. I’ll visit a much warmer climate…”

Alec leans on his elbow and shakes his head. “I don’t believe that.”

Magnus sighs. “I’m afraid your faith has very little to do with my reality, love.”

But Alec just smiles. “You have a soul, Magnus, every living being has one. And every soul can be redeemed. You just have to want it. What you have here,” Alec taps with his finger on Magnus’ chest, over his heart, “triumphs over an accident of birth.”

Magnus snorts, but it doesn’t sound as cynical as he would like. “Don’t tell me you truly believe that, after everything you’ve seen…”

Alec turns serious. “I do. Some people would say I’m doomed to hell just for being born gay. Do you believe that, then?”

“Never!” Magnus responds immediately, voice stern, almost harsh.

Alec smiles again. “See? And the same goes for you. You’re the best man I’ve ever met, Magnus. You’re kind, generous, loving - and that means more than you realize because it’s the manifestation of your free will, the path you chose.”

Magnus’ throat tightens. “You seem pretty sure about it…”

Alec runs his knuckles up and down his lover’s cheek. “I am.”

Magnus captures Alec’s hand and kisses his palm. “I guess we’ll have to wait and see.”

♦♦♦

Turns out, Alec was right.
He’s been lying awake in the darkness for hours when the door opens and a small figure slips in, padding on bare feet. Isabelle.

“Izzy?” Alec asks, confused as she climbs into his bed.

“We need a cuddle,” she states, rests her tousled head on his shoulder and throws an arm over him. She’s dressed in her pajama pants and a tank top, but obviously, she didn’t get much sleep yet either.

Alec huffs. “We are both adults,” he reminds her dryly.

“Yes, and we need a cuddle,” Izzy responds, snuggling closer, like she did when they were children.

After a moment of hesitation, Alec lays an arm around her shoulders. “Mom?” he makes a haphazard guess.

Isabelle sighs. “She made a snide comment about my clothes, dressed me down in front of the whole posse - as you saw for yourself - then proceeded to generally ignore me. The usual.”

Alec kisses the top of her head. “I’m sorry.”

She doesn’t shrug or say, *it’s okay*, because it isn’t.

After a pause, she dares to ask, “What about you and Jace?”

He doesn’t give her his usual sarcastic response and he doesn’t shrug either. The darkness, the fact that he doesn’t have to look at her, makes him bolder when he finally answers, “I don’t know, Izzy. I don’t know what’s going on with us or where we are headed… One thing I do know, though: we can’t continue like this, something has to give. And I’m afraid it’ll be our partnership.”

Isabelle hugs him tighter, but doesn’t reply. There’s nothing to say because they both know Alec’s right.

“But you know what the worst thing is?” he whispers, and when she shakes her head, he continues, “I think… I think that Jace won’t even care anymore.”
They lay quietly in Alec’s bed, drawing solace from each other, until the dawn breaks on the horizon.
Brother

Chapter Summary

Don’t you ever, ever talk to my brother like that again! Spoilers for episode 105. (Unbeta’d)

Jace’s walking down the hall, headed towards his bedroom to change out of his blood soaked clothes - he and Clary just returned from Magnus’ in whose care they left Luke - when Isabelle steps in his way, smiling sweetly - which is never a good thing.

“Yes?” he says cautiously.

“Can I talk to you for a moment?” she asks, directing him quite firmly into the first available room off the hall.

The moment they enter the unused bedroom, Isabelle whirls around, her smile gone. She grabs Jace by the front of his jacket and slams him against the wall by the door.

“What…?” he wheezes in surprise.

She steps closer, her face now barely inches away from his, and hisses, her dark eyes blazing, “Don’t you ever, ever talk to my brother like that again!”

“Your brother?” Jace retorts, becoming angry himself. “What happened to our brother?”

“You lose your right to call him that when you stop treating him that way!” Izzy whispers furiously. “I like Clary, I really do, she’s a sweet girl, but the way you act around her? Like a dog with a bone, snapping even at people who are good to you!”

Jace glares at her. “He lost Clary…”

“She got herself lost when she didn’t listen, because that’s what she does, she simply does not listen. She has guts, I’ll give her that, but she has no discipline, she does not understand what she’s up against, not really. If you want to yell at someone, go directly to the source and stop venting your frustrations on Alec! Is that clear?” she demands. When Jace opens his mouth to protest, she pulls him away from the wall and slams him against it once more, almost rattling his teeth. “Is. That. Clear?”

“Yes!” Jace growls, eyes narrowed.

Isabelle lets go of him and smiles again, sugary sweet. “Good. I wish you goodnight, brother.”

And with that, she leaves.
Worthy

Chapter Summary

Based on the promo pictures for episode 108. (Unbeta'd)

Chapter Notes

Translation into Polish by Pomyluna here.

Alec steps into Isabelle’s bedroom. “We have a mission.”

“Coming,” she responds and grabs her leather jacket. Pulling it on, she notices Alec staring. “What?” she asks aggressively, zipping up. The jacket fits her black leather pants and laced combat boots perfectly. No more miniskirts or tiny dresses for her!

He raises his hands. “Nothing, nothing, it’s just that…” He chooses his words carefully. “You look… different.”

Checking her reflection in the mirror, Isabelle touches her hair, pulled back severely. “Well, it was time for a change,” she states with almost harsh determination.

Their eyes meet in the mirror and hold for a moment. Then Alec nods slowly. “Alright,” he says softly. “As long as it’s what you want…”

Izzy squares her shoulders. “It is!”

Alec watches her a moment longer, then turns to go, but he stops at the door, one hand on the frame, and without turning back, he whispers so quietly she barely hears him. “But, Izzy… don’t be like me. It’s not worth it. She won’t notice anyway.”

Isabelle’s throat tightens and her eyes burn when she sees her brother’s shoulders hunch, but before she can say anything, Alec leaves.

She looks at herself in the mirror again. This is what she wants. It is. A more mature, sensible Isabelle Lightwood. Someone… worthy.

Then why does she feel like she’s disappearing?
The Wedding #2

Chapter Summary

The Wedding, Take 2: What if it was Alec who stopped the wedding...

He’s walking down the hall after Magnus, away from the wedding that will now never take place. He’s just in his shirtsleeves, having already discarded his jacket, and for the first time in a long while he feels like he can breathe freely.

“Alec!” his mother calls after him. “Where do you think you’re going?”

Alec freezes out of habit, his mother’s cold, harsh voice reaching inside him, to the place where he’s still just a little boy, wanting to please his family. Magnus stops by the front door of the Institute and gives Alec an encouraging smile and a nod. You can do it.

Alec turns to his mother. Maryse’s standing at the end of the hall with Robert by her side, Isabelle and Jace peering over their shoulders.

“I won’t do it, mother,” Alec says, his voice quiet yet surprisingly strong. “I won’t let you force me into a loveless marriage. I can see what it’s done to you and father - and I don’t want to end up like you. I don’t want to ever be like you.”

Maryse flinches a little, but then soldiers on. “Have you even considered what your selfishness will do to this family? Such a scandal on top of everything! The Clave… We will lose the Institute!”

“Then maybe we should!” Alec shouts, the anger he has been hiding since he found out about his parents’ involvement with the Circle breaking through. “Maybe we didn’t deserve it in the first place…”

Maryse narrows her eyes, but Alec continues before she can say anything, “I know you’ve never cared about my happiness, but I do. I finally do.”

“At what cost?” his mother snaps.

“I could ask you the same thing. How far are you willing to go to keep your status? What will you sacrifice next?” When she doesn’t respond, he turns away and starts walking again.

“Alexander!” Maryse yells. “If you leave now, don’t bother to come back!”

He stops and looks back: at Maryse and his father, hanging back awkwardly, at Isabelle who’s grinning hugely and giving him thumbs up, and at Jace, who seems… torn. But Alec’s done trying to please him, too.

“As you wish, mother,” Alec responds with finality.

Then he turns back to his lover who’s watching him with so much pride, takes his hand and together they pass through a Portal, leaving everything behind.
Magnus Bane can’t believe he’s actually doing this. He must have lost all his marbles! But, on the other hand, how could he not do it?

*Alec’s sitting naked on Magnus’ bed, loosely hugging his knees, face turned away. “… and if I don’t marry her…” His voice breaks. “If I don’t, my family will lose everything, not just the Institute. We might be exiled, even stand trial for consorting with the enemy, now that the Seelies sided with Valentine. Jace, Izzy… Max!”* He buries his face in his hands. “I don’t know what to do…”

Magnus kisses Alec’s shoulder and winds his arms around him from behind. “Then let me help,” he whispers. “You’re not alone anymore. You have me.”

Alec sighs and leans back slightly. “Not that I doubt your powers, but what could you do?”

Magnus smiles and brushes his lips against his lover’s skin. “You would be surprised…”

And now he’s here, at the Institute, sitting across from Maryse, with Jace, Izzy and Alec standing behind their mother. And just to save the mortal who took his breath away. Smitten fool, he admonishes himself.

“If I understand it correctly, warlock,” Maryse says, “you offer us a deal: all the warlocks under your leadership will side with us against Valentine in exchange for a fitting monetary compensation for services rendered?” She narrows her eyes suspiciously. “That sounds too good to be true. The warlocks have always remained neutral. Why the change of heart?”

“Ah, yes.” Magnus smiles and holds up a finger. “You haven’t heard my last condition yet.” The smile falls off his face and his cat’s eyes glow dangerously. “And this is non-negotiable.”

“Here it comes,” mutters Jace.

“Your son, Alec,” Magnus says, perfectly calm and serious.

“What?” Maryse’s eyes widen, then she and everybody else in the room turn to Alec, who’s gaping at Magnus in disbelief.

“You heard me, Maryse.” Magnus leans forward, his voice hard. “You were willing to sell him out for a little protection against the Clave. Now I’m offering you the chance to bring a powerful posse of warlocks to your side and actually gain the Clave’s favor, and all that for a little bit of money - and your son.” He settles back and crosses his legs. “So, Maryse, how much do you value your son? Are the Branwells enough or do you want an actual army of warlocks in exchange for him? Do we have a deal or not?”
They did.
“Tell me a secret,” Clary asks one Sunday afternoon while they lazy around in bed. “I want some exclusive Jace Herondale knowledge.”

She expects him to turn it into a joke, so she’s surprised when he actually thinks about it and his voice becomes serious when he answers, “Well, there’s something I’ve have never told anyone…”

She props herself on her elbow. “I won’t tell. Scout’s honor.”

Jace mock glares at her. “You’ve never been a Scout, you liar!”

Clary snorts. “It’s the thought that counts. Now secret. Gimme!”

He turns serious again and softly he confesses, “If it wasn’t for the whole **parabatai** thing, I think I would’ve fallen in love with Alec.”

Her eyebrows shoot up. “I didn’t know you were bisexual.”

Jace stares at the ceiling for a moment. “You know, I’m not sure I am. I have never felt attracted to any other man. Not Simon, not Magnus… And Simon actually nibbled on me, so I should know.” He shudders dramatically, grimacing, and she snorts again.

Then he sighs. “There’s just something about Alec… Even before we became **parabatai**, I felt really good when I was with him. He made me feel all… warm here.” He touches his chest. “He made my heart beat faster and my fingertips tingle whenever I touched him… It scared the shit out of me.”

He looks at her. “It was one of the reasons why I asked him to be my **parabatai**. After the ceremony, it was… **safe** to be with him, to feel so deeply for him. I could touch him, tell him I loved him and nobody thought anything about it.”

“And at the same time, he was hiding his feelings for you…” Clary says softly. “What would you have done if you knew?”

Jace blows out a breath and frowns at the ceiling again. “Honestly? I don’t know. But everything might have been different now…”

She nods and snuggles closer, thinking of how one decision made years ago changed the life of so many people…
Strength

Chapter Summary

What strength sharing is like. Spoilers for episode 106. (Unbeta'd)

“You okay?” Jace asks. When he followed Alec out of the room, he didn’t expect to find him with his jacket off and his shirt tucked up, applying a stamina rune to his stomach.

Alec calmly finishes burning the temporary mark into his skin, then he pulls his shirt down. “Yeah, just tired.” He stashes his stele away.

Jace frowns. “What was that actually about?”

“What? With Magnus? He used up all his energy healing Luke and since he asked, I offered him mine,” Alec answers like it’s nothing.

Jace blinks, remembering Magnus saying something about Alec’s virgin energy, but that can’t be it. Or? Jace grimaces. Some things are better left untouched… But then curiosity gets the better of him.

“What is it like?” he asks.

Alec raises his eyebrows. “The strength sharing?” When Jace nods, Alec thinks it over. “Like… when you are bleeding out. It’s exhausting. And it hurts, it feels like someone’s pulling at the very core of your being. There’s this stabbing pain in your chest and it only gets worse with time.”

Jace frowns again, this time with worry. “That sounds like the way mundanes describe a heart attack.”

Alec shrugs. “It’s mostly just tiring, nothing I couldn’t handle.”

Jace studies him closely for a moment. “Yeah… well, just promise me you won’t make it a habit.”

Alec snorts. “Don’t worry. I doubt very much me and Magnus will be spending enough time together to form any kind of a habit.”

Jace grins. “I’ll hold you to that.”
Chapter Summary

I was asked to write a story set in ep 104, where Clary barges into Alec's room first, while looking for Jace... (Unbeta'd)

Find Jace, find Magnus Bane, that’s what’s running through Clary’s head as she turns right off the main hall - and stops.

She really doesn’t want to push the stereotype of a woman who can’t keep her directions straight, but… Which room did Jace say was his? Left or right at end of the corridor?

After a moment of hesitation and feet shuffling, she simply chooses one. What’s the worst thing that can happen, right?

Well, apparently Alec Lightwood. In nothing but a towel around his waist, still damp from the shower. The universe definitely hates her!

“What the Hell?!” Alec yelps. He snatches a blanket off his bed and wraps himself up in it till nothing but his head and the tips of his toes are visible…

But not before Clary takes in his long, lean runner’s body, muscles, runes, scars and dark chest hair…

Belatedly, once they are both properly mortified and blushing so hard it’s a wonder the room doesn’t catch fire, she slaps her hand over her eyes. “Sorry, sorry! Wrong room,” she apologizes profusely and starts backing out through the open door. “Sorry!”

“By the Angel, learn to knock!” Alec yells after her, feathers ruffled.

It’s not till she hears him slam the door shut - and lock it for good measure - that she drops her hand. Good grief… That was so… Yeah.

Clary clears her throat, takes a deep breath and squares her shoulders. Well, at least now she knows which room’s Jace’s. No more embarrassing encounters for her. Silver lining and all that.

She turns around and strides in.

Incorrigible…
Fancy a Drink?

Chapter Summary

Just a something teeny-tiny that wrote down while working. Set during 106.
(Unbeta'd)

Magnus leans closer, eyes half-lidded, voice seductive as he whispers, “Fancy another drink, Alexander?”

Alec clears his throat. “Yeah… Yes, that would be… yes.”

Magnus beams and whirls away. “Fantastie!”

“Just…” Alec stops him awkwardly.

Magnus turns back, lifting his eyebrows curiously. “Yes?”

Alec shifts and grimaces slightly. “Just… could it not be on fire this time?”

“Certainly,” Magnus assures him with a smile. Then he raises his index finger, eyes sparkling with a sudden bright idea. “I’ll just add glitter, then!”

Alec sighs in resignation.
Habit

Chapter Summary

After I mentioned the fact that Matt Daddario was missing the ACL in his left knee and in some of his interviews he was seen absently rubbing his thigh - which he also did as Alec in episode 106, in the scene with Maryse - I was asked to write a story that would explain his knee injury. (Unbeta'd)

“What are you doing up?” Jace mumbles as he shuffles into the control room, rubbing his eyes. It’s three in the morning, and if it wasn’t for that stupid nightmare, he would be fast asleep.

Alec looks up. “Just reading up on something. Couldn’t sleep.”

“Hm,” Jace responds, walking around the computer table to lean against it. He frowns when he sees that Alec has his left leg propped up on a chair and he’s rubbing his thigh absently. He has been doing that a lot lately, Jace noticed. “You okay?”

“Huh?” Alec raises his eyebrows quizzically. When he sees what Jace’s looking at, he says, “Oh, that’s nothing. Habit, I guess.”

Habit… Jace remembers it quite vividly, it’s one of his worst memories, burned into his mind forever. Alec with his knee torn to shreds by a demon, convulsing on a blood soaked bed in the infirmary, pale and feverish, poison turning his veins black… and the Silent Brothers telling them impassively that they will have to cut Alec’s leg off to stop the damage from spreading…

Jace swallows hard, still tasting the pungent smell of poison in the air. If it hadn’t been for that warlock, that blue woman - Corine? Carina? something like that - his *parabatai* would have died or been crippled for life.

“Hey,” Alec says softly, “it’s fine, really. It almost doesn’t even hurt anymore. Only when I put too much strain on it. Or it’s about to rain. Weird that.”

Jace smiles. “Our very own weather man…” When Alec smiles back, Jace nudges his foot. “Come on, someone left a pie in the kitchen. If we’re smart about it, nobody will know it was us who ate it.”

Alec snorts but levels himself up. “Hopefully, it wasn’t Izzy…”
Magnus turns to offer Alec another drink - and finds him fast asleep, tucked in the corner of the couch that Magnus had to clean with his magic after all.

“Alexander?” Magnus whispers very softly. He does not want to wake Alec if he’s truly asleep. Dawn is just around the corner and he knows that Alec will have to leave soon if he wants to make it home before anyone notices him gone, but if Magnus can keep him here just for a moment longer, he will.

He leans over carefully, slips the empty glass out of Alec’s hand and sets it aside. Then he snaps his fingers quietly and summons the softest blanket he has around; it settles over Alec like gossamer, gently and without waking him. For such a tall man, Alec takes surprisingly little space, curled up on himself.

Magnus could be - and should be - doing many things, but instead he settles down in the opposite corner of the couch. He hugs his legs to his chest, props his chin on his knees and watches Alec sleep. Happiness bubbles in his chest, he feels almost giddy with it. My Alexander, he thinks.

Well, not yet, but he will be if Magnus has anything to say in that matter. Alec came. He offered Magnus his strength and shoulder to lean on. He stayed…

Magnus hasn’t felt this blissful since, well, since Camille, but he doesn’t want to think about her. Alec is nothing like her, he won’t ever be. Magnus touched the very core of his being and it was so beautiful he nearly wept.

His feet are almost bouncing on the cushions, Magnus is so overflowing with happy energy. He has waited hundreds of years for someone like Alec. And now he has found him. Life’s perfect…

Alexander, my Alec…
“You… you have to do it,” Alec wheezes, his breath coming in short gasps.


Alec glares at her, then raises his hands: they are torn and burned, just like his torso from where he covered her and saved her from the blast. “Can’t… hold a stele… can’t draw a… rune,” he grits through clenched teeth.


“You saw Jace doing it, right?”

“Yes, but seeing something done and doing it yourself? Two very different things!” she protests. “What if I get it wrong?”

Alec rolls his eyes. “Then it won’t work…”

Clary sighs. “Right.”

“… and I’ll probably die in the mean… time.”

She almost drops the stele. “What?”

“Clary!” Alec snaps, his whole body straining against the pain.

“Right, I’m on it, I’m on it,” she assures him, and finding a patch of unburned, unblemished skin on his stomach, she starts to draw. “I’m an artist, after all. A Shadowhunter newbie, but an artist pro. Clary Fray, the Rune Master. God, I sound like Simon…” she mutters.

Alec bangs his head against the ground. “And I’m dead.”
“Huh,” Jem says, looking pensive. He and Jace are sitting in one of the outdoor cafés in Idris where they usually meet for their semi-regular “Let’s talk about my parabatai and your ancestor, Will Herondale, and how much you two are alike” rendezvous.

“What?” Jace asks, sipping his coffee.

Jem frowns and leans forward intently. “You’re telling me that you died - yet your parabatai bond with Alec didn’t break?”

Jace shrugs. “I was dead for only a few minutes.”

Jem continues, “Then Sebastian suppressed your bond with magic and it wasn’t damaged in any way?”

“It was just for a few of weeks, few months tops,” Jace responds, his voice very matter-of-fact.

The other man looks at him for a moment. “And on top of that, you were almost consumed by the heavenly fire - which was so strong that it cured me! - and your bond with Alec survived even that?”

“Yeah?” Jace answers uncertainly.

Jem leans back in his chair. “You do realize that that’s not normal right?”

Now it’s Jace’s turn to frown. “I don’t follow.”

“Jace, parabatai bonds break after death, no matter how short said death is! They break while suppressed. And your heavenly fire should have burned it to ashes!” There’s disbelief in his voice.

“What does it mean?”

Jem thinks about it for a moment. “I don’t know. I’ll have to do some research on that matter, but I fear that your angel blood might have caused some… unexpected changes in your bond.”

Jace straightens. “But it won’t hurt Alec, will it?”

Jem shakes his head. “No. Well, I don’t know. I don’t think so… But two souls bound together so tightly they don’t separate even after death? I have never heard of anything like that before. The consequences…”

“Yes?” Jace’s frown deepens.

Jem looks at him. “I suspect that for you and your parabatai, Jace Herondale, there might be no ‘till death do as part…””

Parabatai

Chapter Summary

Let’s turn some of the book blunders into canon… (Unbeta’d)
Oversharing

Chapter Summary

That “I talk to you about [my personal life] all the time” scene in episode 107! Now imagine… (Unbeta’d)

Some years back…

Isabelle hops up on her brother’s bed, knocking the book Alec’s been reading - Shakespeare again! - out of his hands. “Hey!” he objects grumpily.

“Guess what?” she stage whispers gleefully as she plops down next to him, their shoulders touching. “I slept with Meliorn!”

Alec scrunches his face. “I really don’t want to hear this!”

Izzy slaps his leg. “Tough. I don’t have any friends besides you and Jace, and I’m not discussing my sex life with Jace!”

Alec glares at her. “I’m not discussing your sex life with you either.”

She snorts. “Well, if you had any, we would be discussing yours–”

“No, we would not be!” he protests emphatically.

“But alas.” Isabelle raises her hands palms up in a “What can you do?” gesture. “So, me and Meliorn…”

Alec groans and hides behind a pillow. It doesn’t help.
“Wait… what-what are you doing?” Alec protests as Isabelle starts unbuttoning his shirt. Again. What is it with her and buttons?

“Alec, honey, you’re about to go on a date, not crawl through demon muck. You are allowed to show some skin,” Izzy chides, slapping his hands away when he tries to re-do the buttons again.

He grimaces. “I don’t like to show skin!”

She sighs and rolls her eyes. “You train half naked–”

He widens his eyes, scandalized. “I do not!”

“What do you mean, you can show some of those muscles to your boyfriend!” She pokes him in the stomach.

“Alec squirms. “Stop that!”

Isabelle looks at him earnestly. “Alec, you’re my dearly beloved brother, true, but that doesn’t mean I don’t have eyes. You’re quite the hunk, believe you me, and you already have Magnus drooling. There’s no need to be nervous.”

“I’m not,” Alec mutters.

Izzy slaps his shoulders. “Well, that’s the spirit then.” She turns and heads out of the door. “And leave the buttons alone!” she yells back when his hands creep up to re-do them.

He glares at the door.

“And stop glaring, you’ll get wrinkles!”
“I was worried about you too, you know?” Jace says softly, crossing his arms on his chest.

It’s almost dawn and the Institute is finally quiet. He expected Alec to be in his room, asleep, instead he finds his parabatai in the weaponry, burning runes into a new batch of arrows.

Alec sets one finished arrow aside and picking up another, he looks at Jace quizzically.

“When I said that Clary was our top priority… I didn’t mean that you weren’t important or…” Jace falls silent, realizing how lame he sounds. When Izzy found him earlier and told him to go and apologize to Alec, he didn’t understand why. But now…

Alec stares at him for a moment longer, his silence and unreadable expression making Jace uncomfortable. “Alright,” he replies finally and without another word, he returns to work.

Jace frowns, shifting uncertainly. He can feel that there’s something wrong, it’s like sand grinding in the gears that used to run so smoothly. It’s setting his nerves on edge.

“Is something wrong?” Jace asks in the end.

Alec doesn’t answer straight away, the sizzling of metal the only sound in the otherwise quiet room. Then he sighs, pauses, and without looking at Jace, he says softly, “Everything’s as it’s always been. I guess it just took me a while to realize it.”

Jace frowns. “What do you mean?”

Alec finally looks up, the smell of scorched metal still heavy in the air, and smiles sadly. “Go to bed, Jace. I’ll see you in the morning.” And without waiting for an answer he goes back to his arrows.

Jace hesitates for a moment, unsure and upset, still not knowing what actually went wrong between them. And when he finally leaves, he can’t help but feel that everything’s falling apart between him and Alec, and he has no idea how to fix it.
Consent

Chapter Summary

A What-If story: Alec marries Lydia. It doesn’t go well… (Unbeta’d)

Chapter Notes

This is not my usual scribble-doodle. It’s not fluffy or sweet. It’s dark and ugly and it took out a lot of me to write it, but the idea wouldn’t let go. It deals with free will - or the lack of it - consent and SEXUAL ASSAULT.

It’s the morning after Alec’s wedding. The sun isn’t even up yet, but Isabelle’s been lying awake in her bed for hours, her thoughts a tangled mess of rage and guilt and helplessness. In the end, she decides that anything’s more productive than this and heads for the training room.

Whom she does not expect to find there, is Alec. From his sweat-soaked shirt, he must be there a long time already, the rapid *thump-thump-thump-thump* of his fists hitting the dummy almost mechanical now.

Izzy frowns. “Alec?” she calls out, coming closer. “Hey, Alec!”

He doesn’t seem to hear her, completely focused on pummeling the dummy bloody. Literally, she notices when she comes to a stop a couple of feet from him. The leathery surface of the dummy is slick with blood from Alec’s split knuckles. His fingers are swollen, blood’s running down his forearms and dripping from his elbows.

“Alec!” Izzy breathes out in shock and grabs his right arm to make him stop.

He mustn’t have even realized she was there because he jerks and stumbles back, his eyes widening, and if she weren’t holding his arm, he would’ve fallen down the stairs behind him.

“It’s me. It’s me, Izzy,” she rushes to calm him. “It’s just me…”

Alec stops fighting her and just stares at her, his breath heavy, face slick with sweat - and eyes frighteningly blank. Isabelle has no idea what could’ve happened between last night and this morning, she only knows that it rattled her usually unshakable brother to the core.

“Come here,” she urges gently and leads him towards the sofa in the corner of the room, and her worry deepens when he just lets her. She sits him down, then kneels down in front of him and takes his hands gently in hers. The damage he did to them is frightening - just like the fact that he doesn’t even seem to notice.

Isabelle looks up at her brother, but it’s like he isn’t even seeing her, though his eyes are fixed on her. “What’s going on?” she whispers imploringly. “Please, Alec, you know you can talk to me. You know that.” When he just blinks at her, she lifts his hands slightly. “Please, tell me what made
you do this to yourself. Please…”

When he still doesn’t respond, something inside her seizes with the realization that this isn’t simply about the wedding or a fight with Jace or his break-up with Magnus. This is something that destroyed the foundations of his world and he doesn’t know how to cope. And it’s scaring her.

Deciding to give him time, she pulls her stele out of her pocket and starts applying *iratzes* to the back of his hands, wanting to at least heal the outer damage. And maybe he just needed her to stop looking at him, because he finally speaks.

“I told her no but she wouldn’t listen,” Alec croaks.

Isabelle freezes, breath hitching in her throat, when she grasps his meaning. *No. Just… no.*

Alec continues, his voice quiet and raspy, “She came to my room, after the wedding. And I told her no. I told her to go away. But she wouldn’t listen. Why didn’t she listen?”

It takes all of Izzy’s will not to look up, to keep her head down, to keep drawing the rune on Alec’s hand.

“She said…” His voice breaks. “She said that my ‘duty’ didn’t end with ‘I do.’ She said… she said that we Lightwoods needed the Branwells’ protection, and if we wanted to get it I… I should ‘keep her happy.’”

Isabelle finishes the second *iratze* and watches Alec’s damaged hands starting to heal slowly. She grips her stele so hard she almost breaks it. *No. This is not happening. This didn’t happen while I laid awake just a few doors down. No.*

“I didn’t want it. I did not… But she wouldn’t listen,” Alec repeats, sounding lost.

Izzy finally looks up, slowly. She expected to see tears in her brother’s eyes but there are none. His eyes are wide and glazed but dry. He seems to be in shock, not entirely aware of what’s happening around him. And he looks so… small. Nothing should make her 6’3” brother look small.

“Alec…” she whispers, blinking back her own tears.

He finally focuses on her, fear in his eyes, when he breathes out urgently, “You can’t tell anyone, Izzy.” He grips her hands so hard it almost hurts. “You can’t. Promise me. Swear, Izzy. Please. You can’t tell.”

“But, Alec, this is wrong,” she objects angrily, her voice hushed. “What she did to you, it’s *wrong!*”

Alec shakes his head. “It doesn’t matter—”

“It doesn’t… *of course* it does!” she interrupts him.

“It does not,” he reiterates flatly. “The Branwells… Lydia, she can destroy us, Izzy. All of us. Mom and dad, you, me, Jace… Max! She has the favor of the Inquisitor. She can…” His voice breaks again and Izzy’s heart aches when she sees the despair in his eyes.

She turns his hands in hers and clasps them together. “And what do you plan to do, Alec?” she asks softly, unhappily, still looking up at him from her kneeling position. “You want to ‘keep her happy’ every night from now on?” He flinches and she feels bad about her own words, but continues anyway, trying to make him see, “You can’t do this. You can’t keep this up. It’ll destroy you - and I’m not trading a cushy position for my brother’s life.” *His sanity,* she adds quietly.
“We don’t have a choice,” Alec says with resignation. “There is no choice. There’s no way out.”

She grips his hands and shakes them. “We will find a way out. I promise, I swear to you, brother, we will find a way out!” Even if I have to personally feed that bitch to a demon, she swears to herself. “And now,” she says, “I will hug you, okay?”

Giving him plenty of time to refuse or move away, Izzy leans forward and winds her arms around him slowly. She feels him shudder, then slump against her, allowing her to take his weight. And she has to blink back tears again, tears of rage and frustration and despair, because this is her brother… and all she’s ever wanted was to protect him, to see him happy. And now…

Isabelle hugs Alec, her hands gentle on his back. But her eyes narrow with fury. Lydia Branwell will pay for this. Izzy will make sure of that.
“Hey,” Jace says, catching Alec by the arm. “Uhm, with all that happened last night, I forgot to thank you for, you know, bringing Clary back to the Institute.”

Yes, so much happened last night, not the least being Alec’s decision to stay back and cover their escape. Jace’s heart still skips a beat when he thinks of it. Only the fact that his parabatai rune stayed completely quiet and unresponsive allowed him to focus entirely on Clary.

Alec looks at him and the flatness of his stare makes Jace frown. “Contrary to your belief, I actually know what I’m doing,” Alec says and turns to go again.

But Jace doesn’t let go. “Wow, wait a minute. Where did that come from?” he asks, startled. “It wasn’t… I didn’t mean anything by that, I honestly wanted to thank you for keeping her safe. What’s gotten into you?”

Alec sighs and rubs his forehead. “Look, I don’t agree with what you two have been doing. I’ve never condoned your complete disregard of the Clave’s rules, but lately you’ve been taking it too far, you and Izzy both.”

Jace opens his mouth to protest, but Alec continues before he manages to get a word edgewise. “That said, I would never allow for something to happen to Clary, if it were in my power to prevent it, regardless of my personal feelings.”

“I know that!” Jace jumps in.

“Do you?” Alec says bitterly. “Because sometimes, I think she’s the only thing you even take into account anymore. And honestly, Jace? I’m not sure I like the person you’re becoming.”

And with that, Alec turns and leaves, slipping his arm out of Jace’s suddenly numb fingers and leaving him standing there, gaping with confusion.

“What…?”
Magnus frowns down at the spell. “Well, that will require more power than I currently have.” He looks up and glares at Jace. “When I woke up this morning, I didn’t expect to have you knocking on my door - again!”

Jace rolls his eyes. “Believe me, if there was any other way, I would not be here, warlock.” Their dislike’s apparently mutual.

“So,” Magnus says, slamming the spell book close, “I do have all the necessary ingredients, but I will need more power. And that means,” he grins and almost bounces in place, “I’ll need Alexander!”

“Why? For his ‘virgin Shadowhunter energy’ again?” Jace comments dryly.

“No, Nephilim,” Magnus responds seriously, disregarding Jace’s tone of voice, “for the very simple reason that him I trust, you I do not. Now, shoo, scram. And bring me Alexander. Or no spell!”
Jace's Take (on the Wedding Thing)

Chapter Summary

I was asked to write about Jace's take on the wedding thing. Posting it quickly before it stops being canon compliant! (Unbeta'd)

When Jace first heard about the wedding, he thought it was a joke. Alec? His spinster of a parabatai and marry? No way. He actually laughed!

Now, he’s standing in Alec’s room, watching his friend, his brother stare fixedly out of the window - and he isn’t laughing anymore. The Institute is abuzz with the wedding preparations and everybody’s so excited to attend the ceremony, because they honestly think Alec’s marrying out of love; they all love him and they want to see him happy. But he’s not.

Jace isn’t sure he even heard Alec speak to anyone today, all the excited congratulations accepted with a wan smile that hurts Jace to see. Because this is wrong. He doesn’t know if it’s his eyes telling him that or his parabatai bond, but his skin crawls with the wrongness of it.

He knows he has to stop it. He must. But he can’t. He tried, but Alec wouldn’t even hear him out.

“Why do you think he’s doing it?!” Maryse snapped at him, when he turned to her, when he told her she must put a stop to this madness. “Why do you think he would sacrifice so much? For whom? Think about it!”

For whom? Jace swallows. He knows the answer to that. For him. And for Izzy. For little Max… For all the people he tried to warn of the consequences of their actions and they didn’t listen. But he didn’t know. Jace did not know. If he knew how bad the situation was…

Bile rises in his throat and his guilt tastes bitter because he isn’t sure he wouldn’t have done the same things, made the same decisions… Clary or Alec. Alec or Clary. Save one, sacrifice the other…

The door opens. It’s Isabelle and she’s looking furtive. Paying Jace no mind, she says in a hushed voice, “Alec, Magnus is here.”

Alec jerks around, an expression of shock on his face. “Magnus…?”

Jace doesn’t understand. What could Magnus Bane possibly want from Alec? And on his wedding day, too? But before he can ask those questions, before he can say anything, Isabelle grabs him by the arm and drags him out of the room, allowing Magnus Bane in all his glittery glory to sneak inside and close the door behind him.

“What…?” Jace starts asking, but Isabelle shushes him.

“Let’s pray to Raziel that it works,” she whispers, and clasping her hands together, she presses them to her lips, eyes shining with fervent hope trained on the closed door of Alec’s bedroom.

Jace still doesn’t understand.
But the wedding does not take place that day, after all…
Alec doesn’t even realize he’s been cut till he tries to pull his shirt off in his room - and finds it stuck to his skin. He hisses as the pain with which his whole shoulder has been throbbing triples. Cursing softly under his breath, he peels the black material off the wound - it’s on his upper arm, a gaping scratch now oozing blood again, jagged and angry red.

He wipes the wound off carefully with his shirt - it’s destined for the bin as it is - and inspects his injury. It doesn’t look pretty but it doesn’t exactly warrant a trip to the infirmary. He pulls his stele out and activates the *iratze* rune on his side… and nothing happens.

Alec frowns down at the wound, the blood oozing out of it now growing darker. What the hell did that thing have on its weapon? He knows a lot about first aid - being the only one in the group who actually bothered to pay attention in class - but he knows very little about germs, that’s been always Izzy’s area of expertise.

He activates the rune again. And again. Still, the wound gapes open, its ragged edges refusing to close. After the sixth time, even the *iratze* starts hurting, as if telling him to stop with that nonsense, it’s *obviously* not working.

Alec sighs, shaking his injured arm to get rid of the pins and needles that seem to be spreading down to his fingertips. Looks like he will have to go to the infirmary after all, maybe ask Izzy about the Forsaken, or Magn…

*No.* With more force than is advisable, Alec slams his stele down on the table and reaches for his first aid kit. Pulling out a sterile pad and a bandage, he cleans the wound, then quickly wraps it up and ties it off tightly. The tingling in his arm hasn’t stopped yet but Alec guesses that torn flesh and bruised muscles will do that to you.

His shoulder is still throbbing to the rhythm of his beating heart. But when he doesn’t move his arm much, it’s just sort of… numb. He promises himself that if the thing doesn’t get better by the morning, he will go to… *someone* for help. Definitely not Magnus, though.

Yes, he will do that. Tomorrow.
Chapter Summary

Shameless h/c that will be certainly debunked the moment 109 airs. But what the heck *hands* Follows the 109 Jace & Clary sneak peek.

When Jace barges in through the main entrance, he finds the Institute in complete disarray, people running around like frightened ants. He looks around, searching for…

There. Isabelle catches his eye across the room and before he can even ask, she calls out, “He’s in his room,” knowing exactly who he is looking for. Jace nods at her and goes.

All the corridors and passages he usually finds so charming make him feel like a rat running through a labyrinth right now, and when he finally throws the door to Alec’s room open, he’s not just afraid but also frustrated, anxious, impatient.

“Alec!” he yells, crashing into the dimly lit bedroom.

Alec must’ve been asleep, because he jerks upright in his bed, immediately groaning in pain. “Damn it,” he grits through clenched teeth. He grips his shoulder tight, and slumping back against his pillow, he curls up on his uninjured side.

Jace stops abruptly a couple of feet away, eyes going to the blood stained bandage on Alec’s arm and the skin on his shoulder gone black and blue. He thought… he thought that if they let Alec stay in his bedroom and not in the infirmary, his injury couldn’t be all that bad. But this…

“Why didn’t you use an *iratze*?”

Alec keeps his eyes shut and his lips are white with pain when he breathes out, “I did. I am… using it. That thing… didn’t just cut me, it… wrenched my shoulder and broke my ribs, too…” He wheezes through clenched teeth. “If Hodge hadn’t been there…”

Jace swallows several times, then he turns away and sinks down on the edge of Alec’s bed. He can’t even look at Alec in so much pain. He can’t even… He should’ve been here, he should’ve been fighting by Alec and Hodge’s side, protecting his home. But Clary needed him, she still needs him.

So does Alec. So does your family. You owe it to them! the voice in his mind whispers.

He buries his face in his hands. Alec’s right, if Hodge hadn’t been there… just the idea of being somewhere else and feeling his *parabatai* rune burn, feeling it bleed, knowing what it meant and not being with Alec… just the idea makes his heart seize. You should’ve been here. He feels so torn, pushed and pulled in opposite directions. Alec or Clary. Clary or Alec. You should have been here!

“I’m sorry,” Jace whispers. “I’m so sorry. I should’ve been here with you. You’re my *parabatai*, this is my… our home! I should’ve protected it. You told me this would happen, and I didn’t listen. I’m sorry.”

He turns around, only to realize that Alec’s fallen asleep again, still curled up, still clutching his hurt shoulder loosely. Jace frowns because this is so unlike Alec, Alec doesn’t simply nod off during a conversation, even a boring one.

“Alec?” Jace whispers and reaches out to touch his arm, only to snatch his hand away quickly - Alec’s skin’s burning hot. “Alec?” Jace asks again with more force and anxiety. Nothing.

He’s about to shake Alec awake, take the blame for hurting him again, anything, just to get him to open his eyes, when he sees the iratze on Alec’s side pulse and burn brightly through the thin fabric of the threadbare tank top that Alec’s using as his sleepwear - and Jace sighs in relief.

Of course, Alec’s healing, and having been on the receiving end of a rune healing many times in the past Jace knows what a toll it takes on the body, how exhausting it is.

Jace watches his parabatai a moment longer, a small smile on his lips, relief making him feel tired to the bones. Then he gets up, careful not to jostle the bed, and covers Alec with a blanket, knowing how quickly Alec gets chilled in the night.

“Goodnight,” Jace says softly, and turning off the light, he leaves the room, shutting the door behind him.
Hodge and Robert have a talk. Follows 108. (Unbeta'd)

“I hear you killed the Forsaken today,” Robert says as he comes up to Hodge who’s putting away his weapons in the training room. “I wanted to thank you.”

Hodge looks at him. “I didn’t do it for you. Or for Maryse. Or even for the Institute. I did it for Alec, to save his life,” he clarifies.

Robert clears his throat. “Yeah, well, I still want to thank you.”

Hodge turns to him and regards him intensely. “You want to thank me, Robert? Then pull yourself together and start treating that boy as he deserves.”

Robert’s eyes narrow. “It’s none of your business how I treat my own children, Starkweather.” His voice is dangerously low.

Hodge shakes his head. “That’s where you’re wrong. You love Jace like your own child. You’ve put Isabelle on a pedestal. Max is the apple of your eye. But you are so blinded by prejudice that you can’t see what an exceptional man your eldest has become.”

Robert stiffens. “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

Hodge steps closer and once he makes sure nobody’s close enough to hear them, he says, “Your son is gay, Robert. Alec’s gay and you treat him like nothing more than a tool to be used as you see fit because of it.”

Robert grabs him by the front of his shirt. “You shut your mouth, Starkweather, or else!”

The threat leaves Hodge unaffected. “No, I’m done keeping quiet about the way you keep hurting people around you. I kept quiet when I saw how you treated your own parabatai, because I believed you were both old enough and smart enough to handle your own issues. And look where it got Michael. I’ll not allow Alec to end the same way. I refuse to allow it!”

“And what is it to you?” Robert sneers.

Hodge looks Robert in the eyes, unflinching. “I love the boy like my own son, Robert. More than you probably ever will. And once he finds out what a man you are - a spineless coward who shunned his own parabatai for who he was - you’ll lose him, once and for all.”

Robert pulls his fist back, preparing to throw a punch, but Hodge just raises his chin. “Go ahead, let’s settle this once and for all. Let’s see who will win this round.”

Robert stares at him for a moment, then he lets his arms drop and with a snarl he turns away and leaves the room.

Hodge watches him till he’s gone, then he shakes his head. “You don’t deserve a son like Alec,
Robert Lightwood, you don’t deserve him.”
Alec Lightwood had always known that there was something very wrong with him. Pig-tailed girls in polka dot dresses never awoke any feelings in him but protective ones - it was the freckled boys with dimples in their cheeks that set his heart aflutter.

And it got even worse when Jace Wayland came to live with them. He finally had a boy his age for a friend, but instead of loving him like a brother, like he did little Max, Jace made his skin tingle and his cheeks flush, he made him want… something. But Alec didn’t understand what it meant…

Until one day, when they accompanied one of the visiting Shadowhunters on a hunt and he saw them, two mundane boys, waiting for a bus… holding hands, giggling and kissing. On the lips. And his heart sang, this is it, this is right, this is what you want, too. A boy to hold your hand and kiss you on the lips.

When he came back home that day, he headed for the library because research was in order. If mundanes felt the same way he did, there had to be some Nephilim feeling that way, too, they were all half-human, after all…

It took him a week to find the one mention there seemed to be in all the books aligned on the shelves. It was in the moral codex, written years and years ago but still valid and used to this day. Homosexuality, the book called it and listed it among abominations and depravities, things like fornication with demons, and called for its extermination, for the removal of these perverts from the society…

Alec’s heart shattered and he cried, because how could something as sweet and innocent as the two boys kissing at a bus stop be called an abomination? How could anyone see it that way?

The answer came from the most unexpected source, for his father caught him reading the book, crying over it - and he never looked at him the same way again. And if even his father, who used to be so proud of him, could not love him because of this… thing, maybe he really was ugly, ugly, ugly.

And Alec was about to do a very stupid, unforgivable thing, when Jace Wayland asked him to be his parabatai. Just like that. He came to him and asked, as if he thought that Alec was worth it. But then, Jace didn’t know how ugly Alec was.

So Alec refused, not wanting to drag his best friend down with him. But Jace, the Clave’s Golden Boy, kept asking and asking, not taking no for an answer, until one day, when Alec tried to explain that there was something wrong with him, Jace yelled, “There’s nothing wrong with you. And if someone tries to say otherwise, I’ll punch him. I’ll punch you if you don’t stop spouting nonsense! You will become my parabatai, because I don’t want anyone else!”

And that was how Jace Wayland saved Alec Lightwood’s life, without even knowing it, with a kind word, even if yelled, and the threat of a punch.
Alec hisses as he carefully pulls his left arm out of the sleeve of his black linen shirt. “Ow,” he mutters, examining the swollen welts on his forearm; the skin’s already turning black and blue.

“What is it, my dear?” Magnus asks, and standing on his tiptoes, he peeks over Alec’s shoulder. His eyes widen. “Ow, indeed! What did that?” He steps around his lover, gently takes his arm in his hands and takes a closer look at the injury.

“I did. With my bow,” Alec grumbles, feeling like a fool. He hasn’t been so careless in years. “This happens when you forget to apply a skin protection rune in the morning and then go bow shooting!”

Magnus tsks. “And why didn’t you apply it?”

Alec glares at him. “Why do you think? Someone refused to let me out of bed till I was running so late I barely had the time to put on my pants!”

“Ah!” Magnus grins like the Cheshire Cat and his eyes sparkle with the fond memory. “True. I am very hard to resist. But! That still doesn’t explain why you don’t simply use a bracer. I know that you Nephilim hate low-magic solutions, but trust me, that one has worked for centuries. I know, I was there.”

Alec huffs. “Because I usually shoot in my jacket which is reinforced and fitted for bow shooting! But in this cursed swelter, I would melt in it. So, I left my jacket at home.”

“You poor thing, the world has conspired against you!” Magnus says, a smile tugging at his lips. Before Alec can retort something very rude, Magnus lets his fingers dance feather-light across his lover’s skin, blue magic seeping into the damaged flesh and healing it. “There,” he declares and kisses the once again smooth, sun-tanned skin. “All better.”

Alec smiles at him. It’s hard to stay angry with Magnus, especially when he doesn’t deserve it. He pulls him closer. “Thank you.”

Magnus kisses the tip of his nose. “You’re welcome, love. And now,” he grins mischievously, “let’s talk about my reward. I do take payments in sexual favo… Hey!”
Magnus will never admit that he has a mental list of all the bad things that could happen to his lover on a hunt. (Unbeta’d)

The thing is, something as mundane as a drive-by shooting has never made it on the list. Funny that.

“What happened?” Magnus asks as he drops to his knees beside his lover, his heart beating so fast he can barely breathe. They are crouching among the bins behind Taki’s, dirt, thrash and Alec’s blood everywhere, police sirens wailing in the distance.

Jace wipes his face with his hand, leaving a bloody smear on his cheek. His eyes are wide and fearful. “Some mundane thing, two gangs started shooting at each other with us in the middle because they couldn’t actually see us. I dragged Alec over here because invisible we might be, but someone would eventually notice a puddle of blood spreading on the sidewalk.”

Magnus nods, running his hands across Alec’s torso. Alec’s barely conscious, pale as a ghost, lips spattered with blood, his gray t-shirt soaked with it. Gray, he wore gray today, not black, Magnus’ mind notices absently, as he finds three holes in his lover’s chest.

“One went through,” Jace says, “two are still stuck inside him, that’s why I couldn’t use an iratze, all I could do was slow down the bleeding…”

There, Magnus locates both bullets - one is nestled against Alec’s rib, the other stuck dangerously close to his heart. He will have to be careful, very careful.

“Hold him,” Magnus orders, and when Jace obeys and grips Alec’s shoulders tight, Magnus leans closer and touches his lover’s face gently. “Hold on, love, I’ll have you back on your feet in a jiffy, I promise!”

He isn’t sure if Alec heard him, but it doesn’t matter. In a moment, it’ll be all fine. Just fine. Surely. It must be. Anything else is not an option.

Magnus takes a deep breath and reigned in his thoughts. He closes his eyes and rests one hand on Alec’s breastbone - then he snaps the fingers of the other one. A second later, two bullets drop to the asphalt a foot away with a soft ping-ping, and Magnus immediately starts pouring all his power into his lover, closing his wounds, healing the damage, giving everything of himself.

It might take seconds, minutes or even hours, he doesn’t know, but when he finally feels Alec take a deep, unrestrained breath, when he feels Alec touch his hand and hears his soft, raspy “Hey…” Magnus opens his eyes - and slumps, barely registering Alec’s wan, pale smile, as he grips his lover tight, heedless of how Alec’s blood-soaked shirt squelches wetly under his cheek.
Bug

Chapter Summary

Another h/c, this time very short and very fluffy. (Unbeta'd)

Magnus fluffs up Alec’s pillows and shakes his head fondly. “Love, you have the stamina of an ox, you can wrestle a bear, but one sneeze in your vicinity, and you keel over.”

Alec sniffles. “Sowwy.”

Magnus smiles down at him affectionately, taking in Alec’s puffy eyes, his red nose and chapped lips. “No need to apologize, you’re just a mystery to me, is all. Actually, you’re a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma.” He tilts his head to the side thoughtfully. “I think you would have liked Churchill. A peculiar guy.”

Alec furrows his brows, eyes glazed. “Wha…?”

Magnus chuckles. “Brain not firing on all cylinders, I see. Don’t worry about it and just rest. I’ll make you tea.”

“Magical tea?” Alec asks hopefully, desperate to be rid of the pestilent bug soon-ish.

“Ha!” Magnus barks out a laugh. “You wish. Chamomile.” He leans over and kisses his lover’s feverish brow. “Now shush. Go count sheep and let me take care of you…”
Magnus remembers them all, every person he has ever loved. (Unbeta’d)

Magnus remembers them all, every person he has ever loved, though he likes to pretend otherwise, he likes to make people think that some of them were so unimportant that he didn’t even bother with their names - mostly those who hurt him the worst. But he does, he does remember.

He remembers how they lived, how they loved and how he loved them, how they left him or how he left them. And he remembers how they died, for what they died, what took them from him. Every one of them gave him something good and precious - but took much more away. Until he felt so hollowed out that he didn’t think he could ever love again.

Until Alexander Gideon Lightwood came along. His Archer Boy. His Nephilim. His Lover with the Stamina Rune. His First of So Many Things. Alec filled places inside him that Magnus didn’t know were empty or needed to be filled in the first place. Alec gave him all of himself with unashamed openness, he gave Magnus love and warmth and tenderness. Magnus has waited four hundred years for a person who would hold his heart in his hands and not break it, four hundred years, and now he found him.

And he would lose him again, one day, for that was the fate of an ageless being loving a mortal. He thought he could bear it, at the beginning, when his love for Alec was so new to him, this unconditional, breathtaking love. But with every day, he’s falling more and more in love with Alexander, and the thought of losing him now, of being unmade, of being unwhole, of all the places filled with Alec’s love becoming empty again, now that he’s aware of how hollow they rang before Alexander came along... the thought of all that makes him want to weep. For he was given a glimpse of perfection - and how could he go to back to an imperfect existence after that?

When he found out that Alec even considered taking away his immortality, he became so very angry because he saw his agelessness as an integral part of himself, a vital part, a defining part. How... laughable that now seems to him. Because now he knows the truth, now he knows that his most vital part isn’t even a part of him, no, it’s Alexander. Eternity without him? That wouldn’t be life, just a simple survival. And knowing what living means, how could he be content with surviving?

Magnus doesn’t know what all those feelings storming inside him mean, what he should or would do about them. What he does know is, that he can’t stand being hollowed out again. He remembers all his past lovers and how they died. But the idea of Alexander Gideon Lightwood dying makes him want to let the world burn...
Jace didn’t understand how he hadn’t seen that Alec was in love with him. Not that he loved Jace, but that he was in love with him. His parabatai. He didn’t know what the last puzzle piece was that fell into place and allowed him to see the whole picture. He didn’t even know when exactly it dawned on him…

“It’s about me. It's about your feelings. Because you’re…”

… in love with me. That was what he wanted to say. He hoped that if he told Alec that he knew, that it was okay, that he didn’t mind, that nothing had changed, that he still loved him more than his own life, that if he told Alec all that, Alec would drop this nonsense, his engagement to Lydia, his blind, rigid adherence to the Law, that he would see.

But he shouldn’t have done it. He knew Alec, he knew how Alec reacted to things he didn’t like and didn’t want to know about - he lashed out. Jace knew his parabatai was precariously balanced on a precipice, and instead of pulling him back to safety, Jace did the one thing that ensured Alec would fall.

And now he was walking away, his heart aching, his throat closed off, so much so that he could barely breathe, he was walking away, leaving his parabatai sitting in a dust among the ruins.

Jace stopped. He couldn’t do it. He needed to go back and throw Alec a lifeline or Alec would drown, Jace was certain of it. He needed to make sure that Alec knew Jace still had his back, that a difference of opinions meant nothing to people whose souls were linked for eternity.

He needed to make sure that it was still true for himself - because he wasn’t so certain of it anymore; the one unshakable constant in his life was knocked dangerously askew, and it was tearing him apart.

Jace turned and raced back, his heart beating wild, suddenly anxious to see Alec again, to mend all fences, to make everything alright - but when he returned to the warehouse, Alec was already gone…
Hypocrites

Chapter Summary

It was all of them... Spoilers for 109. (Unbeta'd)

Alec can hear water still dripping in the shower. He’s leaning with both hands against the sink, just a towel around his hips, head bowed… the gaping wound on his upper arm oozing blood sluggishly. His breath is trembling with pain, but not the physical kind.

The shard is gone. The Cup is gone. Jace is gone. Izzy…

He grips the cold porcelain so tight his knuckles turn white. Red haze descends over his sight. He’s furious and he’s in agony and he can feel his heart pounding so hard that his chest feels tight.

Jace and Izzy freed Meliorn. They went behind my back, my own sister, my parabatai. They took the shard and they took the Cup. And they used my stele, my stele, my stele…

He tries to take a deep breath, but he can’t, it’s like his lungs are frozen. The muscles on his arms are starting to hurt from being locked tight for so long - but if he lets go, if he lets loose… The wound on his arm is now trickling blood, red droplets hitting the floor with a soft plop-plop-plop.

They used my stele, took my stele, stole my stele… But nobody got that close, not Jace, not Izzy. Neither of them, it wasn’t them, wasn’t them, wasn’t them… Only one person got close enough to steal it - with his powers, it must have been him, nobody else…

Alec looks up and stares at his reflection, his face pale, eyes wide and almost black in the mirror, misted over and blurry.

Magnus Bane.

He lets go, lets loose and smashes his fist against the mirror, again and again, making a bloody mess of it, shards raining down, tinkling to the ground. Soon, there’s nothing left of the offending piece but he can’t seem to stop.

All of them, it was all of them, they betrayed me, all of them, they promised and then… hypocrites, just like my parents, every one of them…

He’s alone.
Twister

Chapter Summary

Did I ever tell you that I once worked as a private eye? (Unbeta’d)

They’re sitting on a couch, slumped against each other comfortably, watching a movie, a bit dated now maybe, but still enjoyable in its mindless fun. Twister, it’s called. The main couple just drove their car into a ditch and there's a tornado nipping at their heels, when Magnus suddenly sits up straight, mutes the TV and turns to Alec with a disconcerting glint in his eyes.

“Did I ever tell you that I once worked as a private eye?” Magnus asks.

Alec, who started sliding down slowly once he lost his main support in the form of his lover, straightens up, too. “It was in that book you gave me. You wrote you decided to become a private dick because of some book or other.” Then he narrows his eyes suspiciously. “Why?”

Magnus turns back to the TV where a giant twister is tearing buildings apart now. He looks like he just had a revelation.

Alec looks at Magnus, then at the screen. And then it dawns on him. “Hell, no!” he exclaims, grabs the remote out of Magnus’ hands and switches the TV set off. “Have you completely lost your marbles? That’s tornados you’re talking about here. Big, unpredictable, people-killing phenomenons. It’s not fun, it’s actually dangerous!”


Alec catches Magnus’ finger in his hand to make him stop and glares at him. Then his face clears and he smiles slyly, as if something just occurred to him. “Magnus, the fact that you know nothing about tornadoses, storms and the weather in general aside, can you imagine what all that wind and rain would do to your hair? And clothes? Dust and dirt everywhere, wading through mud…”

Magnus sighs and allows himself to be drawn into Alec’s arms. “I guess…”

Alec kisses his forehead. “Besides, what’s the point of chasing after something you can bring to you with a simple snap of your fingers?”

Magnus shoots upright again, almost knocking Alec’s teeth out in the process. “There’s a thought!” he exclaims.

Alec glares at him fiercely. “If I see one tornado anywhere near New York, I swear I will smother you with a pillow!”
They’re sparing in the training room, when suddenly, Alec stops and puts his hands on his hips. “Okay, I really need to know. What did Magnus tell you?”

Jace also stops and straightens, dropping his hands to his sides. “When?”

“You know, when he was healing Luke. What reason did he give you for why he wanted me there?”

Jace shuffles his feet uncomfortably. “He didn’t tell you?”

Alec huffs. “He said that it was a lie anyway.”

Jace smiles in relief. “There you have it!”

“But I still want to know what it was!” Alec insists impatiently.

The smile drops off Jace’s face. “Uh… I don’t-”

Alec glares. “If you tell me that you don’t remember, I swear I will punch you in the face.”

Jace takes it as a challenge and lifts his chin. “Ha! I would like to see you try!”

Alec narrows his eyes - and tackles Jace to the ground. Jace automatically raises his hands to guard his face, but Alec goes for the gut. Tickling!

Jace squeals out loud. “H-hey, not f-fair!” he protests, squirming like a worm on a hook, but Alec’s straddling him fast and his dexterous fingers expertly find all the right spots to make Jace giggle. “S-stop!”

Alec grins down at him. “Do you give up?”

Jace lifts his hands. “I give up, I swear!”

Alec rolls off and drops to the ground next to him, lying on his back, eyes trained on the ceiling.

Jace turns onto his side, head pillowed on his bent arm. He smiles at his parabatai. “I missed this,” he admits quietly.
Alec looks at him, lips curved up. “Yeah, me too…” he agrees, a soft look in his eyes. After a moment of shared contentment, he asks, “So, what did Magnus tell you?”

Jace grins. “I don’t remember.”

Alec punches him in the face.
There’s a creak as the door opens. “Alec?”

Alec turns in his bed and switches on the little lamp on his nightstand. “Max?” He squints at the figure of his little brother standing in the doorway. “What are you doing here?”

Max shuffles his feet uncertainly. “Can I sleep with you tonight?”

Alec smiles and lifts the covers. “Hop on in.”

Max grins. He closes the door, crosses the room quickly and jumps in, tucking himself snuggly against Alec’s side. When he rests his head comfortably on Alec’s shoulder, Alec kisses the top of his head.

“What brought this on?” he asks softly.

Max sighs. “Mom and dad are fighting. Again. And I can hear them through the wall,” he confesses miserably.

Alec hugs his little brother more tightly. “I’m sorry, Max. It’ll get better, it’ll all calm down again, I promise.”

Max is quiet for a while, then he says, “They said we are being send back to Idris.” His voice becomes even quieter. “I don’t want to go back there. I don’t want to leave.”

Alec sighs. “I know, but it’s not safe here at the moment.”

“Because of the monster that got in?” Max asks, then adds in a small voice, “I was really scared…”

Alec lifts his head and looks down at his brother. “Hey, you don’t have to be afraid. I’ll always be there to protect you, I promise!”

Max shakes his head. “I know that, that’s not it. I heard you were hurt… and dad wouldn’t allow me to see you. I was scared that…” His breath hitches. “I was scared that you would die.”

“It’s just a scratch.” He shows Max the bandage on his left arm. “See? No big deal, dad and Izzy are just worrywarts, is all.”

Max reaches out to gently touch the bandage. “You sure?”

“Would I lie to you?” Alec says, offended.

Max smiles. “Well, you promised to get my stele back,” he reminds him.

Alec reaches out and pulls something out of the nightstand’s top drawer. “And I did.” He hands the thing to Max.
“My stele!” Max exclaims, hugging it to his chest. “Thank you!” He looks at Alec with big, shining eyes. “You’re the best big brother ever!”

Alec laughs softly. “Well, I hope so. Just, please, don’t burn down half of Idris with it? I would never hear the end of it.”

“I won’t, I swear!” Max promises fervently. Then he snuggles back into Alec’s embrace, sighs contently and closes his eyes. “Best big brother - ever!”
Edges

Chapter Summary

“Maybe your mother was right and your best just isn’t good enough!”

Alec doesn’t think that Jace realizes just how deep these words cut him. And the worst thing is, that this wasn’t the first hurtful thing Jace has hurled in his direction over the past few days, it was just the sharpest, its edges actually drawing blood. And Jace didn’t even notice - not that he has been noticing much lately…

“What’s got you brooding?” Jace asks when he finds Alec sitting on the padded bench in the training room, nursing his swollen, bleeding knuckles.

Alec looks up at Jace and finds him… truly oblivious, not just pretending. That’s what prompts him to ask, “Do you regret becoming my parabatai?”

Jace stares at him, frozen. “What?” he asks in a shocked voice. “Where did that come from?” And after a pause, “Do you regret it?”

Alec drops his eyes to his injured hand and shakes his head. “No, I’ve never regretted it. Not once. But lately…” He flexes his fingers, making the knuckles hurt, grounding himself. “I feel like you would prefer it if you could just… cut it out, our bond, our connection, our friendship, just everything.”

Jace keeps staring at him, unsure and maybe even a little freaked out. “That’s crap, Alec! What are you even talking about? Are you drunk or what?” Then he pauses again. “Is this… Is this about Clary? That’s what this is about? Because I’m spending so much time with her?” he asks, exasperated, and even rolls his eyes a little. “Alec, she needs me!”

And I don’t? Alec asks silently and flexes his fingers some more. The skin on his knuckles cracks and starts oozing blood again. It feels good.

Jace steps closer. “Alec, talk to me. What’s going on with you?” His brow furrows when he sees Alec’s bloody hand. “Hey, what happened?” He reaches out but Alec flinches away, startling him. Jace lets his hand drop slowly. “Alec…”

“It’s fine,” Alec says, not looking at Jace. “I’m fine, don’t worry about it.” He gets up slowly, suddenly feeling old and drained. Hollowed out. “Don’t worry about anything. I’m just tired.” Of all the things you just don’t see. Sighing deeply, he picks up all the scattered pieces of himself and carefully hides them from sight again. “Goodnight.”

And with that he departs, leaving Jace standing there, and feeling his forlorn gaze on his back.
Alec can feel the burning cold of the Forsaken poison coursing through his veins, the pain making it hard to breathe, to think, the sensation so horrible that Alec feels like he’s losing his mind…

“Jace!”

One moment Jace’s fighting a demon, chopping off its head with an easy grin on his face - the next he’s on the ground, writhing in agony so terrible that he would gladly die just to make it stop.

He doesn’t understand what’s going on. Was there another demon? Did it stab Jace? He screams so loud his throat hurts and arches his back in pain. It feels like he’s being ripped apart, torn to pieces, dying by degrees… He touches his side, the place where the pain’s radiating from - but there’s nothing there, just…

Jace opens his eyes wide in shock and horror, and screams, “ALEC!”

… And then it’s gone. All gone. The agony, the burning sensation. All of it. And he feels… empty, hollowed out, as if something was carved out of him or cut off, the corner of his mind that’s always thrummed with warmth, his parabatai bond with Alec, gone numb, like a limb fallen asleep, a useless hunk of flesh.

“No…” Jace breathes out. “No. Nononono!” He sits up fast, heart beating so hard it hurts, and lifts up his shirt, expecting to find his parabatai rune gone or burned out or bleeding or…

The rune’s still there, but there’s another one running through it, circle-shaped and angry red and hot to the touch. “What…?”

He grabs his phone and calls Alec, cursing bitterly when his parabatai doesn’t pick up. His hands are shaking now, so hard he barely manages to dial Izzy’s number - and again, no answer. “Damn it! Damn, come on!” he yells. Their parents will be in Idris by now, so who to call…? Hodge.

“He’s alive,” is the first thing that Hodge says when he picks up. “Barely, but he’s holding in there.”

Jace closes his eyes and breathes out shakily. “What happened?” he croaks out.

“It’s the Forsaken wound.” Hodge pauses. “The poison’s spreading fast now, Jace. It’s eating away at him. He could feel you hurting through the bond, so I blocked it, an old trick Val…” He chokes, then grits out, “you know who came up with back in the day. Alec… he didn’t want to risk he would take you with him, when he…” He doesn’t finish his sentence.

Jace’s throat tightens. “There must be something you can do!”

“Rune magic isn’t working. We sent for Magnus Bane, but…” Hodge pauses again and his voice
is grave and quiet when he continues, “… but you should come, Jace. This might be your last chance.”

To say good-bye. Jace blinks fast, tears burning in his eyes. He staggers to his feet. “I’ll be there,” he says in a thick voice. “Tell him, I’m coming, Hodge. Tell him that! I swear, I’m coming…”
Alec’s been sitting on the edge of his bed for what seems like hours now, face hidden in his hands, not knowing what to do, to whom to turn… what else to try to save Isabelle. He failed, utterly so, and Izzy will now pay the price. If he were just… better, this would have never happened.

There’s a soft knock, then the door opens and a voice whispers. “May I come in?”

Lydia. Alec lifts his head. “Yeah, come in,” he responds.

She steps inside, closes the door and clasps her hands together in front of her. “Are you alright?” she asks, genuine concern in her voice.

Alec lets his hands hang between his knees tiredly. “No,” he admits. “I’m not. Everything’s falling apart, and the harder I try to keep it all together, the faster it’s disintegrating…”

Lydia crosses the room and sits down next to him. “You did your best, Alec. Nobody could want more from you…”

He smiles bitterly. “Both my mother and Jace told me that my best was not good enough, so I don’t know about that.”

“Well, then they were both wrong,” she states firmly. “Nobody could want a better son or a better parabatai - or a better brother - than you.”

He looks at her. “I don’t know what I will do if they sentence her to exile, Lydia,” he admits and his voice breaks a little. “I know that you two don’t really see eye to eye, but she has always stood by me. If I lose her…”

“I don’t know your sister well, but I admire her strength and conviction,” Lydia says and reaches out to clasp his hand in hers. “And if someone like you has so much faith in her, then she must deserve it.”

Alec doesn’t respond but he squeezes her hand tighter.

“I’m really sorry that I have to go through with the trial. I tried to find a loophole, some way out of it…”

Alec looks at her, still holding her hand. “I know. And thank you. None of this is your fault.” He sighs and shakes his head. “I’ll find a way out. I have to. I won’t let her down. Or you,” he adds.

“And Jace…?” she dares to ask.

He lowers his eyes. “He made his choice, and I’ve made mine. What’s done is done. I can’t save both him and Izzy - and I won’t sacrifice my sister for something that I don’t believe in anymore. I’ll just have to learn to live with the consequences, then…”
Lydia stays quiet because no platitudes can fix this. So she just holds his hand and offers silent support.
Mannequin

Chapter Summary

Our Magnus meets AU!Alec. Spoilers for episode 110. (Unbeta'd)

Meeting the alternate version of your lover is quite… disconcerting, Magnus decides, as he’s leafing through his book of spells, trying to figure out what the hell went wrong with the last one, that his Alexander was switched with this - he shoots a sideways glance at the man (he refuses to call him by name because this is not Alec!) who’s sitting on a bar stool in the kitchen with his chin in his hand, dangling his feet and munching on peanuts as if he didn’t have a care in the world, and, dear God, is that a pink shirt? - this mannequin.

“You know,” the man says, “you could do something with this place. Add a little color? Some new light fixtures?” He waves a hand, holding a single peanut in his slender fingers. “It’s a bit… ho-hum, you know?”

Magnus frowns defensively, once again contemplating what his alternate self sees in this extravagant… bimbo. His Alexander likes Magnus’ flat the way it is: cozy. Magnus likes his flat the way it was before this… thing happened: with his Alexander in it!

“And don’t you have cats?” The man looks around curiously. “My Magnus owns cats, two of them. Chairman Meow and Church. The Chairman loves everybody who feeds him, but Church loves only me.” He smiles rather smugly. “He’s a smart cat.”

Magnus looks at him in horror. Cats? In his flat? Cat hair on his silk suits? In his potions? Perish the thought!

After a pause, the man asks, “Do you think you could speed it up a little? I don’t want to rush you but I have an anniversary party planned for 6 o’clock and I’m not sure how much your Alec knows about canapés and…”

“Got it!” Magnus exclaims, interrupting the impostor. He picks up the book and reads through the spell eagerly, nodding to himself. “Easy to do.”

The man jumps off the barstool and slinks over in his pink shirt, mint green pants and Italian shoes - leather, of course. He grins - and for a moment Magnus might understand why his alternate self is smitten with him.

“Cool!” the man says. “Not that you aren’t a very attractive person, all in all, but I prefer my Magnuses in cuddly sweaters and with less hedgehog hair.” Before Magnus can say anything to that, he continues, “And, please, could you not do this again? This switching thing, I mean. It really messes with my chi.”

Magnus narrows his eyes in annoyance, barks out the spell and snaps his fingers. “Chi, my ass!” he grumbles.

There’s a flash of blue light and suddenly, his Alec’s standing there, in all his gloriously dark colors, with all his beautiful runes in their proper places and his hair spiked up in a breathtakingly
attractive fashion, blinking at him dazedly.

And Magnus kisses him and keeps kissing him and hugs him tight and breathes in his familiar, soothing scent. “Welcome back…”

Because his Alexander is perfect the way he is.
A What-If story. What if Magnus doesn’t get Izzy off the high treason charge? What if Jace and Clary don’t come back with the Cup in time? What if…? Spoilers for episode 110. (Unbeta’d)

Magnus watches Alec while the guards lead Isabelle out of the court room, and his heart seizes. There’s so much pain in Alec’s face.

“I’m sorry, Alexander,” Magnus whispers, stricken. “I’m so very, very sorry.”

“It’s not your fault,” Alec says bleakly, eyes still trained on the closed door through which Izzy and her guards disappeared. “You did your best.”

Magnus shakes his head. “But it wasn’t enough,” he protests angrily.

“Yes, sometimes it isn’t,” Alec agrees softly and looks at him. “Thank you.”

Magnus waves his hand dismissively. “What will you do now?” he asks.

Alec smiles and it’s painful to see. “What I always do. Stand by my family.”

When Izzy hears the commotion outside her locked room, she wipes the tears off her cheeks and composes herself quickly, determined not to give anyone the satisfaction of seeing her break down.

The door opens. “… don’t care what Inquisitor Herondale said! Get out of my way!” orders a female voice sharply.

Lydia. Izzy twists her lips, planning to snap something bitter and cutting, but the words die in her throat when Lydia slams the door shut and looks at Izzy. Her eyes are wide with fear, face deathly pale.

Izzy steps forward. “What happened?” she asks immediately.

“It’s Alec,” Lydia says quietly, making sure they’re not overheard. “He decided to follow you - into exile.”

A new kind of dread washes over Isabelle. “No, nononono! He can’t! He mustn’t! You have to stop him!” she urges desperately.

“I tried!” Lydia answers unhappily. “But have you met your brother? He would give his life for you, he would give up anything for you. He thinks he failed you. And if he can’t save you…” She lets her voice trail off.

Izzy sinks down in a chair. “He will join me…” she breathes out. No, this isn’t happening. From the start, she was willing to carry the consequences of her own actions, but to drag Alec down with
her? That’s her worst nightmare…

“You have to stop him, Lydia, *please,*” Izzy whispers through bloodless lips.

Lydia looks miserable and a little broken. “I’m trying, but…” She spreads her hands; they’re trembling slightly. “Unless we save *you,* I don’t see a way to stop *him.*”

Isabelle hides her face in her hands. Unless they save her - and there’s no saving her, she knows that, the court has spoken. *God, Alec…*

*I’m sorry,* he told her. And she should’ve known. She knows her brother, better than anyone, she should have known what he would do!

*How did it come this far?*
“… and once this mission is over, I think it would be wise, if you removed yourself from the Institute,” Maryse says, busily reviewing data on the pad in her hands.

Alec’s quiet for a moment. “Are you asking me to leave?” he clarifies finally.

She looks at him, her eyes flinty. “It was neither a request nor a suggestion.”

Robert steps forward, between his wife and his son. “Maryse! This is taking it too far,” protests.

She slams the pad down. “Is it? What he did today? He humiliated us in front of everybody, and at a time when we needed to present ourselves as strong and firm, but thanks to our son,” she points angrily at Alec, “all of Idris will see us as fickle liars who can’t keep their word. And if the Branwells take offense? We will be ruined, Robert! We aren’t just back to square one, we are even worse off! And that you can’t see that proves, how blind you really are!”

Before Robert can respond, Alec says in a dispassionate voice, “As you wish mother. I’ll pack my things and be gone by morning. Now, if you excuse me, I have a mission to plan.” And with that, he turns and leaves, shoulders straight, head held high.

He feels… frozen. His mother’s words didn’t come as a shock to him, he has been expecting to hear them his whole life long. And after you’ve been dreading something for so long, when it finally happens, it’s almost a relief. Almost.

As he dresses in his battle gear, his mind is blank. He tries to think of his future - if he even survives the upcoming battle with Valentine, that is - but it’s looming like a black hole in front of him, his thoughts shying away from it, fearing its depth and crushing power…

Jace’s waiting for him in the weaponry. He grins. “It mustn’t have been that bad,” he comments on Alec’s meeting with Maryse, “we didn’t hear any yelling and the Institute’s still standing. What did your mom want?”

Alec looks at him, still feeling numb and disconnected. “Nothing,” he answers, his voice dull, “nothing important.”
I mentioned on Tumblr that I would love to see Alec turned into a Forsaken. I was asked to write how it could happen. Just a scene from what might have been...
(Unbeta'd)

Valentine and his minions on one side of the chapel, by the door, the guests and family on the other, by the altar, weapons drawn - that’s how Alec and Lydia’s wedding ends.

Maryse steps forward, poised and dignified even now, faced with seemingly unbeatable odds. “How did you get inside?” she asks sharply.

Valentine smiles slyly. “Oh, it’s quite easy when someone lets you in, my dear.”

Everyone by the altar automatically turns to Lydia, the least trusted among them, but she looks just as shocked as the rest of them. “It wasn’t me!” she protests indignantly.

Valentine rolls his eyes. “Of course not, she’s too straight and narrow for that, isn’t it so…” He pauses for effect, his grin widening. “Alexander.”

Everyone gasps and twists around to look at Alec, but he’s already striding down the aisle, towards Valentine and his army. When he reaches them, he turns slowly and stands by Valentine’s side, hands clasped behind his back in a book perfect at ease stance. His face is completely blank, devoid of emotions.

Jace takes a quick step forward, but Isabelle grips his arm. “Don’t!” she whispers urgently, eyes on her brother.

Jace tries to shake her off, but in vain. “Alec! What the hell are you doing?” he yells in the end helplessly. “Have you completely lost your mind now?” Jace’s voice shakes with anger and horror.

“Ah, it’s so easy to plant a seed and let it grow when everybody’s too busy with their own issues to notice,” Valentine comments, self-satisfied, searching out the Lightwoods with his eyes among the crowd.

“What did you do?” Maryse hisses sharply.

“Show them!” Valentine orders and Alec obeys.

Still entirely expressionless, Alec drops his jacket and his bow tie to the ground, then he tears his white shirt open and pushes it off his left shoulder - and they all recoil in horror. His wound! It’s not healed, not even close. Black rope-like veins spread from it in every direction, but mostly reaching for his heart.

In a flash, Jace pulls out a dagger and throws it. Just as fast, Alec snatches it out of the air, stopping it barely an inch from Valentine’s face.

“Now, that wasn’t very nice, was it, Jace Wayland?” Valentine says in a chiding tone, while Jace breathes heavily, eyes burning with hatred. “Oh yes, the boy is your parabatai, isn’t he? I guess you forgot to follow the lessons of your childhood.”

“Go to hell,” Jace grits out.

“How… unoriginal,” Valentine comments, then orders, “Kill them all! Spare the redhead and the blond one, if you can, but bring me the Cup!”

Before anyone can react, a wave of magic descends from above, flattening Valentine and his minions to the ground, and knocking the fight out of them for a moment. They all look up - there, on the balcony, is Magnus Bane.

“Well, don’t just stand there!” he calls down at the Nephilim. “Do something!”

Pandemonium ensues, it’s the Nephilim against demons, traitors and the Forsaken alike. And Jace, with his heart breaking, against Alec, an unfeeling, uncaring thing. They fight like they’ve never fought before - Jace fights like he has never fought before, for if he fails, his parabatai will die or be lost to him forever.

In the end, it’s Magnus who breaks the stalemate - Jace fights only to disarm, Alec heedless of his wounds - and knocks Alec out with a burst of blue magic. Jace catches his parabatai before he can hit the ground and gently lowers him down. Izzy, Maryse and Robert, even Lydia are immediately there, and though a war still rages around them, their personal horror is much too great to care about that right now.

Magnus drops to his knees by Alec’s side and touches his face with tender care, eyes wide with fear. He presses his fingers to Alec’s throat, checking for pulse, then he runs them over the ugly black veins to the blood-soaked bandage. He pulls it off and reveals the ugly, blackened, putrid wound.

“How can you save him?” Jace asks desperately, holding Alec in his arms. “Can you heal him, Magnus?”

Magnus inspects the wound that now oozes black, foul smelling pus. “I can,” he assures them, though secretly he’s not so sure about it, but telling them that won’t help anyone. “But we have to go, now. To my apartment. This is beyond my magic, I need my potions, my herbs…”

A loud rattle reaches them from somewhere inside the Institute, a loud boom, and they all look up, everyone but Magnus who’s too focused on keeping Alec alive.

“But Valentine…” Maryse protests.

Magnus looks up, cat-like eyes ablaze. “I don’t give a damn about Valentine or your God forsaken Cup!” he yells. “Go after him then, but I need someone to help me save Alexander!” If it’s not too late already, he despairs quietly

"Go,” Jace tells them, Maryse, Robert and Lydia. “I’ll help the warlock. I promise I’ll keep Alec safe.” And with Magnus’ help, he picks his parabatai off the floor…
Thankful

Chapter Summary

A quickie based on the 111 promo, how I wish it would go - but it won’t, of course.
(Unbeta'd)

“I saved you from yourself!” Jace snaps angrily. “You should be thanking me!”

Alec just stares at him for a long moment, so furious he can’t even speak. But then, a cold calm settles over him, as if the last strands of something fraying finally snapped, as if something ended, burned out, dissipated…

“I guess you’re right,” Alec agrees flatly, standing up straighter and uncrossing his arms. “I should thank you for making it clear that you’ll always choose your girlfriend’s side, even if it means betraying my trust.” Jace opens him mouth to protest, but Alec plows on, overriding him. “I should thank you for showing me that I can do this without you, that I don’t need you. And I should thank you for making me realize that I do have people I can count on, even if you’re not one of them.

“Now,” he continues, his eyes hard and unforgiving, “I’ll go and thank Magnus who actually stood by me and helped me save my sister from exile. And you… you do whatever the hell you want, I’m sure Clary’s already waiting for you somewhere.”

And with that, Alec turns and walks away.
Chapter Summary

Sequel to Mannequin. What happened between AU!Magnus and our Alec. (Unbeta'd)

*Well, this is awkward,* Magnus thinks, smiling painfully at Not!Alec. The younger man smiles back, just as pathetically. *Goodness…*

They’ve been sitting here for what seems like hours, at the table opposite each other, sipping tea and looking everywhere but at each other. The switch was embarrassing enough, but the position in which Not!Alec found Magnus…

He and Alec were just kissing hello, Magnus moaning slightly, pressed against the wall and pulling Alec closer by his belt loops, one of Alec’s knees between his legs, thigh pressed to… When there was a flash of blinding blue light and suddenly, instead of his meticulously groomed and designer clothed lover, there was this messy-haired, rune-covered stranger, who sprang away from him like a scalded cat - and who hasn’t stopped blushing or stuttering ever since. Not that Magnus feels any less… *uh.*

“I-I’m sure my Magnus… will have it fixed in no time,” Not!Alec reassures him. They both agreed that, since the mishap definitely didn’t occur on this side of the equation, they would better not poke at it. “He’s actually great with magic, really.” When Magnus raises an eyebrow, he continues quickly, “It must have been the nixies I caught in his workshop during his last party. I forgot to tell him because then the vampires ran a bloodbath in the bathroom, literally, and one of the drunk werewolves peed in the fireplace… Uh.” Not!Alec falls silent seeing Magnus’ look of utter disbelief.


Church lands on the table and Not!Alec startles so hard he almost falls out of his chair. His eyes widen seeing the cat. “You-you have a *cat*?” he stammers.

“Actually, I have two,” Magnus answers. Then he frowns. “Why is everybody so surprised by that?” When Not!Alec doesn’t reply, just continues to eye the cat warily, Magnus adds, “His name is Church. He really likes my Alec.”

“Uh… hi?” Alec tells the cat uncertainly, but Church just hisses at him and pads away, flicking his tail pompously. “I think he senses that I’m not…”

There’s another blue flash, and then his Alec’s suddenly sitting in Not!Alec’s chair, pink shirt, mint green pants, styled hair and all - and Magnus’ relief is so profound that he doesn’t even hesitate, he just leans over the table, grabs his Alec by the shirt and kisses him, hard and demanding. *His Alec…*

When they come up for air, Alec’s lips curl up and he says, his tone easy and self-assured in a way that makes Magnus’ knees go weak, “Unexpected, but not at all unappreciated.” His eyes twinkle. “Another one?”
Unwilling

Chapter Summary

I really needed an angsty, tender, loving Jalec ficlet. Hence this. (Unbeta'd)

The cell is cold and damp, just some small storage room on the ship, dirty and dark, a metallic scent hanging in the air - rust and... blood.

Alec coughs and his lips become stained with red again. Jace tightens his arms around him and wipes the blood off with his sleeve. He’s holding his parabatai close, letting Alec lean against his chest, sharing as much of his body heat with him as possible, because Alec’s cold, so very, very cold, having lost so much blood already and losing it still, the makeshift bandage on his stomach soaked with it.

It was a trap, of course it was, Valentine’s minions were waiting for them, and they walked right into it, he and Alec. Surrounded, they had no choice but to drop their weapons, and then... Then Valentine stabbed Alec, just like that, with no warning at all.

“You’re my son and you will join me,” Valentine said to Jace when Jace cried out in horror and caught his parabatai before he could hit the floor. “I would prefer you did it willingly, but I’ll settle for an unwilling cooperation, if need be.”

“Never,” Jace growled, holding Alec and trying to stem the bleeding. “I will never join you, and I don’t care if you’re my father or not!”

Valentine just smiled at him condescendingly. “You will. Because if you don’t, he,” he pointed at Alec who was gasping for breath, growing paler by the second, “will die. Join me and I will save him, you have my word.”

And now they are here, in this cell, without their weapons and their steles, just waiting for... Jace doesn’t know for what. His muscles are cramped, his back is screaming, but he refuses to move because every little shift makes Alec gasp in pain and he would rather suffer himself than hurt his parabatai.

And that means...

“Don’t...” Alec gasps, his voice barely audible. “Don’t... do it.”

Jace rests his cheek against the top of Alec’s head, eyes burning, a lump in his throat. “Shhh,” he whispers. “Don’t speak. Save your strength.”

But Alec refuses to listen. He grips Jace’s hand weakly. “Don’t... go with... him. Don’t... don’t give him... what he wants. It’s not... worth it.” He groans, coughs again and his whole body seizes. More blood pours out of his mouth.

Jace holds him firmly but gently, eyes squeezed shut to push back tears, till the coughing fit is over and Alec slumps in his arms, unconscious. Jace looks at down him and runs his fingers tenderly over his paper white face.
“I’m sorry, I’m so sorry,” he whispers. Then he steels himself and calls out, “Valentine!”
Jace is still reeling from the demon poison, from finding out the truth about his father, when he and Clary return to the Institute. It’s eerily quiet, everyone working diligently, throwing furtive, fearful glances their way. Alec and Izzy are nowhere to be seen, it’s Lydia who’s striding their way, her usually straight and purposeful walk heavy, shoulders round.

“Jace Wayland,” she greets him, unsmiling, then turns to Clary, “and you must be Clarissa Fairchild. I would say welcome but I’m not in the habit of lying.”

“We have the Cup,” Clary says, pulling the damnable thing out of her bag and offering it to Lydia. Lydia stares at it blankly for a moment, then takes it. “So, Alec was right, you took it,” she says, voice hollow.

Jace isn’t sure what he expected but this wasn’t it. “He told you?” Anger simmers inside him. How could he?

Clary squeezes his hand.

Lydia mustn’t have noticed his irritation, for she answers quietly, “Yes. He told me everything. The Cup was the only thing that could’ve saved them…”

Clary’s grip tightens and Jace tenses all over. “What are you talking about?”

Lydia sighs. “While you were gone, Isabelle was charged with high treason. Alec thought that, if we just gave the Cup to the Clave, they would let Izzy go, but… you took it, and we had nothing to trade for her, then. That’s why Alec tried to find you through your bond. He was desperate…”

Jace goes cold. “What happened?”

“Isabelle stood trial and was convicted. Inquisitor Herondale sentenced her to be stripped of her runes and exiled.” She pauses. “And since he couldn’t save her, Alec decided to follow her,” she adds softly.

Izzy… exiled? And Alec, too? Stripped of their runes? His and Alec’sparabatai bond is barely there after the tracking that Alec underwent - and Jace now gets it, he understands how desperate Alec must’ve been, and his previous fury dissipates - but if they strip Alec of his runes, their bond will be destroyed! Jace will lose him! And he doesn’t think he can take it on top of everything else.

“Where are they?” Jace demands, stepping forward. “I need to see them!”

But Lydia just shakes her head sadly. “They already took them to the City of Bones. It’s too late…”

Jace turns and runs, leaving both Clary and Lydia standing there. He isn’t sure what he will do, but he has to stop it. Somehow. He must. He won’t allow them to steal another family from him. Not again.
Gone

Chapter Summary

Another wedding What-If story... (Unbeta'd)

Jace’s running through the corridors; the Institute’s been in complete disarray ever since Valentine attacked, ever since Hodge betrayed them all and let him in, using Alec and Lydia’s wedding ceremony as a distraction.

“Clary!” Jace calls out, seeing her standing in the chapel’s doorway. “Have you seen Alec and Izzy? We need to go after…”

He falls silent when he realizes that she isn’t listening. She just stands there, one hand pressed to her mouth, eyes full of tears. He stops beside her, turns to look in the chapel - and his breath catches in his throat.

The room’s full of debris and dust still fills the air - and in the middle of it all, heedless of the shards from the stained glass windows, Alec’s sitting on the floor, holding Lydia in his arms, and rocking gently, back and forth, back and forth. Lydia’s golden white dress is drenched with blood, one hand hanging limply to the ground. She’s dead.

Isabelle is kneeling beside her brother, her own dress torn. She has one arm around his shoulders and she’s speaking to him quietly, her soft words echoing through the empty chapel, “… go, Alec. Please, big brother, you have to let her go. You can’t do anything for her anymore… Please, Alec, please…”

Jace walks past Clary and into the chapel proper, his steps heavy and glass crunching under his shoes. He didn’t like Lydia, but he admired her strength, her courage. She was a formidable Shadowhunter - and his parabatai’s fiancée, no matter what he personally thought of their engagement.

Isabelle looks up helplessly at him. Her cheeks are stained with tears. Alec continues to hold Lydia, to rock her gently, his eyes empty and unseeing, broken…

Jace crouches down in front of him. “Alec…” he says softly, but his parabatai doesn’t seem to hear him. So he reaches out and rests his hand on the back of Alec’s neck, the gesture one that has always seemed to ground Alec, to calm him. “Alec, stop.”

Alec stops rocking and after a moment, turns his eyes to Jace. “She’s gone,” he says in a dead voice, and Jace feels something break inside him. Then Alec’s eyes harden, their warm brown color turning icy. “I want them dead, Jace. I want them both dead, Valentine and Hodge. No trial, no mercy.”

Jace squeezes the back of Alec’s neck, and nods. Whatever his parabatai needs. “No mercy, I promise.”
“… I’ll pretend I didn’t hear it.”

“That’s the problem, you are not listening!”

They argued, he and Alec - it seems like that’s all they’ve been doing lately - so when Clary called, Jace gladly escaped. Three hours later, just as they were leaving the theater, still laughing giddily, Izzy called with the horrible news.

Alec tried to kill himself.

“… you are not listening…”

And now he’s sitting here, in Alec’s hospital room, by Alec’s bed, one hand on Alec’s leg, feeling its warmth through the blanket, needing the reassurance that Alec’s still here, Alec’s hands too swollen to hold, his slashed forearms bandaged.

“… you are not listening…”

He’s the only one here, all alone; Max away on a school trip, certainly not a coincidence, Alec would never allow for their little brother to find him; Izzy taken home by Clary, heavily sedated for it was she who discovered Alec, the person she loved and idolized most in the world, half dead in their bathroom, completely by accident, a broken heel having forced her to cut her date short; and their parents thrown out by the hospital staff when they could not stop arguing even for the sake of their son, laying blame at each other’s feet.

But Jace knows who’s at fault here…

“… you are not listening…”

Alec’s been shouting and shouting for help for weeks, and Jace just didn’t hear him. He didn’t listen, didn’t want to listen, having better things to do than pay attention to his brother, his best friend since the Lightwoods adopted Jace.

“… you are not listening!”

Jace looks at Alec whose face looks deathly pale, almost gray in the dim light of the hospital room. He seems… tired, worn out, and Jace wonders how he could have missed it, how he could’ve been so blind. If Izzy stayed out later… Jace shudders just thinking of it. He squeezes his brother’s leg gently.

“I’m here, Alec,” Jace whispers. “I’m listening…”
“Magnus!” Alec calls out urgently, as he bursts into Magnus’ apartment. “I need your help.”

Magnus slinks out of his - their - well, still mostly his bedroom, and seeing Alec drenched, he frowns. “What happened?”

Alec pulls out his hand from underneath his jacket and presents it to Magnus. Said IT being something furry. And gray. And also wet. And dirty. “Can you help him?”

Magnus blinks at the furry thing. “That’s a cat,” he observes.

“Yes, I found him by the church.” Alec looks down at the tiny thing anxiously. “Someone must have kicked him. Can you help him?”

“I’m not a veterinarian, Alexander,” Magnus protests, though when the tuft of wet fluff makes a pitiful, wailing noise, his heart seizes a bit.

Alec looks at him, droplets of water clinging to his eye-lashes. He just looks.

Magnus throws up his hands. “Fine! But you’ll bath it first. Who knows where it was! I bet it has fleas!” he declares with disgust and shoos Alec and the beast off into the bathroom, grumbling. Alec might not fight fair, but Magnus will hold fast: he will heal the fluffy bit but that will be it.

It’s the next day morning that Magnus wakes up to find Alec lying in the bed next to him, the little kitten asleep on his t-shirt clad chest. Alec’s smiling down at the kitten, running his forefinger over its soft head.

“I thought we could call him Church, since I found him by the church,” Alec says when he notices that Magnus is awake.

Magnus glares at him. “We are not keeping the beast,” he protests and points at the tufty thing.

The kitten chooses that very moment to wake up. It blinks its large blue eyes at Magnus, then it stretches its neck and rubs its head against Magnus’ extended finger. So. Not. Fair.

Magnus glares some more. Alec smiles innocently. The kitten purrs.

“Well… if we keep it - and I’m saying if, so stop grinning - Church is just too plain a name for the pet of the High Warlock of Brooklyn. I think something like… Chairman Meow would be a much more befitting title!”
An anon wanted “a soulmate au where whatever you write on your skin, your soulmate will see it and vice versa.” (Unbeta'd)

When Magnus realizes that he has a soulmate somewhere out there, in the wide wide world, after four hundred plus years, it’s a… peculiar feeling, for having a soulmate is a special thing, not everyone is so lucky. And being a warlock, he wasn’t actually sure he had a soul to find a mate, so there’s that.

But when the first tentative squiggle that appears on his skin turns into a rune - which gives him an itchy, itchy rash! - he bangs his head against the table. Of course, of course the world would play a joke on him. Of course his soulmate would be a Shadowhunter!

As time goes by, various runes appear on his skin, sometimes in unexpected places, two at once or none at all for weeks. And it’s always the same: a tickle, then the rune - and bam! A rash, red and itchy! He’s a Downworlder, after all! Downworlders and runes don’t mix! But he grits his teeth and heals the rash and gets on with his life.

That is, until the day a huge rune pops up on his neck and suddenly, he looks like a boiled lobster, as if he was rolling in poison ivy. And the itching is driving him nuts!

STOP IT! he finally scribbles onto his forearm, rather ticked off.

There’s a pause that he would describe as startled but maybe he’s projecting.

WHY? appears in the same place.

I’M A DOWNWORLDER! NO RUNES!

Another pause. I’M A SHADOWHUNTER. NEED THEM TO SURVIVE.

And yeah, Magnus knows that. And he doesn’t exactly want his soulmate to kick it before they even meet, but… it itches!

He sighs and swallows his irritation. COMPROMISE? he offers.

And so they agree on one, a compromise: his soulmate will give him a warning in advance, allowing Magnus to gather enough magic to block the rash, and Magnus won’t complain anymore. Much.

Magnus gets used to his soulmate, to mapping the progress of his training, his missions; he worries every time an iratze appears on his skin… But though his thoughts turn to the boy - yes, it’s a boy, that much he gathered - more and more often, he doesn’t really want to know more about him, like his name or where he lives. Because the boy is still a boy, based on the appearance of the first rune, and Magnus might have many vices but children are not one of them; even the thought makes him want to scrub his brain with bleach.
And so he waits, he waits till he’s sure his soulmate is of age, and he has their first meeting all planned out years in advance, to the minutest detail, a candle-light dinner, a proper date… Which, of course, never happens, because that’s just how the world rolls.

It all comes to a head in a night club, during a meeting with Jocelyn Fray’s red-headed spawn and her blond suitor, when an arrow whistles by and a certain young man takes Magnus’ breath away. And when Magnus then asks the all-important question, “Who are you?” The answer is simple: *Your soulmate.*
Removal

Chapter Summary

What if Alec married Lydia? What if Lydia turned out to be working for Valentine? What if Alec needed his wedding rune removed? (Unbeta'd)

“You sure you want to do it?” Jace asks anxiously. “It’ll be very painful.”

Alec takes a deep, shuddering breath and looks down at the wedding rune on his wrist, stark on his pale skin. “Yes. I can’t stay tied to her if she works for Valentine. Just imagine what she could do through this…”

They’re in Alec’s bedroom instead of the infirmary where these things are usually done because Alec wants to keep it quiet. Jace doesn’t like it but he understands and if this is what Alec wants, then he will help him.

They sit down on Alec’s bed and Jace takes Alec’s right hand in his - when the door opens and Magnus Bane slips in. Jace frowns, because… Magnus Bane? Here? What…?

Magnus’ eyes are drawn to Alec’s wrist, and they widen when he realizes what they’re about to do. He steps closer. “Alexander,” he whispers. “Why didn’t you tell me about this?”

Alec ducks his head. “It’s my mistake to correct, Magnus,” he answers softly, not looking at the warlock.

Jace watches Magnus as he stares down at Alec with a soft, almost tender look in his eyes - and something clicks in Jace’s mind and his breath catches in his throat. Alec and… Magnus Bane?

“Then let me help,” Magnus says and slides behind Alec on the bed. He winds his left arm around Alec’s midriff, lacing their fingers together, and Alec stiffens for a moment, throwing a furtive glance at Jace, but then he relaxes and leans back against the warlock. Magnus looks at Jace challengingly, daring him to say anything damning.

Jace lowers his eyes to his parabatai’s vulnerable wrist, offered so trustingly to him. He squeezes Alec’s hand gently. They will have to talk about this but now is not the right time or place.

“Ready?” Jace asks, and when Alec nods, he lowers his stele to the wedding rune to draw a harsh line through it and severe the bond.

The moment the stele touches the rune, Alec stiffens, and once Jace starts cutting through the bond, Alec throws his head back, resting it on Magnus’ shoulder, and his spine arches painfully. He clenches his teeth, making strained, choked off noises. And then he screams.

Magnus snaps his fingers, insulating the room, and squeezes Alec’s hand. Jace is working as fast as he can, but the bond’s fighting him, refusing to part. And then the skin starts peeling off Alec’s wrist, flesh burning, blackening, and Alec’s screaming in agony, his whole body taut.

When the marriage bond finally snaps, and Alec slumps in Magnus’ arms, unconscious, Jace is drenched in sweat, shaking all over and his heart’s hammering so hard his chest hurts.
He watches as Magnus immediately starts pouring his blue magic into Alec’s arm, fixing the damage, while holding Alec gently to his chest, making calming noises while repeating softly, “It’s over, it’s done now, I’ve got you, it’s done…”

And Jace thinks, that yes, he and Alec will have to talk about… this, about Alec and Magnus, how it happened and when, but right now, Jace’s just grateful that Magnus is here, helping Alec. And loving him.
“Well, at least one good news today,” Alec says as he walks into Izzy’s room. “Magnus agreed to defend you.”

Isabelle stands up. “He did?” It was her idea - she needed an attorney and they were severely lacking in people they could trust - but she’s still surprised that Magnus agreed to do it.

“Yes. He mentioned a loophole that would allow him to represent you, even though he’s a Downworlder.”

“What about payment?” she asks nervously when she remembers all the rubies and diamonds she already owes the warlock.

Alec falters for a second. “It’s been taken care of,” he assures her.

Isabelle narrows her eyes. “What did he want?” When her brother fails to respond, he presses the issue. “Alec?”

He sighs, squares his shoulders and turns to her. “My bow and quiver,” he admits, his face unreadable.

“Alec!” Izzy gasps.

He waves his hand. “It wasn’t anything I wasn’t willing to pay for a chance at saving you,” he insists.

She steps closer and touches his arm. “But it’s your weapon…”

Alec shrugs. “It’s also an expensive magical artifact. I’ll just go back to using a normal bow. I’ll adapt, don’t worry.”

She shakes her head. “You should’ve told him to ask for something else.”

Isabelle feels him freeze. “The alternative wasn’t an option,” he answers stiffly. And when she opens her mouth to ask, he interrupts her, “I don’t want to talk about it!”

She thinks of what Magnus could’ve wanted, considering, that it disconcerted Alec so. And then… Oh. Oh, she realizes. “He wanted…”

Alec just glares at her. “Let it go, Izzy,” he orders firmly.

Isabelle looks at him unhappily. She’s convinced that he and Magnus would be perfect together, as a couple, but if his advances make Alec uncomfortable…

Seeing her expression, he squeezes her shoulders and smiles at her. “Don’t worry about it, truly. I can take care of myself, despite what you think. We’ve come to an agreement, me and Magnus.”
She frowns at him for a moment, then she steps into his arms and rests her head on his chest. “Alright,” she whispers. But she decides to have a word with Magnus Bane anyway. Nobody’s allowed to make her big brother feel bad…
Valentine forces Jace to choose between Alec and Clary. (Unbeta'd)

“You forgot the most essential lesson I’ve ever taught you, my son,” Valentine says. “Love makes you weak!”

“That’s not true!” Jace snaps at his father, expression furious.

Valentine sneers. “Isn’t it? Then show me your strength!” He sweeps his hand at the hostages. “Choose who lives and who dies! Choose - or they both die!”

Jace stares at his father, aghast, then he turns to them, to Alec and Clary, his parabatai and his… sister, bound and held by Valentine’s minions, a knife at their throats. How can he choose between them?

Alec watches Jace, the way his parabatai’s eyes shift from him to Clary, back and forth, back and forth, despairingly, forlornly. How can he choose between them? But Alec knows Jace will have to or Valentine will kill them both, there’s no doubt about it in his mind.

And Alec knows already what Jace’s decision will be - for it doesn’t escape him that Jace’s eyes linger on Clary, just a second or two longer than on Alec. Jace will choose Clary… And Alec can’t really blame him. If he were in Jace’s place and Valentine were threatening Jace and Isabelle, who would he choose?

No, Alec can’t blame Jace, he understands, accepts it even, the idea that he will die today, here and now, that death’s just minutes maybe seconds away because that’s how he was trained, to be willing to die for a cause without regret at any given moment… He just can’t take hearing Jace saying it out loud, pronouncing his death sentence. He just can’t.

And so, there’s only one thing to do…

When the guard feels Alec relax, he puts more pressure on the knife at Alec’s throat, drawing a droplet of blood. “Try anything,” the man whispers harshly in Alec’s ear, “and I’ll cut your throat.”

And Alec smiles crookedly. “That’s the point,” he says, and before the man can react, Alec throws himself forward, against the knife, sweeping from the right side to the left along the blade so sharp he doesn’t feel any pain, only the burn of skin and tissue parting, the warmth of blood gushing down his chest.

There’s a scream - Jace? - and a loud commotion, but Alec isn’t really aware of much anymore. His knees buckle and hit the ground when the guard drops him in shock. Alec can sense people fighting, yelling, moving all around him, but he’s falling, and then…

Jace is there. He catches Alec and holds him tight, he puts pressure on his throat in a vain attempt to stem the bleeding. He’s screaming something, but Alec can’t hear the words over the buzzing of
blood in his ears, he can only see Jace’s eyes, wide and full of horror and pain, pleading with Alec.

Alec offers him a pale smile, bloodless lips stained with red. And then darkness claims him.
Father

Chapter Summary

An anon wanted a doodle where Jace would tell Alec about Valentine. (Unbeta’d)

Chapter Notes

Translation into Polish by Pomyluna here.

“Valentine is my father.”

Jace waits till he’s alone with Alec, only then does he tell him. His shoulders are square, chin raised and expression challenging, as if he’s daring Alec to condemn him.

Alec just stares at him for the longest of moments, not saying a word, the slight widening of his eyes and the parting of lips his only reaction. And Jace tries to put up an air of indifference, he tries to pretend that Alec’s opinion does not matter to him, that he’s just informing his parabatai of a slight complication that occurred, a wrinkle…

But Jace’s heart’s hammering and the longer Alec’s silence lasts, the harder it is for him to keep up the facade of studied disinterest. Because if Alec damns him, if he turns away, if he writes Jace off… Jace will shatter to a million pieces.

Finally, Alec nods once thoughtfully, and says without any reproach, “Alright. How can I help?”

And Jace’s shoulders relax, his relief so strong he feels almost lightheaded. There’s still something he didn’t lose, something his fath… Valentine did not - and will not - take away from him: his parabatai, his brother, the other half of his soul.
Married

Chapter Summary

An anon wanted a story where Alec and Lydia do get married, the aftermath and consequences… (Unbeta'd)

They marry. The wedding is beautiful, the ceremony peaceful.

Alec still wishes he were somewhere else, with someone else.

Everything else goes according to their plan, too. They keep the Institute, and they clear the Lightwood name, Robert even becomes the Inquisitor after Imogen Herondale dies in battle. They defeat Valentine and his son, Jonathan Christopher, the real one, and Jace and Clary marry in a beautiful ceremony in the very same chapel; Alec is Jace’s best man. After Raphael Santiago is killed by a demon, Simon Lewis takes over as the leader of the New York vampire clan, and once he and Isabelle marry, she becomes the Clave’s envoy with the vampires, forging her own path in the politics of the Shadow World.

And the emptiness inside Alec’s growing stronger with each passing day.

Then Lydia kisses him, and though he doesn’t feel anything, not even a spark of arousal, he kisses her back, the way he thinks it should be done. And when they start sleeping together, he always makes sure that she’s satisfied in bed, so that she doesn’t notice he takes no pleasure in their coupling. He just wants her to be happy.

One day, when he can’t take the loneliness anymore, he goes to Magnus’ loft, only to find out that the warlock is gone; Alec spends hours there, sitting alone on the dusty floor of the empty apartment.

They decide to try for a child, he and Lydia. But they find out they can’t have any children of their own. It’s his fault, he’s sterile. He expects Lydia to be at least disappointed. Instead, she takes his hands in hers and tells him that it doesn’t matter, that they will just adopt a child, or a bunch, she laughs; so many Nephilim children were orphaned in the war.

He wishes so hard that he could love her the way she deserves; Lydia’s the most amazing woman he has ever met. He wishes it so much… but he just can’t. He loves her, but not like that.

They never get around to fostering a child, because 8 years after they marry, Lydia dies.

They’re in Central Park, fighting off a horde of demons that came through a split in reality. Alec’s picking them off with arrows, sending them back to where they came from, and Lydia’s guarding his back - and then she steps in front of a knife thrown his way. She’s dead before she hits the ground, and he doesn’t even get to say good-bye. When Jace and the cavalry arrive, they find Alec sitting on the ground, with Lydia’s body in his arms.

The funeral pyre is blazing, the ceremony befitting a Shadowhunter of Lydia Lightwood’s renown. Isabelle and Jace are standing by Alec’s side, when he asks forlornly, “Was she happy? Did I make her happy?” Alec doesn’t know what they see in his face or hear in his words, but following the
funeral, they refuse to leave him out of their sight.

The Clave and his parents want Alec to marry again; the head of an institute should be married, bringing children into this world or fostering them. He can’t do it again. And so he resigns and leaves the position to Jace and Clary; they don’t want it, not like this, but he doesn’t care. He’s done.

Alec’s 31, and he is left with nothing once more. He’s sitting on the floor of Magnus’ apartment again, leaning against one of the concrete pillars; the place’s dustier than ever but he still finds it comforting, even after so many years.

And that’s when somebody sits down next to him, their bodies touching. It’s Magnus, dressed in plain black clothes, with no glitter or make-up or grand, sweeping gestures.

They just sit there and stare at each other for a long moment, then Alec rests his head against Magnus’ and Magnus entwines their fingers and something loosens up inside both of them.

“I missed you,” Alec whispers.

“I missed you, too.”
The last thing Izzy expects when she knocks on the door of Lydia’s bedroom and walks in, is to find her brother’s fiancée in tears. Izzy has come to talk to Lydia, fair and square, to tell her that she and Alec simply cannot marry, that they’re about to make the biggest mistake of their lives, but this… this she didn’t expect.

Isabelle stops uncertainly. “Are you… are you okay?”

Lydia hastily wipes off her wet cheeks and even puts on a shaky smile. “Yes. Yes, I’m fine. Just fine,” she assures her.

Izzy steps closer. Lydia’s hair is down. It makes her look softer, younger. Izzy can’t help but ask in a concerned tone, “What happened?”

Lydia lets out a shuddering breath and drops her smile. She turns to the full-length mirror in the corner of the room and touches her hair self-consciously. “Do you know why I always wear my hair braided?” she asks softly, and when Isabelle shakes her head, she continues, “It’s a family tradition, a Monteverde tradition. My husband’s, John’s, grandmother taught it to me. The Monteverde women have always braided their hair when someone they loved died. John was the last descendant of the family, and his grandmother died shortly after him… Now there’s nobody left.”

Izabelle just stands there, unsure of what to say. She knew that Lydia was married once, of course, but she has never really thought about it.

Lydia’s running her fingers through her blond mane now. “I’ve worn the braid since the day they burned John’s body on the pyre…” She looks at Izzy, and holds her eyes in the mirror. “Now I’m marrying your brother, and I should stop, I shouldn’t bring John’s ghost into our marriage, but…” She blinks rapidly. “Not braiding my hair anymore feels like letting him die again.”

Izzy opens her mouth. She wants to tell Lydia what she came here to tell, that if she still loves her dead husband, she shouldn’t marry Alec, that it’s not fair to him - or to Lydia herself, but before she can do that, Lydia continues.

“I know that nobody really understands why we’re getting married, Alec and I,” Lydia says softly. “But it’s my last chance at fulfilling the only dream I have left: to lead an Institute. And Alec…” She shakes her head. “Nobody here, not you or Jace or Clary, nobody knows how much pressure he’s under, how close the Lightwoods came to losing the Institute and everything else, too. If we don’t do this, if the Lightwoods lose the Branwells’ support…” Lydia takes a deep, shaky breath.

Isabelle knows that this is it, this is her last chance to speak up. And it would be so easy if she hated Lydia or at the very least disliked her - but Izzy’s actually starting to like and admire her
brother’s fiancée, and if things were different, she would be proud to call her a sister-in-law, a friend…

Sighing deeply, Izzy realizes she just can’t do it, she can’t hurt Lydia like that, she can’t. Instead, she squares her shoulders, and gives Lydia an encouraging smile in the mirror. “Come on,” she says, touching her back gently, “let’s braid your hair. John should never be forgotten. And Alec will understand.”
Family

Chapter Summary

Izzy shows Jace the meaning of family. (Unbeta'd)

It’s shortly after the bachelor party, a very private affair considering it was just him and Alec, that Jace returns to his room - and finds a suit of black and gold laid out on his bed. He pauses for a moment, then walks closer and touches it. Who…?

“I took the liberty and had one made for you,” a voice says behind him.

Jace turns. It’s Isabelle. She’s leaning against the door frame, hugging herself. There’s a small, knowing smile on her lips.

One corner of Jace’s mouth quirks up. “How did you know?”

“That you and Alec would make up?” she asks. “It was inevitable. You love each other, you would take on the world for each other. What’s a little squabble between parabatai?” Then she grins mischievously. “Also, if my little ruse with the bachelor party hadn’t worked out, I planned on just locking you in a room together till you talked.”

Jace laughs quietly, and runs his hand over the shimmering waistcoat. “Thank you, Izzy,” he says softly, and looks at her again. “We really needed it. I needed it.” His voice turns hoarse, so he clears his throat and looks away before continuing. “I needed at least something in my life to go right.”

She smiles at him. “You’re welcome. That’s what family is for - and you are our family, Jace, mine and Alec’s. We will always have your back.”

Jace’s eyes burn and his throat tightens, so he just nods. Yes, he thinks, that’s what family means - and what Valentine will never understand: unconditional love, support and selfless devotion; him and Alec and Izzy. No matter what.
Chapter Summary

Jace makes sure Alec's okay. Missing scene from episode 112. (Unbeta'd)

They are headed down the hall towards the weapons room where Magnus wants to show them something, when Jace grips Alec’s arm and holds him back. The others throw curious glances their way, but walk past, leaving them alone for the moment.

Jace turns Alec around and looks him in the eye. “Are you okay?” he asks earnestly.

Alec looks a little wild-eyed, his cheeks are flushed and he can’t seem to stand still, fidgeting constantly. “What? Yes, I think so, probably. I just feel so…” He waves his hand.

Jace grins. “High on emotions?”

“Yes, that. Exactly that.” His eyes are wide and his lips are twitching as if he can’t decide between a grin and a frown. “By the Angel, Jace! What did I just do? And in front of everyone! I… I…”

Before he can work himself into a full-blown panic attack, Jace grips the back of his neck and pulls him into a hug. “It’s okay. Everything will be okay. We will deal with this together, alright?”

Alec takes a deep shuddering breath and lets it out, relaxing one muscle at a time, till he’s leaning heavily against Jace. “Alright. Alright.”

Jace smiles and whispers into his ear, “I’m so proud of you. So proud of being your parabatai. Never forget that, okay?”

And Alec smiles too, softly and happily, and tightens his embrace for a second. “Okay,” he whispers back. “Okay.”
Prejudice

Chapter Summary

A What-If story set during episode 113. (Unbeta'd)

When a portal opens in the door of the Institute, it causes an uproar among the staff. Maryse and Robert, the only Shadowhunters left on the premises, don’t hesitate and grab their Seraph blades to protect their home and their people from whatever might come through the shimmering purple gate.

What they don’t expect to see, is Magnus Bane who stumbles in, supporting and dragging… their son with him. The moment they step through the portal, Alec’s knees buckle and he drags the warlock down the ground with him. Alec’s gear is torn and soaked through with his blood that’s dripping to the floor and gathering in a small pool around his knees. His face is ashen and if Magnus weren’t supporting him, he would slump to the ground.

“What happened?” Maryse asks when Magnus waves his hand and closes the portal, and she rushes forward with her husband at her heels.

Magnus adjusts his grip on Alec and presses slender fingers to Alec’s neck to check his pulse. “Valentine sent Abaddon, a greater demon, for the Cup. I think he suspected that Starkweather’s involvement was a ruse, a trap. Jace went after them - but Alec was hurt in the fight, Abaddon stabbed him.”

Maryse hears Robert drawn in a sharp breath when Magnus peels Alec’s shirt off and reveals the ugly wound, already turning black around the edges with poison. “I need to get him to the infirmary. And I need my potions,” Magnus says, already focusing on the task.

“We don’t need your help, warlock,” Maryse states firmly. Even now she simply cannot jump over her shadow, not after what happened earlier that night. “We have Silent Brothers for that.”

Magnus’ head snaps up angrily and he narrows his eyes at her. “As far as I know, Brother Jeremiah returned to the City of Bones, and Alec can’t afford to wait for you to summon him back. *Iratze* won’t help with demon poison. Would you rather let your son die, than accept help from his Downworlder boyfriend? Maybe I should’ve taken him somewhere else, where he would’ve been truly safe.”

They glare at each other for a moment. The tension is broken by Alec’s cough. “Boy-boyfriend?” he rasps. His head lolls on Magnus’ shoulder and his eyes flutter open to meet Magnus’ startled gaze. “Nev-never had one bef-before…”

Magnus kisses his forehead on impulse and squeezes him gently. “Now you do. And he’ll take care of you, I promise.” The last part is said with his eyes trained on Maryse, the threat loud and clear.

“You heard the warlock, get a stretcher!” Robert calls out, and when Maryse turns to him, a look of betrayal in her eyes, he says, softly but firmly, “Enough, Maryse.”
And when people rush in and carry Alec away with Magnus running by his side, holding one of Alec’s hand in his own, Robert lingers for a moment, watching his wife. When Maryse doesn’t move, her lips still pressed into a thin, angry line, Robert just shakes his head sadly, and follows his son.
Jace has been with Valentine for ten days when he feels his parabatai bond with Alec break. There’s no warning, he’s simply seized with agony so terrible he thinks he’s dying. Never before has he felt anything like this, it feels as if a part of him was torn away, like there’s gaping hole in his soul.

But the moment he tries to leave, his need to reach Alec almost overwhelming, Valentine locks him up, and it takes him weeks, long, painful, agonizing weeks till he finds a way to escape. And all the time, a litany of can’t be, can’t be, Alec can’t be dead is running through his head.

The first thing he does after his escape, is to call Alec. Number disconnected, that’s all he gets and his dread is growing stronger by the second. He cannot call the Institute directly, he’s a rogue, after all, so he calls Izzy on her private number.

“They stripped him of his runes,” Isabelle tells Jace, her voice numb.

Jace is relieved, relieved that Alec isn’t dead, but at the same time, his dread turns to horror. They wouldn’t… “Why?” he asks hoarsely. There’s never been a more loyal Shadowhunter than Alec Lightwood.

Izzy’s words sound bitter and harsh when she responds, “They found him unworthy of being a Shadowhunter, and they punished him for bringing shame to the Clave.”

Jace doesn’t understand. “But… why?”

“Why do you think?” she snaps. “He came out on his wedding day, Jace! He humiliated the Branwells in front of all the Clave dignitaries. Who do you think leaned on the Consul and forced this through?”

Jace clenches his eyes shut. They wouldn’t. Not for something like that. They wouldn’t do this to Alec… They did. “Where is he?” he asks softly.

“At Magnus’. He did everything short of breaking into the City of Bones and kidnapping Alec to save him. He wouldn’t abandon him.” She pauses. “No matter what.”

Jace wants to ask what she means, but he guesses he’ll find out soon enough.

Magnus isn’t surprised when Jace barges into his apartment without knocking or invitation. Isabelle must’ve called him. He looks… old. He shouldn’t, Magnus is ageless, after all, but he does, as if his years finally caught up with him. There’s no glitter, no make-up, no fancy clothes this time…

“He’s in his room,” Magnus says quietly and points at a closed door at the end of a short hall. But when Jace takes a step in that direction, Magnus stops him. “Be warned: he has changed.”
Jace stops and turns to him. “How?”

Magnus runs his hands through his messy hair. “They broke him. I think… I think he could’ve dealt with the rune stripping, with not being a Shadowhunter anymore - but when they destroyed your bond…” Magnus looks at him and his eyes are haunted. “… something shattered in him. And I’m not sure he’ll ever recover from that, Jace.”

Something hitches in Jace’s throat. Magnus has never called him by name before, at least that he remembers. This is bad. He nods and goes.

Alec’s sitting on the windowsill, arms loosely looped around bent knees, head resting against the glass. He’s looking out but it doesn’t seem like he’s seeing anything, and Jace’s heart seizes: Alec looks… small, unsubstantial, as if he’s not really there anymore.

Jace walks closer, and drops to his knees beside the man he still considers a part of himself. It’s not until he actually touches Alec’s arm, that Alec notices him. He turns to Jace, looks down at him, and Jace has to blink back tears, because Alec’s eyes are dead.

Jace tries to smile and fails. “Hey…” he whispers, his voice breaking.

Alec just stares at him for a long, long moment, the he rasps, “I can’t feel you anymore.”

And all Jace can do is raise himself up on his knees, take Alec in his arms and hug him hard, face pressed into Alec’s neck where only an ugly scar remains of his most visible rune. He holds him, feeling the bird-like bones under Alec’s paper thin skin. He holds on and he cries, when Alec finally moves and puts his arms around Jace, returning the hug lightly, seeking comfort… crumbling, and letting himself be held.

“I can’t feel you anymore, Jace. I can’t feel you…”
I know I have written a similar story already, but the 113 sneak peek inspired me: Magnus’ “… how unpleasant was it?” and Alec’s “Off the charts.” (Unbeta'd)

“What you did to our family, what you did to us… I’ve never been so ashamed, so humiliated before, Alec. Never!”

His mother is furious, her eyes are blazing with rage so all-encompassing that it makes Alec’s heart beat faster. He’s actually a little afraid, genuinely afraid of her in that moment. He knew that his parents would be mad, but this… And his knee jerk reaction is to apologize, to take it all back, to beg for leniency, for forgiveness…

But then he remembers his sister and his parabatai looking at him with pride, he remembers the overwhelming relief at being able to be true to himself and not hide anymore… He remembers the softness of Magnus’ lips, the warmth of his smile…

And once again, he realizes that it’s now or never, if he backs down now, he will never again stand up to his parents, he will always cower before them. And so he speaks up, though he feels almost faint with dread.

“Well, I guess we’re even, then,” he tells his mother, “because I’m ashamed of you, too.”

Maryse opens her mouth to speak, but before she can say anything, Alec continues; words are spilling out of him, all the things he has wanted to say ever since the ugly, hidden truths about his parents came to light.

“I’m ashamed that you sided with Valentine, that you fought for him, supported him, killed for him. How many Downworlders did you murder at his bidding? Do you even remember or were they not important enough? After all, you didn’t back out till he started killing our own people! You might have recanted to gain back the Clave’s favor, mother, but you’re still no better than Valentine!”

The slap takes them both by surprise, its sharp crack echoing through the suddenly too quiet room. Alec stiffens, his head turned slightly to the side by the force of his mother’s hit, and he blinks hard to push back tears. And Maryse… she freezes too, shocked by what she just did.

It’s Robert who breaks the mounting tension, the silence heavy with reproach and accusations - Robert, who until then stood back, torn by his loyalty to his wife and his love for his son. He steps between them, and asks Alec softly if he’s alright.

Alec simply nods because his throat’s too tight for speaking. He still hasn’t looked at his mother, and Maryse still hasn’t said anything.

Robert reaches out and squeezes Alec’s arm gently. “Go change, Alec,” he tells him not unkindly. “I think your mother and I need to talk. Go on.”

And Alec goes, not looking at either of them. The burning pain in his cheek is fading quickly, but
the feeling that something just irrevocably broke remains.
The Visit

Chapter Summary

Ragnor Fell returns for one more visit. (Unbeta'd)

“So, this is him, huh?” the ghost of Ragnor Fell asks as he bends down over the bed to study his old friend’s young lover with piqued interest. Alec’s lying asleep next to Magnus, his naked body covered with nothing but a thin sheet. “A pretty little thing, isn’t he?” he murmurs appreciatively.

Magnus, who has been sitting up in bed, reading, looks up from his book. With a fond smile and mischief in his eyes he replies, “I assure you, there’s nothing about Alexander that I would call little.”

Ragnor straightens up and clucks his tongue at him. “Don’t be lewd, Magnus Bane!”

Magnus widens his eyes innocently and replies with indignation, “Dear fellow, I was talking about his height! Where did your mind wander off to?” He raises a finger. “Ah, but then, you and Freud did get along fabulously, if I remember correctly.”

“Yes, quite the peculiar fellow, wasn’t he?” Ragnor comments thoughtfully.

Magnus chuckles and raises his eyebrows. “That’s one way of putting it.”

His laugh must’ve found its way into Alec’s dreams because the Shadowhunter turns onto his side with a deep sigh, throws one arm over Magnus’ midriff and curls up around him, before settling down again. Magnus smiles down at him fondly and runs his fingers through Alec’s sleep tousled hair.

“Are you happy, then, my dear?” Ragnor asks, his eyes soft with affection as he watches Magnus and his lover.

Magnus looks up from Alec’s sleep-relaxed face. “Yes, I am. I truly am. And all because of you and your wisdom.” He inclines his head. “I’m forever in your debt, old friend.”

Ragnor smiles, his expression wistful and melancholy. “And I’ll come to collect one day. But hopefully, not for a very, very long time yet…”

And then he fades again, leaving the lovers alone; one oblivious, the other a little misty-eyed with heartache for friends lost forever.
The Truth

Chapter Summary

By popular demand, a sequel to "The Choice". (Unbeta'd)

Jace takes his eyes off Alec for just a moment, and suddenly, there’s blood everywhere. Alec’s guard drops his blade - drops Alec who slowly sinks to his knees, throat slashed open, blood pouring out of the wound, out of his mouth.

Jace’s eyes widen - and he freezes for a second. And then rage seizes him and he lets instincts take over, forgets about everything else. His Seraph blade leaps into his hand and he starts slashing and hacking, he and Clary both, and then he’s there, with Alec, catching him before he can topple to the ground.

“Hey, hey,” Jace whispers frantically while he tries to hold Alec up. He presses his hand firmly to the wound on Alec’s neck in a vain attempt to stem the bleeding. “What did you do? Alec… Alec, what did you do?”

His voice is hoarse, as if he’s been screaming, and he’s repeating his words, over and over again, holding Alec tight, pleading with him to stay alive. And Alec’s just staring up at him, blood bubbling out of his wound and through Jace’s fingers with every breath he takes. And he… smiles!

And then Clary is there with her stele, quickly drawing iratzes on Alec’s skin, and Alec’s still smiling, as if he found peace, and Jace wants to shake him, shake him so hard! And when Alec finally slumps unconscious in his arms, Jace wants to scream and scream and scream…

In the end, Brother Jeremiah manages to save Alec’s life, the ugly, gaping wound soon nothing more than an ugly, thick scar on Alec’s neck. But he also tells them that Alec will never talk again; his vocal cords were too damaged to heal properly. Alec doesn’t look at them when they tell him, at any one of them, he just stares fixedly down at his sheet covered lap.

It’s been days, and Jace has barely left the infirmary. It’s like he’s physically unable to leave, like he fears that if he turns away for just a moment, Alec will be gone forever this time.

Jace is sitting on the floor in the hall outside the infirmary, leaning against the wall out of sight, hiding, arms propped on his bent knees. Isabelle’s in there with Alec, having brought him a pad with a voice app, a miracle of modern technology, already figuring out the best ways how to help her brother. But the mechanical, almost robotic voice of the app is scraping Jace’s nerves raw.

“Why did you do it, big brother?” Izzy asks, her voice anxious. “Why?”

There’s a tap-tap-tapping sound, and then, “HE. WOULD. HAVE. CHOSEN. CLARY. ANYWAY.”

And Jace freezes, chest tightening so hard he can barely breathe. No.

“You can’t know that!” Izzy protests in a hushed voice. “He’s your parabatai!”
More tapping. “I. DO. KNOW. I. KNOW. HIM. AND. I. DO. NOT. BLAME. HIM. BUT.”

“But?” Isabelle prompts gently when he stops typing.

Tap-tap-tapping, and Jace can’t listen to it anymore, it’s like water torture, the taps pricking his brain like sharp icicles. He wants to press his hands over his ears.

“I. COULD. NOT. LET. HIM. SAY. IT. OUT. LOUD. COULD. NOT. ALLOW. MYSELF. TO. HEAR. IT.” A pause. “IT. WOULD. HAVE. BEEN. LIKE. DYING. TWICE.”

Jace runs.
Chapter Summary

An anon wanted me to write my "Prejudice" story in reverse: Magnus gets hurt and Alec saves him. (Unbeta'd)

Abaddon’s gone with the Cup, Hodge Starkweather’s dead body’s lying on the ground just yards away - and Alec’s holding Magnus, wounded and bleeding, in his arms. Magnus who just had to get involved, because “If something happened to you, Alexander…”

“I have to go after the demon,” Jace states flatly as he steps over Hodge’s body casually and switches off his blade.

Alec looks up at him, torn. His hands are sticky with Magnus’ blood, both of their clothes are soaked with it, and he just can’t leave Magnus, he can’t. But he can’t let his parabatai go after Abaddon alone either! “I…”

For a moment, the coldness in Jace’s eyes retreats, and he even smiles a little when he crouches down beside Alec and Magnus and grips the back of his parabatai’s neck. “It’s okay, stay. Take care of him. He needs you now.”

Alec stares at him for a long moment, then he nods. “Okay,” he whispers. “But promise me you’ll be careful! I don’t want to lose you, either!”

Jace just smiles again, then he lowers his eyes to where Alec has his hands pressed against Magnus’ torn stomach; Magnus is barely breathing. Cold fury returns to Jace’s eyes - and then he’s gone, running after Abaddon, after the Cup… and towards Valentine.

Magnus’ groan returns Alec’s attention back to him. “Can you heal yourself?” he asks anxiously, unsure of how it works. “Can you… can you use my strength and heal yourself like you did with Luke?”

Magnus’ eyes open to slits, their cat-like nature showing clearly. “Ye-es. I c-can. But…”

Alec interrupts him, “Then do it. Take whatever you need to save yourself!”

Magnus’ slow, deep breath wheezes in his throat. “But I’ll need a l-lot. I’m drained from fight-fighting Abaddon and the wound’s b-bad.”

“Then get on with it!” Alec urges on holding out one hand in offering. “Take what you need, anything.”

And Magnus does. He grips Alec’s hand so hard his bones grind together - and then he pulls, pulls at the very core of Alec’s being, at the roots of his strength. And Alec stiffens and closes his eyes, bites his lower lip to hold back a moan of pain. And it goes on and on and on…

Alec doesn’t know how long they sit like this, in this vulnerable position, locked in an intimate embrace, but when he opens his eyes again, he feels hollow, as if Magnus used up every ounce of his strength… And there are his parents standing there, just a few feet away, looking…
disappointed? Stricken? Disgusted?

“You… You shared your Angel given strength with a *demon spawn*?” Maryse breathes out, aghast. “Don’t you realize just how… how *perverse* a ritual that is? To open yourself up to a *Downworlder*?”

“It saved his life!” Alec objects, stricken, his arms still around Magnus, who has turned his head away, shamed by Maryse’s words. Alec looks down at him, and seeing that Magnus is fully healed again, he allows himself to relax, despite his parents’ uncomfortable scrutiny. When he speaks again, his words are aimed directly at Magnus. “And I would do it again.”

Magnus looks at him searchingly, and whatever he finds in Alec’s face makes his eyes soften, his lips curl up in a small smile. Alec smiles back and squeezes Magnus’ hand, the rightness of his decision filling him with warmth.

They don’t even notice when Maryse, who’s brimming with rage, turns and stomps away, towards Hodge’s body, with her husband reluctantly at her heels.
“I’ll kill them. I’ll kill them both!” Jace snarls furiously and storms out of the infirmary, hitting the wall with his fist as he stomps by.

“Jace!” Alec calls after him and takes a step to follow, only to stop and turn back to where Lydia’s lying unconscious on the bed; he’s torn by conflicting impulses: to stay or to go?

Seeing this, Magnus walks up to him. “Go,” he encourages Alec, “go after him, and make sure he doesn’t get himself killed. I’ll take care of her as best as I can, you have my word.”

Alec looks at him, and there’s relief, gratitude and… something else in his eyes. “Thank you,” he says softly and entangles their fingers on impulse, squeezing gently for a second before letting go.

Magnus is startled - and pleased by this unconscious display of affection, and he sends Alec off with a nod and a smile.
Jace and Alec discuss consent in marriage. Trigger warning! (Unbeta'd)

They’re still at the club, enjoying Alec’s very private bachelor party, just talking like they haven’t talked in ages, when Jace says, “And what about sex?”

Alec has a bad feeling he knows where this is headed, so he deflects, “What about it?”

Jace laughs. “You’re getting married tomorrow, Alec!”

“And what does that have to do with anything?” Alec replies defensively.

Jace just stares at him pointedly with his eyebrows raised. Alec looks away.

“Look,” Jace says not unkindly, “you have to realize that sex will come up, sooner or later.”

“Our marriage, mine and Lydia’s, it’s… a political arrangement. Sex doesn’t really play a part in it. We’re just… friends, allies,” Alec responds.

“And what about children?” Jace insists. “Did you at least talk about that? You have to know that you’ll be expected to have kids, by the Clave, Lydia’s family, Maryse and Robert…”

Alec shifts uncomfortably. “We can… we can adopt some, there will always be Shadowhunter kids who need family. It worked out in your case, didn’t it?” Alec smirks, trying to change the topic.

But Jace refuses to let him. “Fine, children aside. What about Lydia? Don’t you think she might, at some point in the future, actually want to have sex again? She’s a widow, I’m pretty sure she had sex in the past, she probably enjoyed having sex - what will you do when she brings it up?” Jace presses on. “Will you tell her to go and satisfy her urges somewhere else, or will you just lie back, close your eyes and think of Idris?”

Alec presses his lips together and stares at his clasped hands.

“Alec,” Jace says softly, “I know that you’re a virgin.” Alec blushes. “And I know you’re gay.”

Now Alec blanches so fast he feels almost light-headed. “Hey. Hey, look at me,” Jace urges and waits till Alec complies. “I don’t care. I admit I’m a little hurt that you didn’t tell me yourself, but I get it, I do. And I don’t care.” He pauses. “But eventually, this will become an issue in your marriage.”

Alec looks away again, uncomfortable.

“And the last thing I want, is to see you hurt or pressured into something you don’t want. Especially when it comes to sex,” Jace adds.

“It won’t happen,” Alec insists, but his voice is a little hoarse.

Jace nods. “Maybe not,” he agrees. “But I also know you, and I know how you think, unfortunately
- if you ever put yourself first, we wouldn’t be here now. So, just… Promise me. Hey,” he grips the back of Alec’s neck and forces Alec look at him, “promise me, that you won’t forget that you can say no, even to your wife. Promise me.”

They stare at each other for a long moment, then Alec nods slowly. “Alright,” he says reluctantly, “I promise.”

But, even though he’s a man of honor, Alec isn’t sure if he’ll be able to keep his word this time. Family means everything to him, after all…
**Alone Again**

Chapter Summary

A death story. Sorry. (Unbeta'd)

*Magnus hoped for a lifetime with Alexander - in the end, all they got were two days and one kiss…*

“I don’t regret it,” Alec whispers, breathing raggedly. His skin is turning gray, criss-crossed with black veins, as the demon poison works its way through his system so rapidly that not even Magnus’ magic can stop it.

“Shh…” Magnus shushes him. There are tears in his eyes and his hands are trembling as he holds Alec in his lap. He’s pouring every ounce of his magic into his wounded boyfriend - and it’s not working. *It’s just not working!*

“I don’t… I don’t regret the kiss,” Alec continues weakly, looking up at Magnus with all the *might-have-beens* in his eyes. “And I’m glad it was you.”

And when Alec dies moments later, there’s a little smile on his lips, while Magnus just sits there, holding him, frozen and barely breathing, because *this just didn’t happen, his Alexander didn’t just die, he didn’t leave Magnus all alone again, he did not, he did not…*
Alec Lightwood hates change. He loves rules and his everyday routine and he hates everything that disturbs either. So, when his parents inform him and his sister, Isabelle, that they’ll be fostering an orphaned Shadowhunter child, Alec hates the boy even before he arrives in the New York Institute. Yes, maybe it’s slightly irrational, but he can’t help it.

And when the boy, Jace Wayland - and what kind of a name is Jace! - arrives, it’s like all Alec’s fears are proven right. Jace is rude and rough and violent and he has no respect for rules or other people’s property, and all of Alec’s very civil - in his opinion - attempts at communicating with the intruder are thrown back into his face. Ungrateful little weasel!

And the worst thing of all? Alec’s parents force him to share a room with Jace, stating that it’ll help the blond boy adapt, that they can become friends, bond. As if! They will never, ever, ever become friends. Not ever. That… that oaf isn’t even human!

But then the nightmares come. Jace hasn’t been with them a week yet, when he starts having bad dreams, calling for his dead father in his sleep, begging him to stop one moment, begging him to come back and not leave him alone the next. And he’s crying softly, so very softly, and only when he believes that Alec’s asleep, that nobody can hear him. And Alec can’t take it anymore. He… he hates Jace - well, not really - but his grief’s breaking Alec’s heart.

So, when yet another nightmare causes Jace to cry out in his sleep, Alec slips out of his bed, pads over to Jace’s - and slips in. Jace startles awake and almost hits Alec with a fist, but Alec ducks and catches Jace’s hand in his.

“What are you doing?” Jace hisses.

The tone of Jace’s voice is angry, but Alec can hear the fear and despair and loneliness in it, too. And instead of letting go of the other boy’s hand, Alec clasps it in his, gently, giving Jace every chance to pull out.

But Jace doesn’t. They’re lying on their sides, facing each other and holding hands, and they stare each other in the eyes in the dimness of the room. All the anger seems to drain out of Jace, replaced with exhaustion, as if he’s simply too tired to fight anymore, but also with curiosity.

“I’m sorry about your dad,” Alec whispers, squeezing Jace’s hand gently. “I can’t give him back to you - but maybe we can share mine? And my mom and Izzy, too? And Max, that is my littlest brother. He sleeps most of the time, but I can share him with you too, if you want?”

Jace just stares at him.

“I promise we will take good care of you,” Alec whispers, and squeezes the other boy’s hand again. “Okay?”

And this time, the gesture is returned. Tentatively at first, then so hard that Alec feels his bones
grind together. “Okay,” Jace breathes out, as if afraid of being overheard.

And yes, Alec Lightwood still hates change, but maybe, in this one case - and in this one case only! - he could make an exception.
Bow & Quiver

Chapter Summary

Alec's bow & quiver are "rare magical items"... (Unbeta'd)

“You should really put a spell on them,” Alec says while checking the bow over for damage. He just came back from a hunt, a violent one, and he's sitting on the floor in front of Magnus’ burning fireplace, leaning back against the couch.

“On what?” Magnus asks, pouring them both a drink.

“The bow and the quiver, just in case,” Alec explains. “They’re your weapons, after all.”

Magnus picks up the glasses. “That they are,” he agrees mischievously, and turns. “But in case of what?”

“In case I’m killed in battle,” Alec answers calmly, still inspecting the bowstring.

Magnus, who started walking towards his lover, stops so abruptly the drinks slosh out of their glasses. “In case… you’re killed,” he repeats slowly, quietly.

Alec looks up, his expression puzzled. “Yes. We hunt almost every night these days, so it’s most likely just a matter of time before my luck runs out and some thing gets through to me. It would be a shame to lose these weapons, to let them fall in enemy’s hands. They are magical, after all.”

Magnus just stares at him, speechless. The casual way in which Alec speaks of his own death, as if it were a certainty, steals his breath away every time. For many of Magnus’ previous lovers, mortality was an issue - but none of them has ever treated the prospect of his or her own demise with such dismissal.

“What?” Alec asks uncertainly when the silence grows heavy.

Magnus blinks. He sets the glasses he’s been holding aside, walks over to Alec and drops to a crouch next to him. He grips Alec’s chin firmly in his bejeweled fingers and looks him deeply in the eyes.

“I don’t give a damn about these weapons beyond the fact that they keep you safe, Alexander,” he says, loud and clear, to make sure Alec really hears what he’s saying. “Don’t you get it? If there was anything I could protect from harm with my magic, it would be you!”

And with that, Magnus leans in and kisses Alec, hard and deep, parting his lips with his tongue, claiming his mouth and stealing his breath away.

Neither of them notices when the rare magical items that are the bow and the quiver, clatter forgotten to the ground.
“I’m glad you feel better,” Alec says as he steps into the infirmary. “We were all worried.”

Lydia, who’s sitting up in her bed, propped up on pillows, grins at him. “I’m fine now, really. They just refuse to let me out of here!” She pointedly raises her voice.

Alec huffs out a laugh and walks closer. “Well, you’re an important envoy to the Clave. Enjoy the attention.”

She rolls her eyes. “I think I have had enough attention to last me a lifetime.”

Alec’s shoulders hunch. “Yeah…”

Lydia reaches out. “Come here.”

Alec takes her hand in his and allows himself to be drawn down onto the bed. He sits down facing her.

“I heard about Jace,” she says softly. “I’m sorry.”

He sighs and looks down at their joined hands. “It seems like everything that could go wrong, did so in the last twenty-four hours. Hodge turned traitor, you got hurt,” he squeezes her hand, “now Jace’s gone… My parents are furious and the Clave representatives left angrily because on top of everything else, we lost the Cup - again.”

She ducks her head to try to catch his eye. “Hey, at least you and Magnus are okay.” When he doesn’t respond, she prods, “Aren’t you?”

He looks up. “Honestly? I don’t know,” he admits. “I haven’t even had the time to process what happened at the wedding yet, and suddenly I’m meeting one of his immortal exes, and…” He sighs and shakes his head. “I don’t trust Camille Belcourt or her motives, but… she brought up some very good points that got me thinking.”

“Thinking?” she prompts when he falls silent again.

“What am I actually doing, Lydia?” he asks a little lost. “Magnus is immortal! He was with people like Michelangelo. Michelangelo! Camille, despite all her faults, is a force of nature herself, an immortal like him. How do I even measure up to that? I’m a mortal Shadowhunter, plain and simple, and on the wrong side of the Clave’s favor now, too!”

Lydia squeezes his hand. “I’ve seen the way he looks at you, Alec,” she says kindly. “If I wasn’t absolutely sure that he thinks you hung the moon and stars, I wouldn’t have given you up so easily, I would’ve fought for you, tooth and nail. Camille might be a force of nature, like you said, but Magnus chose you, she’s right here, and he still chooses you - in his eyes, she doesn’t measure up to you.”
Alec ducks his head, embarrassed.

“And there’s nothing plain or simple about you, Alec Lightwood. Don’t insult my taste, I did almost marry you, after all,” she adds with a mischievous crinkle of her nose.

He laughs quietly again.

Then Lydia turns serious again. “The way Magnus looks at you, Alec? John used to look at me that way and it made me feel like I was the only important thing in the world. I would give everything to have him back. Don’t give up on your relationship without a fight. You would regret it for the rest of your life.”

Alec looks at her, squeezes her hand and nods. “Alright…”
Mortality

Chapter Summary

Following the S1 finale, Alec and Magnus discuss Alec's mortality. Alec drops some uneasy truths. (Unbeta'd)

“I saw you leave,” Magnus comments quietly as he walks up to Alec slowly.

Alec’s sitting on the steps outside the church ruin, elbows propped up on his bent knees, watching the stars - or what can be seen of them in the middle of New York. He looks at Magnus over his shoulder. “After everything they’ve been through, I thought that they deserved some privacy.”

Magnus nods, heads down the stone steps, then turns back, towards Alec. “We haven’t finished our conversation yet…” he reminds Alec.

Alec watches him for a moment, then says, “I heard you, Magnus. And I think I understood what you were trying to say: that you’re immortal, not un-killable.”

When Magnus inclines his head in confirmation, Alec continues almost gently, “I heard what happened to your friend, Ragnor Fell. That he died. I’m very sorry. I wish I had the chance to meet him.”

Magnus smiles painfully. “He was an… interesting man, you would’ve liked him.” He reconsiders. “Or maybe not. His sense of humor took some time to get used to. An acquired taste, that was he.”

Alec chuckles quietly. “I think that’s one thing you warlocks have in common: you’re very odd. Unique. I really like that about you. I feel like, even if I lived to a ripe old age, I would never meet anyone like you ever again.”

Magnus grins, pleased. But his smile drops when Alec continues in a serious tone.

“But that’s the thing, Magnus. I might not, live to a ripe old age, that is. And I know that you said you can’t see the future, but us Shadowhunters, we don’t generally live long. We live fast and die young.” He looks off into the distance. “The last time I was in Idris… Alicante was half-empty; abandoned houses, vacant streets… We don’t want the Shadow World to know, but we’re dying out, us Nephilim.”

Magnus draws a sharp breath. Despite all his intell as the High Warlock of Brooklyn, he didn’t know.

“And now that Valentine has the Cup…” Alec looks at Magnus. “Shadowhunters won’t survive another war, we will be obliterated. But I’ll still be on the front line, for Jace, for my family. Because it’ll be the right thing to do…”

Magnus stares at him, the urge to beg Alec to run away with him, to leave all the fighting and killing behind, is almost overwhelming. But Alec would never agree - and Magnus would never ask that of him in the first place.
“So, yes, your immortality is something I’ll have to get used to, and I’m not saying I’ll be always rational about it,” Alec continues honestly, “I’m a bit too… mundane for that.” He smirks. “But you will have to accept my reality, too: I’m a soldier, and I’ve made my peace with the fact that I might die at any given moment, a long time ago. Can you do that? Is it even fair to ask this of you? To ask you to live in this uncertainty day after day?”

Magnus swallows and looks away, the reality of who Alexander is really sinking in, for the first time, his and Alec’s roles suddenly switched. Alec might die. Not in fifty years or even in ten, but tomorrow… Is it worth it? Is the certain pain worth it? The answer is very simple.

He turns back to Alec, leans in and catches Alec’s mouth with his, the kiss sweet and gentle. When he pulls back, he runs his knuckles down Alec’s lightly stubbled jaw. “How about we work on that? Together. Whether just a day or a whole lifetime, I would rather spend it with you than without.”

Alec leans into his touch. “Alright, we can do that,” he agrees, then smiles. “And how about we start with that date?”
“You’re telling me that you can’t find Jace Morgenstern?” Inquisitor Herondale turns away from the bank of computers and towards the Lightwoods. “With all this technology you have at your disposal, with all the magic - you can’t trace one Shadowhunter?!”

Maryse and Robert exchange a look. “It seems Valentine has him shielded, or they’re on the ship that Hodge Starkweather mentioned,” Maryse replies. “We tried to use the things he has left behind to trace him, things he has owned for years, but nothing came up.”

The Inquisitor narrows her eyes. “Things? You used… things? You have the perfect way of tracking Valentine’s son right here,” she points at Alec who’s standing to the side together with his sister and Clary, “his parabatai. Why haven’t you used your son, Maryse?”

Everybody looks at Alec, their eyes widening.

“Imogen,” Maryse breathes out, “you can’t be serious…”

Isabelle steps forward. “You can’t do that!” she snaps angrily. “Their parabatai bond’s weakened. Alec already used it once to try and find your precious Cup! If he does it again so soon, it will break!”

The Inquisitor walks up to Isabelle and looks down at her. “I don’t give a damn about your brother’s parabatai bond with the traitor’s son, girl! Nothing is more important than finding Valentine and recovering the Cup!”

“I won’t do it,” Alec states firmly when the Inquisitor looks at him over Izzy’s shoulder. “Valentine’s a traitor, but Jace is not. I won’t let you break our bond just so you can get your revenge.”

Imogen Herondale narrows her eyes again. “That wasn’t a request, boy!” And then, to everyone’s shock she orders, “Seize him!”

The Lightwoods cry out in protest and move to defend Alec, even Clary draws her Seraph blade and Alec reaches for his, but suddenly, the Inquisitor’s guard moves in, their lances alight with angelic power, and they’re surrounded.

“Enough!” the Inquisitor roars. “Stand down or I’ll have you all put on trial for treason, for harboring not one but two traitors in your midst and for losing the Cup! I have had enough of your incompetence, Maryse!”

They all freeze, Seraph lances at their throats. The Lightwoods hesitate for a moment, then they let their blades drop. Clary’s the last one to subside.

Without calling her guard off, the Inquisitor points at Alec and orders, “Bring him to me!”
Two of the guards grip Alec’s arms tightly and drag him in front of Inquisitor. Alec’s trying to resist, but they’re unrelenting. Clary and Isabelle, Maryse and Robert, they all follow him with anxious eyes.

Maryse tries to take a step forward, but the lance at her throat stops her. “Imogen, you don’t have to do this. We will find them some other way…”

But the Inquisitor ignores her. When the guards haul Alec in front of her, she stares him in the eyes for a moment. He’s pale and breathing heavily, but his expression is defiant, when she grabs his t-shirt and pulls it up to expose the *parabatai* rune on his hip and the knot of the tracking rune still healing over it.

“Now,” Imogen Herondale says, “we will *finally* get some answers.” And with that she pulls out her stele and runs it over the tracking rune on Alec’s skin, activating it.

When Alec throws his head back and screams, the Inquisitor waves a hand at her guards and they release Alec, who drops to his knees immediately, in too much pain to remain standing. He presses one hand to his *parabatai* rune and props himself up with the other, his body racked in agony, head bowed.

“Alec!” Izzy yells and tries to run to her brother, but the guards hold her back.

The Inquisitor drops to a crouch in front of Alec. “Where is he?” she yells at him, and gripping his chin in her claw-like fingers, she draws his head up. “Where?”

Alec’s eyes are wide open but unseeing, his face ashen with pain. “Jace…” he mouths; he doesn’t even have enough breath to scream anymore. “Jace…”

The Inquisitor shakes him. “Where is he? Tell me!” she screeches.

“Sh-ship… the Morn-ing Star,” Alec stutters, blood dripping from his nose. “Head-heading ba-ck to… to New Y-York.”

Imogen Herondale smiles triumphantly. “When will they arrive?”

Alec groans silently, the droplets of blood running from his nose turning into a steady stream. “To- tonight. They’ll arri-arrive tonight…” And with that Alec’s eyes roll up, his chin slips out of the Inquisitor’s fingers and he slumps to the ground, unconscious.

“Alec!” Isabelle screams and tears herself out of her guards’ grip to rush to her brother’s aid with Clary at her heels. “Alec!” She drops to her knees next to him and touches his gray face. “Alec, wake up!”

Imogen Herondale stands up and turns towards Maryse and Robert who stare at her with unconcealed hatred. “There,” she says, coldly. “That’s how you do your job right, Maryse. Now prepare your people, Valentine arrives tonight!”
Tracking #2

Chapter Summary

Sequel to Tracking. Jace's POV. (Unbeta'd)

When the Shadowhunters swarm the ship, The Morning Star, a furious battle ensues, them against Valentine’s minions, the new breed of Shadowhunters. Valentine himself is nowhere to be found, though, and neither is the Cup.

Jace… Jace they discover after a desperate search locked up in a cell deep in the belly of the ship. When Isabelle and Clary storm inside, they find him curled up on his side, clutching at his parabatai rune. He’s barely conscious, pale and soaked in sweat. There’s blood all dried up and crusted around his nose.

“Jace!” Clary exclaims as she drops to her knees beside the mattress on which he’s lying. She reaches out, wanting to touch him, but afraid of hurting him even more. “Jace…”

He opens his eyes slowly and blinks at her. “Clar-y…?” he croaks. Then he turns his eyes to Isabelle who’s standing in the doorway, guarding their backs. “Iz-zy?”

“Yes! Yes, we’re here to save you,” Clary assures him, then helps him sit up, gently, carefully, propping him up when he starts sliding down again. “We’ll get you out, I promise.”

Jace’s eyes roam around, all over the dark, damp cell for a moment, as if searching for something. Then, “Alec… where…” His voice breaks. “How cou-could he? How…?”

Clary shakes her head furiously. “No, Jace, no. It wasn’t him, he did not want to do it. I swear, I was there. It was Inquisitor Herondale.”

Jace blinks at her, slightly more alert now. “Imogen Herondale?”

“Yes. She did it to him. She ordered her guards to hold him down and activated the tracking rune.” Clary touches his face. “I swear, he didn’t want it, he tried to fight her.”

Jace looks at her for a moment, then turns to Izzy for confirmation. His foster sister looks grim. “It’s true, Jace. When we left, Alec was still lying unconscious in the infirmary. That Herondale bitch didn’t care if she killed you both.”

Jace’s expression hardens. “Take me to him,” he says, and looks at Clary, “take me to Alec…”

When they arrive back at the Institute, Clary’s still supporting Jace, carrying most of his weight as he stumbles along, his pale skin almost translucent. Izzy’s flanking them, glaring at everybody who dares to even look their way, her whip uncoiled and sizzling in her grip.

They are barely three step into the Ops Center when Imogen Herondale tries to bar their way. “Jace Morgenstern,” she greets him haughtily. “I see that…”

But Jace doesn’t stop - both Clary and Isabelle looking as defiant as him - and his voice is deathly
cold when he interrupts her. “Get out of my way, Inquisitor, or I swear I’ll murder you where you
stand!”

There must be something in his voice, something that tells Imogen Herondale that he’s absolutely
serious about his threat, because she steps quickly aside and lets them pass, looking after them as
they drag themselves up the short flight of steps at the end of the room.

The infirmary is all abuzz, wounded Shadowhunters returning from the mission arriving for
treatment, one corner is perfectly, eerily quiet, though: one bed and in it, Alec Lightwood, still and
unmoving, his skin ashen gray.

Robert, who’s sitting by his son’s side, jumps up when he sees the three young people stumble
in. “Jace!” he exclaims in surprise.

But Jace, who’s now barely standing, has eyes only for his *parabatai*. “Alec…” he breathes out in
shock and relief. He staggers towards Alec’s bed and with Clary’s help he sinks down into the
chair that Robert just vacated.

Then, when his family steps back, he reaches for Alec’s hand like a drowning man grasping at a
lifeline, and when he touches it, linking their hands together tightly, something loosens in his chest,
it’s as if he can finally breathe again…

And when Alec’s eyes flutter open and he turns his head towards Jace on instinct, his *parabatai*
smiles at him and leans closer, eyes bright and burning. “Hey…” Jace whispers softly.

And Alec smiles back. “Hey…”
The First Time

Chapter Summary

An anon asked for Magnus and Alec's first time, but sex and I don't mix well, so I wrote this... (Unbeta'd)

And they both laugh as they stumble and fall down on Magnus’ bed, Magnus straddling Alec, linking their hands, entwining their fingers, pulling Alec’s arms up and up, above his head, and then they’re kissing, kissing, kissing…

And when they finally come up for air, they grin at each other, and Magnus rubs his nose against Alec’s, and his eyes sparkle with mischief when he asks, “Just to be sure, Alexander. You have never done this before…?”

And Alec shakes his head and stares up at Magnus, pupils blown wide with passion, lips red and swollen, and he’s flexing his fingers, kneading Magnus’ hands unconsciously. “No,” he breathes out, eyes trained on Magnus’ mouth, unable to look away. “But I thought that, hey, as long as at least one of us knows what he’s doing, we’ll be fine.”

And Magnus laughs, heartily and warmly. “You never cease to amaze me, Alexander.” Then he leans in again and runs his tongue over Alec’s lower lip teasingly, yet moves away when he Alec tries to recapture his mouth with his own. “Tell me what you want?” he asks, his hot breath ghosting over Alec’s lips, making him shiver.

And Alec moans softly and clenches his fingers around Magnus’ hands. “I want… I-I want…,” he stutters, licking his lips, all coherent thoughts blown away. “I want.”

And the mischief in Magnus’ eyes is replaced with tenderness and affection so profound that it makes Alec’s heart skip a beat. “As much or as little as you want to give, Alexander. For you, anything. Anything at all,” he whispers.

And Alec surges up, sitting upright with Magnus in his lap now, and his hands are on Magnus’ back and Magnus’ fingers are in his hair, and their lips meet once more, and Alec’s drowning in this wonderful man, and they’re kissing, kissing, kissing…
“Couldn’t sleep either, huh?” Clary says as she pads softly into the Ops Center. It’s almost four in the morning and the staff finally went to bed.

Alec, who’s sitting at the computer with his feet propped up on the table and a keyboard in his lap, looks at her. “Yeah…”

“How much on your mind?” she asks.

He nods reluctantly. “These last couple of days,” he shakes his head, “so much has happened; Lydia, Hodge, Jace…”

“Magnus,” Clary adds mischievously.

Alec drops his gaze and one corner of his mouth quirks up.

Clary pulls up a chair and sits down next to him. “What are you searching for?” she asks, looking at the row of screens.

“Alice’s ship. According to Hodge, it’s called The Morning Star,” Alec says.

“Really?” Clary rolls her eyes.

Alec huffs out a laugh. “Yeah, subtle he isn’t,” he agrees. “But even his ship doesn’t run on magic, he will have to dock somewhere, sooner or later.”

She hums, and after a pause, she asks softly, “Do you think Jace’s okay?”

Alec stops typing, but doesn’t look at her. He drops his hand to his parabatai rune. “I know that he’s alive,” he tells her. “Our parabatai bond’s still too weak for me to sense anything else. But he’s alive. And that’s what’s important.”

He startles when Clary pushes her chair closer to his and rests her head on his shoulder, threading her arm through his. “We’ll get him back, Alec. You’ll see.”

He wants to believe it, but… “What, you know the future now?”

She smiles up at him. “No, but I know us. And we won’t give up on him. Ever.”

He meets her eyes for a moment, then nods. “Never.”
A friend on Tumblr wanted a story where Alec was put on trial instead of Izzy. I turned her request into this. Inspiration taken from the short story "The Lost Herondale". (Unbeta’d)

It’s the pounding on the front door that wakes Magnus. Annoyed and still half asleep, he goes to answer the incessant ruckus, but when he opens the door, Isabelle Lightwood storms in before he can even say a word.

“You need to help us, Magnus,” she blurts out breathlessly. “You need to find Jace, now. You have to find him right now!”

Magnus shuts the door and rubs his eyes. Luckily, he didn’t forget to remove his make-up before falling into bed at 4 am. He peers at the clock. It’s now just after six, so maybe it’s the two hours of sleep he has gotten, but he doesn’t understand the urgency. Jace’s been gone for over two weeks now, after all.

“Why? I mean, I get why,” he amends, “what I don’t get is the sudden rush.”

Isabelle turns to him and her dark eyes are wide and anxious. “They arrested Alec.”


“The Inquisitor! She still doesn’t want to believe that Jace had no choice but to go with Valentine, that he did it to save us. She’s convinced that Jace has been working with Valentine the whole time, that they used Hodge only as a decoy.” She buries her fingers in her hair and tugs desperately. “She lost it when she found out that the Cup was gone again.”

Magnus frowns. “But why did she arrest Alec? What has he to do with that?”

Isabelle wrings her hands. “She intends to put Jace on trial in absentia - for war crimes, Magnus. What war crimes? Jace’s not responsible for his father’s actions! I think the Inquisitor’s still not over the fact that she was forced to let me go. And if Jace isn’t here …”

Magnus stares at her in disbelief. “They want to punish Alec as his parabatai? On what grounds?”

Shaking her head, Isabelle starts pacing. “The Inquisitor quoted some ancient Clave law. When we tried to object, she said that a member of her own family, some distant relative of hers, was once sentenced to death in accordance with that writ. To death, Magnus!”

Herondale… Breath catches in Magnus’ throat, because he remembers, he remembers Tobias Herondale - and more importantly his wife, Eva, and what happened to her when Tobias, who was said to have abandoned his fellow Shadowhunters, wasn’t found…

Isabelle stops pacing, walks up to Magnus and looks at him imploringly. “We have to find Jace. He went with Valentine to save us - but he has no idea that his decision might cost his parabatai his life! We have to find him and bring him back!”
Magnus nods, but he’s been trying to help Alec find Jace and Valentine and the damned Cup for weeks now and to no avail. What chance will they have now, when their time’s limited?

And so he comes to a decision, one that he’s absolutely certain of but fears to acknowledge out loud yet: if he fails, if Alec’s convicted in Jace’s stead, if he’s faced with the same decision that Catarina faced two hundred years ago - he won’t let Alec go to his death, he’ll save him… even if costs him everything.
The Gift

Chapter Summary

Written purely for aesthetics, a flash of a scene. (Unbeta'd)

Jace reaches out reluctantly to touch the darkly pulsating prism. Its warmth should feel pleasant, instead it makes his skin crawl. For it’s not just a pretty crystalline thing, it’s a prison, and inside… his parabatai, trapped like a fly in amber.

Alec’s lying on his side, one arm slightly outstretched, knees lightly bent, still in the same position in which he landed after he was hit with a violent burst of dark magic, after he tumbled and rolled across the stone floor, and before the malevolent energy imprisoned him inside the shimmering crystal.

“I can still feel him,” Jace says softly, hand still pressed against the surface of the prism, eyes fixed on his parabatai’s pale face. “He’s alive in there. I don’t know how, but he is.”

Magnus joins him, arms wrapped around himself protectively. He’s exhausted; he hasn’t slept since it happened, desperately trying to find a way - any way - to break the spell. “Yes, Alexander is alive just… trapped in time.”

Jace finally looks away from Alec. “Why did he do it? Why did Asmodeus do this to Alec? He’s a demon, I get that, but we’ve never fought him before, he had no reason to hold a grudge against us.”

Magnus closes his eyes. He seems to crumple, shoulders rounding even more, as the slithery voice of one of the Princes of Hell echoes through his head…

“Now he’ll never leave you, Magnus, he’ll never age and never die… Isn’t it a wonderful gift that I’ve given you? Am I not generous…?”

Magnus swallows, his heart aching, and without opening his eyes, he whispers, “He did it because he’s my father. Asmodeus is my father and he hates me and he wants to destroy everything that I love…”
“By the Angel, she must hate me so much…” (Unbeta'd)

“I was really surprised when you called and suggested we had our drinks today, Alexander,” Magnus says with a smile as he pours something frothy into two tall glasses. “With everything that’s going on, I didn’t think you would be in the mood for a date.”

Alec smiles softly, and runs his fingers across the back of Magnus’ couch as he walks slowly towards the large windows overlooking the bridge. He’s been very quiet since he arrived. “I guess I really needed to get out,” he replies.

Magnus pauses. “What happened?”

Alec snorts, crossing his arms over his chest. “What didn’t?” he counters.

Leaving the drinks on the table, Magnus goes to him. “What happened today?” he specifies with a worried expression.

Alec sighs and slumps against the window frame. “I was relieved of my position as the second-in-command. I won’t be leading the Shadowhunters in the field anymore, it’s now Izzy’s job.”

“Alexander…” Magnus whispers, his eyes sad.

“Alec, Izzy at least tried to be discreet about her ‘dalliances with the Downworlders’ and didn’t ‘flaunt them’ in front of the Clave envoys.” Alec turns to Magnus. “And yes, those were her exact words.”

Magnus grimaces painfully. “I’m so sorry.”

Alec shakes his head, looking drained. “I thought something like this might happen but…” He uncrosses his arms and rubs his eyes with the heels of his hands. “I thought that the order would come from outside, from the Clave, it has never even occurred to me that it would be mother’s own decision.” He drops his hands and his face is strangely young and vulnerable when he looks at Magnus. “By the Angel, she must hate me so much…”

Magnus steps closer, his heart aching. “No, Alexander, no,” he says, shaking his head imploringly. “She doesn’t hate you. She’s just… angry, that’s all. More so at me than you, I’m sure,” he adds dryly. “But everything will be fine, you’ll see.”

Alec stares at him for a moment, then smiles sadly and shakes his head again. “No, it won’t. Even if we do manage to patch our relationship back together at some point, my career is over, she saw to that. Nobody will ever trust me with a command again, not when my own mother didn’t. The damage’s done.”

Magnus doesn’t say anything to that because there is nothing to say, empty platitudes won’t help. He knows how the Clave thinks, and he knows Alec’s right. And there’s nothing Magnus can do to help, being a Downworlder.
And yet - despite everything, Alec is still here, *with him*…

As if reading his mind, Alec smiles a little brokenly and reaches out a hand that Magnus takes without thinking. “I suddenly felt like I couldn’t breathe anymore. I needed to get out, somewhere I could be free - that’s why I called you.”

Magnus smiles back warmly and squeezes his hand. “Call any time you need, Alexander. I’ll always answer.”
“That looks nasty.” Alec hisses sympathetically as he gently turns Magnus’ hands palms up: they’re raw with burns and blisters. “You shouldn’t have done that,” he chides softly.

Magnus almost whimpers in pain, but still manages to glare. “If I hadn’t, you would be dead.”

Alec looks at him sheepishly and Magnus’ face softens. It really wasn’t Alec’s fault that he got caught in a blast of demon fire. Still, if Magnus hadn’t reacted quickly and pulled him out…

“Can’t you use your magic to heal yourself?” Alec asks, bemused. “I thought all warlocks could do that…”

And the glare is back. “I could, certainly, if I had any magic left. If I hadn’t spent all of it on holding the demon fire off you long enough to get you out! That thing is like Greek fire, it clings to everything - and especially bare skin!”

“Then use my strength, you’re welcome to it,” Alec offers with endearing straightforwardness.

Magnus is charmed, but. “For that, I would actually need my hands. I can’t just lean against you and tap you like a Bluetooth.”

Alec stares down at Magnus’ burns for a moment, a crease between his brows revealing his deep thoughts. “How about your mouth, then?” he asks.

Magnus’ eyebrows shoot up. “You want me to snog you for power?”

Alec rolls his eyes. “Well, it does work for CPR, doesn’t it? Mouth to mouth?”

Magnus ponders it for a bit. “That could actually work. But I would rather not.”

Alec frowns again. “Why not?”

“Because I know that strength sharing is not exactly a pleasant experience - I saw your face the last time we did it, so don’t try to deny it - and I would rather not have you suffer while kissing me, thank you very much.”

“Well, and I would rather not have you in so much pain you pee your pants every time you try to unzip them in the foreseeable future. So, tough,” Alec counters.

Magnus ponders that problem. “I could wear a toga. Or a kilt.”

Alec snorts. “You would. But seriously, Magnus. I hate to see you suffering. I can manage a little pain, even while kissing, if it means healing you.”

Magnus looks him deeply in the eyes to make sure he’s really okay with it, he knows very well what a self-sacrificing idiot Alec can be. “Alright,” he agrees reluctantly. “But the moment it
becomes too much, you break it off. Deal?"

Alec smiles. “Deal. Now, watch your hands,” he says, and stepping closer, he gently rests Magnus’ hands backs first against his own chest. Then he leans down and cradles Magnus’ jaw with one hand - and kisses him.

And they kiss. And kiss. And Magnus is melting because it’s so good his toes are curling, and he forgets all about the pain…

But then Alec pulls back. “Hey,” he says softly, and grins a little when Magnus chases after his lips. “Not that it’s not nice and very, very hot, but - your hands?”


And Alec’s still laughing when their mouths find each other again.
Nightmare

Chapter Summary

Magnus' nightmare. (Unbeta'd)

Magnus is running, running, running, and something’s chasing him, something hidden in the dark, the skittering of clawed feet making his skin crawl…

“Magnus…”

... and the thing’s reaching out, trying to grab him, he’s sure of it, absolutely sure that he can’t escape…

“Magnus!”

... and so he gathers all his power and turns and screams and lets it all go, releasing a powerful blast…

And when his magic illuminates the room with a blue glow, he’s suddenly wide awake, and he sees Alec’s startled face, in the split second before the blast hits him in the chest and throws him off the bed and across the room, against the wall that he hits with a crushing force.

“No!” Magnus yells and he’s moving, scrambling off the bed, even before Alec drops to the floor, and then he’s there, on his knees by his lover’s side, and Alec’s not moving, he’s not moving!

“Alec? Alexander? Alexander, answer me!” Magnus begs as he gently turns Alec onto his back - and freezes, because Alec’s eyes are open, but he’s not breathing and his heart under Magnus’ shaking fingers is so still!

“No, nonononono. Don’t do this to me! I’m sorry, so sorry!”

And Magnus keeps apologizing while frantically applying CPR, releasing a burst of magic into Alec’s chest with each compress, desperately trying to kick-start Alec’s heart, hoping, begging, praying that it was just the blast that led to his cardiac arrest, that he did not snap Alec’s neck, that he did notdo that, he couldn’t have… he couldn’t have broken Alexander, he couldn’t have.

And then the phone starts ringing somewhere in the loft, but Magnus doesn’t pay it any mind, and he’s crying now, pumping Alec’s chest, just… begging.

And then Alec gasps, his back arching in pain as he tries to draw breath into his starved lungs, eyes wide - and Magnus is pouring everything he has into him, everything, keeping not an ounce of magic to himself, healing scrapes and bruises and the ribs he broke during the CPR, healing every tiny thing that’s hurt and hurting on his Alexander, while still apologizing brokenly, pleading for forgiveness.

And he doesn’t stop until Alec makes him, until he pushes Magnus’ hands off his chest and cuts off his magic that slowed down to a trickle now, until Alec sits up and takes Magnus in his arms and hugs him tight, whispering, “I’m alright, it’s alright, I’m fine, I’m fine, it’s all fine, I’m back, not your fault, it wasn’t your fault, shh, shh, stop…”
And the phone is still ringing frantically, and Magnus knows that it’s probably Jace who must have felt what happened, who must be scared out of his mind, and he knows he should get up, pick it up, reassure his lover’s parabatai, but he can’t, he can’t move, and he’s clinging to Alec, breathing harshly, because he just almost killed him, he almost killed Alec… his Alexander’s heart wasn’t beating…

And Magnus just shakes and shakes and shakes…
Worry

Chapter Summary

Magnus and Robert talk following episode 112/113. (Unbeta'd)

“Warlock!”

Magnus cringes. Almost escaped, he thinks bitterly. Almost! He sighs deeply, plasters a smile on his face and whirls around with as flamboyant a gesture as he can manage. Because, why not?

“Robert Lightwood,” Magnus exclaims cheerily, “what I can do for you?”

Robert walks up to him slowly in the short hall leading down to the Institute’s main entrance. “I need to talk to you about my son.”

Magnus wants to cringe again, instead his grin turns a little manic. “Oh, yes, Maryse already made her opinion on the matter of Alexander and me quite clear, so why don’t you take a stab, too?” he allows grandly.

He expects mockery or maybe disdain, humiliating accusations, something like that. Instead, Robert says reluctantly, “Magnus, I know that there’s been… bad blood between us, and that you surely hold a grudge against us, Maryse and me, and with a good reason, too” he adds quickly, then pauses and takes a deep breath. “But I’m asking you… don’t take it out on Alec. Don’t use him to get back at us. He’s innocent in all this.”

At once, Magnus drops his flamboyant act and narrows his eyes dangerously. “That’s what you think this is about? My relationship with your son? Some kind of a… of a petty revenge?”

“I don’t know,” Robert admits, sounding tired, resigned… worried.

Worried for his son, Magnus realizes and his expression softens slightly.

“I really don’t know,” Robert continues, “that’s why I wanted to talk to you. I love my son, I do. He might not see it that way and that’s my own fault, but I would hate to see him hurt, that’s the last thing I would want, for any of my children, especially as a result of my own… wrongful actions in the past.”

Magnus blinks. Did Robert Lightwood really just admit to him that he had been wrong in the past? Magnus doesn’t know what to do with that.

Robert sighs and rubs his forehead. “I won’t pretend I understand what’s between you and Alec, because I don’t, and maybe I never will, but… that’s not really important. The important thing here is Alec and his happiness. And if he thinks you are the person to make him happy…” He shrugs. “Just… don’t hurt him, alright? He deserves only the best.”

Magnus’ smile is genuine, when he replies, “Well, that’s the one thing we both agree on, then. And I hope I’ll be given the chance to make sure that it’s what he gets…”
Chapter Summary

This is a coda to Born to Endless Night, something that stuck in my mind ever since I read that short story. Alec and Lily talk… (Haven’t read Lady Midnight yet, so LM hasn’t happened in this universe…) (Unbeta'd)

“So, now that all your friends - except yours truly, of course - are enjoying the marital bliss, when will you finally propose to Magnus?” Lily asks, sipping O-negative from a tall champagne glass.

Maia and Bat’s wedding party is in full swing at Luke’s and Lily and Alec are standing off to the side, by the lake, enjoying a moment of peace away from the ruckus.

Alec stiffens. He’s quiet for so long that Lily looks at him. “I already did,” he admits softly in the end, looking down into his own champagne glass, still almost full.

Lily’s eyebrows shoot up. “You did? When? What did he say?” she asks eagerly. The head of a vampire clan she might be, that doesn’t mean she doesn’t enjoy gossip as much as the next person… vampire. Whatever.

Alec sighs and empties his glass in one big gulp. “Ten years ago, after we took Max in…”

“And?” she prompts when he falls silent again.

“And he said ’one day’,” Alec answers, and there’s something in his voice that makes Lily frown.

“One day?” she repeats slowly as if unsure she heard right. “What kind of idiotic nonsense is that?”

Alec can’t help but laugh at her bluntness. “He doesn’t want to marry, unless the Clave changes its ways and allows Nephilim to marry Downworlders in a proper Shadowhunter ceremony, the one in gold.” His smile fades. “Ten years, Lily… I’m starting to think it will never happen.”

She stares up at him for a long moment, and her voice is much softer when she says, “Alec…”

He shakes his head as if chasing away his sudden melancholy. “On good days, I get it, I get him, I understand where he’s coming from. I get that he wants to be seen as a real person by the Clave, as an equal, and I want to give it to him, to all Downworlders, so badly.” He falls silent and drops his gaze to his empty glass again. “But on bad days… on bad days, I wonder if it’s just me, if he doesn’t want to marry me, if maybe that’s the real issue here, and the rest is just a convenient excuse.”

“Oh, pish!” Lily tells him with an eye-roll. “That guy is so smitten with you he worships the ground you walk on! Don’t be an idiot.”

Alec laughs quietly and hugs her around the shoulders with one arm. “I know, I know, as I said, it’s just on my bad days, when I can’t help but think about these things…”

“Have you ever told him how you feel about the whole thing?” she asks seriously after a moment.
He shakes his head. “No, and please, don’t tell him either. I know it’s stupid.”

Now it’s her turn to shake her head. “No, it’s not.” She leans against him. “It’s not stupid to want to marry someone, to show the world that this is the person that matters to you most. It’s not stupid at all,” she adds softly, remembering Raphael, her feelings for him still a warm glow in her chest, even so many years after his death.

“Hey, you two!” calls out Magnus, striding towards them in all his glittery glory. “What’s with you two, lurking so gloomily over there? It’s a wedding, let’s celebrate!”

And Alec and Lily smile at each other with understanding, and join the party again.
That Companion AU

Chapter Summary

In a world where Raziel’s followers are sensual Companions, revered and desired, warlock Magnus Bane meets Companion Alexander Lightwood… (Unbeta'd) (Just something I mentioned on Tumblr, and voilà!)

Magnus Bane hasn’t been in Alicante, the capital of Idris, in years, having traveled the world with his two warlock companions, Ragnor Fell and Catarina Loss, until a slight mishap in the country of Peruvia - something about a drunk tango and a shoe that hit one of the dignitaries in the unmentionables - forced them to flee, pursued by villagers with pitchforks.

Well, things like that tend to happen, from time to time, occasionally, more often than not to him, apparently, which is why his friends finally abandoned him at the border of Idris with the intention to “live a quieter life for a few years, thank you very much.”

So now, back in Alicante, with his mansion a little dustier, but with his vault still overflowing with gold and treasures, enough to last him several human lifetimes, Magnus decides to pursue his original profession, that of a magic user, demon summoner and…

… apparently the repairer of broken wards. Which is how he once more, after almost twenty years, finds himself in the Lightwood House, one of the famous Clave Institutes that pride themselves to offer the best Companions in the world. And if Magnus is honest with himself, rightly so. Their staff is always exquisite.

Finishing the last glyph on the wall, Magnus smiles as he feels the magical protection *snick* back into place and start humming contently once again. “Done,” he says, turning to Maryse Lightwood, the Mistress of the Institute. “No Forsaken will now be able to get in.”

Maryse nods, as regal as ever in her black dress and with her hair pulled back severely. “Good. The Possessed One attacked two of our people - my son was one of them! - and I don’t want to see that happen ever again!”

“You don’t have to worry, as long as no one tempers with the glyphs, I can promise you that no Forsaken will get through,” he assures her. He doesn’t like Maryse Lightwood, never has because she has always considered Raziel’s followers everyone’s betters, but he can appreciate her care for her people.

“For the payment you demand, warlock Bane, you should be right,” she replies. “Now, do you want your reward paid in gold or precious stones?”

Her tone makes him want to rattle her cage a bit. “How about a night spent with one of your Companions?” Magnus knows he won’t lose money that way, a full night spent with one of the Clave’s people is worth a small fortune!

Only the slight twist of Maryse’s mouth indicates her displeasure; magic users are not exactly welcome in the Lightwood House, definitely not as patrons. But good money is good money and Maryse Lightwood is a businesswoman, first and foremost. “Of course, warlock Bane. You can
choose anyone you want, they will be made available to you.”

Magnus grins with satisfaction. “Thank you, Mistress Lightwood.” He bows rather mockingly. Then looks around…

The room with heavy dark furniture, expensive carpets and elegant drapes is full of Companions, of any age, gender or proclivity one can desire. But none of them really captures Magnus’ attention. That is until…

A young man, tall and long-limbed, is walking down the stairs slowly, bare feet, silk black pants, midnight blue shirt unbuttoned and revealing a sculpted chest covered with dark hair… And when Magnus’ upward sliding gaze reaches the man’s face, his breath hitches in his chest. He’s absolutely mesmerized by the man’s red lips and big hazel eyes and…

“Who are you?” Magnus breathes out, enchanted.

Maryse narrows her eyes. “That’s my son!”

But Magnus just waves a hand at her, for once not paying attention to her disdain. “I won’t hold it against him, I promise,” he answers, unable to look away from the man. “What’s his name?”

“Alexander,” Maryse grits out through clenched teeth.


And that’s how it begins…
Jace is grumpy. Izzy knows why. (Unbeta'd)

“You seem really grumpy these days,” Isabelle comments as she watches Jace pummel the bag.

“I. Am. Not!” Jace retorts, punctuating each word with a hit.

Izzy rolls her eyes. “Right. So, your current mood has nothing to do with Alec and the fact that these days, he spends all of his free time at Magnus’ place, doing the ‘horizontal tango’?”

The next punch that comes is so crushing that the bag tears itself off its base and hits the floor, bouncing and rolling, spilling its filling all over the training room. They both just stare at it for a moment.

“Alright then,” Isabelle says with an ironic twist of her mouth, “I’m glad we’re clear on that issue.”

Jace shoots her a murderous look, then starts pulling off his gloves. “It’s just…” he starts, then stops again. “It’s… why does he have to go over there all the time? When we’re not hunting, he’s at Magnus’, climbing him like a tree! Before, he lived like a monk, now he seem to have the libido of a starving incubus!”

Isabelle swallows a smile. “And how is it different from you and Clary, when you first got together?” she points out.

“It just is!” he states peevishly and throws his gloves down on the table before propping his hands on his hips. “At least we were both here!”

“Snogging!” Izzy reminds him.

He looks at her tetchily again.

Isabelle sighs. “I get it, you miss him–”

“I do not!” Jace snaps.

“So why don’t you just tell him?” she finishes calmly as if he didn’t interrupt her. “He probably doesn’t even realize that this is how you feel, that you’re miserable. He might think that you’re content to have more time for Clary.”

When he just stares at her irritably, she steps closer and puts a hand on his shoulder. “Look, remember how he was when you and Clary started youtthing? How you yelled at him for finding faults in everything that Clary did?” She waits till he nods. “It’s the same situation, just your roles switched.”

He continues to glare mutely, so she sighs and spells it out for him, “You’re jealous of your parabatai’s lover. Congratulations and welcome to the club.”
“I’m not…” Jace pauses, then groans and hangs his head. “By the Angel, I am jealous of Magnus, aren’t I?”

Izzy pats him on the arm. “There, there.” She grins, but when she continues, her voice is kind, “Just tell him you want to spend more time with him. He will understand because this is exactly how he felt before. And Magnus might be the best thing ever in bed - and from what we know, he actually might - but I bet Alec misses you, too. You are his parabatai. Just talk to him!”

Jace huffs. “I guess…” he grumbles and sighs. “This sucks.”

Isabelle laughs. “You think you have it hard? Try watching all the drama from the sidelines - twice!”
Revenge

Chapter Summary

Their visit to the Seelie Queen's court in the books - what would happen if one applied it to the show? (Unbeta'd)

Alec’s lying in the big four-poster bed in Magnus’ loft, his hair is almost white, his skin paper thin, his breath is wheezing in and out of his lungs so painfully it hurts to listen to it. He fell asleep shortly after they brought him in and hasn’t woken ever since.

“You’re telling me that this… this thing that the Seelie Queen did to him, that it’s just a glamour, an illusion?” Jace asks, looking at Magnus with anxious eyes.

Magnus, who’s standing next to Jace at the foot of the bed, nods slowly, his face grim. “Yes. Not even the Seelie Queen can speed up time or slow it down for one person and one person only, time does not work like that - magic does not work like that.”

“But?” Jace prompts when Magnus falls silent. Because there’s always a “but”.

Magnus lets out a deep breath. “But! Alexander’s body doesn’t know that, it’s not aware that what it’s feeling, what it’s telling his mind, isn’t true, that it’s not real.” Magnus blinks and finally turns away from his boyfriend to look at Jace. “He’s dying of old age, even though he’s only 21.”

Jace clenches his hands into fists. “So, this will kill him if we don’t find a way to break the Seelie Queen’s spell?”

Magnus nods again. “I’ll try to find a way to break it myself, but warlock magic can do very little against a Seelie spell, our powers simply work differently, I could actually do more harm than good.”


“I could kill him trying to reverse the spell,” Magnus whispers.

“So, what can we do?” Jace demands.

It’s Clary who answers his question, coming in with a determined expression. “We’ll go back to the Seelie Queen’s court and force her to reverse the spell.” She stops between Magnus and Jace, eyes trained on Alec. “She only did it out of spite, because it was he who was leading the Shadowhunters who escorted Meliorn to the Silent Brothers.”

Jace shakes his head angrily. “We never should’ve taken him with us to the Seelies, not after what happened between him and Meliorn. Meliorn’s the Seelie Queen’s favorite, we should’ve known she would take revenge on Alec…”

Magnus says, “Whatever you do, do it fast,” he turns back to his boyfriend again, who still hasn’t moved, hasn’t woken up yet, “or he will die…”

Jace looks at Alec, too, his eyes revealing his despair for a moment, then he clenches his jaw and
nods. “I’ll make her undo it, I swear. I don’t care how, but I will force her to take the spell off Alec. I will not let him die!”

And with that, followed by Clary who squeezes Magnus’ arm in reassurance, he stalks away, leaving his *parabatai* in Magnus’ care.
Chapter Summary

He knows this voice and fears it like no other... (Unbeta'd)

Magnus is standing in the doorway of his bedroom, admiring the view of Alec who fell asleep on the couch, all curled up on himself to fit in, a book open in his lap. Magnus can’t remember the last time he felt so... content by simply being in the same room as another person.

“Hm, a thing of beauty, these mortals, like pretty flowers: one moment there, the next... faded and gone,” whispers a voice behind him.

Magnus jerks, dread seizing him, and twists around, magic already gathered in his hands, because he knows this voice and fears it like no other. “Asmodeus!” he hisses.

The Prince of Hell looks as regal as ever in his terrifying beauty. “Don’t worry, my child, I’m not really here, your wards are as impenetrable as ever. Right now, my physical body is in a little forgotten hamlet in Bavaria, where some idiot thought himself powerful enough to summon me. I had to teach him a lesson, of course, but I couldn't miss this opportunity to visit. Especially,” he adds as he floats past Magnus and into the living room, “since word has reached me of a new toy that my son has found himself…”

Magnus moves lightning fast and steps between his father and Alec, who’s still fast asleep, exhausted after a long hunt. “Don’t you dare go anywhere near him!” Magnus spats softly, not wanting to wake his lover.

Asmodeus huffs out a laugh. “Or what? You will kill me? My astral projection? Come on, Magnus, don’t disappoint me, and start using your brain. It’s rather embarrassing to see you this smitten with a mere mortal…” He shakes his head as if disappointed by his progeny.

“Leave Alec be!” Magnus orders firmly, though his heart’s beating so hard his chest hurts. His father... his father is here, he’s here, astral projection or not, in Alec’s vicinity, he knows about Alec, he knows what Alec means to Magnus!

“Ah, yes, Alec... Alexander Gideon Lightwood. One of his ancestors, Benedict, if my memory serves me right, is burning nicely in my corner of Hell, screaming and begging for mercy…” Asmodeus grins, all sharp teeth and malevolent glint in his eyes. “I wonder, where your lover’s soul will go once he dies? Souls are so fragile, so easily lost, misplaced…” Asmodeus lunges forward, his face just inches away from his son’s, voice slithery, “…damned.”

With a silent cry, Magnus throws his magic against him, shattering his astral projection, as useless as it might be, denying his words and banishing him, sending him far, far away from Alec...

Because Asmodeus will not get Alexander, he won’t. If Magnus has any say in it at all, his father will never get anywhere near his lover, whether his body or his soul, ever again!
In Battle

Chapter Summary

“The parabatai runes placed upon them enable them to draw on each other’s strength in battle.” Well, okay. But how does it work? Let’s see… (Unbeta'd)

When Shadowhunters storm the ship, Jace turns on Valentine; yes, he might be Jace’s father, but Jace would never, ever allow him to harm one of their own people, especially when there are so many familiar faces among them, Raj, Izzy… Alec and Clary!

But Valentine’s stronger than Jace suspected, than he thought possible, stronger than any Shadowhunter should be, and when they clash together on the ship’s otherwise empty bridge, Jace’s disadvantage becomes rapidly clear, a source of mockery for Valentine.

Thrown to the ground yet again, Jace starts to despair, to contemplate something suicidal, just to get Valentine, to stop him, to kill him… But in that moment, his and Alec’s eyes meet across the length of the ship.

Alec’s battling Valentine’s minions on the prow, Izzy and Clary by his side, but when he notices Jace looking, he stops, the girls covering his back. He stops and stares at Jace, their need to be there for one another, to help one another, an almost physical thing between them.

Alec’s eyes slide over to Jace’s right, to Valentine, who’s rambling something about Shadowhunter honor, Jace’s not really listening, and then back to Jace again - and very deliberately, Alec touches his hip, the place where his parabatai rune adorns his skin, and nods firmly, his face grim and determined. And Jace understands, and something warm, something he thought long lost, is set aglow in his chest once more. Yes. Yes…

Jace holds Alec’s eyes for a moment before giving him a smile and a nod of his own, and then he turns quickly back to his father who’s coming at him again, his Seraph Blade raised in his hands. Jace rolls aside, and once he’s safely away from Valentine, he takes his stele out of his pocket, pulls up his shirt and runs the stele over his parabatai rune, activating it.

And when Jace stands up again, he can feel Alec there with him, his back pressed against Alec’s front, he can feel Alec’s heart beating as one with his own, and when he raises his Seraph Blade, it glows almost blindingly white, Alec’s arm pressed against his own from shoulder to wrist, Alec’s hand covering his on the hilt of the blade.

And Jace stands there a moment longer, reveling in their joint power humming through his veins, in the feeling of having Alec there, right there with him, in all the glory of what a parabatai bond should be, and when Alec’s ghostly voice whispers in his ear, “Now…”

… Jace attacks.
Blind!Alec AU #2

Chapter Summary

Blind!Alec AU. Magnus meets Alec. (Unbeta'd)

Magnus chuckles when Robert Lightwood states that extra protection is “priceless”. “No, say that after you get my bill.”

Robert just shrugs it off. “My son Alec will take care of that,” he says and waves a hand at…

A young man who apparently joined them while Magnus wasn’t looking. Oh, a pretty one. Tall, dark and handsome does not even begin to describe this perfect specimen, Magnus thinks. The man, Alec, dressed in black training clothes, has a white bandage on his left upper arm, a stick in one hand and… wraparound sunglasses on his face? How… peculiar.

Magnus grins when Robert just walks away, leaving him alone with his son, thus giving Magnus just the opportunity he hoped for. “Magnus Bane, High Warlock of Brooklyn,” he introduces himself, reaching out for a handshake.

“Alec Lightwood,” the young man answers… and completely ignores Magnus’ outstretched hand.

Magnus lets his hand drop and sighs inwardly, already feeling his interest waning. Of course, yet another Shadowhunter dick. What did he expect?

“Father wanted me to settle your bill. Would you follow me to the office?” Alec asks, and turning slightly, he reaches out for the glass railing, bumping into it with his knuckles clumsily.

Magnus raises his eyebrows. He expected more grace from one of the Angel blessed. But then he notices the way Alec runs his fingers over the glass until he finds a little mark scratched into it - one of many, placed in regular intervals along the rail. With a lot more confidence, Alec turns fully to the right, towards the stairs that lead down from the gallery, unobtrusively tapping the floor with his… cane, it’s a cane, not a fighting stick, Magnus realizes.

Oh. Oh!

Magnus skips a little to catch up with Alec, his grin back in place now that he understands what’s going on here. “So, Alec… Alexander?” he takes a stab, and when the other man inclines his head, Magnus continues, “You fought the Forsaken last night?”

Alec nods again. “Yes, I know my way around the Institute very well, and Hodge was there, too, so to defeat him wasn’t that hard.”

Magnus leans forward to take a peek at Alec’s bandage. No wonder Robert wanted the Institute better protected than Fort Knox if his son - his blind son! - was hurt in the one place he should’ve been absolutely safe. “I see you got hurt, though.”

They arrive at the stairs, and Alec heads down slowly. “It’s nothing. A scratch.”

On the main floor, Magnus notices how the staff makes sure that there’s nothing in Alec’s way, as
he *tap-tap-taps* his way through the Ops Center. He finds it quite touching to be honest. “A Forsaken wound often needs a little warlock TLC…”

Alec huffs out a laugh. “Are you offering?”

That startles Magnus a little, since he didn’t expect a Shadowhunter to… flirt back? “Yes, I am,” he confirms.

“I’m not sure I could afford your services. What would you want in return?” Alec asks as he stops at the corridor leading deeper into the Institute.

Magnus thinks it over. Should he? Why the hell not! “Dinner. You and me,” he specifies, just so that there are no misunderstandings.

Alec smiles. “That sounds fun. When?”

And Magnus grins and bounces on his toes. *This is gonna be great!* “How about right now?”
Blind!Alec AU #3

Their dinner was a private affair at Magnus’ loft, just the two of them and some Ethiopian delicacies actually ordered in, not summoned. And now that Magnus is preparing them drinks, he comments with a smile, “You surprised me. Quite a lot, really. I didn’t expect you to flirt back, let alone go out with me.”

Alec, who’s sitting on the couch, laughs softly. “Yeah, well. If we had met two weeks ago, I can assure you I wouldn’t have.”

Magnus looks at him curiously. “What happened two weeks ago?”

Alec sighs. “Clary Fray happened.” He shakes his head, his wraparround sunglasses reflecting the soft lights in the loft. “I don’t know, since she came into our lives…” He falls silent. “No, that’s not fair. Even before, everything was just a little bit wrong, she just made it all float to the surface.”

Magnus finishes Alec’s drink and carries it over. “Drink,” he says, “in a cocktail glass, long stem.” And when Alec raises his hand, he carefully settles the glass in his fingers.

“Thanks,” Alec says, and after a cautious sniff, he takes a sip. “Hm, it’s good,” he adds, a little surprised.

“I only make good stuff,” Magnus answers cheekily, then prompts, “You were saying about Clary?”

Alec plays with the glass for a moment. “For the longest time, it was just Jace, Izzy and me. And Jace…” He pauses, and then, as if coming to some decision, he continues, “Jace has never really dated anyone. He had a fling here and there, but… because of that, I hoped that there was a chance…” He falls silent again. “And then Clary came along.”

“Ah,” Magnus remarks quietly.

“Since that moment, everything has changed. And not for the better. Jace and I…” He shakes his head again. “I guess we’ve always had our issues, he’s the Clave’s poster boy, I’m… who I am. But we’ve held together. Now, all we do is fight. It’s like he’s never there when I need him anymore. It made me realize… it made me realize that I grew too dependent on him, and that he’ll never need me as much as I need him.”

Magnus goes back for his own drink that he left on the table. “He’s your parabatai, he’ll always need you,” he disagrees gently.

“But not like I came to need him, it just took me a while to get it.” Alec sips his drink again. “And then, because of all the unsanctioned actions Jace and Izzy took on Clary’s behalf, the Clave started breathing down our family’s neck. I did not understand why mother was so frantic about restoring our name, until the Clave’s envoy, Lydia Branwell, told me that mom and dad were in the
Magnus cringes. He knew that the Lightwoods used to be Circle members, of course. But for their son to find out from a stranger…

Alec raises the glass and empties it in one big gulp, as if needing the courage to continue. Then, “I heard them talking, my parents. I think they tend to forget how good my hearing really is. They were discussing how to restore our honor quickly, thought the best way would be to marry off one of us to a respectable Shadowhunter family, but…” He grips the glass so hard his knuckles turn white. “But Max, my little brother, is too young, Izzy’s ‘dalliances’ with Downworlders are apparently too infamous in Idris, and me…” He swallows, and his voice becomes a whisper. “Who would want me? Those were my mother’s own words, ‘And who would want Alec?’”

Magnus’ heart seizes. She didn’t… “Alexander…” he breathes out.

Alec laughs harshly. “I knew, I always knew that I was not good enough for the Clave, not good enough to be a warrior, not good enough to be a leader, but I tried to make up for how… defective I am,” he waves at his blind eyes, “I trained harder and I studied harder than anyone else. And it’s simply not enough!”

They both startle when the glass shatters in Alec’s hand, and Alec hisses as some of the shards dig into his skin, the rest tinkling to the floor.

“Alexander!” Magnus exclaims, and setting his drink aside, he rushes over.

Alec breathes in sharply through his nose and holds his bleeding hand up gingerly. “Sorry, sorry…”

“Don’t worry about it,” Magnus assures him and with a snap of his fingers he makes all the shards disappear, blood now welling up quickly in Alec’s open cuts.

Magnus sits down on the low table in front of the couch, and reaches out for Alec’s hand, then hesitates. “I’ll look at your hand and heal it, alright?” he says, wanting to make sure Alec knows what’s going on.

When Alec nods, Magnus takes his injured hand in both of his, inspects the cuts and then pours a little of his blue magic into them, sealing them up and healing the damage.

Alec laughs a little and when Magnus makes an inquiring noise, he explains, “It tickles. Your magic, it feels like a cat’s fur on my skin.”

Magnus grins at that, and when Alec’s injury is healed, he summons a cloth to wash away the sticky blood. Alec startles a bit at the touch of the wet material, but then he relaxes, and allows Magnus to take care of him.

“I’m sorry I’m a lousy date,” Alec whispers dejectedly, shoulders slumped.

Magnus raises his eyebrows and looks at him. “What are you talking about?”

Alec shakes his head. “All I’ve done since we came here is to complain.”

Now it’s Magnus’ turn to shake his head. “Nonsense. You’re not complaining, you’re telling me about yourself, that’s what people do on dates. They get to know each other.”

Alec smiles. “If you say so. I have never been on a date, so…” Then he turns serious. “I just… I
wanted you to know that when I agreed to go out with you, that it wasn’t just some… I don’t know, some kind of a rebellion against my parents or the Clave,” he clarifies. “After all that happened in the last couple of weeks, I finally realized that I would never be good enough, not for my parents, not for the Clave, probably not even for Jace, no matter how much I tried. So, I decided to stop trying. If I’m to be a disappointment for them anyway, I can just as well be at least true to myself.”

Magnus sets the washcloth aside and squeezes Alec’s hand, healed and whole once more, gently in both of his. “You’re not a disappointment. And you’re not defective, no matter what the Clave with its backwards way of thinking claims. You’re smart and funny and a great fighter, and also very, very hot, if I may say so,” he adds a little mischievously.

Alec blushes a little, but he seems also rather pleased by that. “You think so?”

“Yes, I do. And I would very much like to kiss you now, if that’s okay,” Magnus adds.

“Yeah?” Alec breathes out, licking his lips which makes Magnus’ heart skip a beat.

“Yeah,” Magnus replies just as softly.

“Okay,” Alec agrees and leans in a little.

And Magnus kisses Alec, gently at first, then with much more desire, fervor and need, and something in Magnus rejoices, because yes, this one, this one fits.
Chapter Summary

Valentine Morgenstern and Maryse Lightwood... (Unbeta'd)

It all ends with a fight to death between Valentine Morgenstern and Maryse Lightwood. Funny that.

She’s hacking at him with all her might, absolutely furious, almost blinded by her rage. She’s willing to do anything, sacrifice anything just to stop him, kill him, *bury him*, wipe him off the face of earth once and for all. And because of that, she’s winning, pushing him back, forcing him to retreat…

“You come to my town,” she growls, slashing with abandon, her Seraph Blade glowing brightly, “you try to murder my children and destroy my home, wreck everything I’ve built for my family!”

Valentine tries to parry, but she defeats his maneuver, throws all her weight behind her attack, and runs him through with her blade. He gasps and drops his weapon, and she steps in, grabs him by the back of his neck and pushes the blade in mercilessly until its hilt touches his breastbone, then she twists it for good measure.

They stand only inches apart, almost in a lover’s embrace, staring each other in the eyes, when she tells him in a cold, terrible voice, “I won’t allow it. I won’t let you ruin everything again. *Never again.*”

And when the light starts dimming in his eyes, and she’s certain his death is only seconds away, she leans even closer and with vicious glee, she whispers in his ear, “Forgot to tell you, lover: *Alexander is your son.*”
Chapter Summary

Fireman! Alec & Lawyer! Magnus AU, modern setting, no powers. (Unbeta'd)

Jace’s standing in the half-empty hospital corridor, trying to find the courage to actually open the door and walk in. His heart’s beating fast with anticipation and fear. After so many years, this is it…

He takes a deep breath, gathers his courage and finally steps into the hospital room - that looks like a flower shop exploded in there. Flowers are everywhere, and stuffed animals and balloons, bright colors entirely dominating what before was just white space.

It startles Jace a little, it’s not exactly what he expected, but then his attention is drawn to the man lying in the hospital bed - and he breathes out harshly. It’s him, it’s really him, after eight years of searching. Alec…

Alec’s taller than he used to be, his shoulders are broader and he looks more solid, not as lanky as he was at 18. He’s tanned, his hair’s a little longer… and he’s asleep or maybe unconscious, Jace can’t tell. Alec’s head is turned slightly away from the door and towards the windows on the other side of the room through which bright sunshine pours in… and in its light, Jace notices all the bruises and scrapes and cuts all over Alec’s upper body…

“Hello?” someone inquires softly somewhere inside the room.

Jace startles and looks around quickly. And there, behind the huge teddy bear adorned with a big bow and holding a white card in its furry paws, saying, “Get well soon, captain’s orders! Lydia ♥,” there’s a man sitting there in a plush chair that’s definitely not hospital issued, peeking around the toy curiously.

The man’s odd. Asian, slightly older than he or Alec, with fuchsia highlights in his styled hair, layered make-up on his face and… in a suit that Jace would bet cost more than a used car. He’s blinking at Jace inquisitively, eyebrows raised.

Jace steps farther into the room and lets the door click shut behind him. “Yeah, hi.” He clears his throat and tries again. “Hi, I’m here for,” he waves his hand at the bed, “for Alec…”

Now that Jace came closer, the man takes him in with an observant but not unfriendly gaze. “Are you a colleague of his? I thought I knew all the people at his fire station.”

Jace shuffles his feet because this is awkward. “No, I’m… I’m his brother.”

The man’s eyebrows shoot up again, then, “Oh. Oh! Jace Wayland?” he takes a guess and his face brightens as he jumps to his feet and reaches across the bed. “It’s so nice to finally meet you! I’ve heard everything about you!”

Jace shakes the man’s hand, caught completely off guard. “You did?”

“Yes! Alexander talks about you often, about that little… incident between you all those years
ago.” The man pats Alec’s leg gently through the thin blanket and aims a look full of deep affection at him, before turning back to Jace. “Quite the unfortunate thing, wasn’t it?”

Unfortunate… Jace swallows. That’s one way to put it.

Eight years ago, just after high school, when Alec came out to their family, their parents, Jace’s adoptive parents, didn’t take it well. At all. Jace stood firmly by Alec’s side, together with their sister Izzy and their little brother Max, but when Alec then admitted to Jace privately that he was in love with him…

Well, Jace doesn’t remember what exactly was said between them - he was so shocked because he has never considered Alec anything more than his best friend and, most of all, brother! - but it must’ve been something really horrible because the next morning, Alec was gone, his things, everything, just… gone. And he hasn’t seen ever him since.

Until this morning, on TV, in a news report about some big fire downtown, where it was said that one of the firemen was taken to the hospital after being caught in a collapsing building. And it was Alec, his picture in his fireman gear, but the name listed didn’t say Alexander Lightwood, but Alexander Bane!

The man sighs and continues talking. “I wish I could’ve convinced him to talk to you, to call you. But the longer he waited, the harder it was for him…” He pats Alec’s leg again, with the same affectionate smile.

Jace frowns. “I’m sorry, but who are you?” he asks.

“Ah! Where are my manners?” the man exclaims. He reaches into his pocket, and pulling out a business card, he hands it over to Jace, who didn’t notice until now that the man’s fingernails are painted the same fuchsia color that adorns his hair. “Magnus Bane, defense attorney, should you ever need one - but most importantly, Alexander’s husband.”

Jace looks down at the card, blue and… glittery, as odd as the man himself. Magnus Bane, Bane, Loss, Fell & Gray, Law Firm, it states. “Bane? So that’s why…” He waves a hand at Alec again.

“Yes,” Bane confirms. “Alexander took my name after our wedding three years ago. He wanted a completely fresh start, and I found it terribly endearing.” He sighs and gives his husband a sappy look. “Though I wish he chose a little less dangerous career. But as long as he’s happy…” Bane shrugs as if saying, “What can you do?”

Jace just blinks at him, feeling completely overwhelmed. Then he looks at Alec, still asleep in the bed. His brother, married… Somehow, this he never fit into all the possible scenarios he imagined of what could’ve happened to Alec.

Noticing his stare, Bane says gently, “Don’t worry, he’ll be alright. Gave me a big scare, that’s true, but he’s just a little banged up, nothing a little TLC from yours truly won’t cure.”

Jace looks at him uncertainly. “Do you think he will… that he will want to see me? Talk to me?” He swallows. “I would like to apologize to him for how badly I handled the whole thing eight years ago. I’ve waited for so long…”

Bane’s eyes soften even more. He reaches out to squeeze Alec’s hand gently and runs a thumb over his knuckles. “I’m sure he’ll be delighted. You two have so much to talk about. Would you like to sit with me and wait for him to wake up?” he offers. “The doctors prescribed him a mild sedative to help him sleep, but he should be waking up soon.”
Jace smiles at him and nods. “Yes,” he says, eyes on his brother again, the painful tightness in his chest that’s haunted him ever since Alec disappeared, easing. “Yes, I would love that...”
Valentine wins and the Clave’s destroyed... but that's just the beginning, and before long, the world’s flooded with demons because Valentine’s new breed of Shadowhunters can’t kill them tall, they lack the training and the will to sacrifice their lives for the greater good...

They run, Jace and Clary, Alec and Isabelle, hunted by both sides, demons and Valentine alike, viewed as the last remnants of resistance, the rest of the Shadowhunters locked behind the impenetrable wards of Alicante: safe but unable to get out, too...

The four young Shadowhunters - and Magnus Bane, of course, pursued by his father, Asmodeus, one of the Princes of Hell who now reign over the earth...

Tucked in a rocky valley far, far away from any large city, they settle for the night, the perimeter of their little camp guarded by wards raised and locked in place by Magnus’ magic, powered by Alec’s strength, since they can’t afford for the warlock to exhaust himself when he’s their best weapon in the fight against the powerful demonic creatures that have overrun the world.

Both of them, Alec and Magnus, are thus spared from keeping watch through the night. And while Izzy stands guard, and Jace and Clary whisper softly, curled up together on the other side of their camp, Alec and Magnus lie down on the soft mossy ground underneath a large spruce, Alec on his back, and Magnus tucked against his side, head resting on Alec’s shoulder.

“I really like your scruff,” Magnus comments softly, looking up at Alec. He lifts his hand and runs his knuckles over the thick dark hair on his lover’s face. “It makes you look very... manly and handsome.”

Alec laughs quietly and pulls Magnus tighter against him with an arm around his shoulders. “I don’t know if I should take it as a compliment to my current look or as an insult to how I looked before.”

“Definitely as a compliment,” Magnus replies with a decisive nod, drops his hand to Alec’s chest and rests it over his steadily beating heart.

“Alright, then,” Alec says, smile still evident in his voice.

They lie in silence for a moment, just enjoying a moment of peace, and then Magnus whispers, “Tell me that everything will be alright. That we’ll win and save the world and live happily ever after.”

Alec hugs him tight and grips his hand. “Do you want the truth or a pretty lie?”

“Lie to me,” Magnus decides.

“Alright,” Alec says just as softly. “We will win. We will defeat Valentine and his minions, and we
will destroy Asmodeus and his league of demons, and not one of us will die, not one of us will lose their soul. We will all survive and rebuild the world and we will get our happily ever after, all of us.”

Magnus is silent for a long moment. “That was a really beautiful story,” he whispers in the end, his voice full of sadness.

“Yes, it was,” Alec agrees just as sadly and kisses the top of Magnus’ head. “Goodnight, Magnus.”

“Goodnight, Alexander.”

They sleep and outside the barrier, erected by the most powerful warlock left in the world and his half-angelic lover, the demons howl in the distance.
“Alexander, I have survived the Circle once already, I will do so again.” (Unbeta'd)

Thanks to the intel that Jace brings them, they have enough time to evacuate the New York Institute and warn all their Shadow World allies before Valentine attacks. To stay and fight would be madness in the face of such overwhelming odds.

They ask Magnus Bane for help - he is the High Warlock of Brooklyn, after all, as Robert reminds Maryse - and he opens a portal for them, one that leads directly to Alicante…

Alec stands by Magnus’ side and together they watch the personnel leaving the Institute, swiftly but in an orderly fashion, carrying things that they can’t allow to fall into enemy hands.

“You’re going with us, right?” Alec asks as the last stragglers step through the portal and it’s now just them, and Jace and Clary, who are making sure that nobody and nothing is being left behind.

His question makes Magnus look at him. “You mean… to Alicante?”

“Yes. Valentine’s going after our allies. The vampires went underground, Luke took his pack to Idris… and you’re coming with us, right? You can’t stay where Valentine can get to you, he will know it was you who helped us,” Alec points out, “and he will go after you, he has the means to do it now.”

Magnus smiles at him, touched, and his eyes soften. “Alexander, I have survived the Circle once already, I will do so again.”

Alec shakes his head firmly. “No, you won’t. Valentine has the Mortal Cup now, he commands demons!” He lowers his voice. “Remember what happened to Ragnor Fell. I don’t want you to end up the same way.”

Magnus’ face falls at the reminder of his dear friend. Then he says, “I can take care of myself. Besides,” he fixes his eyes on the shimmering purple gate, “I was explicitly told I wasn’t welcome in Alicante.”

Alec’s eyes widen. “By whom?” he asks incredulously.

Magnus just looks at him.

It dawns on Alec, and he whispers, “My mother…”

In that moment, Jace and Clary arrive. “All clear,” she says, while Jace looks around the place that’s been his home for the last ten years, a forlorn, guilty expression on his face. When Clary sees the look on Alec’s face, she frowns and asks, “Everything okay?”

“Yeah, yeah, everything’s just fine,” Alec assures her, finally tearing his eyes away from Magnus who turns back to the portal, and prompts, “Go.”
Now it’s Jace’s turn to frown at him. “What about you?”

“I’m right behind you, don’t worry, I just have one more thing to do,” Alec explains and his expression hardens a little, “courtesy of mother.”

Jace’s frown deepens and he exchanges a puzzled look with Clary. “Alright…” he accepts reluctantly. “I’ll wait for you on the other side,” he promises, claps Alec on the shoulder, and together with Clary, they walk through the portal.

The Institute is eerily quiet now that it’s just Alec and Magnus in here. For a long moment, Alec just stares off into the distance, deep in thought. When Magnus can’t seem to take it any longer, he puts on a blinding but completely false smile and waves his hands. “Go on, shoo, now. I can’t keep the portal open indefinitely. Such a strain will give me wrinkles!”

But instead of complying, Alec says quietly, “Close the portal.”

Magnus’ eyes widen in shock. “What?”

“Close the portal,” Alec repeats.

Magnus steps closer urgently. “Alexander, once I close the portal, I won’t be able to open another one, not to Alicante. They will have put up wards! If I close it, you won’t be able to get to your family!”

Alec looks at the portal, then back at Magnus again. His gaze is steady. “I know. Close it.”

“But…!”

Alec lifts his hand and touches Magnus’ face, runs his knuckles down Magnus’ cheek. “I won’t leave you. It’s my decision, Magnus. I’m staying with you. Now close the portal and let us go before Valentine comes.”

Magnus stands there for a long moment, just staring at Alec in open-mouthed shock. He can’t seem to comprehend that Alec would choose him over his own people.

Then, “If it’s really what you want…?” he inquires reluctantly, needing to be absolutely sure.

Alec nods. “It is,” he confirms, his voice unwavering, decision made.

Magnus grins at him brilliantly. “Alright, then let’s go,” he agrees, and snaps his fingers.

And the portal closes with a silent pop.
Magnus rushes up the stairs, fearing the worst: the explosion he saw from the street must have completely destroyed their apartment. And his husband and their son were inside in that very moment! If they are dead…

“Alexander!” Magnus yells as he barges in through the entrance door hanging askew on its hinges. “Max! Alec!”

The apartment is full of smoke and debris, crackling wires hanging from the ceiling and water rushing through burst pipes. Magnus doesn’t know who’s behind this, but he will make them pay, that he swears.

And then he sees it, something blue shining in the thick gloom. With a snap of his fingers he douses all the fires and sends the smoke away to reveal…

A bubble, or better said a dome of sparkling blue energy. And curled up underneath the dome, Alec and Max, not burned or torn to pieces but blessedly whole.

Magnus runs towards the dome, only to stop a foot away from it. He can see that Alec’s hurt, lying unconscious on his side, his shirt torn, his face pale; but he’s breathing, Magnus notes with relief. And their son, five-year-old Max, is kneeling next to his dad, head pressed to Alec’s chest, hiding under Alec’s limp arm and sobbing his little heart out.

“Max?” Magnus calls again, very gently to not startle the boy. “Max, it’s me…”

Max turns around, sniffs - and the dome fizzles out, allowing Magnus to enter the only part of their apartment that’s left untouched. He kneels down in front of his son and Max throws himself at him.

“Papa,” Max sobs, words rushing out of him. “It was the fairies! Daddy fought them… and then a big demon appeared and everything got loud… and then it went boom… and I had to protect daddy, I had to, ‘cause he got bumped, so I made the bubble you showed me… and… and…” Max looks up. “Will daddy be okay?”

Magnus reaches out and touches Alec’s face, brushing his raven hair from a sticky, tender spot on his temple. He doesn’t sense anything seriously wrong with him. It really must’ve been the bump on the head. Another wave of relief washes over him: Alec will be okay; Max is okay… Everything will be alright.

He looks down at his son, at his tear-stained blue face. “Yes, my little blueberry, your daddy will be just fine.”

Max blinks his big, hopeful eyes at him and sniffs some more. “Promise?”

“I promise. And all thanks to you and your magic.” He kisses Max’s sweaty brow. “Daddy has
always told you that you were special, magical!”

Max wipes his nose on his sleeves and lights up, like he always does when he hears the words of praise from Alec, even through someone else. “Will you help daddy now?” Max asks, then he leans closer and whispers, “I think his head will hurt when he wakes up.”

Magnus hugs his son again. “Yes, I will.”

What he doesn’t say out loud while his eyes turn flinty and his lips pinched, is, “And then I’ll kill the bastards who did this! Every single one of them…”
A Forsaken attacked the Institute, attacked Alec and Hodge. *Alec’s hurt!* That’s all Jace can think of while he races home, having left Clary to look for Simon alone. He feels guilty about that, but he feels even more guilty that he wasn’t at home, wasn’t with Alec when it happened.

But Alec should’ve been safe, the Institute should’ve been the safest place for him outside Idris. And Jace knows that Alec’s *not* fragile despite his blindness, his mind knows that - but his heart’s telling him something else. Since they’ve become parabatai five years ago, Alec’s never gotten seriously hurt, Jace has always been there to make absolutely sure of that, he has made it his life’s mission to watch over his best friend, his brother!

“Where is he?” is the first thing Jace asks Izzy when he barges in through the main entrance. The Ops Center is in uproar, people running around like ants.

Isabelle strides towards him, a little pale but composed. “In his room. After dad took care of his injuries, he ordered Alec to rest until Magnus Bane arrives and reinforces the wards.” She lowers her voice. “Dad was really shaken by what happened. And Alec must’ve been too, because he didn’t protest at all, he just went.” She looks worried. “He wouldn’t even talk to me.”

Jace reaches out and squeezes her arm. “I’ll check on him,” he promises, and she nods gratefully.

When Jace arrives at Alec’s bedroom, he finds the door open, an indication of how distraught Alec must’ve been because he always closes his door just to be sure that no one can watch him unobserved. He raises a hand to knock on the door frame, then pauses when he looks inside.

Alec’s lying on his bed in his training clothes, the heels of his hands pressed into his eyes. There’s a white bandage on his upper left arm and his tank top reveals ugly bruises on his chest, already fading. He’s a picture of misery and Jace’s heart seizes at the sight. And at the fact that Alec obviously didn’t even hear him coming, which almost never happens. What must be going through his head?

He knocks quietly, not wanting to startle his parabatai. “Alec?” he asks in a low voice.

“Alec?” Alec responds just as softly, and after a deep sigh he lets his arms drop to the bed, keeping his eyes closed. He hates to show his unseeing eyes to anyone, even to Jace.

Jace steps inside the room. “You okay?” he inquires gently. He can’t tear his eyes away from the damage done to Alec’s body. If this is how his injuries look *after* the application of *iratzes*… He has to swallow instinctive anger.

Alec sits up slowly, then hisses and presses a hand to his ribs. “Yeah, I’m fine. This…” He waves his good hand at his injuries. “Dad says that it should be all gone in a day or two. *Iratzes* will take
care of that.”

Jace walks up to the bed. “But you don’t seem okay, really,” he comments, still watching Alec carefully.

Rather than responding, Alec reaches out for his wraparound sunglasses that lie on the bedside table. Instead, he knocks them to the floor. He curses softly.

“Wait, let me,” Jace jumps in, picks up the glasses and carefully puts them into Alec’s hand. He notices that Alec’s trembling slightly. “Alec, if it’s about the attack…”

But Alec interrupts him sharply. “Our parents were in the Circle, Jace!”

Jace is so shocked that he almost forgets to breathe. “What?”

Alec grits his teeth. “Our parents, those paragons of virtue, them with the holier than thou attitude, were among Valentine’s minions! For what we know, they might still be in league with him!”

Jace shakes his head with certainty. “No way. I know what kind of people they are!” he protests. “And you should lie down,” he adds, frowning, when he sees that blood’s starting to seep through Alec’s bandage, “your injuries…”

“I don’t give a damn about my injuries,” Alec snaps. “I’ll be fine. Me and Hodge, we did our job and took care of the threat to our people. Just because we’re both confined to the Institute for different reasons, that doesn’t make us dumb or incompetent!” He puts his sunglasses on with an abrupt motion.

“Nobody here is saying…” Jace starts but Alec cuts him off again.

“You know what does bother me about the attack?” Alec asks angrily. “That it shouldn’t have happened in the first place! I’m starting to think that maybe, just maybe we should lose the Institute, that maybe Lydia is better suited to lead it!”

Jace’s mind is whirling. Maryse and Robert were in the Circle? Their family might lose the Institute? And who’s Lydia? He hasn’t been gone for more than a day while helping Clary but it seems like his whole world turned upside down in the meantime.

And the worst is Alec. Jace worried about him before, when he heard that Alec was injured, but now… instead of easing, Jace’s worry is deepening, because he doesn’t even recognize this Alec. What happened to him while Jace wasn’t paying attention?

But before Jace can ask, there’s a soft knock on the door. It’s Izzy. “Magnus Bane is here,” she says quietly, looking from Alec to Jace and back. “Dad wants you in the Ops Center,” she tells Alec.

Alec grimaces but gets up, grabbing his cane. “Right,” he comments, voice dripping with sarcasm. “Let’s see what father thinks I’m actually good for.”

And when he leaves, Izzy hurrying after him, confused, Jace’s left standing there, feeling like the ground is shifting beneath his feet, like he’s losing his anchor - and he has no idea why.
Remembered

Chapter Summary

I was asked to write a TMI story in which Magnus actually died in Edom. What would Alec's reaction be? (Unbeta'd)

Magnus Bane dies in Edom. He dies to save his beloved Alexander and his family and friends.

Alec holds Magnus in his arms, as the warlock grows old and dies and turns to ash in a matter of moments. And when they return to Alicante, in the midst of the aftermath of the battle with the fairies, Alec disappears, just walks away and loses himself among the weeping and distraught.

He avoids them all, his parabatai and his sister, everyone. He returns to New York and goes to Catarina Loss to tell her of her old friend’s passing, because he thinks she deserves to find out from him, from someone who has loved Magnus as much as she did.

“And now I’m alone,” Catarina whispers, tears in her eyes.

There’s nothing Alec can say to make her feel better. His face is stoic, his eyes burning but dry. He has locked his feelings deep in his heart, he had to or he would never recover. And there’s still something he has to do…

“I need your help,” he tells Catarina, and explains his plan to her.

She stares at him as if he’s grown mad. “You can’t do that,” she whispers. “It’s madness. Magnus would never allow you to do that!”

“Well, Magnus is not here, is he?” Alec demurs softly.

“I can make you stop, I can make you forget that you have ever wanted this!” she warns.

But Alec just looks at her. “Yes, you can. But you won’t, because that would be wrong. And Magnus told me that you were a good person, with a kind heart. This is my choice, Catarina. My decision.”

And in the end, seeing that he has no intention to let it go, she agrees to help him, though it goes against everything she believes in. Yet she feels she owes it to Magnus, she owes it to him to make sure his lover achieves his goal, no matter the cost.

It takes Alec almost two years to find a way to do it, two years of poring over old scrolls and dusty tomes. And in the meantime, he keeps to himself, pleased for Jace and Clary, Isabelle and Simon, glad that they found happiness and peace - but he can still feel his lover’s ashes on his hands.

And when it’s all ready, the pentagram’s drawn and the portal’s open, he hugs Catarina one last time. “Will you tell them what happened, please? What I did? My sister, my parabatai, they deserve to know the truth. They need to know that this was my choice, one I made with a clear mind,” he asks her as he steps back, hands still on her shoulders.

Catarina nods. She’s crying, and when she touches his face tenderly, she whispers, “I understand
Alec smiles at her, kisses her forehead gently... and steps into the pentagram, into the portal leading to another world, and disappears in a blinding flash of light.

There’s a gallery in the Gard in Alicante, a long hall decorated with tapestries depicting the greatest events and most heroic deeds in Shadowhunter history, among them one showing Jace and Clary meeting Raziel...

And directly next to it, and newly completed, one that the Lightwoods can’t look at without a pang in their hearts, one that Jace Herondale can’t ever approach without phantom pain seizing the scar that’s all that’s left of his *parabatai* bond. One that depicts a great battle with a Pyrrhic victory...

A battle in which Alexander Lightwood destroyed Asmodeus, one of the seven Princes of Hell.
Dinner

Chapter Summary

Set in my fireman! Alec & lawyer! Magnus AU. Their first wedding anniversary. And an obnoxious waiter... (Unbeta'd)

Gary is a very handsome man. Gorgeous even, if he may say so himself. He loves attention, craves it, and working at the exclusive Ethiopian restaurant on the 44th provides him with all the high society people in town to be seduced by. Twosomes, threesomes, men or women, whatever floats the clients’ boat, as long as they pamper him properly and shower him with affection. Monetary gifts preferred, but he accepts jewelry, too.

So, when a beautiful queer couple walks in - they have had a table reserved for months now, he checked, so it must be some kind of an anniversary thing or other, that’s always good to know - Gary decides that, yes, these two will be it tonight.

The older man is Asian, with golden streaks in his longish hair, tasteful make-up and perfect nail polish, and in a deep cobalt blue silk shirt that Gary bets costs more than his monthly rent. The younger, taller man has a more solid build of someone with a physically demanding job, and he’s dressed more plainly, still, his clothes are definitely not off the rack.

Yes, them he will get! And with that, he goes on the offensive.

And hour later, he’s starting to despair, though, since nothing he does seems to work. He’s been by the table six times in the last twenty minutes already and still nothing. The men seem to be completely engrossed in each other. That will not do. Grabbing a tray with... something, he marches off again!

But before he can even open his mouth, arriving at their table, the Asian man turns to him and with a deep sigh, he says, “Listen...” he pauses.

“Gary,” Gary introduces himself helpfully.

The Asian man smiles stiffly. “Yes, Gary. Listen. You’re a very attractive young man. You’re very handsome and very eager, and I’m sure there are plenty of people in here right now who would very much appreciate your attention.” His smile drops off his face abruptly and he skewers Gary with his almost cat like eyes. “But we do not. We do not. As you can see, I have Alexander here and no matter what you think you can bring to the game, I promise you, you will not measure up. Nobody is more beautiful or interesting or better in bed than my husband. So, if you could leave us alone to enjoy our anniversary, I would appreciate it very much!”

Gary opens his mouth and closes it again, blinking in surprise, stunned by such a blunt rejection, while the other man at the table, apparently Alexander, sputters for a moment, then hisses quietly, “Magnus, you can’t say things like that aloud! And in the middle of a restaurant, too! There are people here!”

The Asian man, Magnus, turns away from Gary, dismissing him completely. He leans forward, props his elbows on the table, rests his chin in his hands and aims a look at his husband like he
hung the moon and stars. “There are other people here? I haven’t noticed,” he comments sappily.

Alexander blushes. “You… that’s… you can’t just…” He waves his hand and almost knocks over a glass, catching it just in time. “You’re impossible!”

Magnus laughs. “One year married and I can still make you stutter.” Then he leans back in his chair and turns to Gary who’s still standing there, gaping like a fish, and says flatly, “You can go now, Gary. Shoo, off with you, go count the napkins or polish the silver or something. Just don’t be here!”

Thoroughly embarrassed, Gary turns on his heel, and strides off, his cheeks aflame, the couple’s hushed words floating after him.

“That was so harsh, Magnus…”

“He was ruining our evening, darling.” Pause. “Alright, alright, I’ll leave a nice big tip. You’re too soft-hearted for your own good - saved any kittens from trees today?”

“Oh, hush…”
Fishes

Chapter Summary

How did fireman Alec and lawyer Magnus actually meet? (Unbeta'd)

Magnus is shifting from foot to foot, wringing his hands, as he watches the smoke that’s still billowing sluggishly from his kitchen window. Yes, his cooking has always been a disaster but never of these proportions. Luckily, it seems that the firemen have it all under control now. But…

“What about Ernest?” Magnus asks anxiously and grabs the fireman who just exited the house by the arm.

The man stiffens. “Ernest? Is that a family member? Was there someone else in the house?” he fires his questions with professional concern, already reaching for his radio.

Magnus frowns. “What? No. Ernest is my goldfish!”

The man, quite a tall one as Magnus’ notices, blinks at him. “A… goldfish?”

Magnus nods earnestly, hanging on the man’s arm. “Yes, I completely forgot about her! I left her bowl on the kitchen counter! Please, please, tell me that the heat didn’t actually cook her?” He shakes the man’s arm.

More blinking. “I… I don’t… Let me check,” he sighs in the end, seeing Magnus’ imploring look. And then he turns, puts his breathing mask back on and goes back inside.

Five minutes later, the fireman is walking down the steps leading from the front door, down to the street level, a smudged bowl in his gloved hands, and in it, in the sloshing, dirty water, a goldfish is swimming frantically.

“Ernest!” Magnus exclaims, grabs the bowl and starts polishing it with his pure silk - though slightly singed - Prussian blue shirt. “You’re alive!”

The fireman pulls his mask off and stares at him with a quirked eyebrow. He obviously wants to ask, then thinks better of it… but no, he really has to ask. “You named your goldfish, a female goldfish, Ernest?”

Magnus nods without taking his eyes off the harassed looking thing. “Yes, Ernest Hemingway. The Third!” he adds.

“Do I want to know what happened to Ernest the First and the Second?” the man asks, voice laced with sarcasm.

“Ah, they swam off to the great fish heaven…” Magnus responds a little sadly.

The fireman stifles a cough, and Magnus eyes him suspiciously.

“Sir, your kitchen,” the fireman says, back to business, “we managed to save most of it, but the area around the stove…” He shakes his head.
“Ah,” Magnus says airily, waving a hand, as he turns back to his house. The smoke is almost gone now. “I wanted to renovate anyway. Besides, I have a very good insurance.”

The fireman snorts, and mumbles under his breath. “Well, I sure hope so with the way you cook.”

Magnus pulls himself up indignantly. “Well, excuse me,” he starts and turns back to the rude man - only to freeze and gape like his little Ernest.

Because the fireman pulled off his helmet. And he’s not just tall, he’s tall, dark and handsome. Very handsome. Gorgeous even. And he has the most beautiful hazel eyes. How did Magnus not notice that?

His indignation forgotten, Magnus puts on his best and brightest and most dazzling smile and his right hand shoots up. “Magnus Bane,” he introduces himself.

The fireman is dazzled. He blinks at Magnus, then down at his outstretched hand… and then, with a small confused sound, he pulls off his gloves and shakes Magnus’ hand. “Alec…ugh… Alec Lightwood?” he replies.

And he keeps shaking Magnus’ hand. Then just holding it. And it’s really nice, Magnus decides. “Well, Alec Lightwood. You, sir, you’re the savior of fishes and the vanquisher of kitchen fires, and you deserve a reward.” He leans in, water sloshing in the bowl under his arm. “Would you go out with me?”

Alec just stares at him for a long moment, dazed and still holding his hand, mouth agape. And in the end, what he blurts out is, “I don’t think that’s the correct plural of fish.”

And the rest is history.
Consequences

Chapter Summary

I was asked to write a Magnus-Lydia interaction. Missing scene from 113. (Unbeta'd)

Lydia wakes with a dull headache. Which is not bad, considering the agony she was in the first time she woke, shortly after Hodge’s attack, with Alec crouching by her side, applying an iratze to her skin.

What startles her, though - and makes her headache flare up - is Magnus Bane, who’s bending over her bed and peering down at her curiously.

“Awake?” the warlock asks with a cheeky half-smile on his lips.

She closes her eyes tightly, and groans. Almost immediately, the pain’s gone, though, and when she opens her eyes once more, she sees Magnus’ fingers dancing above her head, showering her with blue sparks. “Thanks,” she mumbles.

Magnus tilts his head sideways and his smile widens. “You’re welcome. And also very lucky that yours truly was at hand. That bastard actually cracked your skull!” He straightens.

That reminds her. “Did they get him?” she asks, sitting up.

“Alexander and Jace went after him,” he assures her. “They aren’t back yet.”

Lydia hits the mattress with her fist angrily. “I should’ve been more careful!”

Magnus shakes his head. “Don’t. It wasn’t your fault. Nobody could’ve expected this. Starkweather was like family to the people here. Actually,” he ponders, “I knew another Starkweather once… Hm, that also wasn’t a very pleasant man, now that I think of it.”

An awkward silence settles over them. *An ex-fiancée and an almost boyfriend…*

Magnus clears his throat. “I actually wanted to thank you. We *both* wanted to, Alec and me. We were just on our way to you, when…” He waves a hand at her.

She raises her eyebrows carefully. “Thank me?”

He nods and looks at her, and his expression is so earnest, there’s so much honest emotion in his face, that she almost looks away. “Yes. What you did at the ceremony… Very few people would have handled it with as much grace as you did. It means a lot, to both of us.”

“Well…” Lydia shrugs and drops her eyes, a little embarrassed by the praise, because all she did was preserve as much of her dignity as possible. And if she were honest with herself, her heart still aches a little, so she would rather not talk about it, if at all possible.

But there *is* something she feels she has to say, and she hopes Magnus won’t take it the wrong way…
She looks up at him and takes a deep breath. “I appreciate your thanks, but it’s not necessary, really. I don’t want your gratitude. But there is something I want. From you, Magnus,” she specifies.

His expression becomes guarded. “Oh?”

She pauses for a moment, trying to find the right words. “I know that whatever is between you and Alec, it’s still new. He’s an honest man and he would never have asked me to marry him if he was in a relationship already.” Magnus nods. “Still, I want you to promise me, that you’ll never do anything that would make him regret what he did today. I want you to swear it on everything you hold dear.”

Magnus blinks in surprise, then comes closer and sits down on the edge of her bed. “I would never hurt Alexander, not intentionally, not in any way if I could help it. That I can swear to you,” he promises in an earnest voice. “He means… He means a lot to me.”

Lydia stares him in the eyes and there it is again, the well of affection so deep it’s almost breathtaking. It makes her eyes burn a little because that’s how John used to look at her…

“Good, that’s good,” she whispers and lowers her eyes again. “Because he will need you, more than he thinks right now. What he did today, it will have painful, far-reaching consequences that I don’t think he can even fathom yet.”

“What do you mean?” Magnus asks, obviously anxious for Alec.

She looks up. “Magnus, all I did was choose a man that my family considered not worthy, but because we were actually achieving something together, the Clave had to acknowledge us. But after John died…” She shakes her head. “I lost everything. The traditionalist faction of the Clave, took everything from me for daring to challenge the old customs. And my partner was of the proper gender and race!”

Magnus looks away.

Lydia continues, “What Alec did… it’s unheard of, in all of our history. There are no queer Shadowhunters - yes, there are,” she corrects herself when Magnus turns back to her and opens his mouth to object, “but there are not. Because the Clave does not want them to exist, and so they don’t exist. Alec challenged all of that and in the most public way possible. He chose a male Downworlder over a Shadowhunter woman - and he will pay for it dearly.”

Magnus looks stricken now, but she feels he needs to hear this to understand. “He will never become the head of an Institute now, the Clave will see to that. He will never get to do what he has worked so hard his whole life for. He will never achieve any leadership position. He will be lucky if he gets to keep his field leader rank.” She lowers her voice. “I don’t think he realizes yet, just how bad it will be.”

“But if he continued living a lie, he would’ve been unhappy his whole life long,” Magnus objects, a little desperately. “He deserves better!”

She nods gently. “I agree with you. What he did was necessary, and not just for him. If we keep quiet and don’t challenge the injustices around us, nothing will ever change. Unfortunately, those who do so first, usually suffer the most…”

She leans closer and takes his hand. “That’s why you need to be there for him. Just be there. Because at times, he’ll feel like nobody’s on his side, that he’s all alone. I know,” she says with a
soft, painful smile. “And so you need to be there and not leave him when he becomes frustrated or angry. Can you promise me that? That you will stand by his side against the Clave?”

Magnus looks down at their joined hands and pauses, and Lydia appreciates that he actually thinks about it, because this is something he has to approach with open eyes. He’s a Downworlder who has been persecuted unfairly by the Clave many times in the past - but if he chooses a Shadowhunter for a partner, he won’t be on the outside looking in anymore, he’ll become a part of their world with all its archaic rules that they’re subjects to, rules that won’t change overnight, maybe not even in Alec’s lifetime.

Then Magnus nods and meets her gaze. “Yes, yes, I can promise you that. I won’t let him face the consequences alone.”

And Lydia’s smile widens, though her heart gives another pang, seizes a little at what she herself lost. “Then you will be alright…”
Chapter Summary

(What a creative title, I know!) Jace's dropped into an alternate universe where Alec and Lydia are parabatai. OOC warning for the characters from the other dimension. (Unbeta'd)

Everything in this universe is upside down and slightly off-kilter, that’s obvious from the moment Jace wakes up on the floor in the Ops Center and finds it furnished with heavy oak instead of sleek metal and glass. It's just plain weird.

He doesn’t know what exactly he did, what exactly he touched in Magnus’ loft while waiting for Alec to get ready, bored out of his mind, but he hopes this universe’s Magnus Bane can fix it.

And since Magnus is right here - having been summoned immediately after Jace’s arrival, and arriving himself just minutes after, in black silk pajamas and a deep purple robe, a strange thing in itself since it seems to point towards him actually living here, in the Institute - Jace hopes this kerfuffle will be solved in no time.

But he doesn’t realize just how odd this world is, until Alec walks in through the main door dressed in his black hunting gear - and with Lydia Branwell, also in hunting gear, thrown over his shoulder like a sack of potatoes.

“You can set me down now!” Lydia protests indignantly, squirming like a worm on a hook.

Alec’s grinning. “Nope, I really can’t,” he refuses, and holds her more tightly. “What would your husband say if I allowed your to hobble around with such a grave injury?”

She sighs and goes limp. “Can’t you at least carry me in your arms? This is so embarrassing…”

“Nope,” he replies again. “What if we were attacked? I need at least one hand to defend us.”

“We are inside the Institute!” she yells, irritated.

Magnus Bane rushes towards them. “What happened?” he asks with concern.

Alec pulls him close with his free hand. “Hello, husband,” he says softly, his voice full of affection.

Magnus beams. “Hello, husband,” he answers and allows himself to be thoroughly kissed.

Lydia harrumphs. “Can you please stop smooching in the vicinity of my ass? It’s very awkward!”

They both laugh, foreheads touching.

“What's going on?” a loud voice calls and they all turn to see a tall man with dusky skin and large black eyes hurrying down the steps towards them.

Alec grins at him. “John, your wife suffered an injury on the battlefield!” he informs him.
Lydia starts hitting him in the back. “For Angel’s sake! I stepped into a gopher hole and twisted my ankle, you loon!”

The man called John laughs heartily. “I see some TLC is in order, then.” And opens his arm.

“Incoming!” Alec warns and throws Lydia in the air.

She squeals but John catches her expertly. “Hello, wife,” he murmurs, rubbing his nose against hers, while she hugs him around the neck.

“Hello, husband,” Lydia replies just as softly.

“Off with you!” Alec orders, making a shooing notion with his hand. “I think she still might have bits of that poor gopher on her shoe - the smell would suggest that.”

She makes a rude gesture. “Love you, too!” And then she lets her husband carry her away.

“We have a guest,” Magnus tells Alec, pulling him towards the antique table that’s covered with ancient scrolls.

Alec looks at Jace, a polite smile on his face. “Are you from Idris?” he asks.

And Jace feels a little pang at not being recognized by the man who, in his universe, is his parabatai.

“No,” Magnus says and he’s almost bouncing on his toes. “His name’s Jace Wayland and he’s from another dimension, Alexander!” He says it like it’s the best thing that has happened to him in a long while.

“Really? That’s interesting,” Alec comments and reaches out. “Alec Lightwood. And that,” he waves his other hand in the direction where Lydia and her husband disappeared, “was my parabatai, Lydia Monteverde, and her husband, John.”

Jace probably grips his hand more tightly than he should while shaking it, but… Lydia is Alec’s parabatai? It feels like a punch in the gut. “Nice to meet you,” he mumbles numbly.

“I checked,” Magnus says, “in our dimension, there’s no Jace Wayland. He has ever existed. He probably wasn’t even born.”

Jace swallows and hates this universe more and more with every second. It feels like he’s losing everything he is. And the way they look at him, like he’s an extinct creature, not one of them…

“That sucks,” Alec comments, his voice sympathetic but detached.

Impersonal, as if this doesn’t really matter to him, as if he isn’t personally invested in this thing, at all - and Jace realizes that he isn’t, to this Alec, he’s of no real importance, just a curiosity from another dimension.

“Well,” Alec continues. “I need to go and change.” He smiles at Jace. “It was nice meeting you. If anyone can help you with your problem, it’s Magnus. He’s just the best,” he adds and pecks the warlock on the forehead.

Magnus grins at him. “It’s good to be appreciated.”

Alec kisses him softly on the lips. “Always.” And then, with a little wave, he departs.
He just goes and leaves Jace standing there, looking after him forlornly. Jace has never felt so alone, he has never realized how much he depends on his parabatai bond, on things between him and Alec being as they are, deep and profound and intimate. Without their bond, he feels… diminished.

“Now to you, my sweet interdimensional traveler,” Magnus says, rubbing his hands. “I think I know what the problem is…”

And Jace hopes so because he cannot wait to return home.
Frowning, Lydia watches as Alec leaves the restaurant, his posture rigid and closed-off. If she had known that he wasn’t aware of his parents’ involvement with the Circle, she wouldn’t have sprung it on him like that. She likes Alec, what she has seen of him so far, and she didn’t mean to hurt him.

With a sigh, she returns to the problem at hand, to the dead Forsaken. “Mr Garroway…” she starts but he interrupts her.


Lydia reaches out to shake his hand. “Lydia,” she answers with a smile. “Luke, this incident - may I ask why you contacted Alec Lightwood and not his parents who are the heads of the New York Institute?”

Luke replies, “For one, I didn’t know they were back. But also, considering that we were in the Circle together at one point, you might say that our interactions tend to be rather… stilted. We avoid being in the same room together if at all possible.”

Lydia raises her eyebrows. “That must be rather difficult, what with you being the local alpha and them leading the New York based Shadowhunters…”

He smiles. “And that’s why I contacted Alec.”

“Why him specifically?” she inquires. “You could’ve called the Ops Center as there’s always somebody at hand there.”

Luke frowns slightly. “What’s with all the questions?”

Lydia sighs again. “Look, I’m here to investigate the running of the New York Institute. I’m not trying to dig up dirt on the Lightwoods or to oust them. And I’m not after them - or after anyone else,” she adds meaningfully, “because of their past, either. But it’s my job to make sure that the Institute is run properly, that the rights of Downworlders are not being violated, that the mundanes are protected - and that the local Shadowhunters are actually doing their job!”

Luke looks at her a moment longer, then inclines his head. “Alright. I didn’t call the Institute because I don’t know those people, and since I don’t know them, I refuse to entrust the safety of my people to them,” he explains. “And I didn’t call Maryse or Robert because they’re bullheaded. They follow the Law, that’s true, but they do so almost fanatically, as if they’re trying to make up for their past failures.”

Lydia nods. “But there are still other Shadowhunters here…”

Laughing softly, Luke allows, “Yes, I know Jace and Isabelle, and they’re sweet kids. I know they mean well, but rules don’t mean much to them. And that’s all good and well when you’re a
Shadowhunter and a slap on the wrist is the worst punishment you can expect for your transgressions. But we, me and my people, we face a different reality.”

“And that’s the reason why you called Alec,” Lydia guesses.

“Alec…” He pauses and thinks about it for a moment. “With Alec, I know that he will follow the Law - but I also know that he will listen to reason and assess all the evidence fairly. That is all.”

Lydia nods because Luke’s words support her own initial findings. She’s slowly starting to put her report together in her head, and unfortunately, she suspects she already knows what the Clave’s call will be regarding the Lightwood family based on the things she’s uncovered here, ranging from sheer incompetence to a blatant disregard of the rules.

Yes, Lydia doesn’t want to hurt Alec - she likes him a lot - but she won’t lie for him either. The only thing she can do, is make her report as fair-minded as possible. She sighs. Sometimes, her job sucks.
“I’ll be fine,” Lydia tells him with a smile and lets him go.

*I’ll be fine,* she thinks as she walks through the Institute, eyes straight ahead, head held high, shoulders square, seemingly blind to the sympathetic looks and not so covert whispering of the staff.

*I’ll be fine,* because that’s who I am, Lydia “I’m fine” Branwell, she thinks as she steps into her bedroom and closes the door…

… as she leans against it and slides down heavily, her wedding dress pooling around her on the floor, as she starts sobbing, quietly, oh so quietly with one hand pressed against her trembling lips, because *shh, nobody must know,* she’s an envoy to the Clave, she’s always strong, always proud, always collected, she *does not mind*…

… while deep in her heart she knows, she admits it to herself, only to herself, that she allowed herself to hope again, hope for a future, a family of her own with a husband worthy of her affection and deep admiration, hope for a real career that doesn’t lie in being the Clave’s pawn…

… and now it’s gone, all gone, and everything’s in shambles again, and she’s crying like she hasn’t cried since they burned John’s body on the funeral pyre, muffling her sobs desperately, because *nobody must know, shh…*

Nobody must know just how… *mundane* Lydia Branwell is.
Warn Me

Chapter Summary

A short Malec doodle, set in the alternate dimension introduced in episode 110.
(Unbeta'd)

“So, you’re immortal, huh?” Alec says, smiling, and kisses Magnus’ stomach. “How do you escape detection, then? You’ve made some waves with your TV commercials…”

Magnus looks down at him and hesitates, as if he can’t believe that there’s now a mortal who knows, with whom he can talk about these things. “Well, I move around a lot. Every ten years or so, I just reinvent myself somewhere else,” he admits, carding his fingers through Alec’s hair.

And Alec stiffens a little, then he forces himself to relax. “But you won’t just disappear on me, will you?” he asks with studied casualness, head resting on his lover’s stomach. “You will warn me that you’re about to go, right? I won’t just wake up one morning with you gone… right?”

Magnus is quiet for so long that Alec looks up, his heart starting to beat faster with alarm. But then Magnus smiles and runs his fingers down Alec’s cheek. “Of course not. I wouldn’t do that to you…”

… And it’s almost eight years later when Alec returns home from work, a heart-shaped box of chocolates hidden behind his back because, yes, it’s a little silly, but it’s their anniversary!

But his smile fades slowly from his face when he sees that their loft is empty, all of Magnus’ things gone, everything, like he has never even existed.

“Magnus?” Alec calls out softly, then louder, “Magnus? This is not funny! It’s not… it’s not funny. Magnus…?”

The big red box drops to the floor, little chocolates scattering around, and Alec starts to tremble all over, because this can’t be happening. Magnus did not do this to him, he said he wouldn’t, he said he wouldn’t do this to him! He said so!

And then Alec’s knees buckle and he drops to the ground, gasping for breath and whispering hopelessly, “I would’ve gone with you. If you had just asked, I would’ve gone with you…”
Always

Chapter Summary

The Jalec tracking in episode 110, told from Lydia's POV. (Unbeta'd)

Lydia doesn’t want Alec to do it. She tries to dissuade him from using his parabatai bond to track Jace because he's angry with him, furious even, and he wants to hurt Jace back as much as Jace hurt him with his betrayal - but if he actually breaks their bond by accident, she doesn’t think he’ll ever be able to forgive himself.

But Alec’s determined, he’s absolutely refusing to listen to reason, from both her and Hodge Starkweather, his mentor, so in the end, they both decide to help him rather than just to stand aside and maybe watch him make some fatal mistake.

When she burns the tracking rune into his skin, over the parabatai rune, her heart’s beating frantically because she know what will follow. She might have never personally witnessed such a tracking, but she has read about it, and if it’s even remotely as unpleasant as the old tomes described it to be…

And then Alec starts almost seizing with pain on the infirmary bed while Hodge holds his hand and tries to talk him through the agony so that their suffering, his and Jace’s, is not in vain, helping him track his parabatai.

And when he screams, she has to hold back from… from doing something! Yes, she has know Alec for only a short period of time, but he’s her fiancé, and she would have never agreed to marry him if she didn’t consider him a good, honest man, no matter what a marriage with him could bring her.

When Alec loses consciousness and slumps on the bed, head lolling limply to the side, her heart skips a beat because… no, this is not like what happened with John. This isn’t anything like that.

Hodge is leaning over the bed, patting Alec’s cheek, calling his name, trying to wake him, because, though hey would both rather let him rest, they cannot if they want to find Jace. Alec’s ordeal should not be pointless.

And when Alec regains consciousness, he’s a little frantic, worried about how much time he lost, and he’s already scrambling to his feet with Hodge’s help, even though he’s still weak and disoriented, and when he stumbles…

Lydia’s there, slipping under his arm, holding him up, because small she might be compared to him but she’s not frail or weak, she can carry his weight. “I’ve got you,” she tells him and looks up at him.

His eyes are still glazed with pain and she can feel him trembling slightly when he looks down at her and asks, “Help me?”

And with a small, encouraging smile, she replies, “Always.” It’s a promise.
“I love you so much...”

That’s what Alec told him last night, smiling his beautiful, genuine, wide smile, while he held Magnus in his arms, Magnus the little spoon to Alec’s big one. And it was wonderful, so wonderful that Magnus just wanted to sink into that feeling and never come up for air.

So, why is he running? Why did he just run away without telling Alec, without warning him, even though he promised, promised him so long ago never to hurt him like that?

“But you won’t just disappear on me, will you?”

“I wouldn’t do that to you...”

But Magnus did. He did it to Alec. He is doing it to him. Why? Why?

He’s standing in the line at his Gate, the line that’s getting shorter and shorter, last warnings being issued for his flight. *His flight!* So many years have passed since his magic has returned to him, and he’s still using mundane means of... pretty much everything, from transport to cooking.

Because he’s still afraid. He’s so afraid, terrified of being discovered, of being found out, of ending up on the dissecting table in some secret government lab - or worse yet, of re-awaking the dormant Nephilim unwittingly, through some stupid mistake on his part! Where did his confidence go? When did he lose it?

He’s doing the right thing. Magnus tells himself, he’s only doing what he has always done: he’s looking out for himself, hiding, hiding, hiding, never to be found again, and this time he’ll dig in even deeper, because this time he told, he told someone, someone knows his secret!

Alec knows. Alec has known for years now and he never told. He protected Magnus’ privacy, his secrets, covered for him, never allowing anyone to find out. Alec knows and he loves Magnus still. *He loves Magnus!* Who has ever loved Magnus? Nobody, not even those who have never learned the truth about him. And Alec knows and he still loves Magnus...

But Alec will be alright. Of course, he will be! Magnus has never met anyone as confident as Alexander Gideon Lightwood. Alec will get over him, find someone else and that will be that. And Magnus will safe, safe, safe!

He stops, letting the last few stragglers pass by, their carry-ons hitting him in the shin. This has been his plan from the very beginning. Ten years to the day will he stay in New York, and then he’ll go again. All is ready for him to go, the anxiety buzzing, always buzzing in his chest insisting that this is the right thing to do!

“So, you’re immortal, huh?”
“I love you so much…”

“Sir?”

Magnus’ head jerks up. The flight attendant. He’s the last one left standing at the Gate. Safe, he’ll be safe if he goes. He’ll get to keep Alec if he stays.

“I’m sorry, I can’t do this, I can’t leave,” he tells the woman who’s watching him with a frown, not understanding. “I’m very sorry.”

Magnus turns around and runs.
I was asked to write a story where Alec is injured saving Magnus and Magnus needs to nurse him back to health again. Well, I had to give it my very own flavor of angst, of course (Unbeta’d)

When Alec storms into the loft, it’s all chaos inside. Magnus just sent a demon spawn flying across the room, and he’s now trying to fight off two more, and Alec’s looking around, trying to understand what’s going on, how to step in, how to help…

Suddenly, though, the creature that hit the wall to the left of him waves a hand and with a puff of black smoke, a javelin appears in its grasp. With its red-glowing eyes fixed on Magnus, the thing takes aim, and…

And Alec knows he’s not fast enough anymore to reach the demon spawn and stop it. And neither is he fast enough to reach Magnus and save him. Magnus himself is too engaged fighting his enemies to notice. So there’s only one thing that Alec can do…

Just as the ugly coal black creature throws its malevolent weapon, Alec steps between it and its target, between the demon spawn and Magnus.

The javelin hits Alec squarely in the chest with so much force that it pierces him through, tearing through his lung and breaking his ribs. Alec makes the tiniest of sounds as his breath is driven out of him, then the power of the throw tosses him back, and he hits the ground, sliding over the polished hardwood floor, until he stops, crumpled, at Magnus’ feet.

“Alexander!”

Magnus’ frantic scream is the last thing he hears…

Everything’s soft and warm when he returns to consciousness. He opens his eyes to slits and realizes that he’s lying in their bed, Magnus’ and his. It’s all quiet in the loft, the lights are dimmed and fire is crackling in the fireplace that Magnus magicked in some time ago. It’s peaceful.

Alec tries to take a deep breath, but his chest seizes with pain, reminding him of his injury. He can only imagine how bad it must’ve been if it still hurts so much after Magnus’ healing.

His head is turned slightly to the right, towards… He smiles. Magnus is lying next to him, curled up in a ball almost like a cat. Even in his sleep he’s holding Alec’s hand as if refusing to lose contact with him. Magnus is pale and there are dark circles under his eyes; he looks exhausted.

Alec squeezes his hand gently and whispers, “Hey.”

Magnus immediately wakes, and his eyes open wide when he realizes that Alec’s conscious. “You are awake!” he answers just as quietly, voice full of wonder.

“Yeah,” Alec says, eyes roaming over his lover’s face. “What happened?”
Magnus’ mouth twists. “Asmodeus. He sent his spawns to harass me…” Then he swallows and his lips tremble. “When I saw what that thing did to you…” He grips Alec’s hand so hard the bones grind together. “I thought you were dead.”

Alec reaches out with his other hand, slowly, carefully because his chest still pains him, and pushes a lock off Magnus’ forehead. “I’m sorry I scared you.”

“I tried to heal you as best I could, but your body…” Magnus falls silent, his eyes full of misery.

Alec smirks a little. “It’s not knitting back together as well as thirty years ago, huh? Yeah,” huffs, “getting old sucks.”

Magnus’ eyes become a little glassy and he blinks hard. “You’re not old,” he protests but there isn’t much strength behind his words, because they both know the truth. “Just… don’t do that ever again, okay? I want to keep you for another thirty years!”

“I can’t promise you that.” Alec shakes his head. “I would consider my life for yours a fair trade.”

Magnus’ expression darkens. “I would not. I would never consider that a fair trade. Your life’s not less important than mine. Your loss…” His voice fails him and he has to compose himself before he can continue. “Your loss would be unbearable to me.”

And Alec smiles a little sadly, running his thumb over Magnus’ cheek, forever smooth and young. Unbearable loss, he thinks, his heart breaking a little for his lover because he knows it will come one day, his death, maybe not today or in a month, but it will come, and Magnus will have to bear it, he will do so because he’s not a quitter, his Magnus.

“I love you so much,” Magnus confesses softly, kissing the palm of Alec’s hand, eyes squeezed shut, wetness on his lashes.

“I love you, too, more than you will ever know,” Alec whispers, his voice hoarse with emotions.

*Promise me you won’t leave me, my love.*

*I can’t*...
The Cup

Chapter Summary

The Mortal Cup has the power to turn mundanes into Shadowhunters. But what if a Shadowhunter drank from it? (Unbeta'd)

“Let him go!” Jace demands, watching in horror as two of Valentine’s minions force Alec to his knees. “You promised not to hurt my friends.”

Valentine walks around Alec, his two men holding Alec’s arms twisted behind his back. “Yes, I did. And you promised to come with me. And then I find you sending fire messages to your parabatai!” Valentine clucks his tongue and shakes his finger at Jace.

Jace tears his eyes away from Alec’s pale face with difficulty, and looks at his father. “I’ve never promised not to do everything in my power to stop you,” he replies, his voice flat.

Valentine smirks. “And I let your friends live - that one time. I didn’t promise to never hurt them again.” He gives his men a sign and they twist Alec’s arms a little harder, forcing a pained sound out of him.

Jace takes a step forward and yells, “Stop it!”

Impassively, Valentine pulls a gun and points it at Jace. “I might prefer a blade, but sometimes, a quick solution is needed,” he explains, seeing Jace narrow his eyes at the weapon.

Then Valentine hands the gun over to one of the men standing aside and tells him, “If my son moves again, shoot him in the leg. Don’t worry, It will heal,” he adds as in reassurance, eyes trained at Jace.

Jace’s breathing hard now, his need to do something warring with the knowledge that he’s outmaneuvered and out-gunned. He looks down at Alec, barely ten feet away, yet completely out of reach. His eyes fill with despair.

Alec, his parabatai…

“And now,” Valentine says and rubs his hands in anticipation. Then he reaches out towards one of his minions who hands him the Mortal Cup. “The Mortal Cup has the power to turn a mundane into a Shadowhunter. But I’ve always wondered: what would happen if someone who already was a Shadowhunter drank from it? Why is it forbidden?”

Jace turns to him in horror. No… He can’t be serious. He can’t do that!

But Valentine’s already dipping the cup into the vat, he’s turning to Alec…

“No!” Jace roars and moves - and there’s a shot that echoes, echoes, echoes through the ship. And Jace screams, tumbling to the floor, hand pressed to his wounded thigh.

“Jace!” Alec yells, trying to stand up, but the men holding him push him down again, almost breaking his arms. Alec cries out in pain but then he grits his teeth and he’s looking Jace in the eyes, shaking his head imploringly, asking, demanding that Jace doesn’t risk his life.
Valentine snorts. “Isn’t that touching?” Then he looks at the shooter and orders, “If he moves again, shoot him in the other leg.”

And with that he walks towards Alec and grabs him by the hair, pulls his head back and presses the Cup to his lips. Alec’s trying to fight him, to pull away but Valentine refuses to let him. And in the end, he forces Alec to open his mouth and drink.

“No, no, no, no…” Jace whispers, terrified out of his mind. This can’t be happening, he despairs as he watches Alec choke on the fluid from the Cup.

But suddenly, there’s a commotion, a bang so loud it shakes the ship. And when everybody turns to the prow, there’s a portal opening there, a purple, shimmering gate, and Magnus Bane is the first one to stride through, dressed in an unusually somber attire, with all the Shadowhunters from the New York Institute pouring out after him: Clary and Izzy, Raj and Lydia, Maryse and Robert, and then the rest, every single one of them…

“Sir?” one of Valentine’s minions asks.

Valentine grits his teeth furiously. “Retreat. It’s not the time for a reckoning yet. Let the canon fodder down there deal with the enemy.”

“And what about them?” the man inquires, pointing at Jace and Alec, one’s bleeding profusely, the other’s hanging limply in his captors’ hands.

Valentine decides quickly, callously. “Leave them. They will make for a nice distraction.” And with that, and with the Mortal Cup in hand, he turns and marches off, his elite circle at his heels.

But Jace doesn’t care. He doesn’t care what Valentine will do or where he will go, all he cares about is Alec. The moment Valentine’s men drop Alec to the ground, Jace starts crawling towards him, calling his name, but Alec lies still, unmoving.

“Alec, Alec!” Jace screams when he gets to his parabatai, and gently he turns him onto his back. “Alec, say something! Can you hear me?” He pats his face, presses his ear to Alec’s chest to listen to his heart beating.

But all of a sudden, Alec seizes, his back arching and he makes a terrible wheezing sound. Jace sits up, not caring that he himself is bleeding all over the floor, but he freezes, his eyes growing wide with horror.

Alec’s pale, so pale he’s almost glowing, his eyes golden, but slowly turning more and more red. And his veins are swelling, first gray, then black, then ugly red, as if molten lava is flowing through them.

Jace reaches out to touch him but Alec’s body is burning up, it burns so hot that smoke is starting to rise from his clothes. “Alec!” Jace screeches.

And then someone drops to his knees beside them. “What happened?” Magnus! And when he sees Alec, he gasps in shock. “Alexander…”

Jace can’t seem to look away from Alec. He’s burning alive and Jace can feel his parabatai rune starting to burn, too. And he knows what it means.

“Valentine forced him to drink from the Mortal Cup,” he informs Magnus in despair.

Magnus’ hands are fluttering over Alec’s body, not touching because the very air around Alec is
shimmering with heat. “The Cup’s burning away Alec’s mundane half, it’s pouring the power of angels into his mortal body - but it’s not made to hold it!”

Finally, Jace tears his eyes away from Alec and looks at Magnus. “Can you help him? Can you stop this?”

Magnus looks at Jace and opens his mouth, then closes it again. He looks down at Alec who’s now seizing, making terrible noises full of unbearable agony. And Magnus touches his hair gently, a soft look in his eyes, and he admits quietly. “Yes, there is something I can try.”

Jace doesn’t have to ask if it’ll be dangerous for the warlock, the answer is obvious and yet, Magnus is still willing to do it. For Alec. “Please, help him. Try!” Jace asks empathetically.

And Magnus reaches out and grabs Alec’s hand, his own immediately turning pink, then red, blisters covering it, then bursting, showing angry flesh, but he just groans and closes his eyes tight against the agony. And then he lifts his other hand in the air, up towards the sky - and releases the power burning inside Alec.

Jace looks up, everybody on the ship looks up, then turns away quickly, as the column of golden fire from Magnus’ hand shoots upwards, almost blinding in its glare. The warlock has tapped the overflowing well of power inside Alec and turned himself into a conduit, the skin on his hands charring and burning away as more and more of the angelic power is sucked out of Alec and released, the source seemingly endless.

Seconds pass, then minutes, but it seems like hours have gone by before the powerful stream turns into a trickle, then stops altogether, and Magnus slumps over his boyfriend’s unmoving body, drained and burned by the power of heavens.

And Jace, his leg still bleeding, leans over them, touches first Magnus who’s closer, then Alec to make sure they’re both still alive, though Magnus’ skin is burned away in many places, and Alec looks half starved, just skin and bones, as if all his strength was sucked out of him together with the angelic fire. And they’re both unconscious, completely insensate.

But they’re alive, they’re both alive… Alec is alive! He is, because the bond between them is still there, weak and tenuous, but there. Jace’s parabatai rune’s still whole!

And Jace clasps Alec’s free hand in his, the other still held tightly by Magnus despite the rawness of the warlock’s flesh, and he cries. Because Valentine might be gone again, the war is still brewing and nothing is solved… but the way Jace sees it, he’s got his happy ending right here.
When Alec opens his eyes, there’s a kid standing by his bed, a boy maybe as old as Max or a little younger. And he’s holding a knife in his hands, one of the big ones from the kitchen. They stare at each other, both a little startled.

Then Alec notices the cat-like eyes, and the cobalt blue shirt that’s hanging past the boy’s bare knees. “Magnus?” he asks uncertainly.

The boy, who’s apparently Magnus, weird that, jumps back like a scalded cat. Eyes wide, knife still held in his shaking hands, he starts yelling something at Alec. The flood of words is in a language or a dialect that Alec doesn’t understand.

With raised eyebrows, Alec waits till the boy has to take a breath, then he interjects, “I didn’t understand a word you just said.”

Magnus tilts his head sideways and if he were an animal, his ears would be twitching. “I can understand you,” he says haltingly.

“Of course. You’ve been speaking perfect English for centuries now,” Alec replies, sitting up slowly, mindful of the pointy thing in the spooked child’s hands.

“Cen… centuries?” Magnus stutters. “What year is it?”

Alec runs a hand through his hair and yawns. “2016. You’re Magnus Bane, I’m Alec Lightwood. And we’re in New York.”


“Try farther west. United States of America. A big chunk of land west of Europe. Across the ocean.” Apparently, some things stuck, like language skills, other stuff fell through the sieve.

The boy’s starting to look a little desperate. “I’m Magnus Bane?”

Alec nods. “Yes.” He knows that it’s not the name under which Magnus was born. He has yet to learn that name. It’s too private a thing to ask about over a slice of pizza. It needs to be shared, not pried into.

“And you are… Alec Lightworm?”

Alec cringes a little. “Wood. Lightwood. I’m your - well, your much older self’s… life partner.” He was about to say lover but there’s no need to scandalize the children.

“Life… partner?” Alec can see the gears ticking away in Magnus’ head.
“Yes.”

“But I’m a boy and… and a warlock,” Magnus objects.

“Yes.”

“And you’re a boy and…” He eyes Alec’s rune covered arms suspiciously. “A… Shadowhunter?”

“Yes.” Alec nods.

“That’s so weird,” Magnus sighs unhappily, but finally lowers his knife.

“No less weird from this side at the moment, believe me,” Alec assures him.

Silence settles over them and little Magnus starts looking around covertly, still not really taking his eyes off Alec, though. Alec studies him, this boy who is Magnus but not really his Magnus, his bare legs, the silky shirt that Magnus favors so much hanging loose on his thin frame, his hair tousled… and Alec feels a pang of sadness for this child.

“Alright,” Alec says after a moment and starts scrambling off the bed. Magnus is immediately on high alert again. “Let’s find out what exactly happened.”

“I woke up in a weird room,” the boy says and his eyes open wide again while he watches Alec’s tall frame unfold itself.

Alec stretches the kinks out of his shoulders. “Lotsa bottles and strange, dried-out things?” he asks, and when the boy nods, he nods, too. “Magnus’… your workshop. Let’s see if we can find the cause of this… mishap.”

Little Magnus follows Alec out of the bedroom like a lost puppy. “You’re very calm,” he observes.

Alec yawns. “Yeah. I had two hours of sleep. I’m way too tired to work myself into a tizzy over this. Besides, I have a little brother, Max, who tends to do the most peculiar things ‘by accident,’ I guess I’m just used to the weird.”

In the workshop, everything’s like always - everything except for the pile of clothes by the chair and the little glowing ball that’s sitting in the middle of the desk. It’s the size of a golf ball and it’s shimmering with pretty colors.

Alec stops in the doorway, hands on his hips. “I’m no Sherlock Holmes but I think we have our culprit.”

Magnus peers around him. “Who? And what?”

Alec waves a hand around the shop. “There are no books or scrolls open, no potions bubbling away. But that,” he points at the ball, “wasn’t here yesterday.”

Magnus looks up at him. “So, what can we do?” he asks, hopeful that Alec will know.

Alec’s heart seizes a little again and gently, he ruffles the boy’s hair. “We’ll ask for help.”

Back in the kitchen, Alec picks up the phone and under the heavy scrutiny of little Magnus, who finally set the knife aside, he calls Catarina Loss. When she picks up, he explains the problem, and luckily, she knows the solution.

“You got him the ball?” Alec asks in disbelief. “You know how he’s with shiny things and new
toys!”

Catarina huffs. “I told him not to touch it until he did proper research!”

“And you thought he would listen.” Alec’s voice is laced with irony.

“I thought he was not stupid!” she retorts pertly.

Alec sighs. “Alright, alright. So how do I reverse it?”

“Just shut the thing off. That usually works with these things. The ball is made of two halves, just twist the right one clockwise, that should power the thing down.”

“Should?” Alec asks pointedly.

“It will,” Catarina assures him. Then she adds, “You’re taking it remarkably calmly. I’m starting to understand why Magnus is so hung up on you. Anyways, call me - if it doesn’t work.” And she hangs up on him. Like usual.

Alec sets the phone aside and looks down at little Magnus. The boy’s watching him with anxious eyes. Alec feels sad, no child should worry this much about anything. He puts on a smile. “Well, should be easy to solve, our little problem.” Magnus just blinks.

Back in the workshop, Alec eyes the glowing ball warily. The last thing they need is for Alec to be turned into a tidbit, too. He’s about to reach for the artifact, then pauses. He turns towards little Magnus who’s shifting from foot to foot nervously by his side. Alec doesn’t know if this is his Magnus just de-aged or if his Magnus switched places with his younger self. But just in case it’s the latter…

Alec crouches down in front of the child and takes him by his slim shoulders gently. Magnus watches him cautiously, so Alec gives him a warm smile, and says, “Just so you know, little one: no matter how hard life gets for you, no matter how many obstacles it throws in your way, it will get better, I promise. One day, you’ll be very happy, so please, take care of yourself until then, alright?”

Little Magnus stares at him, his cat-like eyes filling with tears for a moment when Alec lays a hand on his cheek affectionately. “Alright,” Magnus whispers.

And then Alec gets up, patting the boy on the head one last time, and picks up the artifact gingerly. It’s warm to the touch. “Ready?” he asks, and when Magnus nods, Alec twists one half of the ball, the one in his right hand, clockwise until there’s a click and the light goes off.

And suddenly, a very confused adult Magnus is standing next to him, feet and legs bare, the cobalt blue shirt barely covering his unmentionables. The warlock is blinking dazedly, looking around as if he just woke from a dream. “Alexander?” he asks in bewilderment.

Alec sighs in relief. “Thank the Angel.”

Magnus frowns at him. “What happened?”

“You played with something you shouldn’t have - by the way, don’t touch that little ball again, I don’t care how shiny it is! - and it turned you into a kid,” Alec admonishes, setting the artifact gingerly on the table. “Now you’re back to being… well, you. And I’m off to bed. Please, try not to turn into anything else, at least until tomorrow?” Alec says, kisses his still confused lover on the forehead and with a deep yawn, he pads out of the room.
After a second, a question floats out after him, “And why do I have no pants on?”
Bit by Bit

Chapter Summary

The prompt was Malec and “what if one day you forget about me?” This time, I didn't go down the obvious route... (Unbeta'd)

It’ll be the fifth time that they will call upon Azazel for help, and Magnus grits his teeth as he finishes drawing the last sigil on the floor of his workshop. He hates it, hates it so much. If there were any other way...

But war is brewing in the world outside. Mundanes might be still unaware of the dangers lurking in the shadows but it won’t last, that Magnus knows. Because Valentine’s growing stronger, turning more and more of his people into a new breed of Shadowhunters… and setting his failed experiments, the Forsaken, loose on the world.

And the real Shadowhunters, Raziel’s true children, are trying, they really are, setting aside their prejudices, maybe for the first time ever, signing treaties with every faction of the Shadow World willing to work with them… Shadowhunters and Downworlders working side by side to stop a threat to all of them.

But the situation has grown desperate, so desperate in fact that the Clave, the Consul and the Inquisitor themselves, called upon Magnus Bane and his lover, Alexander Lightwood, both shunned until then, for help, and entrusted them with a task, unheard of before, of gathering information from demons, even Greater Demons and Princes of Hell if need be, with the Clave’s stamp of approval, because reliable intel is what they lack the most.

And so, whenever the need has been the greatest, upon Azazel they called, Magnus and Alec, in the privacy of their home, Azazel being the only demon powerful enough to fulfill their demands and also willing to trade with them, not really caring which side wins, as long as his own needs are met.

Four times in the past two months already did they summon him, and every time the payment was the same, levied against Alec who took it upon himself willingly, every time: in exchange for information that might save innocent lives, a cherished memory of a loved one. And alway a memory of Magnus, because Azazel’s hate is deep and he delights in hitting Magnus where it hurts the most.

So far, Alec has forgotten their first meeting, their first kiss, their first “I love you” and their first lovemaking, now known to him from Magnus’ stories only, but no matter how detailed they are or with how much feeling they’re told, these moments cannot be truly experienced again. They are now gone forever…

Arms wind around Magnus from behind, Alexander’s arms, and hug him firmly, lovingly. “It’ll be alright,” Alec whispers in his ear. “Whatever moment I have to give up this time, you’ll remember it for me and you’ll help me relive it again. As long as at least one of us gets to keep it, it’s not truly lost…”
Magnus grips Alec’s arms and leans back against him. “What if one day you forget about me? What if one day, there’s nothing left of me in your memory anymore?” he whispers.

Alec’s lips brush against Magnus’ ear when he smiles. “Impossible. Because you’re tied to every moment of happiness I’ve experienced since we’ve met, one way or another. I can’t lose you without losing myself.”

And Magnus’ throat closes, because this, exactly this is what he fears the most, that Azazel will take his Alexander away from him, one memory at a time…
Safe Place

Chapter Summary

Trigger warning for homophobia. I know that this often happens to cops... so why not to Shadowhunters, too? (Unbeta'd)

There’s a soft thump at the door. And then another. And another.

Magnus frowns. He looks up from his spell book and turns towards his front door. Another thump.

Slowly, he gets up and creeps towards the main entrance. He opens the spy-hole, but there’s no one out there.

Another thump. “Magnus…” A whisper.

Magnus breathes in sharply. “Alexander?” he asks and pulls the door open, and though he immediately drops to his knees, he barely catches Alec who’s been leaning against the door heavily, sitting on the threshold of Magnus’ apartment.

“Alec? Alexander?” Magnus cries out urgently, when Alec remains limp in his arms, his hunting gear torn and soaked with blood. “What happened?”

Finally, Alec’s head lolls a little on Magnus’ shoulder. He looks up at Magnus, and his face is pale and spattered with blood. “Demons. Was out on patrol.”

Magnus looks at him aghast. “Alone? Why didn’t you call for backup?”


Magnus’ eyes widen. He didn’t know. Alec never said anything…

Alec’s body is growing heavier as he starts losing consciousness. “Came to you… safe, it’s safe here. Not home…”

And Magnus’ eyes are burning a little when he summons his magic to heal the worst of Alec’s injuries before he dares to move him. “Yes, you’re safe here,” he whispers. “I’ll take care of you. Just rest. You’re safe. Shh…”

Magnus didn’t know…

... you want me to give up my life for you?

... but he should have!
Chapter Summary

And a new, angst-free AU... LOL ;) Present time, no powers. (Unbeta'd)

Magnus Bane is not really into art, paintings and such. If he were, he would own a gallery, not a
dance club. He loves the thrumming beat and rhythm of moving bodies… not the unchangeable
stillness of pictures.

But his friends, Ragnor Fell and Catarina Loss, are often overcome with the unquenchable need to
educate him on these matters which usually ends with him being dragged to a gallery opening or
some other artsy… thing. Much to his annoyance.

This time, it’s some new painter, showcasing his best works - and already making a name for
himself, if the crowds milling through gallery are anything to go by, though Magnus himself didn’t
even bother to check the artist’s name. What he does check, is his watch. Twenty more minutes
and he’s out of here.

Suddenly, Ragnor appears by his side and winds his arm through Magnus’. “Magnus, my dear, I
think you need to see this,” he informs Magnus in a low voice and starts pulling him deeper into
the gallery - and away from the exit, which is the only thing that Magnus is interested in.

“I think I really don’t,” Magnus mutters, dragging his feet like a schoolboy ordered to the
principal’s office.

Ragnor just smiles and there’s something about the smile that Magnus does not like. This
expression never bodes well for him. He notices he’s being dragged towards a small alcove in
front of which Catarina’s standing with her pretty head tilted to the side curiously. When she hears
them coming, she looks at them - well, at Magnus, to be precise - then back at something inside the
alcove, then she steps aside so that Ragnor can literally shove Magnus in.

Magnus stumbles, but catches himself just in time. Immediately he turns to glare at his friends
because, what the hell? They just point behind him, their expressions… odd.

With a sigh, Magnus turns and… breath catches in his throat. Because it’s him, there on the wall.
It’s a portrait of Magnus Bane in all his glittery glory, leaning against a window spattered with rain
and looking into the distance with a soft, dreamy expression on his face. It’s beautiful.

Magnus steps closer and squints at the tag: The Magician, oil on canvas, Gideon Wood.

“Gideon Wood?” he asks with furrowed brows as he turns back to his friends.

Catarina rolls her eyes. “It’s his exhibition, you uncouth buffoon. You didn’t hear one word I was
telling you, did you?”

Magnus waves a hand as if that’s of no importance right now. He points at the painting over his
shoulder and states, “That’s me. How?”

Ragnor smirks. “I hoped you could tell us that, love. Did you sit for the man?”
“What? No! Can you imagine me sitting still for as long as it must’ve taken to paint this?” Magnus retorts in disbelief.

Ragnor snorts. “True.”

Catarina taps her finger against her lips. “Could the artist have used a photo of yours?”

“Definitely not,” Magnus rejects the idea. Then he turns back to the painting and studies the background. “Although… that view in the background, through the window…” He squints. “It is similar to that from my loft,” he admits reluctantly.

Ragnor narrows his eyes mischievously. “Could Gideon Wood be one of your exes, then? You don’t lack in numbers in that department, my dear, one of them could’ve discovered their artistic streak after you’ve parted ways.”

Magnus tilts his head sideways like a cat, thinking, going through the list of his partners one name at a time. Then he shakes his head. “I very much doubt it.”

“So,” Catarina says slowly, “if you didn’t sit for the portrait and neither is it based on a photograph… then the artist must’ve painted it from memory alone.” She grins. “You, Magnus, have a secret admirer!”

“What? Nonsense!” Magnus refuses to even entertain such a ridiculous idea. But then he looks at the painting again and this time, he studies it a little longer, a little more thoroughly. “You think?” he asks in the end.

Ragnor nods and waves a hand. “Oh, definitely. That’s not just a painting, my dear, it’s a love confession. Someone’s very smitten with your pretty face.”

“Hm,” Magnus replies, carefully studying all the little details of his face that he himself has never noticed before. “Well, then there’s only one thing to do,” he states, turns towards his friends and rubs his hands together. “Let’s find out who this mysterious Gideon Wood actually is!”
Isabelle and Magnus talk about Camille Belcourt. (Unbeta'd)

“We need to talk,” is the first thing that Isabelle Lightwood says to Magnus Bane when he opens the door and finds her standing on the threshold.

“We do?” Magnus asks cautiously.

Isabelle strides past him, into his living room, where she stops and turns around. “Yes, about Camille Belcourt,” she replies, propping her hands on her hips.

Magnus sighs, closes the door and follows her. “Look, if it’s about the kiss - *she* kissed *me*, I had nothing to do with that!”

Her answer surprises him. “I know.”

Magnus blinks. “If you know, then what…?”

“It’s not about the kiss itself, it’s more about what followed - when she started insulting Alec.” Isabelle looks at Magnus as if he deeply disappointed her. “You just stood there and did nothing, you haven’t said a word and just let her do as she pleased.”

“Isabelle, you don’t know Camille as well as I do,” Magnus demurs gently. “She’s like a troll: once you feed it, it never goes away. If I started defending your brother…”

She interrupts him sharply, “My brother doesn’t need defending, he can fight his own battles very well, when he’s not playing the self-sacrificing martyr.”

Now he looks at her with confusion. “So why…?”

“138 years, Magnus,” Isabelle says steadily. “That’s how long it’s been since you two broke up, you said it yourself. 138 years, and she still feels she has the right to treat you like that, you and the people who took her place in your life. You had 138 years to put her in her place, before my brother became a part of your life.”

Isabelle takes a step closer. “So, why am I here? To ask you, very politely and as someone who likes you a lot, not to drag my brother into this. Alec has had enough relationship drama in his life to last him a lifetime. He deserves better than to have to deal with your ex, just because you’ve refused to face your issues for 138 years.”

Magnus grits his teeth and narrows his eyes. “You don’t know what you’re talking about.”

Isabelle watches him calmly. “No, I don’t, you’re right. I have no idea what happened between the two of you. What I do know is that Camille Belcourt is dangerous. She’s petty and she’s vindictive and she’s a murderer, who still has or thinks she has a hold on you, for some unfathomable reason. And you let her.”
Magnus looks away with a pained expression. “It’s not that simple,” he murmurs.

Isabelle nods. “I believe you. But you really need to deal with her or she will poison your relationship with Alec. She will push you apart if you don’t stand up against her.” She pauses. “Unless you don’t want to burn all bridges with her, unless you do hope that one day…”

Magnus turns towards her sharply and snaps, “I don’t! Camille is a piece of my past and she will stay there!”

Isabelle looks at him searchingly, then she nods again. “Good. But you should make sure she knows that, too. Really knows it, that she doesn’t think you’re just being coy. Don’t let my brother think that he’s nothing but a stopgap for you till you can get back together with your immortal ex.”

“He’s not,” Magnus protests. “We talked about it, and I explained to him that Camille doesn’t mean anything to me anymore. He understood…”

Isabelle shakes her head, as if he simply isn’t getting it. “Camille’s cunning and she knows her way with words - don’t tell me that nothing she said hit close to home with Alec.”

He looks away under her scrutiny.

She nods. “Thought so. Words are like water, Magnus, and even the hardest rock will be eroded by steady drips.” She walks up to him and lays one hand on his shoulder. “I’m really rooting for you two and I believe that you can make my brother very happy. So, take this as a well-meant advice: deal with Camille and make sure she stays away… or she will destroy any chance at a relationship you two have.”

Magnus looks at Isabelle, his expression a little pained. She smiles at him gently, squeezes his shoulder and leaves.
"I’m off, then,” Alec says, patting his pockets to make sure he has his cellphone on him. “If there’s an emergency, call me.” And with that he turns to go.

Jace, who’s been putting away their weapons after the hunt, it being his turn tonight, makes a humming sound, his lips twisted sourly. He sets the Seraph blade he’s been holding down so hard it rattles in its rack.

Isabelle widens her eyes pointedly and tilts her head in Alec’s direction. Her silence is very loud.

In response to her prompt, Jace mutters bitterly, “Can’t you stay home even for one night?” A small part of him hopes Alec does not hear him. The bigger part hopes he does, because damn it!

Alec stops by the stairs leading down from the weapons room, and turns back, his expression puzzled. “Did you say something?”

Jace opens his eyes and sees Izzy glaring at him reproachfully. He sighs. Fine, that was uncalled for. “I asked if you maybe could stay home tonight?”

Alec, immediately concerned, heads back. “Is there a problem?”

Jace opens his mouth, then closes it again, and Isabelle rolls her eyes. She walks around the rack through which she was watching Jace make a fool of himself before, and heads out of the room.

But on her way out, passing her brother, she whispers very loudly, “Jace has a thing to tell you.”

Jace twists around and glares after the smirking she-devil.

Alec raises his eyebrows and turns to Jace. “Am I missing something?”

Jace crosses his arms over his chest. By the Angel, this is awkward, he thinks. But then he takes a deep breath and decides to soldier through. “You’ve been spending a lot of time with Magnus lately. A lot of it. Almost every night when we’re not hunting.”

Alec’s eyebrows stay up and he blinks. “Well… yes,” he replies slowly. “I’m not doing anything wrong, am I? I’m not neglecting my duties or…”

Jace interrupts him, “I’m not saying you are!”

Alec’s expression turns even more puzzled. “Then what’s the problem?”

Jace huffs. To Hell with it. “I don’t like it, okay? I don’t like that you’re gone all the time. I don’t like that as soon as we’re back from a hunt, you run off again!”

Alec’s still confused. “But… why? I thought you would be glad. I thought that’s what you wanted! You have now much more time to spend with Clary…”
“But a lot less of it to spend with you!” Jace snaps, looking away.

“With… *me*?” Alec asks, surprised. “You want to spend more time with me?”

Jace looks at him, sure that Alec’s just playing dense, but no, Alec’s serious. Completely serious. *He really thinks…?*

Dropping his arms, Jace steps closer to him. “Of course I want to spend time with you, Alec! You’re my *parabatai*, my best friend, my *brother*! I miss spending time with you - I miss *you*.”

Alec studies his face, then shrugs awkwardly. “I miss you, too. It’s just that… since you’ve met Clary, since you two got together again, I can’t help but feel that you don’t really need me–”

“What?” Jace asks in disbelief.

“–as much anymore. Besides, you’ve never said anything,” Alec adds a little more aggressively. “How should I have known? I thought I was doing you a favor, getting out of the way as much as possible.”

Jace closes his eyes briefly and squeezes the bridge of his nose. “OK, there’s been some serious miscommunication happening here. I think we really need to talk about this before someone does something stupid, mistakingly thinking the other someone actually wanted that something done.”

Alec squints, trying to decipher what Jace just said, then he nods. “I agree, but not tonight.” When Jace furrows his brows and opens his mouth to protest, Alec adds quickly, “Magnus made reservations for us at some restaurant on the 44th. He’s been talking about the place non-stop for weeks. I really can’t back out. But!” Alec smiles a little. “What about tomorrow? Sparring session? It’s been way too long since I kicked your ass in a hand-to-hand…”

Jace snorts, a little bubble of warmth that he recognizes as happiness settling under his breastbone. “Ha! In your dreams! But don’t forget to tell Magnus that tomorrow’s night is *mine*! If he bothers you for anything less that the world’s ending, I *will* have my revenge.”

Now it’s Alec who snorts, and when he turns to leave again, he calls over his shoulder, “Sure, I’ll tell him. I bet he’ll be quaking in his boots!”
They’re in bed together, Magnus propped up on a small mountain of pillows, Alec resting with his back against Magnus’ chest, head on Magnus’ shoulder. Magnus is hugging Alec gently around the midriff with his right arm, running the knuckles of his hand up and down Alec’s bare stomach, and planting affectionate kisses on Alec’s tousled head from time to time, just because…

“The bow’s been in our family, the Lightwood family, for generations now,” Alec’s telling him, because Magnus asked for a story and those of magical items are always the best. “It was specially made for Gabriel Lightwood, an anniversary gift from his wife.” He pauses. “Or was it a birthday present? I don’t know anymore.”

Magnus smiles, remembering Gabriel and Cecily. Yes, Gabriel would’ve never won the prize for Magnus’ favorite person, but Cecily was a sweet rascal of a girl.

Alec continues, “As you’ve figured out, the bow is magical. It’s tied to the rune I have drawn here.” He holds his bare wrist for Magnus to see. “Usually, it’s invisible because it doesn’t really do anything, it’s just tied to the bow. When I hold the bow in my hand and run my stele over this place,” he taps his finger on his wrist, “the bow dissolves, so I don’t have to actually carry it around with me. When I need it, I just lift my hand as if I’m already holding it and it materializes again.”

Magnus runs his thumb over Alec’s wrist. The skin there is almost silky to the touch. “And the quiver?”

“The bow and the quiver didn’t make up a set at first,” Alec explains. “When I draw the bow’s string, an arrow automatically appears. But it’s made of my own strength, my own energy, so shooting this way gets really tiring, really fast. So, another ancestor of mine added the quiver. It has its own magic. I can make it appear and disappear just by running my hand over the strap. The quiver I can always feel, though, I have to actually carry it with me, it doesn’t dissolve like the bow. On the other hand, it never runs out of arrows, so there’s that…”

Magnus hmms. “I wonder if I could make some changes to it that would allow it to dissolve, too,” he thinks aloud. “Must be rather tiring to schlep such a bulky thing around.”

Alec shrugs. “You get used to it.”

Then he falls silent and Magnus feels the change in his mood. “What is it?” he asks quietly, hugging him more tightly.

Alec sighs. “The bow was given to me by my father on my eighteenth birthday. I was so proud, so very happy that he gave it to me, such a valuable family heirloom. I wonder…” He pauses, and when he speaks again, his voice is soft. “I wonder if he now regrets giving it to me.”

“He does not,” Magnus replies immediately. “Your father loves you. He’s afraid for you, but he
isn’t ashamed of you.”

“Yeah?” Alec asks, sounding very young, and entwines the fingers of his right hand with Magnus’.

“Yeah. Trust me,” Magnus assures him, squeezing his hand.

When Alec responds, there’s a smile in his voice. “I do.”

Magnus kisses the tip of Alec’s left ear. “Good. Now, it’s my turn to tell a story. Did you know that I was as a private dick once?”
Hatred

Chapter Summary

Magnus knows that the Lightwoods hate him, he has known it for a long time now, he’s just never realized how deep their hatred runs… (Unbeta’d)

Alec groans in relief as he flattens himself on their bed, arms spread wide, feet dangling over the edge. When his spine goes pop-pop-pop, his moan is almost obscene in its pleasure.

Magnus, standing in the doorway of their bedroom, laughs a little. “Slouching will do that to you, darling!”

Alec sighs, closes his eyes and wiggles a little - much to Magnus’ amusement - to make himself as comfortable as possible on the luxurious mattress. “Well, I can’t help it.” And as if sensing Magnus’ rather unfavorable opinion on that, he continues, “No, I really can’t, Magnus. As a kid, I broke my back, several vertebrae. I’m lucky I can still walk.”

Magnus’ amusement is suddenly gone. “What happened?” he asks with concern.

“It was a stupid accident, I fell down the stairs. It was before Jace came to live with us, before Max was born,” Alec says, eyes still closed. “But since I haven’t gone through my initiation ritual yet, my parents couldn’t use aniratze on me. By the Angel, I felt so sick and lightheaded, I could barely breathe, it hurt so much.” Alec shudders just thinking of it.

Magnus walks up to the bed. “What did they do?”

“They contacted the Silent Brothers. I think it was Brother Jeremiah who came, I don’t really remember. He didn’t want to move me, he was afraid of causing permanent damage. He advised my parents to call upon the nearest warlock who could use magic to move me without hurting me further.” Alec sighs. “Unfortunately, there was no warlock in reach at that time, and they couldn’t just leave me lying there until they found one, could they?”

Magnus’ mouth goes dry. “So they moved you.”

Alec nods, still not opening his eyes. “Yeah, but some of the broken pieces shifted and healed wrong. So now, I can’t straighten up, not fully. And my back aches when I overdo it.”

“I’m sorry,” Magnus says softly, glad that Alec’s not looking at him because he suspects he must be very white in the face, considering the coldness that settled over him.

Alec shrugs and yawns tiredly. “Can’t be helped. Mom and dad did their best. I don’t blame them…”

But I do! Magnus wants to shout. He wants to scream and rage and smite Maryse and Robert Lightwood where they stand. Because he was here, right here in New York at that time, and they knew it! He’s barely left the city for decades now, studiously minding his duties as the High Warlock of Brooklyn and trying to help his people get back on their feet after the Circle’s reign of terror.
He was right here, but rather than ask for his help, the Lightwoods almost crippled their own son, they actually caused permanent, irreparable damage to their own child because they hated the one person who could’ve helped…

Magnus is shaking, shaking with fury and shock and helplessness, staring at Alec who has fallen asleep on the bed, fully dressed. They… hurt him, Alec’s own parents. They hurt his Alexander just because they hated Magnus. They hurt him!

Carefully so as not to wake Alec, Magnus crawls on the bed and curls up around his lover protectively. Head pillowed on Alec’s shoulder and one arm thrown over Alec’s stomach, Magnus sends a tiny pulse of magic into Alec’s body to soothe all his aches and pains and help him sleep restfully.

And at the same time, Magnus’ heart hardens with resolve. He’s done playing nice. Nobody’s going to hurt his Alexander again, not if he can help it.
In the end, Magnus buys the painting. And no, it’s not because he’s a narcissistic snob who loves to admire his own face, no matter what Catarina says, or, well, it’s not just that, he simply hates the idea of his face hanging on some stranger’s wall.

Also, he hopes that the painting will help him find the author because as of now, he knows absolutely nothing about the guy. Gideon Wood’s agent who attended the gallery opening instead of him, Jace Whathisname, told Magnus in no uncertain terms that his client hated any kind of publicity. But Magnus is determined to persevere! He will find the guy or die trying. Or something.

He’s just contemplating where to hang the painting in his loft, carrying the thing back and forth and holding it up against this wall and that, when there’s a firm knock on the door. Setting the painting down on the floor and leaning it against his leather couch, he goes to answer the knock.

When he opens the door, there’s his neighbor standing in the hall outside, bare feet, stained jeans, unbuttoned flannel shirt… lotsa dark chest hair and scruff, and beautiful, sleepy eyes. Nice!

“Alexander!” Magnus exclaims excitedly.

His neighbor, Alexander Lightwood, lifts one hand and Magnus blinks. In his long fingers, Alec’s holding a fluffy tabby by the scruff, the kitten kicking its tiny legs as if it were so much fun, just dangling so.

“Your cat,” Alec informs his neighbor in a sleep roughened voice, “was in my apartment. Again.”

“Oh, Chairman,” Magnus chides gently and takes the kitten in his hands. “I don’t understand how he manages to get out. Or why he always ends up at your place.”

Alec harrumphs, rubbing his hand through his tousled hair.

“But I promise to keep him out… of your hair,” Magnus adds, his eyes sliding down. Down. Down. Nice!

When Alec sees where Magnus is looking, he glares and crosses his arms on his chest defensively. And when Magnus just shrugs in a “What I can do, you’re hot!” gesture, Alec opens his mouth to say something - but then he freezes and his eyes go wide.

Noticing the expression of shock on Alec’s face, caused by something inside the loft, Magnus turns. What…? Ah, the painting. Magnus beams. “Pretty, isn’t it?”

“You… you have… you bought…?” Alec stutters, completely flabbergasted.

Magnus turns back to him. “Yes, my friends dragged me to a gallery opening. When I saw the painting, I just had to buy it! Wouldn’t do to let some stranger get their grubby hands on it. Now I
just need to find out who Gideon Wood is. His agent, Jace… something, refused to tell me anything at all, but I won’t be deterred.”

Alec just stares at him as if Magnus has grown another head. “Right…” he replies weakly, then starts slowly backing away. “I… I have to… You know.” He points with his thumb over his shoulder.

“Go?” Magnus guesses.

“Yes.” And with that, Alexander Lightwood runs. Literally.

“Huh,” Magnus comments and jumps a little when his neighbor’s door slams shut. Slowly, he closes his own door, then he frowns down at his kitten, still comfortably cuddled in his arms. “Chairman, honey, you keep strange company. He’s pretty, but really weird.”

When the kitten meows in agreement, Magnus sets it on the floor and pats it on the head, then he claps his hands a few times. “Now, back to my painting. Where to put it, Chairman, dear? Any ideas?”
Repaired

Chapter Summary

My take on how Alec and Jace’s parabatai bond could be repaired… (Unbeta’d)

When they storm the ship, they find it abandoned, with only Jace left on the bridge - stabbed, barely conscious, bleeding to death.

They all gather around him, Alec and Izzy, Clary and Magnus, they activate the *iratze* rune on his skin, Alec even draws a new one because runes drawn by *parabatai* should have a stronger effect than anything else, but it all seems in vain. Clary draws Jace’s head into her lap and she’s hugging him, begging him not to leave her, not to leave *them*…

Alec turns to Magnus. “Can you help? Please, I’m begging you, Magnus, can you help him?”

Magnus looks at him sadly. “I don’t have enough power left after opening a portal to the high seas… magic and vast bodies of water don’t mix well.”

Alec holds out a hand. “Then use my strength. Use all of it, if you have to–”

“Alec!” Izzy exclaims in dismay.

“–but save him, please!” Alec finishes, not listening to his sister. And when Magnus hesitates, he adds desperately, “He’s my *parabatai*, Magnus. The other half of my soul!”

And there’s something in Magnus’ gaze, as if this isn’t the first time that he has heard similar words, because he nods reluctantly and grips Alec’s hand in his. “Alright, but I’m not taking it all. I mean it, Alexander,” Magnus cuts him off when Alec opens his mouth to protest. “Promise me you’ll tell me when it becomes too much. *Promise* me, or I won’t do it!”

Alec looks down at Jace who’s growing paler, the puddle of blood around him spreading, and nods, “Fine, fine, I promise. I’ll tell you when it becomes too much.” He turns to Magnus imploringly. “Now, please, *help him*!”

And Magnus pulls at Alec’s strength, squeezing Alec’s hand hard with his right one, his left glowing bright blue with magic that he pushes into Jace’s dying body, trying to knit it back together.

Then suddenly, Alec’s breath catches in his throat because it’s not like before, like when he helped Magnus keep Luke alive. Yes, the uncomfortable pressure in his chest is still there, but… there’s pain slowly growing in his side, spreading from the place where his *parabatai* rune is set. And it’s starting to hurt *a lot*!

When the pain turns into agony, Alec whimpers and presses his hand against the rune. He squeezes his eyes shut and hunches over… and then Jace’s back arches and a strangled cry escapes his lips!

“Alexander!” Magnus cries out, turning his head towards him, at the same time that Izzy calls out for his brother and Clary for Jace. “Alec? Alec, what’s going on? Talk to me or I will stop!”
Alec draws in a heavy breath, almost wheezing with the effort, and shakes his head. “No, keep going. It’s… it’s our bond… it’s been weak, broken for… weeks now. It’s… it’s healing!”

Because yes, that’s what this is, he realizes, the same agony that he felt when he damaged their bond trying to track Jace. It feels like life returning to a limb fallen asleep, all pins and needles and sharp pain. Alec’s strength channeled through Magnus into Jace, using Magnus as a bridge to bypass the broken connection, isn’t healing only Jace’s body, it’s healing their parabatai bond, too! “Don’t… don’t stop. This is… good!”

Magnus is shooting him little unsure glances, while Isabelle stares at him with open disbelief. “Good? You call this good?”

Alec grits his teeth because he feels like screaming. “Yes!” he forces out.

Then all of a sudden, the pain’s gone, just like that. Only the steady pressure in his chest remains, the tug that, in his experience, accompanies the sharing of strength. But the bond… their parabatai bond is back, back to the way it used to be before, humming in the back of his mind, filling him with warmth, making him once again one half of a whole.

And when he looks up, Jace’s staring at him, his head in Clary’s lap. And then he smiles at Alec, and it’s his warm and untroubled smile, the genuine one that’s carefully guarded and rarely given. And it says “Hello” and “Welcome back” and “I love you, my parabatai.”

And Alec feels like he has finally come home again.
Sequel to Vicious (Chapter 117). Gosh, to figure out how Maryse’s secret could come out, now that was a hard nut to crack! Book spoilers, beware! (Unbeta'd)

They all stare at the letter in Meliorn’s hands in disbelief, Maryse and Robert, Clary and Jace, Alec and Izzy, they just stare at the thing, made of creamy white paper and adorned with golden leaves, so pretty, and yet…

When Meliorn first appeared on the doorstep of the Institute, accompanied by two other Seelies, they couldn’t believe it, he was a fugitive, after all. But he came under the flag of truce, as an emissary of the Seelie Queen herself and with an olive branch in hand, offering not just peace between their races, but an alliance again, all debts and transgressions forgotten, a clean slate for all.

And as a token of goodwill? Information. Intel on Valentine’s troops, gathered by Seelie scouts, because Valentine himself might be gone, killed by Maryse Lightwood herself, but his minions didn’t disperse, just the opposite. They’re ready to strike, to fulfill their visionary leader’s final wish.

But there’s a catch, of course there is, as always with the Seelies…

“I beg your pardon?” Robert asks incredulously.

Meliorn bows again, the letter with the vital information held in both hands, a picture of courteous politeness. “My queen thought it only just that Valentine Morgenstern’s son and heir should be the one to open the letter, to take the first step towards the destruction of his father’s plans. A poetic justice, one might say.”

“But… Valentine doesn’t have a son!” Clary objects weakly, looking from Meliorn to her friends and back. “It was proven that Jace is a Herondale. And Jonathan Christopher, the real one, died. There is no Morgenstern heir other than me…”

Meliorn only bows again. “I’m only relaying my queen’s message…” he replies apologetically.

But Clary… Clary saw it, she saw the way Meliorn’s lips twisted when he said it. And she has always liked Meliorn, but right now, he’s creeping her out. He knows something, and she can feel just how much pleasure he takes from this task that he was entrusted with. Her heart starts hammering.

“Can’t Clary open it?” Jace asks the obvious question. “She’s Valentine’s heir, too.”

Meliorn shakes his head, as if it really pains him that he has to refuse. “I’m sorry. If someone other than the recipient tries to open it, the letter will be destroyed. And since the scouts who gathered the intel and wrote the message are dead, if the letter’s destroyed, the information will be gone with it. Many innocent people will die…”

After a long, heavy pause, it’s Maryse who speaks, her voice hoarse, “Robert? Alec? Can I talk to
you both in private?"

Everyone turns to her. She’s as pale as a ghost and she’s looking straight at Meliorn with so much hatred in her eyes that it steals Clary’s breath away. She shoots a quick glance at the emissary, and there, the almost gleeful smirk is back, just of a second.

“Now, Maryse?” Robert asks in utter disbelief.

“Yes!” she replies sharply, then turns around and marches out of the Ops Center.

Robert follows her reluctantly, and Alec, too, after exchanging an uncertain look and a shrug with Jace.

The silence that settles over the room after their departure is awkward at best. Something ugly is brewing in the air, Clary can sense it, and she doesn’t like it at all. She reaches out for Jace’s hand, and he smiles at her encouragingly and returns the grip.

Isabelle steps forward, towards Meliorn. “Meliorn, what’s going on here? You know that Valentine didn’t have any other children but Clary and Jonathan Christopher. You know that there’s no other Morgenstern child here!”

And Clary sees how Meliorn’s expression changes, there’s something akin to regret in his eyes when he looks at Isabelle who used to be his lover and who’s still his friend, a dear friend, no matter the discord between him and her family.

“I’m sorry,” Meliorn says softly, “I’m only doing my job.”

There are footsteps coming closer, from the direction in which the Lightwoods disappeared. And when they all turn, they see Alec striding in. He’s as pale as Maryse was before she left. His eyes are dark, his lips pressed tightly together, his hands clenched into fists.

“Alec, what…?” Jace asks, but Alec walks past him without even looking at him.

And Clary’s heart’s now beating so hard she feels almost faint, because Alec’s moving towards Meliorn and Meliorn’s staring it him with… satisfaction, is it? A thirst for revenge finally sated.

Can’t be. This can’t be… Clary thinks.

And then Alec stops in front of Meliorn and reaches out. “Give me the letter,” he orders quietly, his voice full of controlled rage.

Can’t be. No…

There’s a small smile playing on Meliorn’s lips, when he responds almost sweetly, “I can only give it to Valentine Morgenstern’s son, Alec Lightwood.”

Can’t be…

“I am his son, and you damn well know it, you bastard,” Alec hisses and he’s almost shaking he’s so tense.

They all stare at Alec in shock. Izzy’s eyes are slowly filling with tears as she presses her hands to her mouth, and Jace is squeezing Clary’s hand so hard her bones grind together. And Clary…

My brother. I have a brother and it’s Alec. He’s my brother… my brother…
“Then here it is,” Meliorn says, and with a mocking bow, he hands over the letter, which unfolds on its own the moment it settles in Alec’s hands, proving that…

Alexander Lightwood is Valentine Morgenstern’s son.

Can’t be…
“Now, tell me about that Shadowhunter of yours!” Tessa says, curling up in one corner of Magnus’ couch, a glass of wine in one hand and a giddy smile on her lips.

“Oh,” Magnus sighs, rolling his eyes. “Catarina and her big, big mouth!” He tsks, settling down in the other corner of the couch, a colorful drink held in his bejeweled fingers.

Tessa’s eyebrows shoot up in disbelief. “So it’s true?”

“Well, yes,” Magnus admits a little bashfully. “His name is Alexander, Alexander Lightwood, and…”

Tessa snorts into her glass. “One of Will’s Lightworms?” she wheezes.

Magnus grimaces. “Lightwood!” he corrects her primly, then he looks away and mumbles, “And yes, it’s the same family.”

Tessa’s laugh fills the air. “You and a Lightwood? By the Angel! Not just a Shadowhunter, but a Lightwood?”

Magnus scowls at her. “You don’t have to keep repeating it. I’m not all that thrilled that he’s a Lightwood either, believe you me!”

“Don’t tell me demon pox still runs in the family!” she jokes.

Sighing, Magnus turns serious. “Worse. Alec’s parents were in the Circle.”

All amusement flees from Tessa. “Oh, Magnus…” she whispers, tilting her head sadly.

He shakes his head. “It’s even worse yet: They hate me personally. Because I was there when they were murdering our people twenty years ago. I witnessed it all, and they hate me for having seen them at their worst. I’m a living reminder of their failures. And now I’m dating their son.” He groans and lets his head fall back against the backrest. “I think they might have swallowed if Alec dated a man or a Downworlder. But both and me in particular? I’m their worst nightmare!”

Tessa looks down into her glass. “But if Alec’s parents were in the Circle…” She pauses. “I’m not doubting your judgment but…”

Magnus turns his head towards her. “Alexander’s nothing like his parents. He’s quite amazing and his sister, Isabelle, is a delight, too. It’s like…” He waves a hand. “It’s like they embody everything that their parents lack.”

Tessa smiles at him softly. “So, you love him, huh?”

Magnus pauses and twirls his drink in his hands for a moment. “I have loved many people in my
“Life,” he says in the end, “but for many years now, I’ve felt… dried out. I started to believe that I lost something essential when Camille betrayed me, something I could never get back.”

“And you found it with Alec again?” Tessa reasons quietly.

Magnus looks at her and his eyes shine. “I can’t remember ever feeling like this before. When he’s sad, I want to make him smile again because I ache for him. And when he’s happy, I feel like bursting because my heart’s so full…”

Tessa’s smile widens and it’s full of affection. “Yeah, you’re in love, Magnus Bane. At last. This is what true love feels like. Trust me on this…”

A pall of nostalgia settles over them when they remember Will Herondale, gone for many, many years now…

“I’m very happy for you, my friend,” Tessa says and reaches out to squeeze his hand. “I hope I’ll get to meet this man who enthralled you so. He must be truly exceptional.”

Magnus blinks hard, returning her grip. And then a mischievous grin lights up his face. “Oh, and did I mention how sexy my Alexander is? My dear, he’ll take your breath away!”

Tessa just laughs.
Impossible

Chapter Summary

Self-indulgent Malec h/c. I’m no doctor, all information was taken from this site: Bafound.org. If you know your way around medicine and you find something completely off in this fic, just hand-wave it as magic, okay? (Unbeta’d)

It’s been two months since they broke up. There was no one big reason, just life and family and friends and enemies who got in the way and kept pushing them apart until their fledgling relationship couldn’t stand the pressure anymore and it all fell apart.

So, when Magnus opens the door and finds Alec on his doorstep, he’s rather surprised. And also displeased. It’s hard to get over your ex when you keep bumping into each other randomly, let alone when one party seeks the other out.

“Alec, what an unwelcome surprise,” Magnus says with a bitter smile. “What can I do for you?”

Alec just blinks at him for a moment as if he didn’t understand a word Magnus just said, then he mumbles, “Sorry. Key. For-forgot.” And then he presses a fleeting kiss to Magnus’ forehead and stumbles past him into the loft.

Magnus frowns and turns after him. “What? What key?” And when he sees Alec stagger into the living room where he stops, swaying uncertainly, he asks, “Alec? Are you… are you drunk?” But that can’t be, Magnus didn’t smell any alcohol on him when Alec kissed him.

Alec doesn’t respond, he just stands there with his back to Magnus, reeling a little. He lifts his right hand to his face and whimpers softly. It’s not a sound Magnus has ever heard from Alec and all his ire is suddenly forgotten. Something’s wrong.

Magnus closes the door and steps closer, walks around Alec to stand in front of him. “Alec?” he asks uncertainly, and when the Shadowhunter doesn’t respond, Magnus tries again, “Alexander?” He touches Alec’s hand, the one Alec’s pressing tightly to his eye.

Alec lets his hand drop and looks at Magnus. He stares at him, squinting, as if he can’t focus, and Magnus notices how blown his pupils are. “Head. Hurts,” Alec whispers, his words slurring a bit, but Magnus knows that Alec’s not drunk. Which means…

“Alec, did you hit your head? Are you injured?” Magnus asks urgently because he sees that Alec’s hands are starting to shake and he’s now almost ghostly pale.

Alec blinks at him. “Not inju-innj… Not… jst… hrrs.”

Magnus’ heart’s hammering so hard his chest hurts now because whatever’s wrong with Alec, it’s getting worse, he can barely understand the other man now. Gently, he takes Alec by the upper arms and carefully turns him towards the bedroom.

“Why don’t you lie down,” Magnus suggests and forces himself to keep his voice as calm and steady as possible, to not show any panic. “Come,” he urges and slowly, he starts guiding Alec out of the living room and towards the four poster bed that they shared only a handful of times before
they broke up.

Alec allows himself to be drawn into the bedroom, but suddenly, he stiffens and cries out sharply. Both of his hands fly up to his head and his knees buckle. Luckily, Magnus manages to catch him in the last second and hold him up long enough to lie him down on the bed as gently as possible.

And then Alec’s starts seizing - and it’s the most frightening thing Magnus has ever seen. And though Magnus doesn’t know the cause, he uses his magic to force Alec to relax to avoid further damage. It’s the only thing he can do for now and the next few minutes are the scariest in his life, because he can’t help in any way, he just has to wait it out and watch Alec suffer.

If Alec had an open wound, something… something obvious to heal, Magnus would do it, he would give Alec everything, because they might be broken up but Magnus still loves this stupid Shadowhunter and he would give his life for Alec’s! But the subtle workings of the body, that’s something that Magnus has never learned to deal with. As warlocks go, he’s a fighter, not a healer. But…

That gives him an idea. And when Alec’s seizure finally starts to abate, Magnus throws himself to his phone and calls Catarina Loss.

Later on, he won’t remember exactly what he tells her because he’s afraid, he’s so afraid that his Alexander might actually die, but whatever he says, however he says it, it must make a real impression on Catarina, his fear, his urgency, because she doesn’t argue or banter like she usually does, she just says, “I’ll be right there,” and hangs up.

And really, it takes her just a couple of minutes to open a portal to a safe place nearby, Magnus’ place being too warded to open a portal directly in here, and to rush over.

Still, Alec’s seizure is over by the time she arrives, and Magnus has to keep checking Alec’s pulse and breathing just to make sure, they’re still there, that Alec’s not dead, that his Alexander is still here, with him.

Catarina’s examination is short, her rapid fire questions sharp and to the point. She focuses her magic on Alec’s head, as if she already knows what’s wrong with him.

And Magnus, feeling absolutely useless, just sits there, on Alec’s other side, holding Alec’s hand in his, and he’s praying, he’s actually praying, to God, to Raziel, to anyone who’s listening to not let Alec die.

The examination might have been short, but the treatment takes Catarina a very long time. She’s sitting on the bed, bent over Alec, her hands, pulsating with magic, gently laid on his head, eyes closed in concentration that Magnus dares not to break. And when she’s finished, sweat is pouring off her, her clothes are soaked with it, and she’s so exhausted that she’s shaking. But Alec’s breathing is lighter, his color is not as ghostly pale as before.

“What’s wrong with him?” Magnus asks softly, when Catarina straightens up, her spine popping loudly.

“Brain aneurysm,” Catarina replies just as quietly. “Did he ever tell you he had it? Did he even know?”

Stunned, Magnus can only shake his head. He can’t force a word through his suddenly numb lips.

“It ruptured which caused bleeding into his brain, basically. I managed to stop it and relieve some of the pressure. If he hadn’t come here, to you, Magnus, if he had been alone or on a hunt when it
happened…” She doesn’t finish. She doesn’t have to.

Magnus squeezes Alec’s hand tight and brings it to his lips. Alexander, his Alexander could’ve died. If he in his confused state hadn’t come here, thinking that this was still his home…

Blinking back tears, Magnus turns to Catarina. “So he will live? He will be alright?” he asks. No, he begs for confirmation.

Catarina sighs. “If there’s no rebleeding in the next few days, then he will live. But if he’ll fully recover, that I can’t tell you right now. I did my best, there’s nothing more doctors could’ve done with their tools than what I did with my magic, but… in two thirds of the cases, there’s some permanent damage, Magnus, you need to be prepared for that.”

Her voice is gentle when she tells him that, but it still feels like a terrible, crushing blow for Magnus. He looks down at Alec, lying on what used to be their bed for a few weeks, with his head turned slightly to the side on the soft pillow, and tries to imagine Alec, strong and fast and sharp-witted Alec, his Alexander… brain-damaged. And his own brain stutters to a halt and can’t move any further, it just keeps running in circles, insisting, impossible, impossible, impossible…

Magnus swallows, his throat dry. “What… what can I do?”

“Will you take care of him, then?” Catarina asks, as if not doing it is an actual option for Magnus. He looks at her as if she can’t be serious. “Don’t look at me like that. I know that you two broke up. There’s no obligation on your part. You could just call his family and let them deal with it.”

“No!” Magnus’ response is sharp. His mind is made. “Tell me what I can do!”

Catarina sighs. “Right now? Keep him as comfortable as possible. Don’t let him move much, his head is in a bad shape and he needs to recover. Peace and quiet, that’s what he needs. And monitoring. If anything changes, Magnus, anything at all, if his head starts hurting, if he starts vomiting, you need to call me immediately. Any little thing could be a sign of rebleeding which can take days to appear. If it doesn’t, then he’s going to be halfway there to recovery…”

“And the permanent damage?” Magnus asks, eyes trained on Alec’s face.

“We’ll see when he wakes up.” Catarina reaches out and squeezes Magnus’ shoulder. “There might not be anything at all, or at least nothing major, it’s not set in stone yet, my friend. Don’t despair.”

Magnus just nods, numbly, because he can’t not despair, he just can’t. How easy it is to say “be strong” when it’s not your loved one lying in the bed, sick.

“I have to… I… I have to call Izzy and tell her, tell her what happened, where Alec is…” he whispers, still squeezing Alec’s hand tight. Alec’s skin is so cold. He needs to warm him up, let him sleep…

Magnus turns to Catarina. “Is he sleeping? Or is he unconscious?” It didn’t occur to him to ask before, he was just overwhelmingly glad that Alec was still alive.

“I put him to sleep,” Catarina answers and her voice is still so gentle that it makes Magnus want to cry. “Let him. He needs the rest. Wait till he wakes on his own.”

Magnus nods, his eyes once more trained on Alec’s face, Alec’s hand pressed to his lips. Catarina gets up slowly, then she touches Alec’s face and uses a tiny pulse of magic to check one last time that everything’s healing nicely.
“You still love him, don’t you?” she asks a little sadly.

And Magnus doesn’t look at her, doesn’t tear his eyes away from Alec, when he responds, “I don’t think I will ever stop…”

Catarina nods and leans over to squeeze his shoulder. “I’m just one phone call away, my friend,” she promises.

And then she leaves, and Magnus knows, he knows that he should call Izzy or Jace and let them know, that he should… he should… there are so many things he should be doing, but instead, he crawls in the bed and curls up around his Alexander protectively, and just listens to him breathe… Just for a moment.
“It will be alright,” Robert says softly to his wife after Alec departs.

Maryse spins towards him angrily. “Are you being purposefully dense, Robert? It won’t be alright. It will never be alright again. He could’ve have saved us all, instead, he has ruined us, shamed us, and he can’t even see it!”

Robert sighs and rubs his forehead. “Don’t you think it’s rather hypocritical of you to blame him when it was us who brought shame to this family in the first place? If it weren’t for us, our family wouldn’t even need saving!”

Maryse presses her lips together for a moment before she speaks, as if she needs to calm down first. “We made mistakes, terrible mistakes, but that’s in the past. For the last twenty years we’ve been trying to make up for it. We made sacrifices our children can’t even imagine, and now, because of Alec’s selfishness, it’s all ruined. And for what? For a roll in the sheets with a Downworlder?” she spits, furious again.

“Maryse,” Robert says in a conciliatory tone. “Alec’s just doing what he thinks is right.”

She makes a sharp motion with her hand. “So did we when we joined Valentine. And look what it brought us. We’ve been paying for it ever since!”

“And so will he!” Robert snaps quietly, his own anger finally surfacing. “He will be paying for this for the rest of his life because for the Clave he will be nothing more than the Lightwood fag from now on!”

Maryse draws in a sharp breath as if he slapped her and her face whitens.

But Robert won’t be deterred, he has kept quiet long enough. “Those people out there who you’re so desperately trying to please will not care that our son is brave and honest and loyal. All they will care about is whom he fucks! And the last thing our son needs is to face the same prejudice at home!”

“Then he should have kept his inclinations to himself!” Maryse retorts bitterly.

“No! What he should have done was not to wait till he stood at the altar, that’s the only thing he should have done,” Robert counters sharply, then he lowers his voice again. “Yes, he could’ve - should’ve - found a better way to do it, but there’s no doubt in my mind that it was the right thing for him to do.”

When Maryse turns away from him, arms crossed over her chest, Robert steps closer and implores, “You can’t tell me you don’t see just how happy he is now. I haven’t seen him so content in his own skin since he was a little boy. Isn’t this what all parents should want for their children, simple happiness, even if they themselves don’t understand its source?”
Maryse’s eyes are cold and hard when she looks back at him. “Not at this cost.”

Robert just stares at her for a long moment, not really recognizing her, not seeing the woman he married in her anymore. And he wonders where that Maryse disappeared to and when.

“You fight so hard to defend your family, Maryse,” he whispers with regret. “Be careful that you actually have a family left to defend in the end.”

When she doesn’t respond, just turns away, back rigid and head held high, Robert just shakes his head and leaves.
Different Times

Chapter Summary

Jace and Robert discuss Michael Wayland. Set in SH, but spoilers for Tales from the Shadowhunter Academy. (Unbeta'd)

“My father’s Valentine, not Michael Wayland!” Jace announces as he walks into Robert’s study and closes the door.

Robert, who’s sitting in his chair, sighs heavily and drops his eyes to his hands, clasped together on his desk. “Yes, I heard,” he replies softly. He and Maryse returned from Idris only a few hours ago but word travels fast.

“You heard,” Jace says, eyes narrowed angrily, and slowly, he walks up to the desk. “You heard?” he repeats in disbelief. “Robert, Michael Wayland was your parabatai. How could you have not known that he was dead all this time? That he didn’t die ten years ago but a long time before that? If Alec…”

Jace cuts himself off, and looks away, breathing hard. It takes him a while to get himself back under control again, and when he continues, turning to Robert once more, his voice is quieter, but no less angry. “If Alec died, it would destroy me,” he says with absolute certainty. “Even when we couldn’t see eye to eye, I would’ve ripped the world apart if something happened to him. That’s what parabatai do!” He leans closer, hands flat on the top of the desk. “And you want to tell me that you didn’t feel your parabatai die?”

Robert sighs again, hunching his shoulders, and suddenly, he looks very old. “Michael and I, we were nothing like you and Alec. I mean, we were, at the beginning. But then…” Robert swallows hard, closes his eyes and presses his clasped hands to his mouth for a moment. “I did something unforgivable, and it… broke us. Our bond, it just… it stopped.”

Robert doesn’t know how else to explain that sudden emptiness that settled over him after that last fateful confrontation. The chasm that opened between him and Michael was so deep, so unmendable that not even the echoes of Michael’s death managed to cross it.

“What did you do?” Jace asks harshly, ruthlessly.

Robert looks up at him, at his adopted son who’s looking at him with blazing eyes. “He told me he was in love with me - and I condemned him for it. I told him I was ashamed of him, disgusted even…” Robert admits truthfully, unable to lie in the face of such righteous fury. His voice breaks at the end.

Jace breathes in sharply. He pales, eyes widening with shock, and slowly, he straightens up. “You didn’t…” he whispers in dismay.

Robert’s shoulders round even more under the weight of that accusatory look. “It was a different time back then, and I was a different man. I trusted Valentine implicitly, I would’ve done anything to please him… And since Valentine insisted that this… what Michael was… that it was wrong, perverted, I believed him.”
Jace’s staring at him with utter horror. “You… you condemned your parabatai for something that he couldn’t help just because some lunatic said so? Is that why you’ve always treated Alec so—”

“No!” Robert interrupts him sharply and sits up straight. “No, I would never do that to my child. I learned my lesson, I did, believe me. I just…” He falters. “I wanted Alec, I wanted all of you, to be better than us, stronger, smarter…” He falls silent because even to his ears, it all sounds like nothing more than empty excuses.

Jace stares at him a moment longer, then he says firmly, “I would never do to Alec what you did to Michael, Robert, never! Valentine might be my father, but Alec is everything to me.” He shakes his head. “People like you and Valentine should never become anyone’s parabatai, because you don’t even know what it means. You will never understand what the bond is about. I feel sorry for you - but I feel even worse for Michael because he deserved better.”

And when Jace turns and walks away, leaving an air of disappointment behind, Robert drops his face into his hands and whispers hoarsely, voice full of regret. “Yes, yes, he did…”
Forbidden

Chapter Summary

My take on that “forbidden kiss” in the Seelie Queen’s court. Set in the TV show universe, not in the book one. BTW, never tried my hand at this pairing in this way yet, so... (Unbeta'd)

“One kiss, one forbidden kiss, that’s my price. That’s what I want in exchange for what you need,” the Seelie Queen demands when they come to her, Jace and Clary, Alec and Isabelle, desperate for information and not knowing where to turn for help anymore.

The queen says it with so much relish, with a grin so wide and eyes sparkling with so much malicious intent, that Jace’s heart sinks. She can’t mean... she can’t!

But in the end, they can’t but comply…

So now Jace’s standing there, leaning in, trying to suppress a moan that’s gathering in his chest, desperate for release, the kiss so deep that he loses himself in it, so hot, so incredibly hot that his toes curl in delight and so sweet that his heart aches with it. He doesn’t want it to stop, ever, he wants to go on kissing, kissing, kissing for the rest of his life and beyond, fingers buried in soft, soft hair, the scent filling his nostrils heady and intoxicating. He would give up breathing just for this to never end. His heart’s hammering, he’s feeling light-headed and a tingling heat has settled in his belly, fluttering and spreading through his veins. So much pleasure, unimaginable pleasure…

How did he not know?

And in the end, when they have to separate, starved of oxygen, he leans back so very reluctantly, almost groaning in disappointment, because he knows that this will never happen again, this can never happen, and though he feels the others looking at them, though he hears the queen’s delighted cackle, he does not care because he needs to savor this, carve it into his memory, every second of it, every sensation, every little thing.

Jace looks up at Alec, into his big hazel eyes with pupils blown wide, and sees that Alec’s cheeks are flushed and his lips are wet and red and swollen from kissing, and he’s looking down at Jace as if entranced, his breath coming in shuddering puffs. Jace’s hands are still buried in Alec’s hair that he now smooths down gently with a soft smile on his lips, and Alec’s hands are still on Jace’s waist, warm and firm and holding him tight. And they are locked in their private little world, everyone else outside looking in, their sisters and the Seelie Queen, too.

The queen is saying something, probably giving them the intel they came for, and Jace can only hope that someone, anyone’s listening, because it’s all just indecipherable noise to him. All he can focus on is the thumping of his own heart and the rush of blood in his ears.

And staring into Alec’s wide, unfocused eyes, all Jace can think of is, Is this why it’s forbidden? Why one must never desire their parabatai? This depth of feeling so overwhelming that I would give anything to keep it?

It was one kiss, one forbidden kiss but it shook Jace’s world to its core.
“Magnus? He’s gone. We broke up,” Alec says to his friends, and when he sees their shocked faces, he snorts derisively, “What? Did you think it would last between us? Give me a break!”

And then he throws back another shot, and disappears into the hot and sweaty crowd gyrating on the dance floor of the Pandemonium club. He carefully does not look back, because he knows that that’s exactly what Izzy and the gang thought, that it would last between him and Magnus. It has lasted eight whole years. And only yesterday, he was telling them about the amazing surprise he had planned for his and Magnus’ anniversary today.

Instead, he’s here, in a night club. And Magnus is gone.

Alec pushes that thought out of his head and lets the music take him, lets the strangers around him take him and pass him among themselves like a rag doll. He just lets it happen, hoping that all these strangers’ touches will allow him to forget, lose himself in them.

But somehow, it’s not working. Because he would still rather be at home, with Magnus, watching reruns of Project Runway and eating pints of chocolate ice cream, he would rather be held by Magnus’ warm, trusted hands, than this.

And he doesn’t realize he’s crying and hugging himself, until someone tries to kiss him and someone else runs his hands down his back and to his ass, and suddenly he’s feeling sick, nauseated by all these people around him groping him and he doesn’t want it, after all, he wants Magnus…

So he runs, he slips out of these strangers’ hands and pushes through the crowd, deaf to his friends’ calling his name, because he can’t let them see what a mess he has become. And outside, he catches a taxi and rides home.

No, not home anymore, just the loft. One tiny part of him hopes that Magnus will be back. But he’s not. Of course, he’s not. He will never be back again. And Alec forgot to close the door before running out, it stands open, tiny chocolates still scattered all over the floor, some of them crushed, but Alec doesn’t care.

He leaves the door open again - maybe someone will steal the rest of the things in the apartment, and then it will be all gone, gone, gone - and he stumbles blindly through the loft towards the bathroom, because he needs to take a shower, wash off those unwelcome touches, the smell of strangers, because it’s all turning Alec stomach.

Alec steps inside the stall with the shower at full blast, his clothes and shoes still on, phone in the pocket - maybe it will finally shut up, it hasn’t stop ringing ever since he left Pandemonium, and he just wants it to be silent! - and he sobs and screams and hits the tiles with his fist until there’s blood running down the drain…
It takes a very long time for him to calm down, but in the end, his pent up pain and rage and despair are spent, and he slides down the wall to sit under the spray that turned from hot to tepid to cold, and he just sits there, shivering, staring blindly into the distance. It’s all gone…

Someone steps into the bathroom, and there’s a gasp and rushing footsteps, and the shower is shut off, but Alec still doesn’t move. He’s shivering so hard now that his teeth are chattering and his bones ache.

A whisper of sound, and then the intruder is kneeling down next to him, right there, in the puddle of ice cold water, and he’s touching Alec, the man’s hands burning like hot coals on Alec’s skin. “Alexander…”

Impossible. Still, Alec turns his head slowly, the muscles in his neck stiff and aching. And it really is Magnus, one of his grandfatherly sweaters soaked with water, face pale, eyes wide with dismay, hair in disarray.

“Y-you… you lef-ft!” Alec stutters brokenly.

Magnus’ eyes grow even wider and his hands flutter, as if he doesn’t know where to touch Alec first. “I’m sorry,” he whispers hoarsely. “I’m so very sorry, Alexander. I didn’t know. I didn’t know that you…” He looks at Alec pleadingly. “I didn’t know!”

And Alec just stares at him, and then he starts laughing hysterically, because, Magnus didn’t know? He didn’t know? Alec has been giving all of himself to him these last eight years and Magnus didn’t know? Alec has given him everything and it wasn’t enough? Even his all wasn’t enough to make Magnus stay? He laughs and laughs and laughs…

Until Magnus, still with the same look of absolute dismay on his face, touches his forehead and puts him to sleep.
Magnus wakes with a jerk, his whole body aching from sleeping in the chair, and turns towards the bed. He expects Alec to be still asleep, but no, Alec’s awake. He’s lying on his side and watching Magnus with an indescribable expression on his face.

“Hi,” Magnus whispers uncertainly.

Alec blinks at him, hands under his cheek. “You put me to sleep,” he croaks.

Magnus clears his throat and looks away, embarrassed. “Yeah, I… you were getting a bit… uh.”

He falters.

Alec doesn’t respond to that and silence settles over the room. Uncomfortable silence, for the first time in eight years. Eight years…

Magnus tries not to cringe as he remembers the chocolates scattered all over the floor by the open door, some of them crushed, the dark polished hardwood sticky with their filling. It was their anniversary yesterday. And he forgot. He… he wouldn’t have left if he remembered. Not on their anniversary.

He shifts awkwardly. “I saw the chocolates… I’m sor–”

Alec interrupts him, “Are you back or did you just forget something and decided you couldn’t have it on your conscience to let me drown in the shower?”

Magnus swallows, looking down at his hands, clasped in his lap. This is harder than he thought. And it’s all his fault, and he knows it. “I’m back. If you… if you would want me, that is.”

Alec’s silent for so long that Magnus finally looks up. The other man’s watching him, face shuttered. “I don’t know, Magnus,” Alec admits finally.

Breath catches in Magnus’ throat. “I-I see…”

“No, I don’t think you do,” Alec demurs softly. “For eight years, I’ve been giving you everything of myself, because I thought we were building something together–”

“We were!” Magnus jumps in.

But Alec continues as if he didn’t speak, “–and it wasn’t enough for you, you left anyway. Even though you promised that you wouldn’t do that to me.”

Magnus leans closer. “It had nothing to do with you! I swear, Alexander!” he says in an urgent tone. “I was just afraid. I have lived in fear for so long…”
Alec blinks slowly and he seems to curl up even tighter on himself. Magnus’ heart aches seeing it because Alec, his Alexander, has always been larger than life.

“And the eight years with me didn’t change anything, did they?” Alec whispers thickly. “While I thought we were happy, you were just waiting it out, waiting for the moment you could disappear, isn’t it so?”

“No! It wasn’t like that,” Magnus insists, scooting closer with his chair.

But Alec isn’t listening. “Did you or did you not agree to go out with me just because I saw you do magic in the cellar of the Institute?”

Magnus straightens up a little. “I… Well, yeah, but that was eight years ago!”

Alec nods to himself as if that confirmed something to him. “That’s what these last eight years were about, then, huh? You were just afraid that I would tell if you left me. That’s why you stayed. And when finally the chance came for you to disappear, you went. Just like that…” His voice is dead at the end.

Magnus’ eyes widen. “No. No, Alexander. It wasn’t like that. Yes, I went out with you because you saw me, but then I realized how amazing you were, and that I could trust you, and…” His voice, his expression soften. “I fell in love…”

“And yet, you left me, without a word,” Alec finishes in a dull voice.

Magnus slides out of the chair and drops to his knees by the bed. “But I came back. I realized that I couldn’t leave - I couldn’t leave you. For four hundred years I was running, always running, alone, because someone was always after me, someone always betrayed me! But this time, when it came to it, I realized that you would never–”

“I would’ve gone with you, into hiding, if you had just asked,” Alec interrupts him again, his voice breaking at the end, and he blinks hard to push back tears.

“Alexander…” Magnus whispers, shocked and touched and angry with himself, because he has lived inside his head all this time, not really seeing, not really understanding. How could he have been so blind?

Alec rubs his nose. “So, what now? What is this, Magnus? Another extended stay? Three more years? Five? Will you disappear on me again? Will you give me a load of empty promises that you’ll break anyway?”

Magnus reaches out and grips Alec’s hand. “No, no, I’m not running anymore. I’ll stay as long as you will want me. I won’t leave you again.” He kisses Alec’s hand. “I know that you don’t trust me anymore, but I swear, Alexander, I swear to you on everything that’s been ever dear to me, that I will do whatever you want, that I will stay as long as you want. Just give me a chance to prove it to you!”

Alec’s studying Magnus’ face, searching for… something in it. Then he licks his lips and closes his fingers around Magnus’ hand. “My lifetime, Magnus. I want you to stay with me till I die, whether it happens in two years or fifty. Can you do that? No running, just… just stay here, with me. Can you?”

Magnus stares at Alec. Can he? Could he do that? Stay and not run? Use his magic to disguise himself? Hide? Grow old with Alec, at least outwardly? Experience this kind of love that he has always just heard about?
Yes. Yes, he can. *With Alexander* he can. Because his trust in Alec is absolute. The thought of Alec being his first in so many ways makes something glow warmly in his chest.

Magnus smiles and he hopes that all his emotions are mirrored in face when he leans closer and kisses Alec on the mouth, when he smooths down Alec’s ruffled hair affectionately. “Yes, I’ll stay with you. I will. As long as you will have me. I won’t ever leave you again. I’ll spend the rest of your life rebuilding your trust in me, if need be.”

And Alec’s breath is hitching and the tip of nose is turning red as he tugs on Magnus’ hand and pulls Magnus into the bed with him, as he curls up around him and hugs him tight around the waist, head pressed against Magnus’ chest. “Don’t ever leave me again, don’t do that…” he begs softly.

And Magnus returns his hug just as tightly and whispers promises that this time, he intends to keep. *For Alexander, he will stop running.*
Spoons

Chapter Summary

Sex. NSFW. My favorite position as applied to Malec. (Unbeta'd)

Their sex life is very innovative - Magnus does own the Kama Sutra, after all (and he likes to tell people that he was there when it was written!), and Alec’s a quick-learner, much to Magnus’ delight. But whenever Alec’s hurt, they use one position only: it’s easy on Alec’s healing injuries but it still allows them to enjoy themselves thoroughly. And just the fact that they have a sex position reserved for when Alec’s hurt, makes Magnus’ heart ache; it suggests namely that Alec’s getting hurt often enough that they had to meticulously research a thing like that!

But anyways…

They’re lying on their sides on the softest of sheets, and Magnus is spooning Alec, and Alec’s knee is slightly bent to allow Magnus access to anywhere he wants. Magnus is moving gently, slowly, deeply, and he’s kissing Alec’s neck, holding Alec carefully, very carefully around the waist, below the broken ribs and slashed chest, their fingers entwined. And Alec’s head is bent forward, and he’s biting his lower lip so as to not make any sound, still too embarrassed to give in and be heard, which is exactly why Magnus loves to make Alec go wild and lose restraint, why he bites Alec’s neck in exactly the right spot, the one that makes Alec moan aloud and push back, give himself over to Magnus fully…

It’s wonderful and hot and sweet - and yet, Magnus would gladly never make love in this position again if it meant that Alexander would never get hurt again, that he would be safe and not hurting…
Junk

Chapter Summary

You lose the people you love twice. Tissue warning! (Unbeta'd)

Magnus Bane is done. He knew it was time to move when the city first came with the bright idea to build a hover road right next to his living room windows, but now that the traffic doubled after the underground railroad was flooded yet again, and new neon signs were installed, blinking pink and green all day long, he’s done. Gremlins on the builders and the city councilors, too!

But this time, he will not be taking the whole apartment with him. Oh no! The junk that has accumulated in the corners over the last few decades is not worth schlepping around. And no, he’s not saying that just because Tessa accused him of living like a crazy old hoarder with nine cats. He has two, cats that is. The hoarding… yes, that might have become a bit of a problem.

Grumbling to himself, he’s sitting on the floor, pulling yet another box close to see what’s actually in it. CDs and DVDs and… oh dear, is that an honest to God cassette tape? Some flash drives, a memory card or ten… What’s actually on this stuff?

With the snap of his fingers he summons a player, one of those old vintage ones, able - and willing - to play anything from the late 20th and early 21st century. He turns it upside down and sideways to figure out how the thing actually works, then with a little “A-ha!” he discovers the proper slot and sticks the first memory card in. He sets the player down, and while the thing whirls and clicks and gets going, he sticks his nose back inside the box.

And then he freezes.

“Hey, what… what are you doing?” a startled, uncertain and very familiar voice drifts from the speakers while a grainy holographic image flickers to life above the player. “Magnus? Why are you filming me? What…? Could you not…?” A sigh. “Seriously?”

Magnus lifts his head slowly, his eyes only reluctantly seeking out the projected image. A dark-haired young man with big hazel eyes and lips made for kissing, hair tousled and cheeks slightly flushed at having been caught unaware…

Alexander…

There’s a laugh from behind the camera, Magnus’ laugh. “Yes, my dear, I am serious. I just got this camera and who knows, maybe I’ll display a tremendous talent and become a famous filmmaker!” Then he lowers his voice to a seductive purr, “With you as my favorite subject.”

Alec’s cheeks flush even darker and he looks away. “You would,” he mumbles. “Why did you even get that thing?” he then asks louder and looks directly into the camera, pointing a finger at it.

There’s a pause, and the image of Alec raises an eyebrow. “Memories, my love. I want to capture them and never let them go,” the Magnus in the recording admits honestly, his voice soft and a little sad. “I don’t want to ever forget the sound of your voice or the color of your eyes. Never…”

Alec’s face grows tender. “Alright,” he says gently and steps closer, his face filling the
picture. “Alright, then capture this: I love you, Magnus Bane. I love you and I want only the best for you. Where ever you are now, when ever you are watching this,” Alec pauses and smiles lovingly, “I hope you’re happy…”

The camera starts to shake then and suddenly drops sideways, capturing the way Magnus throws himself at Alec and kisses him, hands buried in his lover’s dark hair, the way he lets himself be hugged and lifted off the ground.

“I love you, too, Alexander… my Alexander,” the other Magnus whispers against his beloved’s lips. “I love you so much, I—”

There’s a beep and the recording ends, the holopic disappears.

And Magnus sits there, on the floor, among the remnants of hundreds of years of his life, and he cries, sobs harshly, curled up on himself, and with his heart aching so badly he can barely breathe… because he forgot! More than a century ago, he swore, to himself and to his lover, that he would never forget - and he did! He forgot! He forgot!

Alexander…

“You watch the people you love age and die…”

And you lose them twice: first to death - and then when your memories of them fade…
Alec’s sitting on the cold stone floor of his cell in the City of Bones, arms crossed and resting on his bent knees. He wonders why the Silent Brothers bothered to lock him in, he’s here of his own volition, after all.

He can hear Isabelle pacing back and forth, back and forth in the cell next to his, cursing quietly. All the way here, she tried to dissuade him from doing this, she pleaded and yelled and then pleaded again, but he didn’t listen. He can’t let her go through this alone.

He gave his bow and quiver to Magnus before the Silent Brothers took him and Isabelle away. They were the agreed price, after all. He wasn’t happy when Magnus asked for them, but now… now he’s glad his weapons will be safe.

“You don’t have to do that,” Magnus says softly, an imploring look in his eyes.

“I thought you would be happy,” Alec admits. “If I go with Izzy, if I let them strip me of my runes, I won’t be able to marry Lydia, after all.”

Magnus steps closer. “Oh, Alexander, I don’t want you to marry her, but I want to see you suffering even less…”

Alec’s heart clenches and he looks away.

Magnus grips the bow and quiver tightly and brings them to his chest, as if he would rather hug Alec but he doesn’t dare. “When it’s over, when it’s done,” he says gently, “come to me, you and Izzy both. I’ll take care of you, I promise.”


And Magnus smiles painfully. “I told you, if something happened to you…” He shakes his head.

There’s a loud bang that reverberates through the halls of the City of Bones, followed by rushing footsteps and a voice, yelling something, arguing, demanding… Jace?

Alec raises his head and listens. Yes, it is Jace, coming closer, towards their cells, and Isabelle’s now calling their brother’s name, asking what’s going on. There are loud noises, keys rattling, locks screeching.

But Alec’s just too empty to care. He has seen so many things he holds in high regard trampled over the last few days - Jace betrayed him, their parents were in the Circle, orders were given to torture suspects based on simple hearsay - and he feels like everything’s crumbling around him, like nothing’s real anymore, like he’s floating untethered. And maybe, just maybe if he leaves all this behind, he can start anew, live a life that actually makes sense to him again…

The lock on his cell rattles and the door flies open, and there’s Jace standing there, in the torches’
glow, in all his golden glory. And Alec remembers a time not so long ago when just looking at his parabatai would’ve made his heart lurch. Now? Now all he feels is wariness.

“Alec,” Jace breathes out in relief and rushes in, Isabelle appearing in the doorway behind him. “You’re both free to go. Clary gave the Cup to Lydia. She called, the Inquisitor ordered the Silent Brothers to let Izzy go,” he blurts out, dropping to his knees in front of Alec.

But Alec just stares at him, because there’s… nothing. His mind is blank. He was so certain that they would be exiled that now that it’s apparently not happening, his mind’s simply refusing to grasp it. What world do they live in if justice can be bought to easily?

“Did you hear me?” Jace asks when Alec doesn’t react. “You can both go back home. Everything’s okay now.” Jace’s voice grows a little urgent when Alec still fails to respond, and he raises his hands, lets them hover over Alec’s arms, wanting to touch his parabatai but not daring to. “Alec?”

They’re going home… But instead of relief, Alec feels a heavy weight settle on his shoulders when he realizes what it means: going back to being the Clave’s puppet, back to hiding, back to a marriage he doesn’t want but considers necessary… It feels more like a punishment than salvation.

“When it’s over, come to me…”

“When it’s over…”

It will never be over, it seems. Unless he does something about it himself.
The Pawn

Chapter Summary

I really wanted to write a doodle about Jace going to pieces. Because the way Dom Sherwood plays Jace, it’s giving me all the feels! I was afraid of making it too… well, too something, but then I remembered that Jace is our resident drama queen, so no, nothing is too anything when it comes to him ;) (Unbeta'd)

Chapter Notes

For MorganD who wanted a parabahug!

“I can’t do this anymore.” Jace closes his eyes as a wave of exhaustion and despair settles over him. “I just can’t.”

Jace Wayland and Jace Morgenstern…

The Traitor’s Son and the Clave’s Spy…

Who is he anymore?

Fire messages and clandestine meetings under the cloak of Magnus Bane’s magic. Spying, spying, always spying, always listening, pretending and hiding while conflicting loyalties tear him apart. What to do? What to do?

Jace turns to Alec, his parabatai. The single unquestionable thing in a life fallen to ruin. Jace’s North Star in a world gone dangerously dark.

“I know that you… that we,” Jace corrects himself, “need the intel, I know that! But I’m losing myself to him. I feel like I’m balancing on a knife-edge: I’m afraid that I’ll either join him - or slice his throat and damn the consequences!” In a voice hoarse with hopelessness, he adds, “I can’t go back to him.”

“Then don’t,” Alec replies softly but firmly. Then he steps closer, and continues urgently, “Screw the Clave. Screw what they want! We can win this war in some other way, but not like this. Not like this!”

And Jace shudders and slumps against his parabatai, winds his arms around Alec and grips the back of his jacket tight, finally letting go, the familiarity of it all setting something gone cold in his chest aglow yet again.

If Alec had told him to go back, if he had asked Jace to return to Valentine, Jace would’ve done it. If Alec had thought it necessary, Jace would’ve gone. And shattered. But Alec did not - he did not! And Jace feels like a cracked, used thing saved from falling to pieces by tender hands.

“Come home with me, Jace,” Alec whispers, hugging him tight, his love an unquestionable thing,
steady as a rock among the shifting sands of Jace’s life. “We’ll find another way. Together. *Just come home...*”

And Jace goes. Because Alec’s right. Screw them, screw them all, Valentine and the Clave alike. He’s done being everybody’s pawn.
"Enough," Alec says quietly yet firmly and steps between his mother and Magnus. "You have no right to talk to him like that."

Maryse’s eyes narrow. “You have no idea who this Downworlder is, you barely know him, yet you would take his side? You would defend him?” she rebukes him sharply.

But Alec doesn’t flinch, and his voice is steady when he replies. “Someone obviously has to.”

Magnus moves closer to Alec and touches his shoulder gently from behind. “Alexander, it’s okay,” he whispers.

Alec doesn’t turn, he doesn’t take his eyes off his mother, but his words are directed at Magnus. “No it’s not okay. If my mother has a problem with me dating you, she will take it up with you, and leave you out of it!”

Maryse and Alec stare each other in the eyes, both determined and unyielding, mother and son cut from the same cloth.

In the end, it’s Maryse who looks away first and shakes her head. “You will regret this one day, Alec. Don’t say I didn’t warn you, then.” And with that, she turns away and leaves.

Alec waits till she’s gone, then his head drops and his shoulders hunch as all defiance flows out of him together with the deep breath that he releases.

“Alexander,” Magnus says softly and turns Alec towards him. “Not that I’m not grateful to you for standing up for me, but you shouldn’t have done that. I know how much it hurts you to fight with your family. I could’ve said something myself, I didn’t need defending…”

Alec sighs. “This isn’t about what you need, Magnus, it’s about what you deserve, and this,” he points in the direction Maryse left, “this is not it. I don’t doubt that you survived worse things than my mother’s wrath, but that doesn’t make it alright. You deserve to be treated with respect. And maybe I can’t take on the whole Clave for you - but I can at least make my mother back off.”

Magnus stares up at him and his eyes soften. “You don’t even know what happened between me and your parents, maybe they’re in the right…”

Alec scoffs. “My parents were in the Circle, so them being the wronged party? I think that ship sailed. I love them, I really do, but I also finally opened my eyes and stopped being blind to their mistakes.”

Smiling slightly, Magnus looks away for a moment, a little embarrassed but also touched. Then he looks back mischievously. “You would take on the whole Clave for me?” he teases.

Alec’s expression is absolutely serious. “Yes, I would.”
Magnus grips the lapels of Alec’s leather jacket, raises himself on tippy toes and whispers against Alec’s lips, “In that case, I guess I should give my knight in black armor a proper reward.”

And their lips meet in a kiss.
Unbreachable

Chapter Summary

The prompt said: "Alec was so angry at Jace that he called him Jonathan." (Unbeta'd)

They’re yelling at each other, hurling accusations left and right, and it’s ugly, so very, very ugly, all the things left festering for so long finally boiling over. And then…

“Not all of us can be the perfect soldiers, Jonathan!”

… they stop. Everything just… stops. Jace and Alec, they both freeze, staring at each other in shock, because this has gone too far, they have crossed a line that should’ve been unbreachable.

Jace blinks hard and nods, lips twisted sourly. “Right. I think I heard enough,” he says and turns to go.

But Alec reaches out and grabs him by the arm, and he doesn’t let go even when Jace tries to pull away. “Stop, Jace, just stop. I’m sorry, that was low, I’m sorry,” he implores, and when Jace still resists, Alec pulls him into a hug. “I’m sorry, please, believe me.”

And Jace remains rigid and unyielding for a while longer, then slowly, he melts into the embrace, and sighs. “I know, me too. I’m sorry, too. I didn’t mean what I said either, I just lost it… I’m sorry.”

They stand like that for some time, just… recharging, composing themselves, picking up smashed pieces. Because this, this is what’s important, just… this. Everything else they can deal with. Together.
Earthbound

Chapter Summary

Yet another AU, angsty one, Dancer!Magnus. Present time, no powers. (Unbeta'd)

Everything in the large, hyper modern apartment is tailored to Alec’s needs, every single thing the best his parents could get for him when he decided to live on his own - and he’s grateful and he loves them for it…

But his favorite thing is the view that the floor to ceiling windows afford him. It feels like he holds the whole city in the palm of his hand. And he can sit there for hours and just watch people go about their lives…

And then there’s the little dance studio in one of the top floors of the building right across, a little below Alec’s level, so he can watch all the graceful people twirl around the room and fling themselves through the air, as if it were the easiest thing in the world…

He especially loves to watch one of them, a young Asian man of a slim yet strong build, with an extravagant hair cut and a deep love for glitter, who seems to own the dance floor - every time he walks in, everybody else just fades into the background… and Alec’s mesmerized…

That’s why he does it, something he has never done before, the need to show appreciation for all the man’s hard training and incredible talent almost overwhelming…

Yes, there! While Alec watches, someone knocks on the studio’s door with a delivery for the dancer - Magnus Bane, Alec found out. He sees the dancer tilt his head in a confused gesture, and then, then accept what’s being given to him. And he handles it with such care, as if the gift were made of glass…

A single long-stem red rose, and a simple white card, saying, “You’re the most beautiful thing I’ve ever seen.” Nothing more. Not a name, not an explanation. Alec doesn’t want this delivery to be traced back to him, he doesn’t want to be seen, he doesn’t want anything in return, just…

His heart skips a beat when the dancer reads the card and smiles. He’s there all alone in the studio at this hour, between classes, so he smiles his honest, sweet smile, the one that makes Alec’s chest seize with an almost painful pleasure. To be the cause of this smile - it’s enough for Alec…

The corners of Alec’s mouth curl up tenderly as he watches Magnus twirl around the room with the rose for a partner, one dizzying pirouette after another. Alec follows him with his eyes for a moment or two longer, savoring the feeling, and then…

And then he rolls his wheelchair back, away from the window, and returns to his own world where everything’s heavy and earthbound, from his body to his soul…

… and he hopes that this time, Jace will come as promised, he hopes but he knows that Jace won’t, his adopted brother too torn by guilt, even months after the accident, to look Alec in the eyes…

… and he hopes that his sister, Isabelle, will not come, that she will start living her own life and not spend every free minute with her crippled brother…
… and he hopes that this time, when Max calls before bedtime, his little brother won’t cry in fear of losing him…

And in the studio across the street, Magnus Bane *dances*…
Some months ago, I received a prompt to write a story about how Alec got his scar, the one that Matthew Daddario has in his left eyebrow. I already wrote a doodle about that, but going through my drafts, I found this unfinished ficlet and since all it needed was a little polishing… (Unbeta'd)

Jace’s sitting on a hard wooden chair in the infirmary, feet dangling, shoulders round, eyes fixed on the tiled floor. He’s sitting by Alec’s bed, unable to look at the other boy who’s lying there unconscious with his head bandaged, gauze packed over his left eye. He might lose it, they say…

Jace allows himself a sniffle since he’s alone in the room, has been for some time. Alone with the boy who has become his best friend; more than that. It’s been a few months since he came to live at the New York Institute, with the Lightwoods, and Alec…

The boy in the bed shifts slightly, a pained gasp escaping his bloodless lips, and Jace’s head shoots up, eyes immediately going to his friend in the hope that he’s finally waking up, that Jace will finally get a chance to apologize for… for being stupid and reckless and… for everything.

But no, Alec sleeps on and Jace rubs his burning eyes with the heels of his hands.

It’s all his fault. He was so stupid, thinking he could take on a demon, thinking he didn’t need anyone, determined to prove to himself that his father’s lessons still took precedence over everything else, even over the warmth that has settled around his heart ever since Alec smiled at him, eyes wide and hopeful, and whispered, “Do you want to be friends?”

And then the demon attacked and Jace found himself overwhelmed, driven into a corner, and he was sure he was going to die - but then Alec came and saved his life and drove the demon away… but not before it slashed his face with a claw, forehead to cheek and…

“He’ll be okay,” someone whispers and when Jace looks up again, he sees that it’s Hodge Starkweather who dropped to a crouch beside to his chair.

The older man’s watching Alec fondly, as if Alec were his own child. And Jace knows that Hodge was in the Circle and that the Circle were bad people, but to him, Hodge has been always kind. Which makes him feel even worse, as if he disappointed the man somehow.

“But his eye…” Jace demurs despairingly.

Hodge turns to Jace and squeezes his knee gently. “Alec’s a tough little fellow, he’ll heal, you’ll see.” Then he adds, “And even if not, he’ll have you to watch his back, won’t he?”

Jace nods firmly, because he would never abandon Alec, and if Alec loses his eye, Jace will stand by his side and guard him and make sure nobody and nothing hurts Alec anymore - including himself.

Hodge smiles at him warmly. “Such deep friendship, such loyalty. Who knows, maybe you’ll become parabatai one day.” And with that, and a pat on the shoulder, Hodge gets up and leaves.
And Jace sits there with his eyes wide and heart hammering, because that word, that idea, resonates deeply within him, within his soul, within that empty place inside him that has yearned to be filled ever since he can remember. He and Alec… parabatai. Bound together for life, more than best friends, more than brothers…

Jace looks at Alec, at his pale face that is, even in sleep, turned instinctively towards Jace, and he reaches out and touches Alec’s hand. Yes, this feels right, this fits, this is the thing he has been waiting for.

He’ll ask, and he’ll hope with all his heart and soul that Alec agrees.

_Alec Lightwood, Jace Wayland’s parabatai._ He likes the sound of it.

Jace smiles. _Yes._
Alike

Chapter Summary

The prompt said: “Can you write a fic where Alec get thrown out of the ship (final battle) and he’s drowning. And Jace is left with 2 choices, save Alec’s life or follow valentine before he’s gone for good.” Well, I had to two ideas for this one: one where Jace hesitates, one where he doesn’t. So, two doodles: Alike & Nothing Alike.
(Unbeta'd)

He hesitated.

When Valentine grabbed Alec and threw him off the ship, using so much force that Alec’s body broke through the metal railing on impact, he did it to distract Jace from going after him - and Jace hesitated.

His indecision lasted only a few heartbeats, a moment, but he did hesitate, torn between saving his parabatai and going after Valentine, even though he tasted salt water in his mouth, which meant that Alec was drowning, dying - Jace still hesitated!

It was Magnus who brought him back to his senses, Magnus, who wasn’t even a Shadowhunter, who was there simply because Alec asked for his help with saving Jace…

Magnus… Magnus namely did not hesitate, not even for a second when he realized what happened to his lover. With a desperate cry - “Alexander!” - he flung himself off the ship after Alec; for Magnus, nothing was more important than saving Alec…

Which made Jace realize what he was actually doing! That he put his need to get Valentine above his own parabatai’s life! And Valentine knew! His knowing smirk before he stepped through the portal and escaped, felt like a stab to Jace…

And now Jace’s standing by the broken railing, looking down into the lifeboat that Magnus magicked in with the snap of his fingers, he’s watching Magnus desperately trying to save Alec’s life, pumping Alec’s chest hard to get his heart going again, and he can feel their parabatai bond starting to unravel, thread by thread, which means that Alec’s heart stopped, it’s not beating…

And Jace feels sick, he feels sick and disgusted with himself and horrified, absolutely horrified, because he’s always known that there was something wrong with him, but Alec, Alec’s been the best part of Jace ever since he agreed to become Jace’s parabatai. And Jace hesitated when it came to saving his life.

And then Alec sizes and coughs out water, and he keeps coughing and wheezing, and he’s alive, blessedly alive - and their parabatai bond snaps back into place so suddenly and savagely that Jace’s knees buckle and he drops to the deck, hanging onto the railing desperately, almost crying in relief, because his mistake, his… wrongness didn’t cost his parabatai his life, after all.

And Magnus is holding Alec up, helping him breathe, supporting him, soothing him with words that Jace can’t hear, and Jace is so grateful, so very grateful.
But then Magnus looks up, directly at Jace, and his cat’s eyes are glowing fiercely and accusingly - and Jace realizes that what he did, his hesitation, the way he froze when it came down to saving Alec’s life, didn’t go unnoticed. That Magnus knows, that Magnus sees him now the way he is, wrong, crooked, rotten on the inside… undeserving.

He’s just like his father. Valentine’s son through and through.
Nothing Alike

Chapter Summary

The prompt said: “Can you write a fic where Alec get thrown out of the ship (final battle) and he’s drowning. And Jace is left with 2 choices, save Alec’s life or follow valentine before he’s gone for good.” Well, I had to two ideas for this one: one where Jace hesitates, one where he doesn’t. So, two doodles: Alike & Nothing Alike. (Unbeta'd)

He didn’t hesitate.

When Valentine grabbed Alec and threw him off the ship, using so much force that Alec’s body broke through the metal railing on impact, he did it to distract Jace from going after him - and Jace didn’t hesitate.

There was no indecision, he didn’t feel at all torn between saving his parabatai and going after Valentine, he tasted salt water in his mouth, which meant that Alec was drowning, dying - and Jace did not hesitate!

He flung himself off the ship and dove in, searching for Alec in the ocean’s dark depths, in water so cold that it stole the warmth from his body and the air from his lungs.

In a distant corner of his mind, he knew that Valentine was running again, but right now, it didn’t matter, because Alec was somewhere close but sinking fast, and dying, dying on him, the threads of their bond unraveling slowly, the parabatai rune on his side already burning, hurting.

He had to go back up for air - and to activate the rune that allowed him to see in the dark. It was necessary and it lasted only a few seconds, but every one of them was a torture, because he could feel Alec sinking deeper and deeper, getting farther and farther away…

But then - there! To his left, thanks to the rune he finally saw Alec, his deathly pale skin almost glowing in the dark now. And Jace swam, he swam for his life, yes, his life, because there was no life without Alec in it, and he grabbed Alec by the jacket and started dragging him up, his own lungs burning again.

And when he broke through the surface and pulled Alec up, Alec wasn’t moving, wasn’t breathing, his heart... his heart stopped, and Jace had to choke back a cry because his parabatai rune was now pulsating with agony to the rhythm of his own heart. He had to bring Alec back, he had to, nothing else was an option…

And then there was a flash and a lifeboat appeared just an arm’s length away, and when Jace looked up, he saw Magnus standing by the broken railing, blue sparks of magic still dancing around his fingers, and he nodded at Jace urgently, encouragingly, begging him to save Alec.

So Jace pulled Alec into the boat, all his muscles, stiff and cold, straining with Alec’s dead weight, and…

And now he’s here, pumping, pumping Alec’s chest hard to get his heart going again, his
parabatai rune burning and bleeding, the wetness on his left side warm when every other part of him is cold, so very cold, and he’s begging Alec to come back, to not leave him alone, that he can’t do this alone, that he needs him, please, come back, please, please, please…

And then Alec chokes and wheezes, seizing hard, and Jace quickly turns him on his side and helps him vomit all the water he swallowed and breathed in. And their parabatai bond snaps back into place so suddenly and savagely that Jace hunches over, curls up on himself, and presses his forehead to Alec’s shaking shoulder…

Because he did it, he saved Alec, he was forced to make a split second decision - to take revenge or to save his parabatai - and he didn’t hesitate! And the darkness that has lurked in the corners of his mind ever since he found out that he’s Valentine’s son, retreats and fades.

Because he isn’t like Valentine. He is nothing like him at all…
At All Costs

Chapter Summary

WARNING: This is a dark story, the darkest I’ve written yet in this fandom. I mean it. I’m not playing coy. It could be very triggering and it deals with the aftermath of a non-consensual sex (non-graphic). So, beware! (Unbeta’d)

“Is he dead? Did you kill him?”

It’s the first thing that Jace asks when Clary and Isabelle, with Magnus in tow, throw open the cell door. They freeze on the threshold, too shocked to move.

Jace’s sitting on the floor on the other side of the dark, damp room, bloody and bruised, his hunting gear gone or torn to shreds. Despite his sickly pallor and obvious trembling he’s on guard because he’s holding an unconscious Alec in his arms, hugging his parabatai to his chest.

“Is he dead?” Jace repeats, his voice completely hoarse. “Is Azazel dead?”

“No,” Clary breathes out. “No, he escaped.”

Jace closes his eyes tight and hits the wall behind him several times with his head hard. “Fuck. Fuck. Fuck!” he curses.

They all move then, but his sharp, “No!” stops them in their tracks. In reaction to Jace’s shout, Alec groans softly and shifts slightly, but he doesn’t wake up, and Jace shushes him gently.

“No,” Jace repeats more quietly, looking at their rescuers. “Just… just Magnus.” And when Clary and Isabelle’s expressions turn confused and maybe even a little hurt, he adds, “Please, please… just Magnus. Just for a moment.”

Clary and Izzy exchange a look, then reluctantly step outside, making space for Magnus and allowing them some privacy.

Magnus rushes in and drops to his knees by Jace’s side. Alec’s lying between his parabatai’s spread legs, resting against his chest, and his face is almost gray and mottled with bruises.

“What’s wrong?” Magnus asks quietly.

Jace throws one cautious look at the girls standing in the corridor outside, then he lowers his voice and demands urgently, “Take his memories away. Erase everything since Azazel captured us.”

Magnus’ eyes widen. “I can’t do that,” he protests. “After what happened with Clary… I can’t, I would never do that to Alexander!”

Jace stares at him imploringly, his eyes too large in his gaunt face. “Magnus, please. I’m begging you. You need to do it or…” Jace swallows hard. “Azazel, he-he saw our memories, Alec’s memories. When he realized that we are parabatai and that Alec used to have… feelings for me, he…” Jace shudders. “He forced us… he forced Alec to… he-he and I…” He can’t continue. He just hugs Alec tighter and rests his cheek on the top of Alec’s head for a moment, rocking them
both from side to side.

An expression of dawning horror settles on Magnus’ face.

“It wasn’t Alec’s fault, it wasn’t,” Jace insists, seeing Magnus’ expression. “I-I tried to tell him, but he wasn’t listening, Magnus, he refused to listen, he tried to… he tried to…” Jace has to blink back tears. “I had to knock him out, Magnus, or he would have…”

His breathing shudders. “Nobody knows but us and Azazel, nobody else. If you take his memories now, we can blame it on Azazel, that he forgot.” Jace looks at Magnus, eyes full of despair. “He can’t remember, Magnus, he can’t. You haven’t seen him, it broke him. Nothing Azazel had done to us until then managed that but this… it broke him. Please, Magnus.”

Magnus stares down at his lover, battered and bruised, breath rattling quietly in his throat, and his eyes fill with pain and sorrow. “If he ever finds out, he will never forgive us,” Magnus warns.

Jace looks at him, straightforward and determined. “You haven’t seen what it did to him, Magnus, I did. And I’m willing to risk it if it means sparing him that pain. I’m willing to risk anything…”

Magnus nods reluctantly. Then he asks, “And what about you? Do you also want me to…”

“No,” Jace interrupts sharply. “No. I need to remember. I need to!” He tightens his grip on Alec. “I must know what to protect him from.”

Magnus studies him for a long moment, then finally, he nods again. “Alright,” he agrees quietly. “But Alexander can never know.”

Jace nods, too. “Alec will never know.”
“Will you show them to me? Your eyes, I mean,” Alec asks.

They’re slow dancing to something sweet and lovely in Magnus’ loft, the lights are dimmed and there’s a fire crackling merrily in the fireplace. The moment is so intimate in its quietness that Alec’s chest is overflowing with warmth.

Magnus stiffens and stops. He lifts his head from Alec’s shoulder and drops his arms from around Alec’s neck. He looks up, his eyes wary, and asks cautiously, “Why?”

Alec shrugs and rubs Magnus’ upper arms in a comforting gesture. “I haven’t seen what they really look like yet… and I would very much like to, if you would let me.”

Magnus stares at him a moment longer. “Alright,” he agrees finally. He takes a deep breath, as if bracing himself, and closes his eyes. And when he opens them again…

Alec gasps softly because Magnus’ eyes are glowing! They’re yellow or maybe gold, with hints of green, and with pupils slit like cat’s. Slowly, oh so slowly and non-threateningly, Alec raises his right hand to Magnus’ left eyebrow.

Though his touch is gentle, Magnus still flinches slightly, revealing just how tense and anxious he is. But Alec doesn’t pull back, he just leaves his hand there for a moment and waits for Magnus to relax. Then he runs his fingers over his lover’s eyebrow, down around the outer corner of his cat’s eye and even more lightly over his cheekbone towards his nose.

And when he rests his hand lovingly on Magnus’ cheek, Alec whispers in admiration, “They’re beautiful.”

Magnus blinks in surprise and flushes a little with pleasure. He tilts his head and leans into Alec’s hand. “Really?” he asks, unsure, as if nobody has ever told him this before.

Alec smiles affectionately. “Yes. You’ve always reminded me of a cat. Now I know why.”

Magnus grins. “A cat? Do tell!”

Alec’s smile widens, too. “I don’t know, there’s something about the way you move. You… slink. And when something makes you angry, I can almost hear you growl. But when you’re happy, it’s like… it’s like you could start purring any moment.” Then he adds a little mischievously, “Well, and you like shiny things.”

Magnus laughs. He fists his hands in Alec’s shirt and pulls him closer. “Yeah? Like you, my star?” he asks in a low voice that very much resembles the purr that Alec just mentioned, and flutters his eyelashes, his eyes still glowing.

Alec chuckles and wraps his arms around Magnus’ shoulders. “That was so very, very cheesy,” he
murmurs against Magnus’ lips.

“But you liked it, didn’t you?” Magnus whispers back.

“I like you, a lot,” Alec replies breathlessly and kisses him.
Magnus meets Max. It's... memorable. (Unbeta'd)

Magnus’ first meeting with Max Lightwood, Alec’s - very - little brother, is kind of memorable. It happens like this…

“I heard you kissed my brother,” the little imp says when he corners Magnus in one of the Institute’s dimly lit corridors.

“And I heard you almost burned down the Mumbai Institute,” Magnus retorts, not budging an inch.

They eye each other warily, the warlock and the child, like two gunslingers ready to draw at any given moment.

Then Max Lightwood, head held high, replies with much bruised dignity, “It was an accident. I keep telling people that but nobody believes me.”

Magnus snorts. “Well, the kiss was not an accident, yet some people still have a hard time believing it happened, so I feel your pain.” Then he adds, not sure why, “And Alexander kissed me, just so we are clear.”

Max narrows his eyes and Magnus feels like a bug under a microscope. He’s starting to feel rather defensive!

Suddenly, though, Max’s whole face lights up, and he turns from a protective - very - little brother into a gleeful child in two seconds flat. “I wish I was there when it happened!”

Magnus twists his lips sourly. “You really, really don’t. The whole affair was rather… awkward and it made a lot of people angry.”

Max nods. “Yeah, mom’s been furious ever since, she keeps slamming doors and yelling at people. Dad’s mostly confused, he just walks around, shaking his head,” he comments, proving his astute observation skills. “It’s rather funny.”

Magnus raises his eyebrows. Funny isn’t a word he would use to describe his and Alec’s situation.

“Alright,” Max says, drawing himself up to his nonexistent height. “You can date my brother, Mr Bane,” he allows magnanimously. “Alec’s been much happier since he met you. I like that.”

Magnus smiles a little, feeling touched. He opens his mouth to thank the child for his very generous permission, but Max obviously isn’t finished yet.

“Besides,” the boy continues and his eyes sparkle with unholy glee, “mother is so furious with you that she totally forgot to be angry with me because of what happened in Mumbai. Maybe now I will finally get my stele back!”
Magnus snaps his mouth shut. That… that little… weasel!

Magnus is charmed!
The prompt said: “Valentine calls Jace Jonathan, so what if he got the name Jace from the Lightwoods when he moved in with them?” (Unbeta’d)

“Don’t call me that!” he yells and runs.

That’s how he reacts to the simple fact that the Lightwoods, Maryse and Robert, call him Jonathan. He yells and he runs. Because he can’t stand hearing that name from their lips. He can’t. He just… He can’t.

He thinks that nobody will find him here, in the old church tower, because it’s full of cobwebs and dust and broken things. Broken like him. But only minutes after he slams the trapdoor shut, it opens again, and that Lightwood boy, Alec, peaks in.

“Here you are,” Alec says, climbing up.

“Go away!” he orders roughly.

Alec closes the trapdoor much more gently, and says simply, “No.”

“I don’t want to see anyone! I don’t want to talk to anyone. So, go away!” he yells, his voice raspy from tears he hasn’t shed.

But Alec just sits down on the floor opposite him. “No,” he repeats calmly, and heedless of the glare directed at him, he asks, “Why did you run?”

His breath hitches. “Because I don’t want you Lightwoods to call me that!”


“Well, that’s kinda hard. It is your name,” Alec reminds him, still unbothered. “Can you at least tell me why you don’t like it?”

For long, long moments, he just sits there, hands pressed to his ears, rocking slightly. In the end, he does respond, though. “My f-father called me that,” he replies almost inaudibly. “When he was really, really angry.”

“Oh,” Alec says. “So… what did he call you when he was not angry?”

He’s still looking down, not raising his head. “Son. I was always either ‘son’ or ‘Jonathan’. And when I was ‘Jonathan’, it was…” He swallows. “It was bad.”

They just sit there for some time. It’s dark and warm and the church tower is creaking softly in the wind. It feels… safe.

“Okay,” Alec says in the end. “What do you want to be called, then? We can’t just yell ‘Hey, you!”
at you for the rest of your life.”

He looks up, surprised. Nobody has ever asked him that before. It has never even occurred to him that he could choose. “I don’t know,” he whispers.

Alec nods and scoots closer. “So, we will find something you like. What about Jon? Jonny?”

He shakes his head. “No.”

“Nathan?”

He scrunches his nose. “Eww, no!”

Alec laughs. “Okay, okay. Something with J…”

He doesn’t know how long they sit there, going through names, from the most traditional to the most ridiculous ones. It’s comfortable and intimate and sweet and for the first time he can remember he relaxes. Something inside him that has always been all tangled up and… tight, just loosens. It’s… strange.

“Jason?”

“No.”

“Jace?”

“No… Yes!” He straightens up suddenly. Because this one, this one somehow fits.


He, Jace, nods vigorously. He doesn’t know why - and he won’t understand till years later, till he will hold a small wooden box in his hands, the lid adorned with the initials “J. C.” - but it really fits.


Jace returns the grin. He likes it, too.

Then Alec leans closer and holds out his hand. “Hello, Jace, I’m Alec,” he says. “Nice to meet you.”
“Then teach me!” Clary snaps, slamming her weapon down on the table.

Alec, who’s been about to put his fighting stick away, turns to her. “What?”

Clary throws up her hands. “You keep telling me that being a Shadowhunter means more than just killing demons, that one must follow the rules, that ‘the Law is hard but it is the Law.’ Fine, great. Then teach me the rules, teach me the Law. I’m prepared to learn!” She sets her hands on her hips angrily and stares up at him with a clear challenge in her eyes.

“Wouldn’t it be better if you asked your mother?” he suggests.

Clary snorts. “I have as much desire to talk to my mom right now as you have to talk to yours. I love her dearly but there are things that we simply don’t see eye to eye about. And one of them is this.” She waves her hand around, indicating the Institute and the Shadow World in general.

That makes Alec’s lips twitch, but he replies, “Then how about Izzy—”

Clary interrupts him, “From what I know, Izzy dedicated herself to science, germs and bugs and other stuff, that I don’t need to know about right now or, hopefully, ever.” She shudders. “But you, you apparently studied diplomacy. So, teach me, oh wise one!”

Alec sighs and turning around, he sets his fighting stick in the rack. “I just don’t think it would work, with the two of us, considering we still seem to disagree on everything…”

“Actually, I think that right now, you’re the one with whom I have the most in common,” Clary says, thoughtfully.

Alec raises his eyebrows dubiously. “Really?”

She nods. “Really. I mean, I don’t think that anyone out there,” she waves a hand at the rest of the Institute, “wants Jace back as much as we do, you and I.”

Alec stares at her for a moment, emotions waring on his face, then he looks away.

“And we’re both social pariahs, too!” Clary adds with somewhat forced cheer.

He turns to her quizzically.

“Well, I’m Valentine Morgenstern’s daughter, a black sheep, if ever there was one. And from what Izzy told me, you’re the first Shadowhunter ever to come out as anything but perfectly straight,” she explains. And when his expression turns pained, she asks, “How does it feel to be a trailblazer?”
Alec widens his eyes a little when he honestly admits, “Terrifying.”

Clary reaches out and with a small smile she squeezes his forearm comfortingly. Then she clears her throat and continues, “Anyways, all those things sound like a good foundation for a friendship, so…” She trails off hopefully, leaving her words hanging in the air between them.

After a moment, Alec smiles at her hesitantly. “I could do with a friend,” he allows.

Clary grins in relief, and in an attempt to lighten up the mood, she blurs out, “And about that Law thing, it’s not like I need to know every paragraph in the Codex, just enough not to cause trouble!”


“Hey!” she slaps him on the arm, then she amends, “Well, it’s a talent, really.”

Chuckling, Alec clears away her stick and his Seraph Blade, too. But when he turns back for Clary’s, she has the blade out and glowing, and she’s staring at it with a grim expression. “Clary?” he asks uncertainly.

She looks up. “I’ll kill him, you know?” she replies, deadly serious. “Valentine. I’ll kill him if it’s the last thing I do in my life. And not just because of what he did to Jace - but *for* Jace. I can live with Valentine’s blood on my hands, but I don’t think that Jace could…”

Alec stares at her searchingly for a few seconds, then he nods slowly. “And I’ll help you,” he promises.

Clary smiles at him, her expression a little dangerous. “See? We’re already bonding. Nothing brings people closer than a premeditated murder.”
Chapter Summary

Alec & Magnus & dancing... (Unbeta'd)

They get Jace back. They defeat Valentine. They find out the truth about who’s whose child and everybody gets their happy ending. And to celebrate all things going right for once, Magnus lends them his club for a huge party, courtesy of the New York Institute.

When the music changes from some thump-thump-thumpy thing to a slow and mushy tune, Magnus reaches out towards Alec. “Would you do me the honor?” he asks with a seductive smile.

But instead of accepting his lover’s invitation, Alec becomes a little wild-eyed, his eyes twitching from side to side in a near panic. “I-I… I don’t think…”

Magnus frowns a little, his hand still hanging in the air. “Are you ashamed of being seen dancing with me, Alexander?” he asks, a little disappointed. He honestly believed that they were over this.

Alec looks straight at him and his eyebrows shoot up in surprise. “What? No! No, that’s not it. I just…” He looks around furtively, then he leans closer and admits in a whisper, “I don’t know how to dance!”

Magnus laughs. He spins around Alec and threads his arm through is lover’s. “Well, I think you just lacked the proper motivation.” He leans closer and his warm breath wafts over Alec’s cheek as he whispers, “I’m a very good and patient teacher, as you know…”

Alec hunches his shoulders and crosses his arms over his chest defensively. “Well, I don’t,” he mutters darkly. “When Izzy tried to teach me once, I almost flattened her toes. In the end, she gave up on me. Apparently, I'm hopeless when it comes to dancing.”

Magnus laughs. He spins around Alec and threads his arm through is lover’s. “Well, I think you just lacked the proper motivation.” He leans closer and his warm breath wafts over Alec’s cheek as he whispers, “I’m a very good and patient teacher, as you know…”

Alec blushed so hard the tips of ears turn pink.

“Come along, love,” Magnus pulls at Alec’s arm, dragging him towards the crowded dance floor. “Let me show you how it’s done.”

“They’re your toes,” Alec’s grumbles, dragging his feet, “but don’t complain that I didn’t warn you.” Still, he goes.

Turns out, Magnus really is an excellent teacher. But a few toes were sacrificed for the greater good, after all.
They say it wasn’t his fault.

Nobody blames him. Not his parents, not his siblings. Not even Alec himself. Not the cops or the experts. He wasn’t speeding, he wasn’t drunk or high, his car was in a good condition…

His tire simply blew and the car went into a tailspin on the highway. That’s all. An accident. A dumb, stupid, ridiculous accident, a thing that happens every day, to dozens of people. But this time… his accident, their accident ended with his brother crippled for life.

And he blames himself, Jace blames himself even though no one else does. Exactly because no one else does. Things like that can’t just happen. There has to be a reason, someone to blame. It’s not just… random. It can’t be!

He is at fault, he is, somehow, he knows that. Maybe… maybe if he paid more attention - they were arguing after all, just before it happened, he and Alec - about something… something… he can’t remember what anymore. Maybe he looked away from the road for second or… or… he doesn’t know what. But he must have done something wrong or such a stupid thing would not have ended in a tragedy like that.

Jace wishes he could switch places with Alec - he would do it in a heartbeat - or that he were left with some lasting damage, scars… anything, anything at all that he would have to deal with every day, a proof that they went through the crash together, he and Alec. But there’s nothing. Nothing at all. He got away with bruises - and his brother ended up in a wheelchair for life.

He was there with him, in the hospital. He sat by Alec’s bed and held his hand and prayed, prayed to anyone who was listening, all those days when Alec lay there unconscious, that the doctors were wrong, that the injury wasn’t as bad, that Alec would wake up and be perfectly fine. But no.

After that, Jace couldn’t go back. No matter how much his parents or his sister or his little brother pleaded with him, because Alec wanted, needed to see him, Jace couldn’t go back. No, he spent his days working, turning their home and later on Alec’s new apartment into a safe, accessible place for his brother, doing everything for Alec, everything… but going to see him.

And the days became weeks became months. He saw Alec a few times, when his brother cornered him, when there was no way for Jace to avoid him, he saw him and he exchanged a few mumbled, polite words with him, and then he fled and stayed away, away, away…

Because Jace ruined his brother’s, his best friend’s life - and he doesn’t understand why nobody else sees that!
“I don’t like showing people my eyes,” Alec admits softly when Magnus asks about the wraparound sunglasses. “I know that they’re all squinty and cross-eyed and… ugly.”

Magnus frowns at him. “Who told you that?”

Alec sighs. “Children can be very cruel and because of this,” he touches his sunglasses self-consciously, “I’ve had to deal with my share of bullies from a very young age.”

“I’m sorry, nobody deserves to be bullied, for any reason,” Magnus says.

“Yeah,” Alec whispers. He stands there for a moment, one hand still touching his sunglasses, as if he’s contemplating something. Then he offers hesitantly, “Would you like to see them? They might be gross, but—”

“I would be honored by your trust, Alexander,” Magnus interrupts him gently. He feels touched yet also rather surprised because he truly didn’t expect this gesture. It’s obvious that this is a big step for Alec, something very intimate.

Alec nods. “Okay…” Then he takes a deep breath, pulls his sunglasses off and opens his eyes.

Suddenly, Alec feels much more vulnerable to Magnus. And yes, Alec squints for a moment, as if trying to hide his blindness, or trying to see, then he opens his eyes wide. He is a little cross-eyed, yes, but his eyes, now roaming around restlessly, are so… They take Magnus’ breath away.

“Oh,” he whispers.

Alec flinches and tries to put his sunglasses back on. “Sorry…”


Magnus raises his hand. “I’ll touch your face now, alright?” he announces and when Alec nods, he lets his fingers settle featherlight on Alec’s cheek. “Your eyes are amazing, Alexander. Whoever told you they were ugly must have wanted to hurt you really badly. Because your eyes…”

Magnus tries to find the proper words. “They’re the most amazing hazel color, all brown and green mixed together. Just beautiful. And your eyelashes are so long that they make your eyes look even bigger.”

Alec blushes a little while his eyes slowly drift from side to side aimlessly. “Really? They are
not… they’re not ugly?” he asks, a little unsure.

“No,” Magnus whispers and runs his knuckles up and down Alec’s smooth-shaven cheek. “No, they’re like… they’re like a deep forest after a spring rain. They’re breathtaking.”

Alec clears his throat a little and the flush in his cheeks reaches the tips of his ears. “That’s… that’s good. I mean, that’s good to know.”

Magnus grins. “I will kiss you now, okay?” he asks, and when Alec nods once more, Magnus raises himself on tippy toes and whispers against Alec’s lips, “Thank you for showing them to me.” And then he kisses him.

And Alec closes his sightless eyes in pleasure, his sunglasses slipping from his grasping fingers and dropping to the softly carpeted floor, forgotten. At least for a while.
Jace doesn’t like Magnus Bane. He doesn’t hate him, but he doesn’t really like him either, not really. But that doesn’t matter. All that matters is that Alec loves Magnus and that’s reason enough for Jace to defend the warlock and Alec’s relationship with him. That’s what parabatai do.

And so Jace stands by Alec’s side, always, and makes sure that both Alec and his lover receive the respect they deserve. All he wants is for Alec to be happy. But never, not once, does it cross his mind that…

“I wonder if Magnus will offer Alec immortality. You know, so that they can be together forever?” Isabelle remarks offhandedly while they’re walking back to the Institute, just Jace and her; Alec already took off to Magnus’.

And Jace almost stumbles because… because this has never occurred to him, this possibility, that Alec might… that Alec would even consider…

Jace’s chest clenches in something achingly similar to panic. Because if Alec does that, if Alec allows himself to be turned immortal, somehow, in some way - he will become a Downworlder. And that means their parabatai bond will be broken. And Jace will lose him!

Though he tries to guard his thoughts, his feelings, to push them back, some of his fears must seep through, mirrored in his face, because Isabelle rushes to add, “I’m not saying that Alec will do it, he hasn’t mentioned anything to me, anything at all—”

Jace interrupts her, his voice harsher than he intended, because he doesn’t want to hear any more, he doesn’t want to discuss it or even think about it! “Whatever Alec decides, I’ll support him, one hundred percent,” he states and stomps away from Isabelle who stares after him with a concerned look.

His words sounded so firm and steadfast, filled with conviction, but Jace knows better. He knows the truth. He wants Alec to be happy, yes, he really does - but not like this. Not at the cost of their bond.

Jace will not lose Alec. He will not give up a part of his soul. If it comes to it, he will fight to keep his parabatai, and fight dirty if need be. And if it makes him a selfish, self-centered bastard, so be it!
A romantic Jalec. Yes, I really wrote a romantic Jalec. It’s an AU, present time, no powers, that starts with Clace and Malec, and turns into Jalec. Trigger warning for death. Yes, it’s sad. Then it gets slightly better. (Unbeta’d)

Clary dies in childbirth. She’s 25 and they’re expecting a girl, a tiny kick-ass *GI Jane*. They plan to call her Amatis after Clary’s godmother, the older sister of her step-dad Luke. And then Clary dies. And their daughter dies with her.

Jace… Jace falls to pieces. He just *breaks*. And if it weren’t for Alec, who has been his best friend since kindergarten, whose family took Jace in after his parents died in a car crash, who was Jace’s best man at his wedding with Clary, who helped Jace paint Amatis’ room and assemble all the impossible furniture from IKEA… If it weren’t for Alec, Jace would break irrevocably.

But no, Alec’s there, always, whenever Jace needs him. He moves Jace into his and Magnus’ loft, he helps Jace pack Clary’s things, helps him get rid of all the stuff that Jace and Clary and their extended family bought for Amatis… and when Jace’s knees buckle at his wife’s and child’s funeral, he’s there to prop him up physically, steady as a rock.

It’s Alec who helps Jace regain some semblance of normalcy.

And two years later, Jace’s there to return the favor. He wishes it weren’t ever needed. Oh, just how much he wishes it!

When Magnus dies of cancer, two short weeks after having been diagnosed, he’s only 32 and he just made partner in his law firm. And Alec just… *stops*. His whole life simply comes to a halt. He doesn’t become emotional, he doesn’t rage against the world like Jace did after Clary’s death, he just… *checks out*.

But Jace is there, right there. He takes care of everything, from bills to funeral arrangements. It’s he who fights with Magnus’ father when the bastard has the audacity to try to get his filthy hands on his son’s estate. Jace sics Magnus’ lawyer buddies, Ragnor Fell and Catarina Loss, on him, and he doesn’t allow the guy to get within a hundred feet of Alec.

And he’s patient. Jace wasn’t aware he knew how to be this patient. He moves Alec into his new flat, far away from all the things that remind Alec of his dead husband, but he doesn’t push, he gives no ultimatums. He’s just… *there*. And slowly, so very, very slowly he manages to pull Alec out of his shell.

Because he knows, he *remembers* what it’s like.

And Alec never moves out. And Jace never asks him to.

They watch TV together, curled up on the couch, under one afghan and with their feet inextricably tangled. They split the bills and buy groceries and cook dinner together. They go on vacation together, the first vacation for both of them since they lost their partners. They even get a dog
together…

And soon, they become one entity in the eyes of their friends, *Jace-and-Alec*, not really two people but one unit. For their neighbors, they’re “the widowers from 12B.” For the giggling staff of the little café down the block, they’re “the cute couple that tips well…”

4 years, 3 months and 2 days after Clary dies and 2 years 1 month and 11 days after Magnus’ death, they kiss for the first time. They’re making steaks for dinner - and it *just happens*. It’s the barest brush of lips, noses bumping, and there’s no urgency behind it, it simply… is. And then they eat their dinner and walk their dog and watch TV, still curled up under the same afghan.

And when they make love for the first time, it’s as if something hurting and raw is finally soothed. It feels like a deep, content exhale after a back-breaking weight has been dropped off one’s shoulders.

“What do you think that they would say if they could see us now?” Alec asks, lying on his back in their luxuriously wide bed.

Jace, feeling pleasantly drowsy, rubs his cheek against Alec’s chest and smiles at the sensation of his lover’s knuckles running up and down his naked back. “Clary and Magnus?” Jace’s smile widens. “They would say, ‘Finally!’”
PDAs

Chapter Summary

Alec and Magnus, holding hands. (Unbeta'd)

Their first very public kiss aside, Magnus is aware that Alec’s not given to public displays of affection. He’s reserved, stoic, some people would even call him repressed - which Magnus knows is not true, oh, it’s so not true! But yes, Alec’s upbringing has done a number on him, curse the whole Shadowhunter society and its backward rules.

So, when Alec takes Magnus’ hand in his and entwines their fingers while they’re walking back home from their favorite restaurant, Magnus startles a bit and looks over at his lover, expression quizzical. But Alec’s not looking at him, his hazel eyes are roaming around, taking in all the sights of New York after dark, and he seems… happy, genuinely happy. There’s even a little smile on his lips.

And Magnus realizes that Alec’s not even aware of what he has done, that he’s holding Magnus’ hand in public, rubbing Magnus’ soft skin with his callused thumb, back and forth, back and forth...

Magnus doesn’t say anything, reluctant to break this magical moment. He’s letting Alec lead the way, walking blind himself, because he’s so enthralled by the serene expression on his lover’s face and he’s trying to etch this moment into his memory forever.

It’s a summer night in New York and Alexander is walking hand in hand with him through the streets that never sleep. And Magnus is filled with light.
“Have you ever considered becoming immortal? You know, for Magnus,” Jace asks. This thing has been bothering him ever since Isabelle brought it up and he really needs to know the answer.

They’re in the smaller of the two kitchens at the Institute, the private family one, and Alec’s cooking, which is always a treat. The smells wafting through the room are already making Jace’s mouth water. But after Jace’s question, Alec takes the pan off the stove, apparently to give Jace his undivided attention.

Alec turns around, and crossing his arms over his chest, he leans against the kitchen counter. His expression is not surprised or offended, simply serious. “No, I have never considered it,” he replies with absolute certainty.

Jace’s so relieved he feels almost lightheaded and he’s glad that he’s sitting down at the table by one of the stained glass windows. He’s relieved - but also curious. “Why not?”

Alec stares at him for a moment. “Because of you,” he replies and Jace blinks at him, shocked. “And Izzy and Max and the rest of my family and friends. But mostly because of you. Gaining immortality would mean becoming a Downworlder - which wouldn’t be so terrible per se, but!”

He pauses and turns his eyes to the beautifully colored glass, lit up with late afternoon sun. “It would also mean breaking my bond with you. And not just that, it would mean watching you grow old and die. And I couldn’t stand that. You’re a part of my soul, Jace. When I took that vow ten years ago, I meant it - I still mean every word. And our bond doesn’t mean any less to me now just because I’ve fallen in love.”

Jace is staring down at his hands, clasped tightly on the table, and his eyes burn a little, his throat is a little tight. Nobody has ever given him this. Nobody has ever regarded him as so important. Nobody.

He clears his throat and looks up. “You have put a lot of thought into it.”

Alec shrugs. “It’s inevitable, I guess, when your lover is immortal.”

“But doesn’t it bother you that he will survive you and eventually move on?” Realizing how it sounds, Jace rushes to add, “I mean, I’m not saying that he doesn’t love you or that you’re easily forgotten or something…”

Alec laughs a little at Jace’s flustered words. “I get you, don’t worry.” Then he sighs. “Magnus is… Magnus. It took me a while to make peace with the reality of us, but…” He falls silent, thinking. “I understand now that his immortality is simply an inseparable part of him. And if I’m not willing to give up my mortality and my bond with you, to change who I am to this extent, how could I demand it of him? How could I ever ask him to become mortal or swear off any lovers after I’m gone? Wouldn’t that be terribly hypocritical?”
Jace shrugs. “Emotions are not always logical,” he demurs. “You can’t help how you feel.”

“No, but you can choose if you will act on those feelings,” Alec replies.

“True,” Jace admits.

Alec smiles softly. “So, did I allay your fears?”

Jace’s eyebrows shoot up. “My fears?”

Laughing, Alec turns back towards the stove and puts the pan back on. “Yes. Izzy told me that you might need to talk about this, that she rattled you quite a bit, apparently.”

Jace twists his lips sourly. *That she-devil, ratting on him!* “She did not!”

Still chuckling, Alec says, “Whatever helps you sleep at night.”

Jace grumbles some more, but secretly he thinks, *You do, Alec. You help me sleep at night and wake up in the morning. You’re the one thing in my life that always makes sense, my parabatai.*
Wasteland

Chapter Summary

Jace and Alec land in a wasteland. (Unbeta'd)

They were running from the battlefield, overwhelmed by Valentine’s superior numbers, but just as he and Alec were about to step through the portal that Magnus opened for them to Idris, something hit its shimmering purple surface, some magical discharge, and they didn’t manage to react fast enough, they couldn’t stop anymore, and they tumbled through…

And now they are stuck here, in this grim, dark desert of ashy dunes and howling winds, in a place that’s definitely not Idris, stuck and unable to return back home. All they can do is hope, hope and pray that their friends and loved ones find a way to retrieve them…

Jace’s standing at the cave entrance, looking out at the desolate wasteland. They discovered the underground complex soon after their arrival, fortunately, for it offered them shelter from the freezing winds driving ash across the gray dunes. Shelter and water clean enough to drink, a small lake in one of the deeper chambers. Though food, that will become a problem very soon.

Food - and Alec’s cough. It’s hard not to notice that it’s getting worse, much more frequent and harsher with every fit, so harsh in fact, that it hurts Jace to listen to it. From the moment they fell through the gate, Alec has had a hard time breathing, he seems unable to draw air into his lungs, as if it were too thin or maybe noxious. Jace too has noticed that there’s something wrong with it, but all he feels is a slight tickle in the back of his throat. He doesn’t know why, why he’s resistant to it and Alec’s not…

Jace leaves his post by the cave entrance and goes back to his parabatai. They’ll have to head back down to the lake again soon. Alec will need to drink and they have nothing with them that they could fill with water, nothing at all, their hunting gear is all they have. Besides, Alec’s breathing marginally easier down there. But Jace knows that once they head down, they won’t come back up again, Alec just won’t have the strength for it. And Jace will not leave him! Who knows what might still be crawling through these caves. But if someone does come for them, and they’re not up here to spot them, their footprints awash with sifting ash a long time ago…

He’s torn by the dilemma of their situation: if they go, they might miss their one chance for a rescue, but if they stay, Alec will suffocate all that faster! But as he drops to his knees by Alec, who’s curled up on his side on the cold stone floor, his breath coming in hard, wheezing gasps, his decision is made: there’s blood on Alec’s lips and his face is turning bluish gray from the lack of oxygen. Alec’s dying on him!

“Hey, hey, Alec,” Jace whispers urgently, taking Alec’s face gently in his hands. “Alec, come on. This is not a good time to fall asleep. You must help me keep watch. You know me, born slacker…” He’s trying to keep the despair out of his voice, cover it with terrible jokes.

His parabatai’s eyes flutter open and they’re red, the vessels in them burst from how hard he’s trying to drawn breath into his starving lungs.

“Yes, that’s it,” Jace praises him, his smile wide and more than a little manic. “That’s it, buddy.
We need to get back down, to the lake. It’ll be easier for you to breathe down there, you’ll see.”

Alec tries to moisten his cracked lips with his tongue. “Look… out,” he rasps out, wheezing. “Rescue… must see…” And there must be something in Jace’s face, his despair simply too great to hide, because Alec insists more strongly, “Magnus will… come!” Then he’s seized with a coughing fit again, the most agonizing yet.

And Jace lifts him up gently and allows Alec to rest against his chest. He holds his parabatai upright, arms wound around him, and waits for the coughing fit to pass; there’s nothing else either of them can do.

And he feels like crying, because he knows that Alec’s faith in Magnus is not misplaced, he does not doubt that Magnus will try to find them, that he’ll move heaven and earth to discover what happened to his Alexander, anything for Alec. He will try - but Jace is not so sure that he will succeed. Whatever world this is, whatever dimension - because it’s definitely not home! - he’s certain that it was a fluke that they landed here, an accident, not anyone’s intent. So how can they be found if what brought them here was simply some random discharge of magic, if there are no clues to be followed? He is trying to stay optimistic, he really is, but every cough that rattles in Alec’s chest, every shudder that runs through his body, makes it harder and harder not to succumb to despair…

Alec’s cough finally subsides and they just sit there for a moment, drawing strength from each other. Jace’s hugging Alec from behind, cheek propped on Alec’s tousled head, Alec’s gripping his arms tight, and Jace’s contemplating their options, to stay or to go, to stay or to go, there are only two and both seem damning and both end in Alec’s suffering, maybe even in his death… And Jace can’t take it, he can’t take this helplessness, what to do, what to do…?

And outside, the winds howl, driving flakes of ash into the cave.
Little Archer Boy

Chapter Summary

Magnus meets a little archer boy. (Unbeta'd)

“Mr Warlock, sir? Mr Warlock, could you wake up now, please? I really need to go home. Mr Warlock?”

Magnus groans. His head’s pounding and that voice - a child’s voice - is terribly persistent. He opens one eye only to realize that he’s lying on the ground in a dirty alley - and a boy of maybe eleven years is kneeling over him and shaking his shoulder gently. He’s dressed all in black - and there’s a rune on his small hand. A Shadowhunter child!

Magnus sits up fast which does not help his headache and the boy scoots away a little, but he’s still looking at him with wide hazel eyes. His cheeks are pale and his hair is tousled, dark locks sticking up every which way.

“Ah, yes, I’m awake. I’m okay. I’m perfectly fine, don’t worry,” Magnus rushes to calm the child because the boy looks like he might actually start crying. After Magnus’ reassurance, his shoulders drop in relief. “What happened?”

The boy looks shifty for a moment. “I was out on a hunt!” he blurts out finally, then he reaches out and grabs the small bow lying on the ground nearby.

Magnus is about to snort - there’s no way this child was out hunting, not even in the company of elders! - but he swallows his reaction, because the boy looks so earnest about the whole thing. “Yes?” he prompts.

The little Shadowhunter rushes to add, “And there was a demon and I saw him stalking you and then he jumped you and I shot him. Dead. I shot him dead.” His voice wobbles a bit. “I killed him.”

Magnus’ heart aches a little for the child. “It was a dangerous beast, boy,” he states, his voice firm but kind. “It might have looked like a man, but it was a monster. You saved my life.” He reaches out slowly and squeezes the boy’s shoulder. “You saved me and I thank you.”

The child hugs his bow tightly to his chest and nods, his pale cheeks flushing a little with pride after hearing Magnus’ words. But then something in his pocket makes a shrill sound, a cellphone probably, and his eyes open wide again, and he scrambles to his feet. “But now I really need to go home! Mom and dad will be so mad! I shouldn’t even be here,” he admits in a whisper, as if his parents could hear him.

Magnus smiles up at him. He’s sitting in a cold puddle but the child’s already freaking out enough without him making any sudden movements. “Well, if you hadn’t been here, I would be probably dead now, so… I’m glad you were here. And that you stayed with me till I woke up.”

The boy nods again. “I couldn’t just leave you. What if something happened to you after I left?”

Magnus finds the child terribly endearing.
There’s the shrill sound again and the boy jumps a good foot high. “I… uh, I have to go now?” he says, making the statement sound like a question. Then he starts backing away. “Take care of yourself, Mr Warlock? Next time I might not be there!” He waves a little, then he turns and runs.

Magnus laughs. But then he remembers. “Wait, kid! What’s your name?” he calls out, but the boy has already disappeared.

Shaking his head, Magnus slowly gets up and makes a disgusting face at his ruined pants and squishy shoes. But when he remembers the child again, his concerned little face and the little bow he hugged to his chest like a talisman, a smile returns to his face.

Yeah, maybe the next generation of Shadowhunters won’t be so bad.
A Valuable Lesson or Two

Chapter Summary

Alec is the archer in the family. (Unbeta'd)

Alec is the archer in the family for one very simple reason - well, two actually. Izzy has no interest in archery. Period. And Jace, the Golden Boy, the best and brightest of his generation… can’t hit the broad side of a barn with an arrow.

It’s the third time in a row that Jace, a boy of twelve at this time, misses the practice target, his arrow clattering to the tiled floor instead. He growls and makes as if to break the bow over his knee but Hodge jumps in to stop him.

“There’s something wrong with that thing!” Jace curses and points angrily at the bow in Hodge’s hands. “It just doesn't shoot right!”

Hodge smirks, obviously taking immense pleasure from Goldilock’s frustration. “Alec?” he calls out to the Lightwoods’ eldest child. “Could you come here for a second?”

Alec, who’s been running arrows at back of the shooting range, startles a little, but he sets his stele and the arrow he’s been working on down, and trots over. “Yes, Hodge?”

Hodge hands him the bow and an arrow from the quiver he has hanging at his hip. “Can you hit the target, please?”

Alec frowns at him, a little confused, but he takes the bow and the arrow and under Jace’s suspicious glare takes up the proper position, aims and shoots, hitting the bullseye, right in the middle.

“He cheated!” Jace snaps angrily.

Alec turns to him, completely baffled. “How can you cheat at bow shooting?”

Hodge, who’s grinning widely now, hands Alec three more arrows. “Would you do Mr Wayland the honor of showing him how it’s done?” he asks, his mocking tone aimed at the blond child.

Alec takes the arrows and with one last bewildered glance at Jace, he shoots all three arrows in quick succession, hitting the bullseye with every single one of them.

Seeing this, Jace growls again and stomps out of the room, slamming the door shut so hard the stained glass windows rattle in their frames. Hodge guffaws so hard his eyes fill with tears.

Alec blinks at the door, then turns to Hodge. “What’s with him?” Alec asks, uncomprehending.

Still grinning, Hodge reaches out and squeezes Alec’s shoulder affectionately. “Ah, don’t worry about it. Our Golden Boy just learned a valuable lesson or two, is all.”

“He did?” Alec says uncertainly.
Hodge nods. “Yes. First, that he can’t be the best at *everything*. And second, that everybody is best at something.” He smiles at Alec. “And you, you’ll always be the better archer because he simply lacks the temperament for it. So don’t let anyone ever tell you that you’re not as good as him - you’re just as good, simply at different things.”

Alec looks up at him for a moment, then he whispers gratefully, “Thanks, Hodge.”

Hodge nods again and pulls the boy close for a quick hug around the shoulders. “Now,” he says, letting go, “show me the arrows you runed.”
The Necklace

Chapter Summary

And now to Lydia’s wedding necklace... (Unbeta’d)

“And now to Lydia’s wedding necklace,” Izzy says, sprawled lazily on Alec’s bed while Alec’s trying on the shirt he plans on wearing for the wedding. “I’ve asked Denise to bring back a selection of necklaces from Idris tomorrow…”

Alec turns around. “There’s no need,” he interrupts her. “I… uh… I actually got one already.”

Isabelle sits up, her eyebrows shooting up in surprise. “You do?”

“I do,” he responds reluctantly. Then he steps towards his dresser and with a furtive glance thrown at his sister, he pulls out a black velvet pouch.

Izzy scrambles off the bed, making grabby hands. “Let me see! Let me see!”

Alec hands over the pouch. “I bought it in Alicante, a long time ago,” he admits, a little embarrassed, while she pulls the strings open. “I’ve never spent money on anything, not on clothes or weapons, so I had some saved, and…”

Izzy shakes the necklace out of the pouch and into her open hand. And then she gasps in wonder as the pendant shimmers on her palm. “Alec,” she breathes out and raises her eyes to him. “It’s beautiful!”

Alec’s cheeks color slightly and he shrugs. “When I saw it, I just had to buy it,” he says quietly and touches the jewelry gently with his fingers. “I thought that… if I ever did get married, despite…” He pauses, dropping his hand, then he continues, “I wanted my future wife to wear this. I want Lydia to wear this.”

Izzy looks down at the necklace for a moment, then back up at her brother. Her eyes are softer than before. “You like her a lot, don’t you?” she asks.

“Yes, I do, Izzy,” he confirms. “I might not be able to give her the kind of love she deserves, but I do like her very much. She’s amazing. And I couldn’t wish for a better friend.” Seeing her expression, he adds quickly, “And I know what you want to say, that marriage should be about more than a simple friendship, but…” He swallows. “I could do a lot worse, considering. To have a trusted friend for a partner, it really is the best thing I can hope for…”

Isabelle runs her thumb over the sparkling pendant. “I still think you’re making a huge mistake, Alec,” she whispers, then she looks up and gives him a shaky smile. “But if you insist on doing it anyway, I’ll stand by your side and support you in any way you need.”

He smiles back at her and squeezes her shoulder gratefully.

She lifts the necklace. “And this will look lovely on Lydia. You have chosen well, big brother.”

And they both watch as the pendant dances in the soft ambient light, shaped and shimmering like a
tear.
Jace stares dumbly at the space where just seconds ago, the purple surface of the portal shimmered gently. Now, there’s… nothing. No portal - and what’s more important, no Alec.

“What…?” Clary starts asking, confused, but she’s interrupted by Isabelle, who is walking towards them across the courtyard.

“Where are Alec and Magnus?” Izzy calls.

Clary turns to her. “Alec said that they would be right behind us.”

Isabelle’s eye widen when she stops beside Jace and Clary. “They are still in New York? With Valentine coming?” Her voice is rising, drawing the attention of the people gathered at the Gard.

And then, a fire message burns into life in front of Jace, the paper uncurling from the flames. He raises his hand and catches the note deftly before it can flutter to the ground.

“‘I’m staying with Magnus,’” Jace reads aloud. “‘I’ll be your eyes and ears on this end…’” His voice trails off. He can feel Clary staring at him, but he doesn’t raise his eyes from the paper.

“He’s staying with Magnus?” Izzy says in disbelief. “But surely Magnus was invited to…” She cuts herself off and draws in a sharp breath. “She wouldn’t.”

Clary looks at her. “Who? Your mom?” She pauses. “Well, Alec did mention Maryse before he sent us through…”

There are loud footsteps coming closer, and then Maryse’s sharp voice echoes through the courtyard, “What’s going on here? Why aren’t you moving, people? Evacuees from other Institutes will be arriving here shortly, we need to clear out!”

Isabelle swings around. “Alec didn’t come through the portal before it shut down. He stayed in New York.”

Maryse stops short, her eyes widening slightly, and Robert, who was following her, now asks, in dismay, “Why would he do something like that? Doesn’t he understand how insanely dangerous that is?”

Isabelle is staring hard at her mother. “You did extend an invitation to Idris to Magnus Bane, too, didn’t you, mother? Because he isn’t just your son’s lover, he’s a trusted, powerful ally.”

Maryse squares her shoulders. “He’s a warlock! There’s no place for Downworlders in Alicante!” she snaps.

Robert and Clary turn to her with disbelief, but Izzy holds her head even higher, radiating fury. “Do you have a problem with him being a warlock - or simply Magnus Bane? The guy who
witnessed you murdering Downworlders on Valentine’s behalf?”

Narrowing her eyes, Maryse warns, “I won’t have you talking to me like that, Isabelle.”

But Izzy takes a step closer. “Yes, you will. Because thanks to your damn prejudice, my brother is now stuck in New York which will soon be overrun by Valentine and his hordes.”

“It was his decision,” Maryse protests.

“That you forced on him!” Izzy yells, and all the people around, mostly the staff of their Institute, look away. “Do you really not know your son at all? What did you think he would do, if you closed off Alicante to his lover? Do you think so little of him, that you believed he would abandon him?”

They’re arguing, yelling at each other, Jace’s family, Izzy and Maryse, and Robert now too, trying to get his wife and his daughter to calm down, vainly, of course - but Jace, Jace is not listening. None of that matters to him. All he can think of is Alec, stuck in New York, within Valentine’s grasp. All he can see is the fire message - and the last lines, added at the very end, words aimed at Jace alone, a private message.

*I’m sorry I lied to you. If I had told you, you would’ve wanted to stay with me, I know you. And I couldn’t have that. I needed you safe, somewhere Valentine wouldn’t get to you. He can’t get to you again! He must not! Please, be safe, my parabatai.*

Jace’s staring at those words, re-reading them again and again. And his heart is seizing, driving all the air from his lungs. He would’ve stayed. He *should’ve* stayed. That’s what *parabatai* do, they fight side by side, they protect each other.

*I needed you safe.*

That *idiot*! Doesn’t he get that it works both ways?
Magnus sees Alec smile his bright, unrestrained smile only once - shortly after their first kiss, after the called-off wedding, at the Institute. For the first time since Magnus has met him, Alec stands tall and unburdened, head held high and shoulders squared. And his eyes are devoid of shadows.

And then he meets Camille…

It’s not the kiss that brings it all crashing down, it’s Camille’s words, hard truths that cannot be unheard, unlearned, forgotten. Truths about the reality of them, Alec’s mortality, Magnus immortality, and the way things will inevitably end one day, the tragedy of their love woven into their relationship from day one.

And after that, Alec never smiles that broad, perfectly happy smile again, the one through which a heart as light as a feather and a spirit finally free of all fetters shine, a mind finally at peace with the body. Never again.

Yes, he smiles much more often these days than before, while he still allowed himself to be ruled by other people’s wishes and demands, and his smiles are genuine and honest and sweet and full of affection so deep that Magnus’ heart skips a beat every time he sees one them…

But there’s always the ever-present shadow of crushing truth that bows his head and rounds his shoulders. And the worst thing is, that Alec never says anything, as has always been his wont…

And Magnus… Magnus feels genuinely like crying, because this is not what he wanted, it’s not, definitely not. But he can’t do anything about it, nothing at all, because that’s the reality of them.

You watch the people you care about age and die.

And Alec will age and die. And Magnus will have to watch. And neither of them can forget that. And the first victim of that inevitable end is Alec’s unburdened smile, gone forever.
Cultivating Relationships

Chapter Summary

How did Luke get Alec's number? (Unbeta'd)

Shortly before dawn there’s a soft knock on the door of Magnus’ bedroom and Luke, still cozily tucked into Magnus’ large four-poster bed, looks up. It’s Alec, standing in the doorway.

“Hey,” Alec says quietly, “Magnus said you were doing much better.”

Luke smiles broadly and raises himself up on the pillows. “Yeah. And from what I hear, I have you to thank for it.”

Alec shrugs a little awkwardly. “It was Jace and Simon who procured all the ingredients needed for the potion and it was Magnus who prepared it. All I did was lend Magnus my strength, it wasn’t a big deal, really.”

Luke shakes his head. “That’s where you’re wrong, Alec. There aren’t many Shadowhunters who would willingly share their strength with a warlock to save a werewolf.”

Alec looks down and hunches his shoulders a little. “Yeah, well…” Then he clears his throat. “But that’s not why I’m here. I really need to get back, but I wanted to give you this.” He walks up to the bed and hands Luke a slip of paper.

Luke takes it. “What is it?”

“It’s my phone number,” Alec says. “You’re now the alpha of the New York pack, and with all that’s going on, with Valentine and the Cup and Jocelyn Fairchild’s kidnapping…” He shrugs. “If you need help, call me, alright?”

Luke stares at him, his face revealing nothing. “Are you just trying to cultivate proper interspecies relationships as the acting head of the New York Institute?” he asks.

The corners of Alec’s mouth quirk up a little. “How about extending a hand in friendship?”

Looking down at the slip of paper, then back up at Alec, Luke smiles, his expression open and warm now. “Yeah, I like that better,” he agrees.
“Magnus? Don’t take it the wrong way, please, but - what’s that smell?” Alec asks when their kiss comes to its inevitable end, enforced by their need to breathe.

Magnus raises his eyebrows. “Are you saying that I stink, Alexander?” he replies with mock offense.

“What? No!” Alec blushes deeply, which Magnus finds entirely too endearing. “I just…” He reaches out carefully and finds Magnus’ head with his hands. Then he leans in, close to his face, and - sniffs. “That smell. It’s all over your face.”

Magnus frowns. “My face…?” And then he gets it. Of course! Alec can’t see! He grins. “Oh! That’s my makeup!”

Alec’s eyebrows shoot up from behind his wraparound sunglasses. “Makeup? You are wearing makeup? Men wear makeup, too?” he asks, bewildered. “Really? I mean… Really? Usually, I only smell something similar around my mother or Izzy, I didn’t know.”

Magnus laughs. “Well, the Clave would have a collective apoplexy if one of your manly men came in wearing makeup, I bet.”

“Can I touch it?” Alec asks curiously, head tilted to the side like a cat.

Smiling, Magnus nods. “Of course. I use good quality products so don’t worry about smudging,” he tells Alec. “Today, I just used some foundation and blush on my cheeks, my favorite gold eyeliner and mascara. Oh, and eyeshadow, just a little.”

Despite Magnus’ assurance, Alec’s touch is feather-light as he runs his fingers over Magnus’ cheeks, a soft, wondrous smile on his lips. He reaches Magnus’ eyes and brushes against his eyelashes, over his eyelids and eyebrows…

Magnus sits there, perfectly still, and stares at his own reflection mirrored in Alec’s sunglasses. He watches as Alec’s fingers map the powdery softness of his face, their calloused pads a little rough on Magnus’ skin. He wants to close his eyes and lean into Alec’s touch because he can’t remember the last time anyone touched him so gently, as if he were made of spun glass.

“I wish I could see you, just once.” Alec whispers longingly after he’s done with his exploration. He takes Magnus’ face in both of his hands and runs his thumbs over Magnus’ cheekbones. “You must be so beautiful…”

And Magnus’ heart clenches painfully with regret because against some hurdles, even his magic is powerless. He wishes so hard that it were in his power to bestow the gift of sight to Alec. But it isn’t.

“Will you kiss me now again, please?” Magnus asks, his voice husky with emotions.
Alec smiles, leaning close, but before his lips touch Magnus’, he whispers, “Just for the record, you smell heavenly.”

And then his lips claim Magnus’ once more.
“YOU. HAVE. BEEN. AVOIDING. ME.”

Jace is in the middle of swinging his Seraph Blade when he hears that robotic voice. He freezes and trips, his routine ruined. He didn’t notice Alec sneaking up on him. Quickly, he regains his composure but he doesn’t turn to his parabatai.

“I have not,” Jace replies flatly, raising his blade again.

“YES. YOU. HAVE.” comes the robotic reply. “WHY.”

Jace’s heart is starting to hammer, his breath coming out faster. He’s not ready to have this conversation, he’s just not ready. That’s why he has been avoiding Alec, he can admit that at least to himself.

“JACE.”

He doesn’t listen. Maybe if he pretends that Alec’s not here, his parabatai will give up and go away. Go away, go away, go away… But he forgets how stubborn Alec can be.

Jace swings around, stabbing with his blade, when Alec’s suddenly there. He grabs Jace by the wrist, raises his arm, twists and turns - and Jace’s lying flat on his back, his sword arm still up in the air and in Alec’s tight grip, Alec’s boot pressed hard to his shoulder. Jace gasps at the unexpected move and Alec glares down at him mutely.

“Fine!” Jace snaps.

Alec lets go of him and pulls his smartphone out of his back pocket. “TALK. TO. ME,” he demands through his app.

Jace drops his Seraph Blade to the floor, sits up and rests his arms on his bent knees. He drops his head and whispers, “You shouldn’t have done it.”

There’s a pause, then some quiet tapping. “VALENTINE. WOULD. HAVE. KILLED. BOTH. ME. AND. CLARY. IT. WAS. JUST. SMART. MATH. RATHER. ONE. THAN. BOTH.”

“You can’t know that he would’ve actually done it…” Jace mumbles, still not looking up. 

*Tap-tap-tapping.* “YES. I. CAN.”

Jace’s head snaps up. “You can’t!” he yells, and jumps to his feet. “And what made you think your death would have been any more acceptable to me than Clary’s?”

Alec sighs, lowers his eyes to his phone and taps out his response. “YOU. LOVE. HER.”
Jace takes a step closer. “I love you, too, you fool! Damn it, don’t you get it? I could have never made such a choice, never, and it doesn’t matter what stupid nonsense you convinced yourself of. I could never, ever choose between you and Clary! She might be my girlfriend but you’re my parabatai!”

More tapping. “THEN. WE. WOULD. HAVE. BOTH. DIED.”

With a resolute head shake Jace denies that. “No. No. I would’ve found a way out. I would’ve saved you both!” He isn’t sure who he’s trying to convince here.

Alec stares at him for a moment, his face impassive. Then, “WE. ARE. BOTH. ALIVE,” he objects.

“But at what cost?” Jace yells and throws up his hands in frustration. Then he takes a deep breath to calm himself, steps even closer to Alec and raises his hand to touch the thick purple scaring on Alec’s throat where the blade sliced in. “At what cost, Alec?” he adds brokenly.

Alec draws in a quiet breath at Jace’s touch. He searches Jace’s expression, then he responds, “I. CAN. LIVE. WITH. THAT.”

Jace shakes his head again and looks up at Alec, his fingers still running gently over the scar. “At what cost, Alec?” he adds brokenly.

Alec shakes his head firmly. “NOT. YOUR. FAULT.”

Jace laughs bitterly and drops his hand. “How can you say that? If you hadn’t believed that I would’ve chosen Clary over you, you would’ve never done it!”

Alec tilts his head slightly and ponders that. Then he taps out a response. “NO. I. WOULD. HAVE. IT. WAS. STILL. THE. SMARTEST. WAY. OUT. TAKE. THE. HOSTAGE. OUT. OF. THE. EQUATION. NO. OTHER. WAY.”

"Killing yourself is not the smartest way out!” Jace protests loudly.

Alec frowns at him. “YOU. WOULD. HAVE. DONE. THE. SAME. THING,” he argues.

Jace waves a hand. “That’s different.” And when Alec just raises his eyebrows at him, he argues, “Well, it is!”

Huffing out a silent laugh, Alec taps out, “CAN. WE. AT. LEAST. AGREE. THAT. THIS. WHOLE. MESS. IS. ACTUALLY. VALENTINE’S. FAULT.”

“That we can do,” Jace allows with a small smile, feeling marginally better, like he always does after talking to Alec. And still, he usually avoids these heart-to-hearts. He has never claimed to be logical.

Alec smiles, too, then he looks down at the clock on his phone. “GOTTA. GO.”

“Where to?” Jace asks.

Tap-tap-tapping. “MAGNUS. FOUND. ME. A. SIGN. LANGUAGE. TUTOR.”

Jace’s eyebrows shoot up in surprise. “He did?” he says, and then he adds without thinking it through, simply going with his gut feeling because it seems right, “Can I come with?” And when Alec’s expression turns startled, he explains grudgingly, “I want to know how to talk to you. We
have enough issues between us as it is without adding a language barrier to them.”

Alec’s smile is soft and genuine. “I. WOULD. LIKE. THAT.”

Jace nods and picks up his Seraph Blade. “Great! Then let’s go!”
Jace knew he shouldn’t have gone on this mission. The intel was all wrong, he knew it, he felt it. His gut was telling him not to go. His parabatai was telling him not to go! But no, he had to be stubborn about it.

And now he’s stuck in the maze-like net of the Brooklyn sewer system, running for his life with demons at his heels. By the Angel!

He has tried everything to spot and avoid them - fighting is not an option, not with these odds, even Jace is not that stupid! - he has tried to activate all of his runes, every one of them that could in any way sharpen his senses, but the darkness down here is absolute - and using a witchlight? He could just as well advertise his position, so…

The idea hits him like a train. His parabatai is blind. This is his everyday reality, this pure, unadulterated blackness, and Alec has often told him about how his other senses seem to be working overtime… So! If he borrowed them…

No! What is he even thinking?! By the Angel, no! He knows how the bond works for them! Yes, they can borrow each other’s senses, but it also means that the one who’s being borrowed from, temporarily loses the use of them! When Alec once borrowed Jace’s sight, just to experience what seeing actually felt like, Jace was left half blind for the duration.

Which means that if Jace activated his parabatai rune and borrowed from Alec… he would leave Alec virtually helpless. Alec wouldn’t be left just sightless, he would lose his hearing, his sense of smell and touch, everything. He would literally lock Alec inside his body till he broke off the connection again! Jace swore to himself that he would never do that to his parabatai. Never! That he would never be so cruel, no matter the circumstances.

But when he hears the scuttling of claws on slimy bricks again, this time almost too late to avoid the creature, he knows he has no choice - he already tried every trick up his sleeve, every trick - but one. And if he does not do it, he will die down here!

Jace closes his eyes tight for a second, praying that Alec would forgive him, already begging for forgiveness - and then he takes out his stele, pulls up his shirt and activates his parabatai rune. And his senses expand…

… and at the Institute, Alec crumples to the ground, because it’s gone, it’s all gone! He can’t hear anything! His knees hit the floor, but he can barely feel it! All his senses, every one of them, muted or gone entirely. Just gone…

He starts hyperventilating almost immediately, his heart slamming so hard against his ribs that it hurts. Because he’s locked inside his head, locked inside, locked in! And though his mind, the warmth spreading from his parabatai rune, are trying to tell him what’s going on, that it’s just
Jace, that he needed his help, needed Alec’s strength - his sharpened senses - and he knows it’s temporary, his rational brain knows that… but he’s still panicking, feeling like he’s going mad from sensory deprivation, because he can’t sense anything, anything at all, anything…

Please, stop, by the Angel, please…

Isabelle’s sitting by her brother’s bedside, holding his hand and running her thumb over his knuckles, hoping that he somehow senses that she’s there with him, that he’s not alone!

She had to put him to sleep in the end because he was panicking so hard and there was no way to get through to him, not when he couldn’t hear or see or even feel anything. She had no choice…

And when Jace comes home, she will kill him! Because she will never be able to get the image of her big brother out of her mind, Alec huddled on the floor, hugging himself tight, and whispering over and over again, “Please, stop, please, stop…”

She will kill Jace for reducing her strong, independent, self-sufficient brother to this. And though she knows, objectively speaking, that Jace wouldn’t have done it, wouldn’t have taken Alec’s senses from him if he had any other choice, any at all, she knows that Jace loves Alec as much as she does, her protective instincts are still telling her to rip his balls off for this!

There’s a buzz, Alec’s cellphone ringing. Izzy takes it from the nightstand and looks at the screen: Jace. She picks up, still entirely too angry.

“Alec?” Jace’s says anxiously.

“Izzy,” she snaps. “If you want to talk to our brother, you’ll have to wait for him to wake up!”

“Wake up? What…” His voice sounds stricken. “By the Angel, I tried everything else, Izzy, I swear. I tried everything!”

And Isabelle feels her anger dissipating because she knows it to be truth, she knows Jace. Headstrong he might be, but he would never intentionally hurt his parabatai.

She looks at her brother, still fast asleep in his bed. “I know,” she sighs. “It’s just… it was bad, Jace. He had a panic attack so bad that…” She cuts herself off. “Come home. He’ll want to know you’re okay.”

“Will he?” Jace asks uncertainly, his words laced with bitterness.

“Yes, he will. Because he loves you,” Izzy answers with certainty, squeezing Alec’s hand. “Come home. Be here when he wakes up. You’ll need to talk. Because this can’t happen again, Jace. Not like this.”

There’s a pause. “Alright,” Jace whispers, hanging up.
Unexpected Side-Effects

Chapter Summary

Sequel to The Talk (Chapter 183). (Unbeta'd)

It happens during a battle with a horde of ravener demons.

The monsters are everywhere, crawling all over the floor and the walls and the ceiling, there are so many that it feels like the Shadowhunters must’ve stumbled across a nest of them or something.

Jace and Clary are fighting on one side of the large room, Alec and Izzy on the other, they’re separated by a mass of writhing, screaming bodies and they just can’t seem to get across, slashing and stabbing and stomping on anything that comes close - and who would’ve thought that sign language would be so useful for coordinating attacks under these circumstances? Go figure!

And that’s when it happens.

To Jace it feels like someone rammed a red hot poker through his right eye socket directly into his brain. The pain is so terrible that it borders on agony, and then…

~JACE! BEHIND YOU!~

And he moves, completely on instinct, still blinded by the pain, and he twists around and stabs and slashes, cutting the beast, almost twice as big as the rest of the raveners, in half with his Seraph Blade.

Its screech is almost deafening - and the rest of the horde roars with it. And then, with an abruptness so unexpected it’s almost terrifying, it’s over, all the remaining demons scatter and disappear through holes in the floor underground.

“So, it must have been a nest!” Izzy comments a little breathlessly and frowns down at her torn pants and scuffed boots.

Clary pears curiously at the huge carcass that’s still slowly falling apart and dissipating. “And this is the mother… thing?” she asks, wrinkling her nose. “Yuck!”

But Jace is barely listening to them because his head’s still hurting and his right eye is still streaming tears since the stabbing pain is ebbing away only very slowly. And he has no idea what just happened.

Jace presses the heel of his right hand into his right eye and rubs hard, trying to make it finally stop hurting, and when he looks across the room at Alec, he notices that his parabatai is staring at him, wide-eyed.

“What?” Jace mouths, frowning.

<<Did you actually hear me?>> Alec replies, using sign language.

“Yeah, so?” Jace replies loudly, irritated, because he doesn’t get what the big deal is. Of course he
heard Alec.

~Can you hear me now?~ Alec asks.

He asks. Without moving his mouth. His lips are completely still. His *mute parabatai* just *asked* him a question!

And - *ow, ow, ow*! - the stabbing pain flares back up again and Jace blinks hard to push back tears, but! He heard Alec! He actually *heard* him! And not with his ears, but with his *mind*.

Jace’s eyes, one rubbed raw, widen and his jaw drops. And he tries…

~*Yes*?~

And now it’s Alec’s turn to wince and he slaps his left hand over his left eye.<<*Ow!*>> he signs, squinting.

“Tell me about it, buddy,” Jace mutters, still in shock over this latest and very unexpected development.

Clary turns towards him. “Tell you what?” she asks curiously. And only now take both girls notice of the way Jace and Alec are staring at each other - in open-mouthed shock - across the large room.

Izzy steps closer to her brother. “What’s wrong, Alec? What happened?” she asks, concerned, and touches the hand he still has pressed to his left eye.

“Unexpected side-effects, I guess,” Jace replies dryly, since nothing else comes to his mind, his thoughts are just too jumbled.

Because how the heck can they even begin to explain this… this sudden telepathy - *telepathy*! - especially if they don’t understand it themselves?
No(i)sy Neighbors

Chapter Summary

Yet another Alec and Magnus are neighbors AU, present time, no powers. I seem to be very fond of this trope... (Unbeta'd)

“If you want to write about the life of normal people, you should actually try living it for a while, Magnus!”

That’s what his agent, Catarina Loss, told him - and that’s why he’s now stuck in a one room, no kitchen tiny hellhole of an apartment - if one can call it that! - in a part of town where he would never usually set foot! Dear God!

Turning his music louder in a vain hope that the reassuring thump-thump-thump would chase away any rats and/or cockroaches crawling in places he is too afraid to look, Magnus opens up his state of the art laptop and settles down to work.

Only to be interrupted by a quiet knocking that soon turns into a loud, obviously annoyed banging. With a sigh, Magnus gets up from the tiny table by the grimy window, mutes the music, and goes to answer the door, slightly nervous about what or whom he might find in the hallway.

He opens the rickety door and - looks down. And down. And down. There’s a slip of a boy standing there, with dark hair, blue eyes, glasses that keep sliding down his button of a nose - and with an indignant expression unfit for a child of his - undetermined - age.

“Yes?” Magnus asks uncertainly.

The squirt clears his throat. “Mr…?” he starts.

“Bane,” Magnus fills in automatically.

“Mr Bane, sir,” the child continues politely, drawing himself up. “If you would be so kind and turn down your music, sir? My dad really needs to sleep and he can’t in this racket.”

Magnus stares at the boy with his absolutely serious expression and large blue eyes that blink at Magnus from behind glasses fixed with duct tape, as Magnus notices.

“And you are…?” Magnus asks.

The boy draws himself up even more. “Christopher Lightwood, your neighbor, sir.” He holds onto his attitude a moment longer, but when Magnus just keeps staring at him - he has always considered children exotic creatures better left in their natural habitat, so he has no idea how to respond to this one - the boy crumples and looks up at Magnus imploringly. “Sir, please, my dad really needs to sleep, he has three jobs…”

In that moment, the door of the adjacent apartment opens and someone calls softly, “Christopher?”

The boy frowns at Magnus. “And now he’s awake. And it’s all your fault,” he blames Magnus and turns to the left. “Here, dad!”
There’s the sound of footsteps, then a tall, tall someone shuffles into view, working boots, jeans, and a flannel shirt. Dark hair and… gorgeous hazel eyes. Magnus is smitten. And then the man smiles apologetically and Magnus’ knees turn into jelly. Dear God!

“I apologize for my son,” the man says, laying one hand on the boy’s shoulder and extending the other for a handshake. “Alec Lightwood.”

Magnus automatically takes the hand and shakes it. And then holds it. It’s warm and calloused and big, with long fingers and… “Magnus Bane,” he blurts out quickly, realizing that he should say something, and finally lets go of his handsome neighbor’s hand.

The boy frowns up at his father. “Dad, you have nothing to apologize for,” he insists. “He is the one who should be sorry. He played his awful music so loud he woke you!” Christopher throws a stern look at Magnus.

Magnus feels chastised. He smiles bashfully at both father and son. “I’m sorry, I didn’t realize…” He waves a hand. “I just moved in and I was trying to work…”

Alec smiles back and draws his son close. “It’s okay, really. My son tends to get a little… overprotective.”

Alec looks down at the child with so much love in his eyes that Magnus’ heart clenches. He can’t remember his own father ever looking at him that way. Yes, he had all the money he could ever need or want, but love? Whereas these two, Alec and Christopher, don’t seem to have much - their clothes are clean but obviously old and mended - but their love for each other is undeniable.

“I promise to keep it down,” Magnus says, feeling the need to do at least this for them, something simple that’s very well in his power - and that can make their life a little easier.

Alec nods. “Thank you, Mr Bane—”

“Magnus,” Magnus corrects him.

Alec’s smile is almost blinding. “Magnus,” he allows. “I really appreciate that.”

“Now you need to go back to bed, dad,” little Christopher pipes up, aiming a worried look at his father. Then he reminds him, “You have a shift tonight.”

Smiling down at his son affectionately, Alec ruffles his hair. “You’re right.” Then he sweeps the child up, throwing him over his shoulder like a sack of potatoes. “Off we go. We’ll leave Mr Magnus to his work.” And with a nod at Magnus, he turns and heads for their apartment.

Christopher, hanging over his father’s shoulder, waves seriously. “Good-bye, Mr Magnus! Thank you for not being loud!”

Unwittingly, Magnus raises a hand and waves back. “Good-bye, Christopher,” he calls after them, and he stands there with a goofy smile on his face and one hand in the air, till the door of the neighboring apartment closes.

Huh, he thinks. Maybe Catarina’s idea isn’t half-bad after all.
Calm Anger

Chapter Summary

Jace hates hurting others. (Unbeta’d)

Jace is used to pain. A harsh thing to say when he’s just twelve years old, but that’s his reality, has been ever since he can remember. His father’s brutal lessons shaped him well…

He’s used to pain, but - his own. His own pain is alright, accepted, expected even. No pain, no gain, that used to be his father’s favorite motto. But Jace’s own pain! Not the pain of people Jace has come to love, despite his father’s teachings.

“I need you to draw a rune on my back,” Alec says one day, pulling his t-shirt off. “Here,” he touches a spot on the left side of his upper back. “Calm anger. It’s a huge one and I can’t fit it anywhere else.”

Jace swallows nervously. Because Alec’s right, the rune’s huge. And it will hurt. Jace knows, having had his own rune drawn years ago. For apparent reasons, being of a rather… explosive nature.

“Why do you of all people need a ‘calm anger’ rune?” Jace tries to stall. Why did Alec have to ask him to draw it?

Alec lets out a long breath. “We’re getting a visit from Idris tomorrow. A Clave representative. And she’s bringing her son with her, Preston. A few years back, I broke his nose,” he admits reluctantly.

Jace can’t help but laugh. Alec? Alec broke someone’s nose?

But Alec’s not laughing. He looks over his shoulder at Jace and he’s completely serious, even bleak. “I was punished for insubordination. I spent three days in a cell in the City of Bones, under the Silent Brother’s supervision. I never want to end up there again.”

Jace stops laughing. He didn’t know. He can’t even imagine being locked in one of the dark, windowless cells. “That was rather harsh, wasn’t it?”

Alec shakes his head a little, his dark hair falling into his eyes. “I don’t know why I was punished so severely. One iratze later and Preston was just fine. But I heard whispers that it had something to do with my parents, that I was turning out to be just like them. I don’t know what that was about…”

“So, why the rune?” Jace asks softly.

“Preston never forgave me, he became the laughing stock of all the kids at the academy after that. And ever since, he’s been trying to rile me up, get me into more trouble. Last time, he almost succeeded,” Alec whispers. “He knows what buttons to push with me. I’m not sure I can keep myself under control around him…” He pauses, then adds more firmly, “Besides, I would need to add that rune to my collection at some point anyway. So, why not now?”
**Why not when I’m not around to do it?** Jace asks quietly.

Alec looks at him again, over his shoulder. “Will you help me? I trust you to do it right and quickly.”

Jace is staring at his friend - yes, his friend, his father’s teachings be damned! - and Alec’s hazel eyes are so warm and honest and full of trust that Jace feels a pang of something in his chest. Alec needs him. Alec trusts him.

“All right,” Jace mumbles, and though Alec beams at him gratefully, Jace’s hands shake a little when he takes his stele out of his pocket.

And though he’s quick about it - as quick as he dares without risking a fumble - Alec’s every twitch, his every hiss of pain makes Jace’s throat tighten a little more. And the smell of burned flesh, the sight of layers of skin parting and curling… it makes him sick to his stomach.

When it’s all done, and Alec smiles at him in gratitude, grimacing a little at the pull of damaged skin, Jace just nods - and flees. He barely makes it to the bathroom before he throws up.

By the Angel, he knows that this is an everyday part of every Shadowhunter’s life, and he doesn’t mind doing it to **himself**, nobody has ever had more runes covering their body at his age than him, but… to hurt others? Especially people like **Alec**?

Jace remembers a falcon with a broken neck - and throws up again.

And even years later, when burning runes into other Shadowhunters’ bodies becomes a routine for Jace - in no small part thanks to Alec who must have sensed Jace’s unease, because from that moment on, he made Jace draw **all** his runes, made him get used to the process with someone who Jace could trust explicitly - his heart still clenches a little whenever his stele lights up over someone’s unblemished skin.

Because Jace might be used to pain, but he hates hurting others.
Survivors

Chapter Summary

A Jalec gif set on Tumblr made me all emotional. Thus a ficlet was committed.
(Unbeta'd)

The battle lasted for hours, laying waste to a good half of the Institute. Doors were blown, windows shattered, walls torn down… and no side won, all they managed to do was force Valentine and his hordes to retreat.

And now it’s over, Shadowhunters and their allies finally able to rest, slumped and sleeping wherever there’s still clean space, some not even caring about that. Clean-up can wait, food can wait. Rest is essential.

They find them fast asleep, Jace and Alec, curled up together in a narrow bed in one of the rooms still left standing untouched. Magnus and Clary stop in the doorway and actually laugh quietly, for the first time in what feels like eternity, amused by the tableau in front of them.

Jace and Alec must’ve sat down to rest for a little while and fallen asleep, still in their gear and with boots on, sharp weapons at hand, slowly sliding down the wall until they just curled up into each other, Alec with his back against the wall, Jace playing the little spoon, yet between his parabatai and any danger that could come in through the door, both protecting and protected at once.

And Magnus and Clary lean against the door frame, one left, the other right, arms crossed over their chests, and just watch their exhausted boyfriends sleep with tired smiles on their faces and no jealousy in their hearts.

They’re alive, they survived another day, another battle. But the war rages on.
The Painter

Chapter Summary

Sequel to The Magician (Chapter 138) and The Neighbor (Chapter 143). (Unbeta'd)

When Magnus opens his mail box and finds the post of Alexander Gideon Lightwood inside, *again* - this time a simple white envelope from Fairchild & Wayland, whoever that might be, though the second name tickles Magnus’ memory - he bangs his head against the wall.

Not again! First his cat, now the postman! Alec will think Magnus is stalking him, because how could anyone mistake the name Bane for Lightwood, is beyond any comprehension. Even their mail boxes are completely different: Alec’s is simply black, very butch, whereas Magnus’ is covered with glitter, because why not?

With a deep sigh, Magnus slams his mail box shut and starts dragging himself up the stairs, already dreading the stop he will have to make. And then he reaches the top floor - and groans, slapping a hand to his face.

There’s a cat carrier parked in front of his door with a giant cardboard sign propped up on top of it, reading one very distinctly annoyed word: SERIOUSLY? Not this again…

With another deep sigh, Magnus almost crawls towards his loft, then drops to his haunches in front of the box to peek inside. Yes, it’s Chairman Meow, alright, snoring away, contently curled up in one of Alec’s very soft looking shirts. If Magnus were a cat, he would also curl up and go to sleep on Alec’s shirt, so, there’s that.

And so Magnus gets up, unlocks his door and pushes it open, then he leans down, grips the handle of the carrier - and almost face-plants it into his loft, Alec’s letter flying out of his hand. Because the box is *stuck*! As in, stuck to the floor! The Chairman wakes up with an annoyed yowl.

“What the…?” Magnus mutters and bends down to take a look. Was Alec afraid that the kitten would escape with the carrier in tow so he glued it to the floor, or what?

He pulls. And pushes. He even tries shaking the thing, much to the Chairman’s irritation. In the end, Magnus lets the kitten out and when the box still refuses to move, his temper gets the better of him and he kicks the god-awful hellish terrible thing! And gets it unstuck. *Finally.*

Still huffing with annoyance, Magnus picks up the carrier and turns it upside down. Huh. Paint? Alec must’ve put it down in a puddle of spilled paint, cobalt blue. Magnus frowns, but yeah, he remembers seeing Alec with a bucket of paint and a brush shortly after Alec moved in. Is he still not finished decorating?

Shaking his head, Magnus takes the carrier in, sits it down behind the door to return it to Alec together with his post - and he’ll have to ask Alec if he got the box just for the Chairman, because if so, Magnus will pay him back! - but first, he needs a drink or two to calm down.

He shuts the door and goes to collect the spilled post - only to realize that the Chairman planted his butt on Alec’s letter. “Chairman!” Magnus moans in exasperation.
And then he freezes. And stares. Because the way the kitten is sitting…

Thanks to the Chairman’s paw and tail, curled up neatly, the name on the envelope now reads: ……… Gideon ….wood. Alexander Gideon Lightwood. Alexander Gideon Lightwood. Gideon Wood.

Gideon Wood!

No. Way.

Magnus shoots up, straightening so fast he feels almost lightheaded, and the kitten rabbits it with a frightened yowl. Revealing the sender on the envelope. Fairchild & Wayland. As in… Jace Wayland, the agent whose name Magnus couldn’t remember if his life depended on it?

Slowly, Magnus turns towards the painting, hanging on the opposite wall, right between the two large windows in his living room. And compares the background in the painting to what he can see outside. And he shuffles slightly to the left. A little bit more to the left. A step or two more, and he would be in Alec’s apartment - and the view would fit perfectly!

No. No. Way. Magnus is not that stupid. Or blind. Or slow.

“Kitten, dear,” he tells his cat that’s hiding behind the couch and watching his weird behavior suspiciously, “either I’m going to crack this mystery or make a complete fool of myself.”

And with that, he grabs the painting off the wall, and with the Chairman in tow, he marches over to Alec’s apartment. And starts knocking. Loudly. Rapidly. Incessantly.

“What?!?” Alec barks, throwing open the door. And stops, face to face with the painting.

Magnus drops the thing onto his right foot - wouldn’t do to damage such a masterpiece! - and stares at Alec. Who stares back, hair tousled, cheeks unshaven, eyes that were full of sleep a moment ago now wide with shock.

Magnus decides that his best option is to be frank, straightforward. “Did you paint this, Alexander?” he asks.

Blinking rapidly, Alec opens his mouth and then closes it again, repeatedly. In the end he settles on an uncertain, “Yes?”


Exasperated, Magnus asks, “Why didn’t you say anything? That you were a painter? That you liked me?”

Throwing his arms up, Alec huffs. “I did. When we first met, I told you I was a painter!”

“Your family owns a construction company. Excuse me for thinking you painted rooms for a living!”

“I do! I usually paint murals! I was working on the one in my bedroom when you came knocking that first time!” Alec responds, irritated. “It was Jace who convinced me to try my hand at actual paintings!”

Magnus still hasn’t stopped frowning yet, his frown might be now permanently stuck on his
“Jace Wayland?” he guesses.

“My adopted brother. He and his fiancée, Clary Fairchild, own a gallery downtown,” Alec explains patiently. “Usually, I paint murals in the houses my family builds, each an original, anything the client wants. But it’s my sister, Izzy, who’s being groomed to take over the company. I am just the painter.”

Huffing, Magnus can’t help but glare at Alec. This whole mix-up is so not his fault, so it must be Alec’s. Somehow. Magnus is not taking any responsibility. “And you like me?” he asks, his tone a bit too aggressive for the question.

Alec blushes a little and rubs the back of his neck. He opens his mouth, but before he can respond, Magnus snaps, “And if you answer that with a question again, I swear I will sick my cat on you!”

They both look down at the kitten that’s sitting at Alec’s feet, gazing up at him adoringly.


“But-but-but…” Magnus sputters. “But I’ve been flirting with you the whole time and you… you… Nothing! No reaction!”

Blinking in surprise, Alec says uncertainly, “You have? Been flirting? Really? I thought you were being just, uhm, you know, cryptic.”

Magnus groans and drops his head, forehead slamming against the frame of the painting. “I was trying to be coy!” he mumbles.

Then he peers up at Alec, one eye hidden behind his bangs. Alec’s standing there, smiling uncertainly, looking adorably confused. Magnus is smitten anew.

“Alright,” Magnus says briskly and straightens up. “Just to avoid any confusion: You’re a painter. You painted this thing. And you like me. A lot.”

Shuffling his feet, Alec blushes again. “Yeah, I do.”

Magnus beams at him. “Great! Since we already seem to share a custody of my cat, I think a date is the next logical step. Wouldn’t you think?”

Alec smiles back. “Yeah. Yeah, that would be great, a date,” he agrees warmly.

“And maybe you could show me the mural in your bedroom afterwards?” Magnus asks, his tone suggestive and eyes sparkling in mischief.

Alec laughs. “Only if that cat of yours stays out of my apartment - I’m not waking up with a face full of fur again!”
Why did Jace choose Alec, a blind boy, as his parabatai? Set in my Blind!Alec AU.
(Unbeta'd)

Alec’s blindness, that’s the reason why Jace decides to spend time with him at first. No, he’s not a good Samaritan, he’s not doing it out of the goodness of his heart. Jace chooses Alec for his companion because he feels safe with him - Jace’s sight gives him power over Alec, he can strike him down easily or run away, if need be, and Alec won’t be able to catch him. Jace is safe. Safe with Alec and safe from Alec. Just… safe. Finally.

But out of these selfish reasons, out of Jace’s fear, springs something else, and soon, he can’t help but think of Alec as his… friend, the first real friend he has ever had. Jace’s father would be disgusted to see that all his lessons have gone to waste in such a spectacular way. It’s been only a few months since Michael Wayland’s death, and his son has already broken every rule he hammered into him.

For once, though, Jace doesn’t care. He’s safe, safe at the Institute, with the Lightwoods, with Alec, but… there’s more. Alec’s mere presence chases Jace’s nightmares away. Jace doesn’t go to bed with dread in his heart anymore, but with a tiny ball of warmth and… happiness glowing in his chest. And when he does wake up with all his insides clenched in fear and tears in his eyes, all he has to do is listen to the other boy’s deep, slow breaths in the bed next to his, and it all goes away.

Alec’s good to him - and for him. Being blind, Alec doesn’t like loud noises and shouting makes him jump or flinch, which helps Jace keep his own explosive temper down, because he doesn’t want to be like his father, never, ever, ever. He loved his father, he really did, but not this, not this cruel side of his, and he doesn’t want Alec to ever have to learn to walk on tiptoes around Jace in fear of what Jace might do. Never. He would rather die.

Alec makes Jace simply better, makes him want to be better. And not just as a person, but as a fighter, as a Shadowhunter, too. Until he met Alec and watched him train with Hodge, Jace has never realized just how much he relied on sight in his own fighting style. But seeing Alec twirl his staff around, the long stick he uses as a cane, with so much dexterity, seeing him do what he does despite being blind… it makes Jace want to learn.

And Jace is soaking it all up like a sponge, his friend’s attention and affection and kindness, and yet his firm refusal to put up with Jace’s bad temper. It’s so different from what he experienced with his father, because, yes, there might be rules in their relationship, his and Alec’s, but they don’t need to be enforced, Jace wants to adhere to them because he doesn’t want to hurt Alec, because he likes to see Alec happy. It’s the strangest thing.

And that’s why he does it, why he asks Alec to be his parabatai. Because he can’t imagine giving anyone else so much power over him, and yet it feels right, like the next logical step for them, a connection deeper than the bond between brothers.

That’s why he does it, and his throat’s tight and his heart’s beating so hard, because… what if Alec turns Jace down? What if he will not want someone like Jace for his parabatai? Jace’s broken after
all, all crooked on the inside, and Alec is… amazing, simply… amazing. So, what if Alec says no?

*Please, Raziel, don’t let him say no. Please.*
Chapter Summary

Alec has a crisis of faith. Magnus helps. Based on a tumblr prompt. (Unbeta'd)

“Oh, this looks serious,” Magnus comments as he steps into Alec’s room. “Isabelle was right, you are brooding. It will give you wrinkles!”

Alec, who’s sitting in the window seat, lifts his head from his crossed arms, propped up his bent knees. “Magnus?” he asks, startled.

Magnus smiles and closes the door, cutting them off from the rest of the Institute. “Yes, Alexander,” he responds, then he saunters over and sits down in the other corner of the window seat, opposite Alec. “I thought that after everything we’ve been through, you would visit me, or at least call.”

Alec pushes the heels of his palms into his eyes. “I’m really sorry, Magnus,” he sighs, “but I promise you, it has nothing to do with us.”

Raising his eyebrows, Magnus asks, “So, there’s still an ‘us’?”

Freezing, Alec lets his hands drop and stares at him. He looks awfully tired, Magnus can’t help but noticing. “Yes, yes, of course. That is, if you still want there to be…” He lets his words hang in the air.

Magnus gives him a warm smile. “Yes, I would like that very much.”

Alec’s shoulders round a little in relief. “I just thought…” Another sigh. “I thought that, until I sort it all out up here,” he taps his right temple, “it wouldn’t be fair to drag you into the mess that my life has become.”

Crossing his legs, Magnus clasps his hands on his knee and settles down. “Alright, Alexander, tell me what the problem is. Obviously, you need to talk to someone and since I’m already here…”

Alec sighs again. He crosses his arms on his knees and props his chin on them. For a long moment he just stares at Magnus, for so long actually, that Magnus thinks that he might not respond at all. But then…

“I’ve always tried to do good,” Alec starts reluctantly, softly. “Help people, be they mundanes or Downworlders. I thought that that was our mission as Shadowhunters, not just to kill demons but to protect those who needed protecting. And I thought that the Clave were the good guys, that the rules and the Law were worth following…”

“And what changed?” Magnus asks seriously.

Alec snorts and looks out of the stained glass window. “Everything. Everything changed, that’s the problem. It turned out that my parents, the people I trusted implicitly, who taught me everything I know, were in the Circle. We were given orders to send a suspect to be tortured, maybe even killed. The Inquisitor who should’ve been above any reproach, was more interested in the damn Cup than
in seeking justice. And Hodge…” His voice breaks.

Magnus reaches out and squeezes Alec’s ankle. The other man is just in his socks, toes curled slightly. It makes him look strangely vulnerable in Magnus’ eyes.

Looking back at Magnus, Alec shakes his head. “Everything I’ve built my life on, is falling apart, Magnus. If I can’t trust my parents, if I can’t trust the Clave, how can I trust their teachings? And if I can’t trust their teachings, how can I trust my own decisions? I’m making them based on what I’ve been taught my whole life long. And if I’ve been taught the wrong things, how can I make the right decisions?”

Alec’s voice is so bleak that Magnus’ heart breaks. He’s starting to understand that this isn’t an issue easily hand-waved. Alec’s obviously having something of a ‘crisis of faith,’ he’s doubting his whole existence. And suddenly, Magnus is a little afraid that he will say the wrong thing and break Alec, it feels like he’s been handed a precious thing made of spun glass: one wrong move and it will shatter.

“All you need to make the right decision, is listen to your heart. Because you’re a good person, that I know.”

Alec stares at him for a while. “Are you sure about that? Because I stood by when they arrested Meliorn. I almost handed him over to the Silent Brother to torture. Would a good person do that?”

Magnus winces inwardly. “Everyone makes mistakes, out of grief, out of anger, out of ignorance… What’s important is that we learn from them and don’t repeat them. Would you do it again today? Arrest Meliorn and hand him over?”

Alec lets out a long breath. “I don’t know,” Alec responds honestly, and Magnus must admit that he’s a little surprised. “Don’t get me wrong, I’ve never agreed with the Clave’s method, how we went about it. And the threat of torture was completely out of line, but… Do I think that Meliorn was actually innocent? I don’t know.”

Magnus blinks at him. “You think that a Seelie would side with Valentine who swore to wipe out all Downworlders? Wouldn’t that be completely illogical?”

Alec uncrosses his arms and runs his hands roughly through his hair. “And this is what I’m talking about, Magnus,” he says dismally. “One part of me is telling me that it’s nonsense, that he’s innocent. The other part of me, the one that’s been taught that you can never trust Seelies because they always pick the winning side, even if they have to betray their current allies, is telling me that he’s guilty. And I’m trying to reconcile these two parts, somehow.”

Magnus frowns, trying to find a way out for Alec, out of this dilemma of his. Unconsciously, he’s still gripping Alec’s ankle, running his thumb over the naked skin above his sock.

“When your gut is at war with your head,” Magnus says eventually, “then just look at what hard evidence is telling you.”

“Hard evidence is telling me that Valentine used Seelie blood,” Alec replies. “But he could’ve gotten it from the scouts he killed, so that’s not telling me anything. But Meliorn knew that Clary had the Cup. Only us and Luke knew that.” He pauses and looks at Magnus. “And Valentine and the demons, nobody else. And if none of us told…”

Oh, Magnus catches on.

Alec nods. “And can I as a Shadowhunter afford to dismiss this? What if I trust him and it turns out
that he’s been working for the enemy all along? What if I show mercy and innocent people die because of it?” He pauses again. “But what if this is just my prejudices talking and he’s not guilty of anything? What if it’s just the Clave’s and my parents’ teachings talking here?”

Magnus doesn’t know what to say. He has never been in Alec’s position, his own loyalties have been - mostly - straightforward. His own knee-jerk reaction is to say that Meliorn is innocent - just like the Clave’s automatic reaction was to say Meliorn was guilty.

Alec shakes his head. “I’ve been taught that us, Shadowhunters, stand above everybody else,” he continues softly. “We protect mundanes, because they’re weak, not because they’re worthy of our protection. And we police Downworlders because they’re dangerous, ‘slaves to their urges.’” His lips twist. “That’s what I kept hearing for years, from my parents, from my teachers… Over and over and over again. As a warning to stay away from them - from you.”

Now it’s Magnus’ turn to sigh. “Alexander, we Downworlders aren’t any different from you Shadowhunters or mundanes. There will always be bad people in every group of people, regardless of their race, that doesn’t mean that the whole group is bad.”

“I get that,” Alec agrees. “But what if all you encounter are bad people? Isn’t it normal then that you start thinking that they must be all bad?”

“That stems from the nature of your job, love, you see only the worst because you look for the worst, not because there are that many bad people out there,” Magnus objects gently. “Many you encounter do not deserve to be treated like lesser beings because they didn’t do anything wrong. You can’t generalize like that. That’s one step closer to blind bigotry.”

Alec nods again slowly. “But what about you?”

Magnus frowns. “Me?”

“No, I mean Downworlders. Don’t Downworlders see us as their oppressors? Not all of us are like Valentine. Most of us are simply doing their jobs, dealing with demons or trying to stop monsters like Camille from murdering innocents.”

Magnus winces a little at the reminder of Camille, but he explains kindly, “It’s not the same. Because we are not equal. You said it yourself, you’re taught that you’re better than us. And even the Accords, even your Law, they side with you, give you power over us. Until there’s equality, and not just in the eyes of the Law, but in yours too, until you don’t see yourself as better than us, until you assign a Downworlder’s life the same worth as that of a Shadowhunter, we won’t be able to help but see you that way. Because if you’re not our friends…”

“We are the enemy,” Alec finishes for him, looking sad. “Do we even stand a chance, then? The two of us?” he asks softly.

Magnus turns to him fully and tugs at Alec’s arms until he uncrosses them. Magnus then takes Alec’s hands in his and looks him earnestly, urgently in the eyes. “Of course we do, Alexander.”

Alec grips his hands, eyes disconsolate. “How can you say that? Since we’ve met, I’ve done and said so many wrong things. I try not, I really do, but I don’t know anything else. This is what I’ve been taught since I was a child. Why do you even want to be with someone who can be casually hurtful without even realizing it?”

“Why? Because you ask this very question,” Magnus answers with a warm smile. “Because it occurred to you to ask it. Because you think about these things and you’re willing to learn. Because
despite your ingrained lessons, you lent a warlock your strength to heal a werewolf. Because you stood up for yourself and for me in front of your family and the Clave. Because no matter what you think of yourself, you are a good person, you’re simply still trying to find the right path to follow.”

Alec blinks hard, his eyes suspiciously shiny. “I’ll need a guide on my quest,” he whispers, “someone who will not judge me for my mistakes but who’ll help me not to repeat them.” He looks at Magnus hopefully. “Will you be him? Will you help me?”

Magnus’ smile broadens and he squeezes Alec’s hands, running his thumbs over his knuckles. “Of course, Alexander. For you anything.”
Chapter Summary

The Alliance Rune and the show, all smooshed together. Alec is a BAMF and Magnus couldn’t be prouder if he tried. (Unbeta'd)

Even though Valentine’s knocking on the gates of Alicante and they have no better plan to fight him - well, actually, they have no other plan at all - the Clave balks at the idea of using the rune Clary created, the Alliance Rune. To bind a Shadowhunter to a Downworlder, to share powers with lesser beings, however temporarily? Sacrilege!

Magnus stares at Clary with pity in his eyes. Oh, biscuit, he thinks sadly as she steps off the podium, I could’ve told you that the Clave would react this way. He watches Clary walk up the aisle between the rows of seated Shadowhunters, her face as red as her hair, eyes blazing with frustration, anger and dismay at the Clave’s bigotry; they would rather all die than lower themselves to the Downworlders’ level.

When Clary joins their small group and Jace hugs her around the shoulders and kisses the top of her head comfortingly, Magnus catches Alec’s eye. His lover is looking at him, his eyes speaking volumes - but for once, Magnus does not understand.

“What?” he mouths.

Alec leans closer. “I’m willing to give it a try, to Clary’s idea, if you are,” he whispers.

Magnus’ eyes widen. “The Alliance Rune?” he responds in surprise. “But the Clave just dismissed her plan.”

Alec shrugs. “Maybe they just need to see that it actually works. As we know by now, the Clave won’t accept change unless we force it upon them.” He smirks.

Magnus stares at him for a second with his eyebrows raised, then he grins slowly. Alexander is turning the ruffling of the Clave’s feathers into his favorite pastime, it seems. Magnus is so in.

“Consul Penhallow, Inquisitor Herondale!” Alec’s voice rings through the hall and cuts the Inquisitor off in the middle of a word. Every head in the hall turns in Alec’s direction. Even his parents’.

“Alec, what are you doing?” Maryse hisses, her voice loud in the sudden silence.

But Alec ignores her. He steps forward, away from the wall so that everybody can see him. He looks around the seated Shadowhunters, then directly at the two women on the podium. “You dismissed Clary Fairchild’s plan without any consideration at all. Without even seeing if her idea worked.”

The Inquisitor draws herself up. “I don’t need to see if the rune works. To establish a bond between a Shadowhunter and a Downworlder? Abomination!” she snaps. “We will defeat Valentine Morgenstern some other way.”
Alec narrows his eyes at her. “Please, do tell. What other genius plan did the Clave came up with and failed to inform us of it?”

Alec’s voice is dripping with sarcasm and Magnus can’t keep the smile off his face. His Alexander has come a long way in the past months, gone is the boy who bowed his head in front of people who thought themselves his betters. Magnus is falling in love more and more every day.

Hushed silence settles over the hall because they all know that there’s no other plan, that all that awaits them is a glorious death, nothing more.

Alec and the Inquisitor stare at each other across the room, neither budging an inch. Then Alec turns towards Consul Penhallow whom he apparently considers the more reasonable of the two. “I suggest a demonstration, Consul,” he tells Jia Penhallow.

The Consul steps forward, shutting Imogen Herondale up with a wave of her hand. “What demonstration?” she asks.

Alec turns towards Magnus and extends his hand that Magnus accepts and joins him. “I and Magnus Bane, the High Warlock of Brooklyn, will give a try to Clary’s idea, the Alliance Rune. It seems to me that the Clave members need to witness the benefits of such a union with their own eyes.”

The Consul ponders his suggestion, watching Alec and Magnus thoughtfully, and once again waves the Inquisitor silent. “Alright, Alec. You can have your demonstration,” she agrees in the end. A buzz runs through the hall.

Magnus feels Alec’s grip tighten for a second, the only hint of how nervous Alec actually is. Then his lover turns to Clary and Jace. Jace nods at him encouragingly while Clary smiles gratefully and hands him a piece of paper. The rune.

With his expression as confident as ever, a front, as Magnus understands, Alec mumbles under his breath, “I hope you know what you’re doing, Clary.”

When she nods decisively, he takes the paper, and with one last look at Jace, he starts leading Magnus down to the podium.

When they arrive there and the two female Shadowhunter leaders step down to make room for them, Magnus actually starts feeling a little bit nervous. He’s used to attention, but to have scores of Shadowhunters staring at him intently? Not exactly a pleasant feeling.

Alec pulls out his stele and asks Magnus quietly, “Pull up your sleeve, please.”

Magnus blinks in surprise but complies. His wrist? The hush in the hall tells him he isn’t the only one who caught the significance. ‘A rune on the wrist…’ That’s where the wedded union rune is placed on men. Alec could’ve chosen any place he wanted and he chose the wrist? Magnus grins again. Oh yes, Alec does love to pull the tiger by the tail.

Alec hands Magnus the paper so that he can follow it while copying his half of the rune, then he takes Magnus’ hand gently in his. “Ready?” he asks, looking Magnus in the eyes.

When Magnus nods firmly, Alec activates his stele and starts drawing.

And it hurts! Magnus knew before, objectively speaking, that it hurt to draw a rune, but he didn’t know how much. Ow, ow, ow, ow... he complains in the privacy of his mind, while outwardly he keeps an impassive face. He’s gaining a new appreciation for his lover’s pain levels. Ow!
Alec’s fast and when’s done, the last line drawn, Magnus feels his heart stutter and skip a beat. His wrists is raw and hurting badly but the first part of the link is established. Now it’s his turn.

They exchange the paper for the stele, Magnus takes Alec’s hand in his, the vulnerable underside of the wrist up. When he looks up nervously, Alec gives him an encouraging smile. “I trust you,” Alec whispers and Magnus swallows.

He isn’t as fast as Alec, having no real experience in rune drawing as such, and his squiggle also isn’t as precise as Alec’s - he’s burning his lover’s skin, for cryin’ out loud, he’s allowed to be nervous - but Alec doesn’t flinch, he doesn’t move at all.

And then the last line is done and Alec draws a sharp breath. There’s a silent whomp! between them and then the connection is established, the bond blazing so bright it almost hurts.

Magnus is so surprised that the stele tumbles out of his hand - but before it can fall to the ground, Magnus moves, his reaction a blur, and catches it firmly in his hand. He blinks and the gathering murmurs in shock.

“Whoa,” Magnus breathes out, then he looks up at Alec who’s grinning at him - and he runs around Alec twice so fast he almost gets a headrush. He laughs out loud, claps his hands in delight and bounces on his toes. “Now you! Try to do some magic!”

Alec’s brows furrow and he raises his hand. For a moment, nothing happens, then a shower of blue sparks bursts out of his palm, shooting up towards the ceiling and singing it a little. Alec laughs.

And Magnus falls even harder when he sees the expression of absolute wonder on Alec’s face. Alexander is doing magic, using his magic, and he’s delighted by it, laughing and showering them both and everything in their vicinity with blue sparks.

Clenching his hand into a fist, Alec cuts off the geyser of magic and looks at Magnus with such adoration in his eyes that everybody in the hall must see it. Magnus’ heart stutters.

The Consul clears her throat as she walks back up the steps onto the podium again. “I see that Clary Fairchild’s rune does work,” she comments dryly, but she can’t hide her own wonder at the display of magic.

Alec becomes serious once more and turns towards her and the rest of the Clave. He looks up at Clary, who’s still standing by the wall with Jace, hands clasped to her mouth, eyes bright, and nods at her. “Yes, the Alliance Rune works, Consul.” His eyes row over the gathering. “And you can either insists on your small-minded bigotry, die a noble death and lose, or you can swallow your pride, accept the Downworlders’ help and destroy Valentine - as is your duty!”

And with that, with Magnus in tow and with his head held high, Alec leaves the podium, barely giving the seething Inquisitor a look. They head back up the aisle towards their family and friends - and Magnus couldn’t be prouder if he tried.

This is his boyfriend, Alexander Gideon Lightwood, and he’s standing up for what’s right!
He really does look lonely, Lydia observes as she stops several feet away from their interdimensional traveler, Jace Wayland. The blond man is sitting on the steps leading up from the Ops Center, brooding.

“You okay?” Lydia asks reluctantly.

Jace looks up from his stele that he keeps playing with, a nervous tick she guesses. “Nope,” he answers honestly. “Just found out that my girlfriend isn’t alive in this dimension either.” He laughs bitterly. “Who would’ve thought that I would be actually glad that Valentine Morgenstern lived long enough to reach adulthood in my world, huh?”

Lydia raises her eyebrows. “Who?”

He waves a hand. “A bad guy. A really, really bad guy. But thanks to him, both Clary and I were actually born, so there’s that.” He looks down again, twirling his stele between his fingers.

“I see.” She doesn’t.

Jace smirks. “It’s just one of those things, take one piece of the puzzle out and the whole picture suddenly looks different. One little change and it snowballs.”

Lydia nods, and after a moment of hesitation, she sits down next to him. She straightens her legs, the heels of her boots apart, the toes tap-tapping together. He smiles seeing it.

“What?” Lydia asks.

Jace looks at her and there’s melancholy in his smile. “You’re so different from her, from the Lydia in my world.”

She raises her eyebrows. “I am?”

He looks her up and down slowly, his gaze lingering on her two thick braids, thrown over her shoulders, on her flowery blouse and pale blue jeans. “Yes, you are. My Lydia is… harsher, sadder, more… severe, I guess.”

Lydia can’t imagine herself being ‘severe’. “Why is it so?” she asks curiously.

Jace stares her in the eyes for a moment. “Do you really want to know?”

She thinks it over, then nods. “From what Magnus said, he has to wait till the next full moon to send you back. That’s 14 days away. We can hardly just keep staring at each other mutely.”

He laughs softly. “True.”
“So?” she prods.

“In my world, your husband is dead,” he admits softly, not looking at her.


Now Jace looks at her. “He was killed by demons, down in Rio.”

She swallows. “We decided not to go to Rio,” she whispers. “Alec couldn’t leave because of Magnus. And I didn’t want to leave my parabatai. So we didn’t go…”

He winces at the mention of Alec and looks away. Lydia’s mind is still in turmoil over this news - John might have died if they had gone! - but she can’t help but notice Jace’s reaction to her mentioning Alec. She remembers Alec telling her that Jace was avoiding him.

“Why do you react so?” she asks. If anyone has a problem with her parabatai, she will deal with them accordingly!

Jace frowns at her. “React how?”


Jace lets out a long breath, looking down at his stele, thinking over how to respond. In the end he opts for honesty. “In my world, Alec is my parabatai.”

That shocks Lydia just as much as the news of her husband’s death in that other dimension. “What?” she breathes out.

Jace looks at her. “I was sent to live with the Lightwoods when I was ten years old. Alec and I, we became parabatai soon after. You and Alec haven’t met till last year in my dimension. You actually almost married him,” he admits with a small smirk.

She gapes at him. She and… Alec and she, they… “Why? He’s gay!”

The smirk is gone from Jace’s face. “It was a bad time for our family. Our parents, Maryse and Robert, they… did some bad things in the past and because of that, the whole family was under strict surveillance. Alec hoped that if he married you, a Branwell, it would help us all keep the Institute, keep our good name.” He looks at her again. “He did it to protect us. Even though Izzy and I didn’t see it that way at the time.”

Lydia’s staring at him with her mouth open, still unable to comprehend it. “ Didn’t I know that he’s gay?”

Jace sighs. “He wasn’t out back then, he was still keeping it a secret, but we, the people closest to him, knew.” He points with his stele at her. “You knew.”

Alec used to hide his orientation in Jace’s world? Lydia doesn’t understand why he would do something like that, in their world, it has never been an issue, after all, but what’s more pressing is another thing. “If I knew, then why—”

“When did you decide to marry him?” Jace finishes for her, then smiles a little. “Because you liked him. You became very good friends. You wanted to help him and he wanted you to have a chance at heading an Institute. It was a strictly pragmatic decision on both of your parts.”
“So, what happened?” She’s almost afraid to ask, but Jace laughs.

“The wedding of the century! You were already at the altar when Magnus Bane waltzed in - and Alec couldn’t go through with the wedding. Smooched the guy right there, in the church, in front of a whole bunch of Clave representatives!” Jace leans in and he’s grinning. “It was all very scandalous!” But then his smile softens. “But you were amazing. You told him he deserved to be happy and you let him go.”

That makes her smile, too, though she feels her heart aching for the Lydia in Jace’s world. “I bet you were his suggenes, huh?” she asks.

“Yeah,” he responds quietly. “But I almost wasn’t. We two were going through a rough patch, too.” His smile is completely gone now. “But we made up, and since we’ve kicked Valentine’s ass, we’ve been inseparable, as parabatai should be. Our bond has never been stronger than it is now. That’s why…” He sighs deeply. “That’s why it’s so hard for me to be around your Alec. I don’t exist here, I’m nothing to him.” He presses his hand to his chest as if his heart ached. “It feels like a part of me is missing - the best part,” he adds so quietly she almost doesn’t hear him.

“He noticed that you’ve been avoiding him,” Lydia admits. “He’s afraid that he did something wrong, that hurt you, either here or his other self in your world.”

Jace looks at her with his eyebrows raised. “No, nothing like that, I swear. It’s just… disconcerting to be around him and not feel our bond. My brain’s telling me that he’s not my Alec, but my heart’s insisting on something else.”

“Maybe you could tell him that?” Lydia suggests. “It’ll be hard to avoid him for the next 14 days. But if you explained to him why, I’m sure he would agree to visit his sister in Los Angeles or stay at Magnus’ old place for the duration if it hurts you so much.”

“I can’t chase him out of his own home!” Jace protests.

Lydia shakes her head. “You wouldn’t. Alec… I’m sure he would do anything for his other self’s parabatai.”

Jace smiles. “Selfless to a fault even here, huh?”

Lydia grins. “I guess your Alec isn’t all that different from mine.”

Jace’s smile becomes softer. “No, mine is just a little more… closed off, a little more reserved. Our world hasn’t been as happy as this one, I guess.”

Lydia snorts. “Believe me, we have had our share of problems.”

“A genocidal maniac hell-bent on destroying the world?” Jace asks dryly.

“Well, no, that one you can keep, thank you very much,” Lydia replies and they both grin. “Just talk to him, okay?” she asks. “I hate seeing him sad.”

Jace smiles at her, and as one parabatai to another, he admits quietly, “Me too.” And they understand each other.
He draws and lets fly, draws and lets fly, the arrows simply appearing in the bow, materializing from his life force, draining his strength, wearing him out, exhaustion settling deep into his bones, while the arrows keep hitting the bullseye of the target set on the other end of the shooting range with a dull thunk-thunk-thunk…

Alec knows he has never had a chance with Jace. He suspected it for a long time, knew it from the moment Jace told him with a bright, warm smile that he loved Alec like a brother, like a parabatai. But knowing something and actually seeing the door slam shut on any chance at all, these are two different things.

When Alec saw Jace kissing Clary, all his remaining hope for… something, something more than a brotherly bond between them, fled. Because this feels different, Jace’s relationship with Clary feels different from all of Jace’s previous dalliances. It feels like the end of all of Alec’s vain hopes.

He draws and lets fly, draws and lets fly, trying to lose himself in the repetitive motion, trying to tire himself out, wear himself down so that he can actually sleep tonight. The muscles in his arms ache, his fingers hurt from pulling the bowstring and his shoulders burn but he can’t stop. If he stops, he’ll start thinking again. And he can’t think.

“Alec, what the actual fuck!”

Jace’s voice pulls Alec out of his zone with a suddenness that’s almost jarring. *Jace is never vulgar,* Alec has the time to think before his bow is torn out of his hands and flung aside. What…?

Jace grabs Alec’s hands and turns them palms up, eyes wide with dismay. Alec looks down uncomprehendingly. The fingers on his right hand are so raw they drip blood. His left forearm is bruised black, skin scraped.

“Huh,” Alec mumbles in surprise.

Jace stares up at him angrily, eyes ablaze. “That’s all you have to say? I find you covered in blood, hurting yourself, and all you say is ‘huh’?” He’s furious.

“I…” Alec starts, but then decides that telling Jace that he didn’t even notice, that he doesn’t even feel the pain, wouldn’t be very wise.

Jace glares at him for a moment longer, his grip surprisingly gentle considering his anger, then he lets go of Alec’s hands, pulls up Alec’s t-shirt and activates the *iratze* on Alec’s flank with his stele. The rune blazes up and Alec’s wounds start to heal.

“Please, tell me this isn’t something you do often and I’ve just never noticed.” Jace whispers imploringly while he watches Alec’s injuries heal. “Please, tell me that I’m not so blind.”
Seeing Jace’s distress, Alec decides to be honest. Or at least as honest as he can be, considering. “I do go shooting to calm down, but I’ve never gone as far as to hurt myself before, I promise. I was just thinking of something else…”

“No,” Jace snaps. “You weren’t thinking at all!” He hides his stele and takes Alec’s hands in his again. The bleeding has stopped and the bruising is going down, too. He looks up again. “What made you do this? Go this far?” There’s pain in his voice.

Alec shakes his head. This is where his honesty ends. He can’t tell Jace the truth. If he hasn’t realized yet that Alec has had feelings for him, feelings that are more than brotherly, if he doesn’t know after so many years, Alec won’t tell him. Because it doesn’t matter. Jace is happy with Clary, and though Alec’s still wary of Valentine’s daughter, he doesn’t begrudge Jace his happiness, just the opposite. He wants Jace to be happy, Jace deserves to be happy - Alec’s feelings are his own damn problem.

Jace holds Alec’s hands in his, running his thumbs over Alec’s open palms. “What’s going on with you?” he pleads softly. “This isn’t like you, Alec.”

Alec chooses a partial truth because he can’t deny his parabatai anything. “It’s becoming too much,” he admits, watching Jace’s thumbs drawing circles on his palms. “Clary and the Cup and Valentine… and the Clave.” You. He shakes his head. “It feels like I’m juggling too many responsibilities, too many loyalties. And it feels like all I can do is watch it all fall apart.”

Jace shakes his head firmly. “We won’t let that happen, you and I. And Izzy and Clary.” He smiles up at his parabatai. “We have the Cup and we have powerful allies. We will win and get Clary’s mother back. You just need to have a little more faith in us! Just…” He draws Alec’s healed hands up and clasps them between his. “No more of this, alright?” he asks beseechingly. “I can’t stand to see you hurt.”

And Alec nods because there isn’t anything he wouldn’t do for Jace. Alec trusts Jace implicitly. Maybe Jace can’t give Alec what he wants, but Alec knows that Jace would also never lie to him, never betray him. They’re parabatai, after all, and there’s no bond closer or more sacred between two Shadowhunters than that.

Alec has been content with his lot for so long - nothing had to change.
Upheavals

Chapter Summary

Apparently, I can’t get enough of the “from neighbors to lovers” trope. Woo me. AU, present time, no powers. Just something that got stuck in my head and simply wouldn’t let go. Thus this tiny doodle was committed. (Unbeta’d)

They’re all covered in scars, Jace, Isabelle and he, terrible burns all over their arms and legs and torsos, a painful, everyday reminder of the fire that cost their parents and their youngest brother, Max, their lives.

Alec’s sibling carry their marks as a statement - this is us, look at us, see us - they show them off and rub small-minded idiots’ wrinkled noses in them. They walk tall and proud with their heads held high, they always did.

Alec… not so much. He’s the tallest, yet the least noticed of them, and though he does dress in dark colors, too - the looks their tight-knit group drew in high school while they stomped through the halls in combat boots and black leather, scars standing out vividly, challengingly even! - he tends to cover his skin, bow his head and round his strong shoulders, because he hates, hates, hates the way he looks, though he pretends otherwise.

The one place where Alec feels free to be himself is at home, in the dojo of Hodge Starkweather, Alec’s godfather, the man who ran into the blazing fire and carried the three of them out, his own scars the mark of his bravery, and then fought to keep them, three burned and grieving kids between 8 and 10, determined not to just let them vanish into the system, because they were his now, his to love and his to take care of and his to protect. Just… his.

So, only there, at their place, does Alec feel truly comfortable - or at least comfortable enough to show more skin - while cooking dinner for his family or heading self-defense classes for women and children. There, he can cope, be himself. And his life is safe, quiet… unremarkable.

That is, until a new owner takes over the place next door, the tiny, dusty hole in the wall that has stood empty ever since Alec can remember. A candy store it will be now, it seems. Magnus’ Magnificent Munchies, the huge blue sparkling sign hanging above the door declares, winking at passersby in the morning sunlight.

Alec stares at the glittering sign blankly and then shakes his head and sighs. He hates change, he hates disruption and upheavals, always has, and the candy store already feels loud and too visible, but he guesses that it could have been worse. A new business venture in their street doesn’t mean any socialization on his part will be required.

Alec and this… Magnus person never have to meet, after all.
Bird Bones

Chapter Summary

An Obligatory Wingfic (TM)! (Unbeta'd)

Everybody expects Alec’s wings to be dark like his parents’ or his siblings’, and Jace’s to be pale, maybe even white. But it’s the other way around, strangely. Alec’s wings are dove gray, snow white even at the tips, whereas Jace’s wings are raven black, so black actually that they shimmer blue.

Alec’s wingspan is also abnormally big. He can’t spread his wings to their full length anywhere indoors, he has to go outside where he can stretch them and stretch and stretch… and it’s such a glorious feeling that he almost moans in pleasure every time he does it - which happens very, very rarely. Ever since someone made a dumb joke about how the size of the wings related to the size of… other parts of the male anatomy, Alec’s been embarrassed by his wings’ look, keeping them hidden or folded all the time, never letting anyone see them unless absolutely necessary.

The only person who has ever seen his wings in all their glory, whom Alec allows to touch them, who knows every single one of his feathers, is Jace, his parabatai, who helps Alec groom them regularly, keep them clean and healthy. It has become a bonding experience between them, something they do alone, without Izzy. It allows them to keep their wings in a good shape - and their bond working.

That is, until Clary Fairchild storms into their lives and turns everything upside down. And when Alec waits and waits for Jace to come to his room at the usual time and Jace doesn’t come, Alec goes to him, a little nervous, thinking that maybe something happened - only to find Clary in his bedroom.

They’re both sitting on Jace’s bed and she’s running her hands through Jace’s raven black feathers and they’re laughing… And Alec’s heart sinks and he feels a little bit like dying on the inside, because Clarissa Fray or Fairchild or Morgenstern or whatever her surname is, she seems to be taking everything from Alec, even this.

Alec doesn’t let them see him and he doesn’t groom his wings that night even though he knows he should. No, he goes outside and lets his wings out and stretches them as far as they go. Their pale color shimmers in the darkness like fairy dust. And he stands there, in the overgrown garden behind the ruin of the church that hides their Institute, and he stares up at the sky, at the moon and at the stars…

And then he takes off, his mighty wings beating the air, and he’s rising up and up and up in the air, his strong but hollow Shadowhunter bones singing with the exertion, with the exhilaration of freedom, because he has never allowed himself to do this, to just let go and try out what he can actually do, he has always taken into account the limitations of his siblings’ smaller wings…

But now that he’s all by himself up here, for the first time ever, he gives it his all, rising higher and higher, twirling and diving, gliding and rising again. Up here where cold can’t touch him because his metabolism is working overtime, so high even his crazy siblings wouldn’t dare to try and reach this altitude, he doesn’t have to think, not about Jace and his own feelings for him, not about Clary
or Valentine, not about the pressure the Clave’s been putting on him…

Alec just flies, alone among the clouds, and it’s glorious.
The first time Magnus sees Alec’s wings is during a battle with Camille and her cohorts, when he’s thrown from the roof of Hotel Dumort - and Alec jumps right after him.

Magnus has always known that Shadowhunters have wings, of course, wings and hollow yet incredibly strong bones that make them strangely light, despite their body mass, and add to their speed and agility. They’re the byproduct of Raziel’s blood coursing through their veins. Over the course of centuries, he has seen many of the Nephilim flying around but he has never actually related this knowledge to Alec, it has never truly sunk in that, since Shadowhunters have wings and Alec is a Shadowhunter, he must have wings, too.

And then…

Magnus just turned one of Camille’s minions into a splatter on the wall, but the battle is still raging on, Shadowhunters and Raphael’s people against Camille’s murderous posse, when one of the bloodsuckers jumps him and simply throws him from the roof. Magnus doesn’t even have the time to scream, and he’s sure, absolutely positive that this is it, that he’s dead.

But before he can drop more than ten or fifteen feet, Alec’s there, much to Magnus’ shock, and he grabs Magnus’ hand and looks into Magnus’ wide eyes and with a confident smile - the idiot, they’re falling! - tells him, “Hold on tight!”

And then he unfurls his wings and it’s a sight that takes Magnus’ breath away - if he had any breath left to be taken away, that is, they’re falling! - and he juststares. Alec’s wings shoot out of his back and stretch out to the sides, far and far, dove gray and snow white and large and magnificent. Simply magnificent, there’s no better word to describe them.

They jerk and almost stop in mid-air, Magnus and Alec, and then they start gliding instead of simply falling, though the speed with which they move is still too much for Magnus to take and he wants to close his eyes but can’t, because Alexander is simply stunning! Magnus has never seen anyone more beautiful, and he can’t tear his eyes away from Alec’s face and from his wings because Magnus’ lover seems to be… glowing with angelic power.

And then Alec turns sideways, the tip of his right wing almost grazing the asphalt as he maneuvers through the trees and the rush hour traffic in the street below, and Magnus hangs on even tighter, hugging Alec and fisting his hands into the back of his leather jacket. And Alec’s holding him just as tightly, one hand on Magnus’ back, the other pressing Magnus’ head to his shoulder protectively.

And then - then Alec flaps his wings, once, twice, three times and they shoot back up, straight up and up and up, above the traffic and the trees and the roofs of the surrounding buildings, and Alec sweeps back in, back towards Hotel Dumort, and he spreads his wings to their full length and curls them forward slightly to slow down, and gently, oh so gently, he drops Magnus down onto the
gravel covered roof.

Magnus lets go reluctantly, landing on his feet, and he turns around quickly to watch Alec fly past. He stares as Alec folds his wings and tucks them back in, as he drops to the roof and rolls over his shoulder, and when Alec jumps to his feet again, his Seraph Blade is already in his hand, all ablaze. And back in he goes, slashing at the screeching vamps as if nothing happened.

But all Magnus can do is stand there with his mouth hanging open and his heart beating wild, feeling a little dizzy, because in all his centuries, he has never met anyone like Alexander. Because Alexander is just… Alexander is… fabulous, incredible, amazing…

And Magnus is in love!
Almost Lost

Chapter Summary

Anon requested: “A fic where Magnus unleashes his true potential as a high warlock of Brooklyn when a rogue werewolf breaks into Magnus and Alec’s apartment and hurts Alec?” (Unbeta’d)

The moment Magnus opens the main entrance door of his apartment building, he knows that something’s wrong. There’s a smell of blood hanging in the air, and loud growling noises and the sounds of furniture being smashed to pieces are echoing down the stairwell.

Alexander!

Magnus almost flies up the stairs, but when he arrives on his floor, he freezes, breath catching in his throat. The door of his loft stands slightly ajar and there are deep claw marks marring the forest green paint. The lock is smashed and the door itself is hanging slightly crooked. He pushes it open slowly and it swings in with a soft squeak.

There’s a body lying in a pool of blood on the hardwood floor, a werewolf’s body, dead and still turning back from wolf into human. A little further down the hall, there’s another werewolf, this one alive and furry, growling and gnashing his teeth, trying to drag himself towards the living room from where more loud noises are still coming.

Magnus might have spared the werewolf’s life - he tries to avoid indiscriminate killing whenever possible - but in that moment, there’s a pain-filled gasp and a loud thud, like a body hitting the floor, followed by a victorious snarl… and then a Seraph Blades rolls into the hall, past the injured werewolf. It clatters loudly, hitting the wall just a few feet away from Magnus, and powers down.

Magnus stares at the weapon in horror for a second…

Alexander!

… and then he snaps his fingers and the werewolf in the hall drops dead, just like that, his heart arrested mid-beat by warlock magic, not the pretty, glowing creative kind, but the dark and harsh killing kind. The kind Magnus usually does not use.

But these… these monsters, they broke into his home and attacked his lover - he did notice the arrows jutting out of the first werewolf’s body and the deep slashes in the fur of the other one, and that means that Alec fought them, fought them to death - and Magnus trusts his lover’s judgment: if Alexander killed them, they deserved killing!

The need to get to Alec - who’s hurt, hurting and in danger! - is driving Magnus forward, but he forces himself to creep slowly towards the living room entrance because he doesn’t know what might await him in there. But when he peeks around the corner, all caution flies out of the window and he barges in, hands ablaze with magic.

Because there’s an alpha in his living room, a giant, gray-brown wolf with his fur spattered with red, teeth bared in a snarl and eyes glowing green - and he’s standing above Alec who’s lying on
his back on the floor, barely moving. Alec’s clothes are soaked with blood and torn to pieces, and
he’s gasping for breath, eyes wide and mouth hanging open - but no air seems to be passing
through his lips because his throat is slashed open! The wound is ugly and gaping and bubbling
with blood, and Alec’s face is turning alarmingly gray, paler and paler with each second. And then
the alpha lunges forward, his teeth bare inches away from Alec’s face…

And Magnus reacts, with fury and determination, the only thing on his mind to get the beast away
from Alexander, to protect Alexander at all costs! And so he throws his magic out, grips the
werewolf with his power and tears him away from Alec, throws him across the room, and before
the beast can hit the floor, Magnus claps his hands together and there’s a loud boom - and the
werewolf explodes, simply disintegrates into a shower of blood and gore that turns into dust and
then into nothing before it even reaches the floor.

And then Magnus is by Alec’s side because Alec can’t breathe! Blood’s still streaming from the
terrible wound on his throat, air bubbles are forming in it, escaping from Alec’s oxygen-starved
lungs, and he seems not even aware of Magnus, that Magnus is there and pleading with him to hold
on, assuring him that everything will be alright now.

With the gentlest of touches Magnus use his magic again, but this time not to kill but to heal. to
close the wound on his lover’s throat, to replenish the blood Alec has lost, and Magnus is holding
one hand over the torn flesh, pouring his power into it, and with the other he’s gripping Alec’s
hand, claspimg it tightly to his chest, and all the time, he’s whispering to Alexander, my Alexander,
trying to get Alec to hold on just a moment longer, because everything will be alright now that
Magnus is here, Magnus will make everything better..

And when Alec finally takes a wheezing, unrestrained breath, when his lungs finally fill with air
again, Magnus drops his head to Alec’s chest, not caring that Alec’s blood is soaking into his pants
or that he’ll have it smudged on his face since Alec’s t-shirt is drenched in it, he doesn’t care,
because Alec’s alive and that’s all that matters and Magnus needs to hear his lover’s heart beating
and the rush of breath in his lungs.

And after a small eternity Alec lifts his free hand and strokes Magnus’ back slowly, completely
exhausted, his other hand still clasped tightly to Magnus’ chest, and Magnus thinks it’s a miracle,
not that his magic can kill, to kill is so very easy, but that it can do this, save a life and heal… give
back something that was almost lost, something Magnus doesn’t think he could live without
anymore.

His Alexander…
Intolerable Intolerance

Chapter Summary

A weird fic with a much harsher Jace Wayland than I usually write. Apparently, I had much pent-up feelings about the going-ons in the world these days. And writing is cheaper than therapy. Trigger warning for slurs and rampant homophobia. (Unbeta'd)

“I don’t want a fag to be my team leader!”

When Jace hears that, he sees red. He becomes so angry, furious even, that he actually feels his heart beating in his temples. He rounds on the group of Shadowhunter newbies they were sent to train from the Academy in Idris, and his eyes must be truly ablaze because the kids, all twenty of them about sixteen or so, take a quick step back.

He opens his mouth to dress the idiots down, but before he can say anything at all, Alec grips his shoulder, silencing him. Jace looks at him sharply but Alec just shakes his head. Jace stares at him in disbelief. He can’t just let something like that slide! But apparently, letting anything slide isn’t Alec’s plan.

Alec steps forward. “Mr Landchild, do you have a problem with me?” His voice is perfectly calm.

Everybody looks at a blond kid, really buff for his age and approximately Jace’s height - which makes him almost half a head shorter than Alec. The guy is smirking, arms crossed over his chest, and Jace just wants to punch him.

“Yeah,” Landchild - Oliver, if Jace’s memory serves him right - sneers. “I said I didn’t want someone who does it with a filthy Downworlder pansy to be my team leader. Sir!”

Alec looks at him sternly. “So, you think you could do better, then? Be a better leader? A better fighter?”

Oliver looks around his cohorts with the confidence of a prized fighter and says, “Sure. I think any one of us could do better!”

Nodding sagely, Alec waves a hand around the training room where they are gathered. “Care to prove it to me, Mr Landchild? We have the time and the necessary space, and I’m sure your friends would love to see you wipe the floor with a… what did you call me? A ‘fag’?”

The groups shifts uncomfortably, but Oliver’s grin doesn’t slip. And Jace is now grinning openly too because he already knows where this is headed - and how it will end. By the Angel, he will thoroughly enjoy the spectacle.

“Bring it,” Oliver responds confidently, and the kids make space for them and stand in a rough circle, a makeshift arena for two unexpected gladiators.

Alec steps into the circle and loosens his shoulders quickly, while Oliver starts punching the air in exaggerate movements, shadowboxing for the amusement of the masses.

After a moment, Alec sighs. “Any day now, Mr Landchild.”
And Oliver attacks, the crowd of students murmuring in admiration of his speed. But Alec just dodges and dodges and deflects his punches, then he drops to one knee, and when Oliver stumbles past, Alec’s right arm snaps up and he hits the guy with the edge of his hand right in the solar plexus, driving all the air out of Oliver’s lungs. Oliver bends at the waist, wheezing.

“You’re dead,” Alec states calmly, getting up. He turns to Oliver, takes a few steps back and spreads his arms. “Again, Mr Landchild.”

Oliver straightens up angrily, red in the face, and attacks again. And this time, Alec doesn’t dodge, he grabs Oliver’s outstretched arm, slips beneath it to get behind Oliver, jerks Oliver’s arm painfully up, kicks at his knees from behind and drives him to the floor. To finish his maneuver, Alec draws a line across Oliver’s throat with his free hand, from one ear to another.

“You’re dead,” Alec repeats just as calmly as before, then he lets go and steps back.

Oliver growls and slaps the floor with his open palm. The kids are starting to snicker now, even Oliver’s cohorts who previously rooted for him. He’s being turned into the laughing stock of their class.

“Come on, Mr Landchild,” Alec says, and though his voice could be mocking, it’s not. It’s still as calm as ever. “I’m sure that’s not all you’ve got. From what I heard, you’re among the best in your class. Do show me what you can do!”

And with a roar, Oliver jumps to his feet and attacks again, furiously, madly, fiercely. But Alec fluidly evades every one of Oliver’s punches, and when Oliver overreaches, Alec takes his chance. He grips Oliver’s arm by the wrist and jerks forward, bringing the guy fully out of balance, and when he stumbles, Alec just pulls him around and twists, flipping Oliver over and slamming him to the floor. Then he turns Oliver over onto his stomach, right arm once again twisted behind his back, and raps him sharply with the knuckles of his free hand on the back of his head.

“You’re dead,” Alec says, his voice calm, breathing steady. Then he bends down lower and adds, “I don’t give a damn about what you think of me, Mr Landchild. I don’t care enough about you to be worried about your opinion of me. You will follow my orders regardless or I will make you, be sure of that.

“But,” he continues more threateningly, “if you ever insult Magnus Bane again, I swear I’ll knock the teeth out of that stupid, cocky grin of yours. Did I make myself clear, Mr Landchild?” When Oliver just growls again, Alec jerks his arm up higher, eliciting a painful gasp out of the guy. “Did I make myself clear?”

“Yes, yes!” Oliver grunts through clenched teeth.

“Good, I’m glad we understand each other,” Alec replies, releasing Oliver. When he gets up, he looks at the students gathered around. “Anyone else has a problem with me?” he asks challengingly. And when they all drop their eyes, he nods, turns around and starts walking back towards Jace without giving Oliver Landchild one more look.

Jace grins at him proudly, but then his smile disappears in the blink of an eye, because that cowardly bastard Landchild jumps to his feet and throws himself at Alec, attacking him from behind. But before Alec can react - and he would have because the moment he saw Jace drop his smile, he started turning around - Jace is there, so fast his movements blur. He pushes Alec aside and punches Oliver right in the face, so hard that the guy drops back to the floor, blood spurting from of his nose. The gathered students gasp.
“Jace,” Alec chides gently, but Jace notices that he doesn’t rush to help the bastard.

Jace stands over Oliver who’s writhing on the floor, holding his nose, and says, “I’m not Alec, I see no problem in knocking your teeth out on his behalf, too, not just on Magnus’.”

Jace scans the students with angry eyes, watches as they all cringe under the weight of his scrutiny, and says loudly and sharply, “Let’s make one thing clear here: my parabatai is off limits! You hurt him, I’ll drop you from the belfry. You do something stupid that results in him getting hurt, I’ll drop you from the belfry. You try to sabotage his mission to make him look bad, I’ll drop you from the fucking belfry. Is that understood?” he snaps, his voice like the crack of a whip.

When the students all nod mutely, looking anywhere but at him, he continues, “Don’t make the mistake of thinking that I’m like Alec. Because I’m not. You were sent to us to gather at least some experience before the Clave sends you off to fight Valentine and his minions, because we are at war. But unlike Alec, I don’t give a damn about you. If you get eaten by a demon because you were too stupid or too bigoted to follow simple orders, then you deserve to be eaten. You are useless to us. I’m not here to hold your hand. You either do what we tell you, or you die. But I will not allow you to take any one of us down with you.”

He pauses and looks around the students. All their smirks and jeers are now gone. They stand there pale and frozen, too shaken by the reminder of what they will be facing soon to find it in themselves to make fun of it. Jace nods. “You’re not kids anymore - so stop acting like it!”

And with that Jace turns around and grabs Alec by the arm. “Come on, we need to see where Maryse wants these brats.”

Alec allows himself to be dragged away, though he throws a glance or two over his shoulder at Oliver, who’s still lying on the floor, groaning. The others gather around him and someone pulls out a stele to heal him.

Jace hopes that bastard’s nose heals crooked!
Magnus is powerful. He just doesn't like people to know. (Unbeta'd)

“Why did you let us believe that you were less powerful than you truly are?”

After Magnus woke up Jocelyn Fairchild using the Book of White, Alec offered to see him out which turned into a leisurely walk through the nighttime streets of New York. He waited till they were safe distance away from the Institute, out of the range of every surveillance device in the vicinity of the headquarters, to ask his question, just in case Magnus’ answer was not meant for everyone’s ears.

Magnus laughs, but there’s a note of slight apprehension in his voice when he responds, “I’m sure I don’t know what you’re talking about, Alexander.”

Alec looks at him sideways. “You told us that the Book of White was full of the most powerful spells out there, and yet, you used one as if it was nothing, your everyday bread and butter. You didn’t even have to make any preparations at all, you just told us to move Jocelyn because you needed space. That was it. And then you woke her up. Just like that.”

Magnus shoots him a furtive, nervous look and speeds up his steps a little. “It was actually a pretty easy spell, beginner lever, a warlock child would’ve been able to perform it.” He waves his hand again. “I’m nothing special, really. Just one of the herd, an average practitioner at best.”

“A Magnus…” Alec says softly, and reaching out, he touches Magnus’ upper arm gently to make him stop. That’s all he does, he just says Magnus’ name and touches him gently - and Magnus crumples.

Sighing in resignation, Magnus turns around. “Alright. I just didn’t think it wise to point out just how powerful I am while I was at your place, surrounded by…” He waves a hand again. “Shadowhunters?” Alec finishes for him. “We are not your enemies, Magnus.”

Magnus just stares at him. “Alexander, one of the people who were there at that time, in that room, joined - or rejoined, you might say - Valentine not two days later. So, I’m sorry if I don’t really trust your lot all that much.”

Alec cringes at the painful reminder of Hodge’s betrayal. “Alright, I see your point,” he admits. “I just really hate secrets and lying. It always ends badly, no matter how good your intentions were at the beginning.”

One corner of Magnus’ mouth turns up. “The road to hell is paved with good intentions, and all that?”

Huffing out a laugh, Alec crosses his arms over his chest in an unconscious defensive gesture. “Yeah, something like that.” He looks away. “I guess you must think me naive, huh?”

Magnus takes a step closer. “No, Alexander. Not naive - innocent. And I find it admirable,
charming even, that after everything, your first instinct is still to trust people, to believe in their honesty and goodwill. I hope you never become jaded, that you won’t allow life to destroy your faith in the world.”

He lifts one hand and after a moment of hesitation, as if he’s still unsure of his permission to do this, to express his... affection for Alec openly, he touches Alec’s face gently, comfortably. And Alec smiles and presses his cheek into his hand.

They stand there like that for a moment longer until a group of drag queens stumbles past, giggling, and one of them, a dark-skinned beauty dressed in a short neon yellow dress, yells at Magnus, “Hot damn, sugar, you’re one lucky bastard!”

Magnus chortles and bends over laughing, and Alec blushes so hard the tips of ears turn pink - he has completely forgotten that they were visible!

To save at least some of his bruised dignity, Alec clears his throat, and tries to get back on topic. “So,” he says, “just how powerful are you, then? I promise not to tell.”

Still chuckling, Magnus straightens. “You’re like a dog with a bone when you want to know something, aren’t you?” He lets out a deep breath and shakes his head in exasperation. “Fine. Let’s just say that I’m powerful enough and,” he hesitates, then looks around quickly and continues, giving Alec as honest an answer as he can, “there are not twenty warlocks out there more powerful than I am, alright? But honestly, it’s not like we hold the Warlock Olympics to determine who’s best at magicking. Mostly, we just assume that the older the warlock, the more powerful he or she is. And some of us are very old.”

Alec narrows his eyes. “And how old are you, exactly?”

Magnus holds up a finger. “Nah-ah, my dear. I don’t kiss and tell.”

“Are you being coy again?” Alec asks, looking suspicious.

Laughing, Magnus entwines his arm with Alec’s and pats him. “See? You’re slowly getting the hang of it. One day, I might even teach you how to flirt!”

“Please, don’t?” Alec mutters, expression pained.

Still laughing, Magnus drags Alec along - and Alec can’t help but smile, too.
After Alec releases Meliorn with a harsh “Get out!” he storms out of the room, his face paper white, back rigid, heedless of Izzy’s soft, imploring call.

Clary moves to follow him, but Jace catches her by the arm, and when she turns to him, he shakes his head slightly, eyes trained on the door through which his parabatai left. “Don’t,” he whispers.

“But,” Clary protests, her voice anxious, “he’s… he’s my brother, Jace! Alec is my brother!” The tone of her voice indicates that she still can’t believe it.

Now he looks at her. “I know,” he replies gently, “and I’ve been exactly where he’s now, Clary, I also had a father I considered a hero replaced with the worst villain in our history. He’s not going to be happy about it. Give him a moment, alright? Let me talk to him first.”

She looks at him a moment longer, her need to go after Alec an almost physical thing, but in the end she nods reluctantly. Jace smiles at her in reassurance and kisses the top of her head.

Now Isabelle steps closer and her voice is full of distress, when she says, “Jace…”

He nods. “I’m going to talk to him,” he promises, and leaving Clary with Izzy, he goes.

The door to Alec’s room stands slightly ajar when Jace arrives there, and he pushes it open slowly. Alec’s standing at his desk, all things swept off it to the floor, some smashed to pieces. He’s bent over, hands pressed flat against the top of the desk, his head is down and his breathing heavy. The letter that Meliorn gave him is lying on the floor, among the shards, valuable intel be damned for the moment.

Jace walks in and closes the door quietly. “Are you okay?” he asks softly.

Alec just laughs harshly and doesn’t look at him.

“This might sound cliché but I know exactly how you feel,” Jace says and steps closer.

Alec turns his head to him and his eyes are ablaze with fury. “Don’t worry, Jace, I won’t suddenly develop a crisis of identity and start thinking that I might turn into Valentine 2.0,” he snaps.

Jace blinks and raises his eyebrows. “Ouch,” he replies calmly, “that was harsh.”

All the anger suddenly flows out of Alec. His shoulders slump, and turning around slowly, he leans against the edge of the table. He rubs his forehead with the fingers of his right hand and sighs. “Sorry. Sorry, sorry, I didn’t mean that.”

Jace accepts his apology with a nod and settles against the desk next to him, bumping their shoulders amiably. “As I were saying, I know exactly how you feel. And I’ll tell you what you told
me: Maryse and Robert are your parents, Robert is your dad because he raised you. That won’t ever change.”

Alec drops his hand and looks down. “You didn’t see his face. He couldn’t even look at me,” he whispers.

Waving a hand dismissively, Jace assures him, “He was simply in shock, it’s understandable. It didn’t mean anything. He knows this is not on you.”

“No,” Alec agrees. “It’s on mom.” He looks at his parabatai. “She cheated on him, Jace. How could she do that?” He sounds so lost, so betrayed.

And Jace understands that this is what’s bothering Alec the most. Yes, the fact that Valentine’s his father will hurt Alec terribly when it really settles in, but that his mother, who Alec still loves dearly despite everything, did something like that…

“First I find out that my…” Alec pauses and takes a deep breath to steady himself. “That my parents were in the Circle. Then I realize just how bigoted my mother actually is - did you know that the conversation we just had, that it was the first time that she didn’t yell at me or blame me for anything since the wedding fiasco? And now this. What’s going to be next, Jace? I don’t know just how much more disappointment I can take.”

Jace knows he should say something comforting, something to make it right, to soften the pain, but he honestly doesn’t know what. He remembers how angry he was with Jocelyn when he thought she was his mother. He understands Alec perfectly. And so he at least leans with his shoulder against Alec’s to let his parabatai know that he’s not alone - and Alec slumps against him, soaking up the comfort.

“What will you do now?” Jace asks softly. “Izzy and Clary are really worried about you.”

Alec huffs out a broken laugh. “I guess they’re both my sisters now, huh?” he says, then he shakes his head. “I know that we need to talk, Clary and I, but… not right now. I don’t think I can be here right now. I need to get away.”

“To Magnus’?” Jace hazards a guess.

Alec lets his head hang. “By the Angel, Magnus! How should I tell him? How should my Downworlder boyfriend that my father was the biggest racist in the Shadowhunter history? What will he think?”

“He won’t give a rat’s ass!” Jace states bluntly and with absolute certainty, and when Alec looks at him, he continues, “He didn’t give a damn about you being a Shadowhunter. He didn’t give a damn about Robert and Maryse who were in the Circle. He won’t give a damn about this either. Hey, he loves Clary as if she were his family!” Then he adds more gently, “He will be worried about you.”

Alec gives him a half smile, so hopeful that Jace’s heart aches. “Come on, off with you,” he prompts and pushes against Alec’s shoulder, and when Alec gets up, Jace leans down to pick up the letter from the Seelie Queen. “I’ll clean up this mess and give the letter to Maryse. And I’ll talk Clary and Izzy into giving you a little more space, alright? You go to Magnus. You need a little TLC.”

Alec laughs tiredly, then he leans in on impulse and hugs Jace tight - and Jace wraps his arms around him, too, and holds him as long as his parabatai needs.
The Mark of a Fallen

Chapter Summary

Sequel to Bird Bones (Chapter 196) and Rush of Wings (Chapter 197). Yes, another wing!fic. (Unbeta'd)

The battle has been raging on for what seems like hours, Shadowhunters and Valentine’s minions swarming in the sky above the Brooklyn Bridge, clashing together so loudly that Magnus is having a hard time keeping up his illusion, the impenetrable, sound dampening fog that hides them from the mundanes’ eyes. One slip and all will be revealed, their existence, their war, everything. Magnus is growing tired fast.

And then it happens. Two of Valentine’s men attack Alec cowardly from behind, and though Alec manages to repel and kill one, the other stabs at his wing and scores a brutal hit, staining Alec’s dove gray feathers with blood - and with a gasp of pain, Alec plummets from the sky, his injured wing useless.

“Alexander!” Magnus, standing on the top of one of the bridge towers, screams in horror, heart in his throat. Because nonononono, this is not happening!

Sparing a trickle of magical energy, as much as he can afford to divert and still keep up the illusion, he tries to catch Alec, to slow down his fall at least, to pull Alec towards him, towards the granite tower, because should Alec hit the water from this height…

But Alec’s still falling too fast, and Magnus wants to drop the illusion and just help his lover, but he can’t, his powers are woven too tightly into the illusion, he spent too much energy on it already, and if he lets it collapse suddenly, the backlash will surely stun him. And so Alec hits the tower at too great a speed, he hits it with a sickening thud and rolls across the top, bones in his wings snapping like twigs, and though Magnus throws himself after him and grabs his hand, Alec still slips over the edge.

And now Alec’s hanging from the tower, anchored only by Magnus’ hand, and he’s barely conscious, his face scraped and bloody, wings broken and twisted. And Magnus is lying on his stomach, slowly sliding towards the edge, and he’s desperately trying to hold on, to not let Alec go, and to keep up the illusion, too, but everything’s slipping from his grasp.

“Alexander,” Magnus whispers, his voice raw, because he will not let go, he will not let go, he will not!

Feeling another lurch, another slip, Alec slowly raises his head, and his hazel eyes are glazed with pain when he twists his lips into a pale approximation of a smile and rasps, “Let go, Magnus.”

Magnus shakes his head violently. “Never!” he refuses firmly.

“Magnus,” Alec pleads, “let go or you’ll fall, too!”

And Magnus shakes his head again. “I will not let go!”

Alec’s eyes shine with wetness. “Magnus—”
And they both slip from the top of the tower and they’re falling, the bridge’s hard surface already so close, and Magnus roars a defiant “No!” and…

… wings! Wings sprout out of his back! Not the fluffy feathery ones but dark and bat-like things, leathery and large, and they catch the wind and jerk them both to a bone-jarring halt. Alec cries out in pain and Magnus flails because he has wings and he has no idea what to do with them! And they drop further, the tips of Alec’s pale wings almost grazing the roofs of the cars swooshing below them now. But Magnus will not let Alec fall!

Screaming with new, never before experienced pain, he strains the muscles in his back and flaps his wings the way he has seen Alec do it, or at least he tries to, again and again, and they’re not flying so much as bobbing up and down and sideways, and Alec’s dangling below Magnus, but finally they start rising, slowly, oh so slowly.

And Magnus feels his attention slipping, he feels the illusion starting to fall apart, and he clamps down hard on the strands of magic that he has woven into intricate patterns, keeping it up, while flapping his wings hard, and up and up they rise, towards the top of the tower, and when they finally drop down onto it, Magnus curls up into a tiny ball, whimpering in pain. But they are alive. *Alexander is alive!*

It’s Alec’s voice, hoarse but full of wonder, what brings him out of the haze. “You have wings,” Alec rasps and when Magnus turns his head towards him, he sees Alec reaching out to gently run his scraped fingers over the dark membrane of Magnus’ wing. And when Magnus twitches uncertainly, Alec smiles, eyes still glazed with the agony of his own injuries. “They’re beautiful.”

“They must be my father’s legacy, the mark of a fallen angel - demon wings,” Magnus whispers, pained.

But Alec shakes his head minutely. “They’re yours. And you’ll never be not beautiful to me.”

Magnus’ throat closes off and he blinks back tears, because nobody has ever loved him so much. And then he starts crawling towards Alec, wings dragging after him, because he needs to take care of his lover, to heal him. To keep him safe.

And above them, the battle rages on.
Chapter Summary

I wondered how the story would change if Jace had asked Izzy and not Alec to become his parabatai all those years back. Angst for angst's sake. (Unbeta'd)

When Alec is told that Izzy was asked to become Jace’s parabatai, his world shatters. He has been contemplating asking Jace to become his parabatai for months now, trying to convince himself that Jace will say yes, that he’ll agree, that he must surely feel the same way. But obviously, Alec was wrong. So, he puts on a smile and congratulates them - and he never tells anyone just how much he wishes to be in Izzy’s place.

When it comes to their weapon of choice, Alec chooses the bow - the perfect weapon for a solitary boy like him. Izzy chooses the whip and Jace the blade, of course. To watch them fight side by side, as parabatai do, feels like watching a perfectly rehearsed dance, it’s a thing of a heart-stopping beauty. And Alec covers their backs from afar but never gets to join in.

When Clary Fairchild enters their lives, Alec’s last hope dies. He thought that maybe… he hoped that he and Jace could... since they’re not parabatai and Jace never had a steady girlfriend before, Alec hoped that there maybe was something between them after all, that this was the reason why Jace asked Izzy and not him to become his parabatai, because parabatai can’t be lovers. But now he knows that it wasn’t that, after all, that he simply lacks something that Izzy apparently has. He wonders if there’s something wrong with him.

When Magnus Bane shows interest in him, Alec doesn’t understand it. Why? Why would anyone look at him when there are Jace and Izzy around? Nobody ever did before. Alec doesn’t get it, and he’s too afraid to believe it to be true. He has been wrong so many times over the years. And if this is just some… some game to Magnus Bane, it would kill Alec.

When Alec asks Lydia Branwell to marry him to save the Lightwoods’ family name, besmeared by their parents’ ugly past and by his siblings’ irresponsible stunts, nobody thanks him for it, just the opposite. But Alec’s used to it by now. The only thing that really hurts is the pain in Magnus Bane’s eyes when Alec tells him. Maybe, just maybe, Magnus’ intentions were honest after all? Well, it’s too late now anyway.

When Jace and Izzy free Meliorn, when they steal the Cup from the vault and run, it’s the last straw for Alec. He stands there, before the open vault, staring at the empty shelf in disbelief. Because they didn’t just steal the Cup, they stole from him, from their own brother! They betrayed him, stole from him, attacked him and then left him to pick up the pieces… and he’s done, he can’t take it anymore, he can’t be here anymore. So...

When Inquisitor Herondale arrives to investigate the high treason committed by the Lightwoods - Alec takes the fall. He confesses to everything: to contacting the Downworlders, to planning the attack, to freeing Meliorn. Only the theft of the Mortal Cup, that he keeps to himself. Everything else? He shoulders it all. One last time. The one thing he regrets is hurting Lydia. But then, she has always deserved better.

When he’s sentenced to exile, only Lydia comes to say good-bye - she and the whole Institute,
every one of the staff! - but nobody from his family’s there: Max and his parents are still in Idris, and Jace and Izzy are who knows where. Lydia hugs him and whispers in his ear that he’s amazing and so very brave. After that, he never sees her again.

When the Silent Brothers strip him of his runes and then drag him outside the City of Bones, now forever closed to him, when they simply dump him in front of their door like the traitor they think him to be, he’s still hurt and aching and disoriented…

… but then Magnus Bane is there, touching Alec gently, mindful of his injuries, and whispering words of love and comfort. And when he helps Alec up, Alec clings to him tightly, because he just lost everything!

But not the loyalty of a friend, because it was Lydia who called Magnus, who told him what was happening, who sent him after Alec - who must’ve known the whole time about Alec’s feelings for Magnus and still stood by him.

And when Alec whispers, “Please, Magnus, take me away from here,” Magnus responds gently, “For you, anything, Alexander.”

And Alec dares to believe.
Alec doesn’t know how it happened. They used to snap at each other, wound each other in places where it hurt the most, and now? Now they work side by side, rubbing shoulders amicably…

He and Clary.

Huh.

Maybe it’s their shared desire to get Jace back, to save him from Valentine, no matter what. Nobody else truly gets it, this visceral level of need they feel to have Jace back with them, not Maryse and Robert, not Jocelyn, not even Izzy. It’s like a part of them is gone.

And now they sit there, at the desk in her room, heads bent over new intel that Magnus managed to gather from his contacts - and that’s when she says…

“I’m sorry, you know?”

Alec looks up from his pad and raises his eyebrows. “About what?” he asks.

She props her head against her fist and watches him fondly. “About how pushy I was before, when I kept insisting that you should admit you were in love with Jace. I’m sorry. I didn’t know that it’s forbidden between parabatai. I had no idea.”

Alec pauses and drops his gaze. His knee-jerk reaction is to tell her that he doesn’t know what she’s talking about. But considering his fear, his panic cost Clary her memories, he feels he owes her an explanation.

“Yes, it’s forbidden,” he says. “If someone had found out… I could’ve landed us both in a lot of trouble, me and Jace. We would’ve been punished, or at least I would’ve been, they would’ve probably exiled me or worse. But it wasn’t just that…”

He falls silent but Clary doesn’t prod, she waits for him to gather his thoughts. And so he answers honestly, looking at her shyly because he has never talked about this to anyone, not even to Isabelle.

“When Jace asked me to become his parabatai, I was already in love with him,” he admits softly as if afraid someone might hear. “But even then I knew that I could never act on those feelings. And so I thought that if I became his parabatai, I could at least share my life with him this way, be as close to him as I could. But it also meant that I entered our bond under false pretenses, and I was so…” He swallows hard and looks away. “… ashamed. I was so ashamed because I was convinced that I was perverting something that should’ve been pure. And I was afraid that if Jace found out…” He falls silent again.

And this time, Clary reaches out and squeezes his hand. “There was nothing you should’ve felt ashamed of, Alec,” she tells him gently. “Love should never cause shame because love is pure.
And Jace would’ve never held it against you. He didn’t. He’s pig-headed and cocky and sometimes I want to strangle him,” she say, wrinkling her nose cutely, “but he is worthy of both of our love, no matter what shape it takes in the end.”

Alec turns his head towards her and smiles slightly. “And we will get him back.”

She nods. “And we will get him back.”

So, he and Clary. Who would’ve thought?
Forever Out of Reach

Chapter Summary

This is a death story. It doesn’t have a happy ending. It’s a what-if story: what if Alec actually broke his and Jace’s bond while searching for Jace and the Cup in 110. Obviously, I needed to work through some issues. (Unbeta’d)

Alec dies trying to find Jace and the Mortal Cup.

He’s angry, so very, very angry and despite Hodge’s warning, he pushes and pushes against his bond with Jace, because he will not let Isabelle stand trial, he will not let his sister take the fall, if the Clave wants the damn Cup, then he will get it for them, he should’ve given it to them immediately, he shouldn’t have let Jace sway his judgment, and now they have this mess, this terrible mess…

And he pushes and leans against the bond - until it snaps and all the pent up power of it lashes back at him with such intensity that it stops his heart in mid-beat.

And Alec’s last thought is, I can see him…

Jace collapses when the bond breaks, knocked unconscious by the snap of the connection between him and his parabatai. But when he wakes up, he doesn’t immediately realize what happened. There’s the escaped demon he needs to deal with in the other dimension and then he gets wounded and then his dad returns and he turns out to be Valentine! It’s one shock after another. And he thinks that the yawning emptiness in his chest is only the bond gone weak because of Alec’s actions.

It’s not until they return to the Institute, he and Clary and their sleeping mother, it’s not until Clary gives the Cup to Lydia, and he snaps angrily, “Where is Alec? I need to speak with him!”, it’s not until then that he finds out the truth.

Lydia stares at him for a long moment, uncomprehending and a little shocked, the Cup still in her hand. “He’s dead,” she replies simply.

And it’s as if someone sucked all the oxygen out of the room; Jace can’t breathe and he’s starting to get dizzy. “You’re lying,” he croaks hoarsely, while Clary gently squeezes his arm, whispering his name.

But Lydia’s gaze remains steady. “He died trying to find you and… this,” she says, her voice disgusted, and raises the Cup. “Inquisitor Herondale ordered Izzy to be put on trial for high treason and the Cup was the only thing that could have persuaded her to stop it. Alec was so desperate to find it…” Her voice breaks and she looks away, blinking rapidly.

It can’t be. It just can’t be, there must be some mistake. “Where is he?”

“In the morgue. Izzy is there with him,” Lydia responds, not looking at Jace.

And Jace tears his arm out of Clary’s grip and runs, racing down the corridors towards the morgue,
because this can’t be true. If Alec were dead, Jace would know, Jace would… Jace would have
died together with him, on the spot, he wouldn’t be here, living and breathing as if a half of his
soul weren’t dead.

When he barges into the morgue, he freezes at the tableau before him: Alec’s lying on one of the
stainless steel tables, naked to the waist and unmoving, his skin gray. And there’s Izzy, sitting by
the table, holding Alec’s hand and rubbing it as if trying to warm her brother’s flesh.

No. Just no.

Without turning towards the door, eyes still trained on Alec’s lifeless face, Izzy speaks, “He was so
furious. I’ve never seen him so angry. Or so hurt.” She pauses and strokes her brother’s hair off his
forehead. “I think he would’ve forgiven us that we saved Meliorn. He did forgive us because he
understood why we did it. But we took the Cup - and he knew that we must’ve stolen his stele to
get inside the vault…”

Jace takes a step closer, then another and another. He feels unreal. All of it feels unreal. Because
he now understands that the terrible abyss inside him will never be filled again. His parabatai is
gone. Alec is gone. Alec died.

Alec… died.

“By the Angel, he felt so betrayed by what we did. He didn’t think he could trust you ever again.”
Izzy turns towards him and she’s almost as pale as Alec, eyes bloodshot and swollen from long
crying. “Did you know that he loved you? Not just as a friend or a brother or even a parabatai. He
was in love with you. He has been for years, maybe even before you two became parabatai. And
he knew you would never see him that way but he has never stopped hoping.”

Yes, Jace knew. He realized it after what happened with the demon that held Clary’s memories
hostage. And he didn’t understand how he could’ve been so blind. Did he ever really know his
parabatai?

“That’s why I was so happy when Magnus Bane took a liking to Alec,” Isabelle continues and
looks back at her brother, her voice choked up. “I hoped that he would finally make Alec happy.”
She hunches her shoulders and suddenly she looks so small and fragile, nothing like the headstrong
Shadowhunter she is. “Oh God, Magnus. I’ll have to tell Magnus.”

And Jace stands there, barely listening, because all he can do is stare at Alec’s face, his yearning
for his parabatai to open his eyes, to… to yell at him, if need be, but to be alive, growing deeper
and more profound with each second. Alec’s right there, and yet forever out of reach now.

As if this realization opened the floodgates, it all crashes down on Jace, everything, and his knees
buckle and he sinks down to the floor, breathing harsh, and his stomach rebels at the smell of the
chemicals in the air, at the harsh reality, and he presses his forehead to the edge of the metal table,
just inches away from Alec’s lifeless hand, and he makes a wounded, keening sound that quickly
turns into a roar, and he’s screaming himself hoarse, not even registering that Clary’s there now,
too, holding him, that she’s crying together with him, pleading with him…

Because Alec is dead and Jace’s soul died with him.

And he didn’t even notice…
Magnus follows Alec out of the room, the need to explain what happened with Camille, the kiss and all, tying up his insides into unhappy knots.

“Alexander,” Magnus starts saying when they step into the hall to “check the perimeter,” as Alec wanted, “what you saw–”

“I don’t want to talk about it.” Alec interrupts him, opening the first door in the hall, one of many, to make sure the room’s clear.

Magnus replies a little dryly, “Considering that the last time we did not discuss something properly you went and almost got married, I don’t think this tactic is all that wise, darling.”

Alec glares at him and moves on to the next door in the long hall.

Magnus sighs dejectedly. His need to fix this is almost overwhelming. He wants Alec to smile at him again. He wants to kiss Alec again. And he’s afraid that if he allows this thing to fester, it will destroy the fragile sapling of a relationship they started to grow. And as he has proven already, he will fight tooth and nail to protect it!

He tries it again. “Alexander–”

Alec snaps around, one hand on the doorknob of the second door. “I really do not want to discuss your relationship with Camille Belcourt of all people. By the Angel, Magnus, Camille Belcourt?”

“She was different back then,” Magnus objects softly.

Raising his eyebrows, Alec responds, voice dripping with sarcasm, “Really? So, a century ago, she was not a murdering psychopath? Or was it that you simply didn’t care?”


Alec shakes his head angrily. “It should not be! That woman should be facing murder charges. Who knows how many she killed or turned against their will. I should be taking her in, that’s my job, protecting people, instead I’m making deals with her and letting her go. Everyone who she kills from now on, will be on us!” He twists the doorknob sharply and pushes the door open, still facing Magnus. “So, excuse me if I’m more disturbed by the fact that we’re letting a mass murderer go, than by the unresolved issues you two apparently have!”

Magnus opens his mouth to respond when Alec’s suddenly shoved forward roughly, and a man dressed all in black steps out of the room that Alec was about to enter - Valentine’s man! Lighting fast, the man winds his arm around Alec’s throat and presses a glowing Seraph Blade against Alec’s vulnerable skin. Magnus reflexively lifts his hands to–
“One move, warlock, and your boy toy is dead!” the man growls and puts more pressure on the blade.

Alec tries to turn his head away, the edge of the blade scraping his throat, the glow of it reflected in his eyes. And Magnus understands that the man means it, that he would slice Alec’s throat without a second thought - and Magnus has seen enough people die by the Seraph Blade over the centuries to know that the weapon would cut through bones and tissue with little resistance. He could still snap his fingers and kill the man on the spot - but one wrong move, one spasm, and Alexander would be dead.

Alec’s looking at him, urging him to do it anyway, to kill the man, to take the risk - but Magnus cannot. He will not risk Alec’s life. He will not. As long as they are both alive, they can always fight later. He lets his hands drop. And then there’s a blade at his own throat, too. And Alec’s eyes widen with fear - fear for Magnus’ life.

And they’re caught, used against one another. And all Magnus wanted this morning was kiss Alexander again.

Hell.
Once Alec tracks down Jace and the Mortal Cup through his \textit{parabatai} bond - and Hodge still can’t believe that the Cup was so close, \textit{so close} and he didn’t know it! - Lydia rushes off to change, promising to be back in a minute.

Hodge stays, though, he stays and watches over Alec as the younger man sits up slowly and drops his legs to the floor, and he can’t help but notice the way Alec grips the edge of the mattress so hard his knuckles turn white.

“Are you okay?” Hodge asks in concern.

“I’m fine,” Alec responds tightly, but in the very next moment he hisses and hunches over as his muscles spasm painfully.

“You’re not fine,” Hodge comments pointedly and drops into a crouch in front of his charge. “Alec. Hey, Alec,” he repeats more forcefully and grips Alec’s knee to make the young man look up.

When Alec does, Hodge furrows his brows in sympathy. Alec’s face is pale and drenched in sweat and his lips are pressed into a thin line. There’s a painful tension around his eyes and he’s breathing slowly, deliberately through his nose.

“You’re not fine,” Hodge says much more gently. “How bad is it? You didn’t break the bond, did you?” That was his greatest fear when Alec set his mind on this stupid stunt.

Alec shakes his head jerkily. “No,” he croaks out, “but it hurts like hell.”

Hodge sighs in exasperation. “You stupid boy! What did you expect? The bond’s not a rope, you can’t just pull at it and twist it as you please and expect no backlash!”

In response, Alec hisses again, pressing one hand hard against his \textit{parabatai} rune, and Hodge can see the muscles in Alec’s side spasming again.

“I can handle a little pain, Hodge. But I had to do it,” Alec grits out. He looks Hodge straight in the eyes, and Hodge is reminded of the stubborn little runt Alec used to be. “I can’t allow them to go through with this trial. If Izzy’s case goes to the court, she \textit{will be} convicted because she \textit{is guilty},” he admits in a whisper.

“Ready?” Lydia asks, standing in the doorway, dressed in her casual clothes.

Hodge straightens and helps Alec stand up. He catches him when Alec sways unsteadily, then hands him his shirt which Alec takes with a trembling hand and a quiet “Thank you.” And then, Alec’s gone, following Lydia out.

And Hodge stares after him in frustration, cursing his imprisonment for the umpteenth time, but
this time not on his own behalf, no, but because of these kids who throw themselves into danger that he can’t protect them from.
After all the angst and suffering, I really needed to write something fluffy. Set in my Fireman!Alec & Lawyer!Magnus AU. (Unbeta'd)

Stories so far: Found (Chapter 118) & Dinner (Chapter 124) & Fishes (Chapter 125).

When they hear a car screech to a halt in front of the fire station, they peer out curiously - and chuckle at the bright purple Jaguar, the latest model, of course, that’s now parked half on, half off the sidewalk in front of the building.


Alec, whose turn it is to cook their lunch today, pokes his head out of their tiny station kitchen. “Huh? What?”

Raj’s grinning now, hands on his hips. “Your sugar daddy’s here. And he looks mighty miffed.”

Frowning, Alec turns off the heat on the stove and walks outside, the others sneaking not so stealthily after him because they know better than to miss this. Whenever Magnus Bane graces their station with his presence, hilarity ensues.

And yes, there it is: Magnus in all his designer suit glory, this one in dove gray, clambers out of his car, stomps around, opens the passenger door and drags a… *cat carrier* out. A bag of this and that follows, a feathered toy in all the colors of the rainbow sticking out of the bag like a flag.

“Magnus?” Alec calls out, surprised.

Magnus turns to him with a glare, dumps the bag on the sidewalk, and huffing in annoyance, he starts dragging the cat carrier - quite a big thing that makes him stumble this way and that like a drunk - towards the station.

“Hi, yes, Alexander,” Magnus doesn’t respond till he’s almost an arm’s length away. When he slams the carrier down - so abruptly that Alec actually has to jump back to avoid having his toes flattened - the animal inside yowls. “Here you have your beast. I hope your station is infested with mice because that… that *thing* will not cross the threshold of our apartment ever again!”

Alec blinks at him, then he crouches down to shush the large, fluffy cat inside the carrier. “What did Church do?” he asks, confused.

Magnus points a finger. “That carnivorous monster ate Ernest! When I came home, it still had poor little Ernest’s tail sticking out of its maw! You told me that your *pet tiger* and my goldfish could coexist. Well, two *Ernests* have now paid with their lives for your erroneous assumption. Two, my dear! I will not suffer that *dangerous killer* on our premises a day longer! I hope that… that *duster* of yours will be very happy in its exile. I did warn it to keep its furry paws away from my fishes!”

Alec straightens and opens his mouth to protest, but Magnus grabs him by the front of his shirt, drags him down and kisses him hard on the mouth before Alec can say anything. Their attentive
When they separate, Magnus licks his lips, and with his nose still barely an inch away from Alec’s, he orders softly but firmly, “I expect Ernest Hemingway the Fifth to be swimming happily in his tragically departed predecessor’s bowl tonight. The pet store’s open till six.”

And with that, Magnus turns on his heel and marches away. Alec still stands there, gaping like the dearly departed Ernest the Fourth, long after the sparkling purple car roars off into the distance. What the…?

*When did my life turn into a circus?* Alec sighs inwardly, and the unfairly exiled Church yowls in agreement.
Some Go Free

Chapter Summary

And we're back to angst and suffering. This one popped up in my head while I was listening to Fleurie's Soldier on repeat. (Unbeta'd)

“We don’t have the Mortal Cup and we don’t know where it is, I swear,” Alec says. “But I’m willing to do anything, *anything at all*, to save my sister.”

Slowly, Inquisitor Herondale gets up from behind her desk; she’s never looked more ominous than in this moment. “Anything, Mr Lightwood?” she asks.

Alec takes a deep breath, and squaring his shoulders, he nods. “Anything.”

“You’re free to go,” Lydia says as she walks into the room where Isabelle and Magnus are kept waiting. “The Inquisitor let the charges drop.”

Both Izzy and Magnus whoop and hug excitedly. “Really?” Isabelle asks. “Did Jace and Clary come back with the Cup, then?”

“No,” Lydia answers quietly. “Your brother made a deal with the Inquisitor.”

Only then do they notice her somber expression, and Magnus’ breath catches in his throat when he sees that Lydia’s holding Alec’s bow and quiver in her hands.

Isabelle steps forward anxiously. “Alec? Where is he? What did he do?” she demands.

Lydia shakes her head. “I don’t know. He left with the Inquisitor and her guard. But he asked me to give you this, Magnus,” she adds and hands him the bow and the quiver. “And to tell you that you were right, about everything.”

Izzy and Magnus stare at the weapons in dismay.

Several hours later, Clary and Jace bring the Mortal Cup back, after all.

It’s several hours too late.

They ask and ask and ask - they never find out what happened to Alec.
Chapter Summary

Sequel to Some Go Free (Chapter 209). At first, I wanted to leave it like that, leave Alec’s fate to the readers’ imagination. But then I got this cool idea… (Unbeta’d)

When Maryse learns of her son’s disappearance, she goes directly to the source, uncompromising, demanding and determined to find out the truth.

“Where’s my son, Imogen?” she asks the Inquisitor. “What did you do to him?”

Imogen Herondale regards her with deep contempt. “Your son made a choice. He saved your recalcitrant daughter from exile and he restored your family’s honor. Be content with that and let it go.”

When she turns to leave, Maryse grabs her arm - a thing unheard of to which the Inquisitor’s guard immediately reacts by pointing their spears at her - and Imogen looks at her in shocked disbelief. But Maryse doesn’t care. “Let it go? This is my son we’re talking about here! I will not–”

Imogen twists her arm out of Maryse’s grip and snaps at her, outraged, “You will, Maryse Lightwood! You and your husband will return to New York and you will continue fulfilling your duties with diligence as you should’ve done before! To allow you to do just that, your son made a great sacrifice - and you should better make damn sure you don’t trample all over it!”

And with that, Inquisitor Herondale turns and leaves, her guard falling into step behind her.

Two weeks later, Imogen Herondale falls in battle with Valentine Morgenstern’s forces. And the only link leading to Alec’s whereabouts seems lost.

But they don’t give up, they try and try to find any sliver of information, though it’s not until Robert becomes Inquisitor himself, months later, after they win the war with Valentine and peace returns to Idris, that they discover the truth. The truth about Alec’s disappearance - and about the greatest mystery of Alicante.

And as Robert stands there, deep underneath the streets of Idris’ capital, and stares at the brightly glowing sphere that has become Alec’s prison, stares at his son, asleep or maybe unconscious, floating inside unaware of his surroundings, he’s overcome with horror so profound that it steals his breath away.

“You poor, naive fool,” cackles the Warden of this place, an old woman brown as a nut and wrinkled as a prune, dressed in a long gray robe, “how did you think your precious demon towers worked? What did you think powered this creation of Raziel’s?”

The Warden shuffles closer, still chuckling, amused by Robert’s dismay, the clicking of her cane on the stone floor echoing through the otherwise deadly quiet room. But Robert can’t tear his eyes away from his son, because if it’s true, then every time the towers glow, every time the wards go up…

“The strength of Raziel’s children is almost infinite, Inquisitor,” the Warden says as she joins him,
eyes trained on the sphere, too. “The one before lasted more than a century, powering the wards. This one’s young and strong, he’ll keep us safe for decades to come. And when he’s drained, we will get another one, just like always.”

She turns to Robert and her voice loses all its pointed merriment when she states with harsh coldness, “For the good of all, some must suffer.”
Winged Shorts #1 (The One with the Tardis)

Chapter Summary

Set in my Winged!Verse. Previous stories: Bird Bones (Chapter 196) / Rush of Wings (Chapter 197)/ The Mark of a Fallen (Chapter 202). (Unbeta'd)

Their bedroom? Is just one big room - and a bed. That's it. Magnus learned the hard way.

You see, the first thing Alec does in the morning? Is to stretch, from the tips of his fingers to the tips of his toes. With an almost obscene moan of pleasure, he lets all the pent-up tension flow out of his muscles - which naturally means that his wings pop out of his back too, stretching to their full length, which is a sight to behold, considering their size. Many pieces of furniture - lamps in particular - have not survived his morning routine.

Magnus doesn’t understand how he did it before, while he still lived in the Institute where everything’s so narrow and filled with ancient artifacts. When he asks, Alec looks at him sheepishly and admits, “I didn’t. I almost never let my wings out till the ache became too much and I couldn’t stand it any longer. I hated showing them to people…”

After such a confession, Magnus can’t but be overcome with fuzzy feelings of happiness for the very simple reason that Alec trusts him so much. Damn the furniture and the lamps. If he can’t tailor their living space to his boyfriend’s needs, what’s his magic actually for, then?

So he turns their bedroom into their very own little version of the Tardis: bigger on the inside, just so Alec can stretch his ridiculously large - and gorgeous and so very, very soft! - appendages to his heart’s content. A walk-in closet and a faerie light or ten take care of the rest of their needs.

And afterwards, when Alec looks at him with those beautiful hazel eyes full of wonder and asks in a hushed voice, “You did this for me?” Magnus thinks that yes, this, this is what magic’s for.
“Now, let them out, just like I showed you,” Alec says, holding Magnus’ hands.

They’re standing in their bedroom, facing each other, naked from the waist up. Alec has his wings out, beautiful, big and dove gray, and he’s patiently trying to teach Magnus how to let his wings unfurl on purpose. But so far to no avail.

“Nothing,” Magnus huffs, frustrated.

“Just concentrate,” Alec advises gently.

“I am concentrating,” Magnus grumbles.

“No, you look like you’re about to poop.”

Magnus glares.

Amused, Alec laughs. “Alright, let me try something.”

With that, Alec drops Magnus’ hands, and leaning closer, he winds his right arm around Magnus as if in a hug. But instead, he finds Magnus’ spine, right between the shoulder blades, and runs his fingers down along the vertebrae.

Magnus reacts with a giggle - and a yip of surprise because half a second later, his wings pop out of his back and he almost topples over backwards under their weight, flapping them wildly for a moment just to stay upright.

Laughing, Alec catches him around the waist and helps him stand. “There.”

“What did you do?” Magnus exclaims, looking over one shoulder and then the other in wonder.

Smiling, Alec explains, “That’s how we teach our children to let their wings out. Apparently, it works on ancient warlocks, too.”

“Huh,” Magnus replies and flutters his dark leathery wings experimentally.

“And now try to hide them again,” Alec asks.

Squinting, Magnus pursues his lips and tries to concentrate.

“You’re making that pooping face again,” Alec comments, still amused.

Magnus mutters something very uncomplimentary. Alec just laughs.
From Afar

Chapter Summary

Set in my Dancer!Magnus AU. I was asked to write a continuation... Beware of ableist slurs.

Sequel to Earthbound (Chapter 159) and Guilt (Chapter 169). (Unbeta'd)

Five years. Five years they were together. And now Camille’s leaving him for some Russian guy. Typical. Magnus wants to punch something. Or someone. Damn it!

He leans against the window frame with a tired sigh and looks outside, eyes roaming restlessly. It’s twilight now, windows in the surrounding buildings are starting to come alight, and Magnus is in love with New York. At least the city will stay true to him.

And then - in the tall building across the street, someone’s sitting in the window over there, a floor or two above him, watching him. Their apartment is dark but it seems, yes, it’s a man, a young one, Magnus guesses.

Reflexively, Magnus smiles and waves. The studio behind him is brightly lit, so he knows the man must see him. The stranger pauses - and then waves back, uncertainly.

Magnus grins, and overcome with a crazy idea, he pushes away from the window and does a pirouette, leaps and twirls again, before turning back to the window and bowing. When he straightens again, he can see the man clapping. He laughs.

“What are you so happy about?” a sharp, vicious voice snaps behind him.

Camille.

She joins him at the window, and taking a look, she snorts. “Ah, that crippled creep again. Pervert.”

When she moves away again, leaving a whiff of cigarette smoke and expensive perfume behind, Magnus turns after her. “What?” he asks.

Camille starts gathering the last of her things as she replies, “Yeah, he can’t seem to keep his eyes off you. Like I said, a creep. I’m surprised you didn’t notice him. He just sits there, in his wheelchair by the window, and stares at you while you dance. If it were me, I would’ve called the cops on him. But it’s no skin off my nose.” She shrugs.

Magnus just stands there, gaping at her. “Who is he?”

Camille shrugs again. She grabs her bag and one of the trophies they won together off the shelf. “Some rich fuck’s kid, from what I heard. Lightworm? Light… something. It just shows that no money can buy you working legs.”

Then she heads for the door and yells over her shoulder, "Have a nice life, Magnus. I’ll send you a can of caviar from Boris’ yacht!” And she’s gone.
Magnus stares after her and wonders what he ever saw in this woman.

When he finally gathers his wits and turns back to the window, it’s dark outside - and the curious stranger in the apartment across is gone.
Chapter Summary

A little bit of navel gazing about Jace. (Unbeta'd)

When Jace comes back, it’s a very strange experience indeed.

It’s not that his friends and siblings didn’t try to find him, that they didn’t fight for him - they did, by the Angel, they did, they fought for him and they bled for him! - but in his absence, they also inevitably moved on.

And so he comes home to find Izzy and Simon, of all people, a couple. Alec’s not the acting head of the Institute anymore, demoted for his indiscretion, the scandal he caused. And he doesn’t even live at the Institute anymore, but at Magnus’! And Alec and Clary, his parabatai and his sister, seem to be best friends now. It feels like the whole world has gone mad.

But it’s not just that. Jace changed, too. And though they expect him to be the same person as before, he’s not. What he saw while at Valentine’s side, all the murder and cruelty, it changed him on a profound level. It tilted his world view, knocked him off balance. And he’s not sure if he can find his way back to who he was before.

But when they welcome him back, when Jace’s parabatai and his sisters hug him tight and hang on as if they never want to let go again, Jace thinks that maybe, maybe that’s okay.

Maybe they don’t have to go back to what used to be. Maybe moving forward is exactly what they need.
The Difference One Day Makes

Chapter Summary

Alec and Hodge and the difference one day makes. Set after the season finale.
(Unbeta'd)

Alec doesn’t speak to Hodge, he doesn’t even look his mentor directly in the eye while he redresses his wound in the holding cell. And Hodge doesn’t talk either. It seems that there’s nothing left to talk about.

It’s not until Alec gathers his things to leave that Hodge finally asks, “When will they come for me?”

Alec pauses at the door while the guards in the corridor outside watch them impassively. Slowly, he turns and finally, he looks at Hodge. “In the morning,” he replies. “They’ll take you to Alicante where you’ll stand trial for high treason. And because you committed your crimes while already in exile…”

Hodge grimaces. “Right. The Inquisitor will demand the death penalty.”

Alec just stares at him. He doesn’t have to confirm Hodge’s guess. They both know it’s the truth.

Hodge, still sitting in the bunk, looks at his former charge challengingly. “What? Will you not rant? Curse me? Blame me?”

Alec pauses for a moment longer, then he shakes his head. “No. It wouldn’t do either of us any good. But I want to know something.”

Hodge gives him a silent look, his face unreadable.


Laughing harshly, Hodge leans forward. “Why? Why? For twenty years have I lived in exile, branded and hurting, unable to go home, unable to leave, while Maryse and Robert enjoyed their pampered privileged lives - just because they turned on their friends when they got scared. They were pardoned, even got to run their own precious Institute, but not because they actually changed their way of thinking and repented, oh no, but simply because they were cowardly opportunists.” He shakes his head in disgust. “And I had to live under their roof and be reminded of that for twenty whole years. I had enough.”

Alec stares at him with a closed off expression. “So we - me, Jace, Izzy… Max - we meant nothing to you? We were just means to an end for you? A long con or what?” he asks in a flat voice.

Hodge looks away.

Shaking his head, Alec continues bitterly. “The funny thing is, Hodge, that yesterday, I would’ve agreed with you. It was unfair that you were punished and my parents were not even though their crimes were no less terrible, the only difference was that theirs were perpetrated against Downworlders, so in the eyes of the Clave, theirs were forgivable.”
Alec pauses for a moment to compose himself. “These last few weeks taught me that the Clave is not infallible and that it’s okay to think for yourself and not follow the Law blindly, that we need to change our ways. I finally opened my eyes and yesterday, *yesterday* I would have agreed with you.”

He waits for Hodge to look at him, then he says coldly, “But today, Lydia’s in the infirmary, recovering from your attack - you fractured her skull, did you know that? Today, Valentine has *both* the Mortal Cup and *Jace*, my *parabatai*, in his hands. And we’re going to war that we will most likely lose. All thanks to you.”

And this time, Hodge flinches. He looks away once more and brings the stump of his hand protectively to his chest.


And with that he nods to the guards who slam the cell door shut. It’s a terribly final sound.
Chapter Summary

Sequel to Solitary Boy (Chapter 203), requested by several bloodthirsty readers here :P (Unbeta'd).

This is the 3rd time that I've written a take on this scene, with Jace coming back and Lydia meeting him. I'm starting to repeat myself. That wouldn't do...

When they finally come back - Jace, Isabelle and Clary, with the Cup and the sleeping Jocelyn, too - a hush settles over the Institute. They pause, feeling everyone’s gaze on them, hard and not at all friendly.

“What’s happening?” Clary asks quietly, but Jace only shakes his head. He has no idea.

And then Lydia’s walking towards them, across the Ops Center, and suddenly all the people manning the computers turn away as if they know what will come and don’t want to witness it.

“What’s going on here?” Isabelle asks, stepping in front of her parabatai, his sister and their mother.

Lydia comes to a halt a few feet away and when she speaks, she’s not looking at them directly, but somewhere into the distance, over their shoulders. “It’s my duty as the temporary head of this Institute to inform you that in your absence, Alexander Lightwood was found guilty of high treason and sentenced to exile.”

“What?” Jace and Izzy exclaim, distraught.

But Lydia continues as if they haven’t spoken. “According to the Law, all his possessions were confiscated and his name struck from the records. As of this moment, Alec’s not considered one of the Nephilim anymore and every contact with him is henceforth forbidden.”

“Why?” Jace demands angrily. “How could you let it happen?”

“But he didn’t do anything!” Isabelle protests loudly.

Now Lydia finally looks at them and her blue eyes are ablaze with anger. “I did not let anything happen,” she hisses quietly. “And I know very well that Alec didnot do anything. But the Inquisitor ordered a full investigation of Meliorn’s escape - under her own supervision! And Alec knew he couldn’t let that happen because everything you’ve done so far without the Clave’s permission would’ve come out -everything.”

“So he took the fall?” Izzy says in dismay.

“Where is he?” Jace asks sharply.

Lydia answers, he anger unrelenting, “He was taken to the City of Bones and stripped of his runes. Nobody knows where he’s now.”
Clary touches her brother’s shoulder. “Jace, what does it mean?” she asks anxiously.

He clenches his jaw to compose himself before he replies, “The Silent Brothers burned all of Alec’s runes off his body. They erased the Nephilim part of him. He’s now a common mundane.”

Clary draws in a sharp breath.

Isabelle shakes her head. “We have to find him. We have to protect him! Every Downworlder will be after him: he’s a Lightwood, the son of ex-Circle members. We have to go after him!” she says urgently.

“No!” Lydia snaps. “What you have to do is leave him alone. Let him live out his life in peace. I think you’ve done enough already. Let it be.”

Jace looks at her furiously, then he narrows his eyes. “You know where he is,” he reasons.

Lydia presses her lips together and does no respond.

Izzy takes a quick step forward. “Where is he? He’s our brother, Lydia! If you know where he is—”

“I know nothing!” Lydia interrupts her sharply. “Alec might be your brother, but he was my fiancé and I would’ve never hurt him! What’s done is done. All I can do now is hope that he’ll be happy - wherever he is.”

Both Jace and Izzy look like they might go on arguing, but Lydia takes a step back. “Now, I see that you found Jocelyn Fairchild, so I trust you brought back the Mortal Cup, too.” She reaches out. “Give it to me.”

For a moment, they hesitate and exchange a look. Isabelle looks uncertain and Jace shakes his head sharply, but Clary takes the Mortal Cup out of her bag and hands it over to Lydia. This has always been their plan, after all.

Lydia stares at the Cup for a moment. “All for this…” She shakes her head sadly. “I will return it to Alicante, to the Clave for safe keeping. If Valentine got his hands on it…”

“We would’ve never let that happen!” Jace denies angrily.

“The Cup was never at risk,” Isabelle protests at the same time.

“I needed it to save my mom,” Clary adds.

Lydia looks at them, one by one. “If you’ve never intended to actually give it to Valentine, you could’ve easily used a decoy. Instead, you stole it from the vault, where it was perfectly safe and unreachable for our enemies. From a vault that was under Alec’s supervision, I might add, and that made it his responsibility. But none of you thought about that, huh?”

They all exchange another uncomfortable look.

Lydia shakes her head. “Did you even consider how it would make him feel to find it gone? Did you think of him even once while you planned this stunt?”

“He never should’ve gotten involved,” Jace mutters.

Laughing, Lydia looks at him in disbelief. “He was your leader, your brother! The acting head of this Institute! How could you have thought that he wouldn’t get involved?”
They have no answer for her.

“It doesn’t matter now anyway,” Lydia says softly. Then she holds up the Cup. “I’ll contact the Clave and tell them that we have the Cup, then I’ll lock it away for the time being. In the meantime, you can bring Jocelyn to the infirmary. We can keep an eye on her there.”

And with that, she turns and goes, leaving them standing there, in the middle of the silent room. When they look around, nobody meets their eyes, not even their closest friends. And though nobody says anything, blame hangs thickly in the air, settling heavily on their shoulders.
Magnus takes him to Paris and London and Venice, he shows him Louvre at night, under the cloak of invisibility, and the actual Big Ben part of the Big Ben, and he steals a gondola to take him on a ride and then returns it full of duck feathers just to confuse the owner…

And Alec appreciates what Magnus is doing, he really does, he’s just so tired all the time now, because that’s what losing your innate powers will do to you. He lost his strength and his speed, his stamina. Everything that made him in any way special. He feels incomplete, damaged, broken. And he wonders when Magnus will realize that he’s simply… mundane now.

So, he tries to keep up with Magnus, but in Vienna, while he listens to Magnus planning their next trip - maybe to Switzerland, or would Iceland be better? - he finally admits defeat and asks Magnus to stop. Just stop.

“What is it, darling?” Magnus asks, dropping into a crouch in front of him.

Alec’s sitting in the armchair, feeling heavy and out of breath. Still, he smiles and runs his knuckles up and down Magnus’ cheek. “Can we slow down, please? Just for a while?”

And Magnus finally sees, the slump of his shoulders, the dark circles under his eyes, and he grips Alec’s hand and leans his cheek into it - how strange, this intimacy, when they haven’t even kissed yet.

“Anything, love.”

They stay in Vienna and spend their days walking through the city, hand in hand, lounging in small cafés or simply driving around, sightseeing - Magnus is driving, that is, Alec has never learned how - and Alec usually falls asleep in the car, the hum of the engine a lullaby.

But then…

They’re headed for the Opera - Alec does not think he’s a fan but Magnus insists he must see this one - when Magnus’ phone rings. He picks it up, and since they’re in a taxi, he responds with a simple cheerful, “Magnus Bane,” followed by a more subdued, “Oh. Biscuit,” and an uncertain glance in Alec’s direction.

And Alec’s world grows a little darker, but just for a moment. Then he takes a deep breath, squares his shoulders and leans forward to ask the taxi driver to take them back to their hotel. He knows what will follow.

They don’t speak again until they’re safely back in their room. Only then, with Magnus leaning heavily against the closed door, do they talk about it.

“I need to go back,” Magnus says quietly.
“Alright,” Alec responds and takes his jacket off, folding it carefully - Magnus bought it for him and he can’t even imagine how expensive it must have been. Never before did he have to think about things like money, the Clave provided, but now it’s always there, in the back of his mind.

Magnus rushes to explain, “Clary and the others found the Book of White - Camille Belcourt had it, she gave it to them in exchange for her freedom - and they think there might be a spell in it to wake Jocelyn–”

“Magnus,” Alec interrupts him gently, “you don’t have to explain. I always knew that your vacation would end one day and you would have to return to New York.”

Magnus blinks at him. “My…?”

“**You are** the High Warlock of Brooklyn,” Alec says. “You have your duties and responsibilities. I knew that you would never abandon your people, especially not now, with Valentine out there and the Circle on the rise again. You’re a good person, it’s something I’ve always admired about you.”

“Alexander…” Magnus whispers.

Alec sets his jacket aside. “I can’t go back. It wouldn’t be safe or wise. But I have some money set aside - I never knew what to spend my allowance on, I just kept it, hid it in a place where I could easily get to it, just in case. So, if you drop me off there, I’ll be fine.” He shrugs with false confidence because in reality, he’s scared, so scared of being alone, of not being fine, of the big mundane world out there.

Magnus pushes off the door and walks over quickly. “Alexander, I won’t just leave you!” he exclaims, affronted that Alec even suggested it. “We’re in this together, you and I, and we’ll find a way how to handle this - together! You’re right, I can’t abandon my people, but I can’t - I won’t! - abandon you either because you’re… you’re,” he swallows hard and his eyes are so full of emotions that Alec’s heart skips a beat, “you’re everything.”

And Alec leans down and kisses him. It’s their first kiss and his first kiss, too, and Alec feels like his heart will burst. Magnus makes a very happy, content noise, grabs Alec by the front of his shirt and drags him down while rising on his tiptoes himself at the same time. And it’s glorious.

When the kiss finally ends, they press their foreheads together and just stand there for a long, long while, till Alec whispers, “Okay.”

Magnus slumps in relief and it’s not until this moment that Alec realizes that Magnus expected him to say no, he expected Alec to leave him. How odd.

“Alright, alright,” Magnus whispers back. “We will find a safe place for you to stay while I deal with Jocelyn, somewhere no Downworlder hellbent on revenge will ever find you, or - dare to thread!”

As if that gave him some idea, Magnus leans back and grins mischievously. “Have I ever told you about my friend, Ragnor Fell?”
Chapter Summary

A little what-if story about Hodge. What if Valentine had taken Hodge back? And what if Hodge then met Alec on the battlefield? (Unbeta'd)

He hands the Mortal Cup over to Valentine and Valentine takes him back. After twenty years of pain and misery, Hodge can finally have his revenge. And the bloodier it will be, the better!

It’s an easy task: draw the Shadowhunters into an ambush and let Valentine’s minions slaughter them like they deserve. This is what he has been waiting for, these hypocrites at his mercy! The ultimate satisfaction at his fingertips.

But then, then he sees Alec among those ambushed on the battlefield. Alec… the boy he watched grow up into a fine young man. The son of his most hated enemies, traitors to their cause, yes - and yet…

Suddenly the sweet taste of vengeance sours in his mouth.

No. Not this.

Hacking his way through the thinning ranks of Shadowhunters, he sneaks up on Alec, and when the young man turns and sees him, his eyes widening in shock, Hodge punches him hard.

Alec staggers, and before he can recover, Hodge has him in a choke hold, one arm wound tightly around Alec’s neck from behind. He drives Alec to his knees, tightening his hold even further, but mindful of causing no lasting harm. Alec struggles and gasps for breath - it’s all in vain, though, and his movements grow sluggish and weak.

“You will not die today,” Hodge hisses through clenched teeth into Alec’s ear, his promise almost drowned by the din of the battle around them.

When Alec finally loses consciousness and slumps in Hodge’s hold, Hodge carefully lowers him to the ground, and after a quick glance around to make sure that nobody’s watching, he drags the dead body of a Shadowhunter he has never seen before over and covers Alec with it. Then he dips his fingers into the stranger’s wounds and smears his blood all over Alec’s pale face and throat, making him look like just another corpse on a battlefield full of them.

And then, with one last look at the young man he would’ve been proud to call a son, Hodge turns and leaves. He still has enemies to kill.
They’re in London when it happens.

There’s a fire crackling merrily in the fireplace and Alec’s curled up on the sofa, asleep. For a while, Magnus pretended to read, now he just sits there, in his leather armchair, and watches Alec, a little concerned about Alec’s lingering tiredness, caused by the removal of his runes, but mostly overwhelmingly happy that Alec’s here, with him, in Magnus’ old London house.

And that’s when Magnus feels it, the prodding nudge of scrying, of a magical tracking. He frowns and straightens quickly because the touch is not directed at him but at Alec, the protective net that Magnus has spun around Alec after he picked him up at the City of Bones catching the attempted contact and not letting it pass.

Magnus narrows his eyes dangerously. Whoever is trying to find Alec, they’re terribly insistent, their prodding hard and unrelenting. That angers Magnus because he swore to protect Alec from any harm. And though he’s sure that the scrying will never reach Alec, this will not do.

Leaning forward, he touches Alec’s hand gently, using him as a focus for his own spell - and then he punches back at the prying touch, hard, and with a satisfied smirk on his lips.

Jace and Izzy scream when they feel their parabatai tracking turn back on them, the power of their bond blowing up in their faces. They stumble back, letting go of each other, and Alec’s old t-shirt, found forgotten in a hamper, drops to the floor between them, catching flames with a loud whoomp!

Clary, who has been watching from afar until now, rushes forward and stomps the fire out. She looks at Jace, then at Isabelle. “I gather it didn’t work, huh?” she hazards a guess.

“No,” Izzy replies, and burying her hands in her hair, she clenches them into fists in frustration. “It’s as if something’s blocking us, something very powerful.”

Jace props his hands on his hips and drops his head for a moment, breathing hard. Then he twists around, lightning fast, and punches the wall behind him with his fist, leaving a hole in the wood facing.

“Jace!” Clary exclaims and grabs his hand.

Jace hisses and pulls away sharply. “I’m fine!” he snaps angrily, his eyes ablaze, cheeks flushed.

An uncomfortable silence settles over the room as they stand there, looking at each other. They
know. They all *know* but nobody wants to say it aloud. Saying it aloud would mean accepting that it is their fault.

And it can’t be their fault. It just *can’t*. They did not mean any harm, just the opposite. They wanted to save lives, Meliorn’s and Jocelyn’s, they wanted to stop grave injustice from happening, a possible war with the Shadow World. This, *this wasn’t what they wanted*. It never should’ve gone this far. Nobody should’ve gotten hurt.

But Alec was hurt. Their brother was hurt. Irreversibly. In a way they’ll never be able to make up for. To save *them*. Because that’s what Alec has always done, covered for them, though they never admitted it even to themselves. And the worst thing? They weren’t even there. He *needed* them and they were *not* there.

“*You’re not listening!*”

“We fucked up,” Isabelle whispers into the silence in the end, throat tight with emotions, eyes trained on Jace.

Her *parabatai* looks away, saying nothing. What’s there to say?

Guilt hangs heavy in the air, choking them all.
They are sitting around the table in the Ops Center, Jace, Isabelle and Clary, joking and laughing, when Maryse approaches - and they all notice how pale and shaken she seems.

“Mom?” Izzy asks, uncertain.

Maryse takes a deep breath. “The Clave received intel that Valentine and his forces were approaching the borders of Idris. A patrol was sent to check it out. They were ambushed and slaughtered.”

Clary presses her hand to her mouth. “Oh my God…”

Maryse takes a deep breath to compose herself. “Alec was with them.”

Now they all straighten up and Izzy exclaims, “What? Why?”

“He was in Alicante, delivering our monthly report,” Maryse responds quietly, and they all notice how her hands shake when she presses them hard against the table. “They asked for volunteers, and he…” She swallows and closes her eyes.

“No,” Jace states firmly and shakes his head. “No, Alec’s not dead. I would know.” And when they all turn to him, he touches his chest. “I would feel it. He’s my parabatai. He is not dead. I would know!”

Isabelle jumps to her feet. “Then we must go look for him!”

Maryse looks at her. “The Clave sent out scouts, then pulled our people back to Alicante. They forbade us to go anywhere near the place where the ambush took place. They fear a second attack might come—”

Izzy slams her hand on the table. “I don’t care! I don’t give a rat’s ass about what the Clave wants. If Jace says that my brother’s alive, then Alec is alive. He might be injured, even dying right now.”

Maryse shakes her head. “The scouts checked—”

“Maryse,” Jace interrupts her and leans forward urgently. “He is alive. I can feel it.”

Maryse takes a deep, shaky breath again. “Even if you are right, how do you propose we get to the border? It would take us hours, and it’s already been half a day…”

“Magnus Bane,” Clary speaks up. They turn to her. “Magnus would move heaven and earth to help Alec, I know it. He can portal us there or at least somewhere close.”

Frowning, Maryse opens her mouth to protest, but Izzy jumps in before she can, “Is your hatred of him stronger than your desire to help your own son?”
Maryse glares at her, but then she nods. “Fine. Call him. Go find Alec.” She pauses and whispers, “And bring him home.”

When they step through the portal - Magnus luckily knows this area, having visited it several times with his friend, Ragnor Fell, while Ragnor was teaching at the Shadowhunter Academy in Idris - the first thing they notice is the awful stench. The stench of dead bodies lying for hours in the scorchingly hot sun. They almost gag.

“Dear God…” Clary whispers, looking around.


Jace turns to Magnus who stands there, frozen. Jace’s own heart is beating wild, with fear and with hope, and he’s so anxious to find his parabatai that he can barely breathe, so tight is his chest. He knows very well how Magnus must be feeling right now.

“Can you locate him?” Jace asks desperately. “We don’t have the time to search for him. And,” he looks around the field, trampled and churned and layered thick with corpses, and finishes softly, “there are so many dead here.”

As if waking from a dream, Magnus nods sharply and pulls one of Alec’s fingerless gloves out of his pocket. For a heartbeat or two, he clenches it in his fist, as if afraid what he will find. Then he takes a deep breath, despite the foul stench in the air, and closes his eyes.

“There!” Magnus says sharply after a moment and points down the field.

They start running.

In the end, they find Alec buried under two corpses, under the dead bodies of two unknown Shadowhunters in full gear. He’s lying on his back, pale and spattered with blood. There’s a big bruise on his cheek and a thick ring of bruising on his throat - and he’s not moving.

“Alec!” Jace yells and together with Izzy, they start dragging the bodies off him.

“Alexander,” Magnus whispers, dropping to his knees next to Alec, his fingers reaching for his throat. His shoulders slump in relief when he finds a pulse. Not that he didn’t trust Jace’s word, their parabatai bond, but… he was afraid to. “He’s alive.”

“I told you so!” Jace retorts as if annoyed, but his relief is very obvious, too. He kneels down on Alec’s other side and starts running his hands over Alec’s body, searching for injuries - and finds none. He even turns Alec onto his side to look at his back. Nothing.

“What’s wrong with him?” Izzy asks anxiously.

Magnus touches the bruising on Alec’s neck. “He was choked.” Then he lays one hand on Alec’s forehead. “And he’s burning up.” Magnus looks up, at the hot sun, standing overhead. “I think it’s the heat - sunstroke, dehydration…”

“Can you help him?” Clary asks.

Magnus nods, already focusing on his boyfriend, one hand on Alec’s chest, the other on Alec’s forehead, and he pushes his healing magic into Alec’s body, blue flames dancing around his fingers. He wants, he needs Alec back, conscious and healthy and there.
Because, even though Magnus *knows* that Alec’s injuries aren’t grave, Alec’s stillness scares him deeply. Ever since Clary called and told him about what happened, he was sure, *absolutely sure,* that this was it, that they wouldn’t find Alec alive, that fate was cruel once more - and that horror still lingers, squeezing his heart. *Wake up, Alexander. Please, wake up!*

A moment later, Alec’s eyes fly open. His back arches and he takes a deep, wheezing breath. Immediately, he starts coughing and gagging, and they turn him onto his side quickly so that he can vomit what little remains in his stomach.

Izzy laughs and Clary hugs her with a grin, and Jace is smiling, too - and it’s a terrible thing to feel so happy among so many corpses, but their brother, their lover, their friend is alive. Alec’s alive. And Magnus slumps forward, pressing his forehead to Alec’s shoulder, almost crying with relief.

“Wh… what happen’d?” Alec croaks out, and when they help him sit up, he leans against Magnus who hugs him gratefully.

“You were ambushed,” Jace says and his voice is so gentle, his hands so tender when he offers Alec a sip of water from his canteen - just a small one, so he wouldn’t throw up again.

Alec’s eyes roam around sluggishly. “Hodge,” he remembers. “Hodge was here…”

They all draw in a sharp breath and exchange a look before quickly scanning their surroundings, as if they finally remembered that they are in enemy territory.

“I think… he saved my life,” Alec whispers, still leaning heavily against Magnus.

“How?” Izzy asks angrily. “We found you covered with corpses!”

Alec swallows. “He knocked me out.” He touches the bruises on his throat. “If he hadn’t done that…” He turns his eyes to Jace. “Any other survivors?”

Jace looks at Magnus. “Magnus?” he asks softly.

Magnus throws out a net of magic across the field. Nothing. He grimly shakes his head. They all drop their eyes.

“We should go,” Clary whispers. “We can’t help anyone else here and we can’t take all the bodies with us. Besides, Valentine’s men could come back any moment.”

They nod and Jace helps Alec stand. Alec staggers, then bends over and throws up the little water he drank. “Sorry,” he whispers.

“Don’t apologize. Just… *don’t,*” Jace implores and drapes one of Alec’s arms across his shoulders. “You’re alive! That’s all that matters.”

Magnus props Alec up on the other side. “I will make it all better once we’re safely back home, alright?” he promises. “Just hold on a moment longer.” He squeezes Alec’s waist.

Together, they stumble up the field, towards the portal Magnus left open just in case they needed to retreat fast. It’s only a short distance, but it seems much longer because Alec can barely stand.

Just before they step through the gate, Alec looks over his shoulder one last time, scanning the field full of dead Shadowhunters with his eyes. “He saved my life,” he whispers, a little forlorn.

And then they’re gone.
On the hill above the field, Hodge Starkweather watches the portal wink out. Then he turns and disappears into the thick shadows of the forest.
“Magnus? What is this?” Alec asks, coming out of their bedroom. He holds a…thing between his thumb and his forefinger, a look of dismay on his face.

Magnus grins. “Those are leather pants, Alexander. I’m sure you’ve heard of this age-old invention, you wear plenty of leather every day, after all.”

“Jackets, Magnus, jackets. And gloves. And boots. Not… this!” he breathes out in horror.

“Then it’s time to breach this virgin territory, my love. Up and at them. Or into them. Shoo!” Magnus waves his hands, still grinning.

Alec shakes his head firmly. “No, no way. My cargo pants are just fine. Or… or my jeans. I’m not putting this on!”

Magnus walks up to him, grips his shoulders tightly and looks Alec earnestly in the eyes. “Alexander, dear. We’re going clubbing. You promised. And because I know that this is a novelty of a situation for you, you’ll have to trust me: no pants you own are suited for what I have in mind for tonight.” He raises himself on tippy toes and pecks Alec on the mouth. “Now go and put them on.”

Alec furrows his brows. He opens his mouth to protest then closes it again, and in the end, his shoulders slump in defeat and he goes. He did promise.

After a while, though, his voice floats out of their bedroom, tinged with panic, “Magnus, I can see my underwear in those pants! What do I do?”

Magnus grins devilishly and yells back, “You go commando, darling!”

The following stream of curses would make a nun go up in flames; Magnus is quite impressed, he didn’t know that his lover’s swearing was so… innovative. And though he tells himself that he’s a bad, bad man, he’s absolutely positive that Alec’s buns in those leather pants? Will make a saint want to sin!
In the morning, there are always feathers in their bed. Sometimes one, sometimes a handful, sometimes enough to stuff a pillow, it seems. Magnus doesn’t understand how Alec isn’t as bald as a boiled chicken by now.

But the thing is, the feathers are always there. Even when Alec doesn’t stay the whole night, even when he gets up in the wee hours of the morning and leaves on some Shadowhunter business. Sometimes, even when Alec doesn’t stay over at all. Magic? Is weird like that.

Magnus always gathers the feathers and puts them in a wooden box that he fireproofed, waterproofed, mouldproofed, whatever-came-to-his-mind-proofed, just to make sure that Alec’s feathers stay the way they are. Because. He does not like to think of why exactly he’ll be grateful for this keepsake one day, so… he tells himself it’s just because.

But one feather, a long and elegant one, pure white at the tip and dark gray at the bottom, Magnus fashions into a pendant. It feels good and right to carry a piece of his lover with him, always.

And then Alec sees it…

“Is that one of mine?” Alec asks in a hushed voice, gently touching the feather where it rests on Magnus’ chest, over his heart.

“Yes?” Magnus answers, a little uncertain. “Please, don’t tell me that I violated some Shadowhunter custom that I did not know about? Please?”

Alec smiles softly, eyes still trained on the feather. “No, it’s just that… couples give each other feathers to wear on a necklace during a wedding ceremony. When the feather turns to ash, you know that your husband or wife is dead.”

“Oh,” Magnus mumbles and looks down. He didn’t know that. “I’ll take it off, then.”

He reaches up to take the necklace off but Alec stops him. He whispers, “No, keep it. I like seeing it on you.”

And Magnus usually knows how to read between the lines, but this is too important to risk a misunderstanding. “Alexander, what exactly are you saying?”

Alec finally looks up, and his eyes are so full of emotions that Magnus’ heart skips a beat. And then, when Alec slowly sinks down to one knee, Magnus forgets how to breathe.

“Magnus Bane,” Alec says formally, “will you marry me, Alexander Lightwood?”
And Magnus’ knees are trembling and his hands are so cold that his fingers tingle and he has lived for four hundred years but never, not once did anyone ask him this most important question. And there’s only one response he can give.

“Yes.”
Betrayal

Chapter Summary

Sequel to Consent (Chapter 46). It deals with rape, so beware! (Unbeta'd)

I was asked many, many times to write a sequel to this story. This is probably not what people had in mind, though. But between when I wrote Consent and now, I fell in love with Lydia so hard that I just couldn’t let her be the bad guy, not even in a what-if story, so a twist.

Isabelle leaves Alec with Magnus.

When the warlock first opens his door, he’s anything but pleased to see them. But one look at Alec and his reluctance to let them in is gone, because Alec is still pale, his eyes wide and unfocused and darting around anxiously. It’s very obvious that something’s wrong.

And when Izzy tells Magnus what happened - no, it’s not her secret to tell, but if she wants to ask Magnus for help, she has to be honest with him - Magnus swears to take care of Alec, to keep him safe. And Isabelle’s heart aches when she watches them together because Magnus treats her brother with care and affection and respect - the way Alec deserves to be treated.

She leaves Alec there, safe, and returns home, her anger building and building with every step she takes. And when she crosses the threshold of the Institute, she’s brimming with fury, determined to make Lydia pay, the Lightwood family honor be damned - this price is too high to pay!

And so Izzy heads directly to Lydia’s room - but what she finds there, changes everything…

Jace still can’t believe that this is Alec’s wife - his parabatai’s wife! - standing by his side in front of the bank of computer monitors in the Ops Center. Lydia, his sister-in-law. By the Angel, when did everything turn upside down?

He doesn’t really know Lydia - he was too consumed by his anger at Alec to bother getting to know her before - but this morning, something about Alec’s wife feels a little bit… off to him. Maybe it’s the novelty of the situation, maybe it’s because he finally gets to spend more than five minutes in her presence, maybe it’s nothing at all - and yet, his gut is telling him to watch out, to beware. He should really talk to Alec about it, even if it makes him angry again…

That’s his last thought before Isabelle storms in. Her face is paper white but her eyes are blazing with fury. Jace has never seen her so angry. He opens his mouth to ask what’s going on, but before he can do that, she strides over and punches Lydia in the face - so hard that Lydia stumbles.

“Izzy!” Jace exclaims while a shocked silence falls over the room.

But Isabelle’s not finished yet. She unwinds her whip and attacks Lydia again, and only then does Jace notice that Lydia pulled out a knife, a simple steel, not a Seraph Blade. The whip wraps itself around her wrist, and when Izzy pulls with all her might, Lydia goes flying across the room, smashing through a table and some chairs, rolling on the ground. And when she comes up in a
crouch again, she *hisses* loudly!

Everyone freezes, and Jace whispers into the silence, “What the hell?”

Breathing hard with anger, Isabelle claims, “That’s not Lydia. I found the *real* Lydia dead in her room. Dead and hidden in the closet. Whatever that thing is, it must have killed her right after the wedding and it has pretended to *be her* ever since.”

The creature’s features ripple, showing scales beneath Lydia’s pretty face for a second, and they all gasp in horror. A shapechanger on the premises! Which means that either the wards are down, or…

The thing snarls and turns to run, but Raj, standing behind it, whips around and kicks it in the face. The creature stumbled back, in the direction of Hodge - who pulls out a Seraph Blade.

“No!” Isabelle yells, but too late.

The shapechanger turns and pulls up short, a surprised look on its face, then Hodge slashes across with his blade and cuts its head off. The decapitated body drops to the ground, the head rolling across the floor, turning from a pretty blond into bald, scaly and terribly ugly.

“We needed it alive!” Izzy roars at Hodge. “Now we’ll never find out who let it inside the Institute!”

“What exactly are you saying, Izzy?” Jace asks from behind her. He suspects, he *knows*, but it’s such an absurd thought that he needs to hear it aloud.

She twists around. “I’m saying that we have a mole among us!” she snaps. “That thing couldn’t have crossed our wards, someone must have invited it in! And I swear, I swear to you, that I’ll find that person and I’ll make him or her pay, if it’s the last thing I do!”

“Because of Lydia?” Jace is surprised by Izzy’s fury. Not that Lydia’s death doesn’t warrant it, he just didn’t think that Isabelle and she were that close.

“That person betrayed all of us. Lydia is dead! And Alec…” Isabelle swallows her words, physically restraining herself from saying more.


But Isabelle just shakes her head. “Not now, not here,” she replies quietly.

Jace is about to protest, to demand to know where his *parabatai* is, but then Maryse and Robert are there, demanding to know what’s going on, and the whole Institute is in chaos because a demon got through the wards and one of their people died, their daughter-in-law and sister-in-law and friend is *dead*!

“But why?” Robert asks, crouching next to the head with its slit-pupiled eyes wide open and mouth agape. “What was the point of this charade? Why impersonate Lydia?”

“To get to the Cup?” Jace reasons. “To get intel? To wreak havoc? The Inquisitor herself will be arriving to take the Cup into custody. If that thing assassinated her, especially wearing Lydia’s face…”

He lets his words hang in the air.
“Now we will never know,” Isabelle spits, glaring at Hodge.

Hodge doesn’t apologize, he doesn’t make any excuses, he just offers, “I’ll go through the surveillance footage. I’m sure we will figure out who let the shapechanger in.”

“And where the hell is Alec?” Maryse demands, her voice sounding all the sharper for the concern and anxiety she’s trying to hide.

And that’s when Isabelle motions to Jace to follow her out, away from the crowd. She obviously knows something and she doesn’t want to have to answer questions.

“I took Alec to Magnus,” Izzy admits in a hushed voice when she pulls Jace into the hall leading towards the main entrance.

Jace’s eyebrows shoot up in surprise. “To Magnus? Why?”

Suddenly, all the anger flows out of her, and she hunches her shoulders and hugs herself tight, looking pained. “She… it hurt Alec, Jace,” she whispers.

Jace’s starting to have a horrible suspicion. “Izzy?” he prompts.

She takes a deep breath. “That thing forced itself on him, Jace. He thought it was Lydia, that Lydia did that to him, and he didn’t think he could refuse, fight back. He said no but Lydia… that creature, it did not stop. It raped him, Jace!”

Jace feels sick and a little light-headed, so he sinks down on one of the benches in the hall, trembling. Alec… Alec who has never had sex before, who has never even been kissed before, as far as Jace knows, Alec who would do anything for his family…

Izzy continues, “I didn’t know what to do, so I took him to Magnus. Alec was… he was completely out of it and I was afraid that…” She takes a deep breath. “The last time I heard mom talking Alec’s marriage, she said that Alec would ‘adapt.’ I was afraid, by the Angel, I was actually afraid of telling my own mother that my brother was raped because I wasn’t sure how she would react!” She hugs herself tighter. “How did everything get to screwed?”

And all Jace can do is sit there with his head in his hands, because his parabatai was hurt, hurt in a way that he can’t just fix. It’s not a wound to be healed with an iratze. Alec was raped, violated in the worst possible way. And on top of that, his wife was killed. Lydia, abrasive, but strong and proud Lydia…

“What I don’t get is why?” Isabelle whispers. “Why did the monster do that to Alec?”

“Why did the scorpion sting the frog?” Jace retorts grimly.

But then, a much worse thing occurs to him. Alec is his parabatai. And the shapechanger was sent by Valentine, Jace’s father, to impersonate Alec’s wife. No… no, not even Valentine is so twisted, not even Valentine would hurt Jace’s parabatai in such a terrible way just to prove a point to Jace. Not even Valentine!

Jace growls and stands up. “Are you sure Alec’s safe with Magnus Bane?” he asks.

Izzy nods firmly. “Magnus would never hurt him and he would die first before he let anyone touch Alec.”

“Good. Then let’s catch ourselves a mole - and make our enemies pay!”
The Significance of Feathers

Chapter Summary

Magnus and the empty box. (Unbeta’d)

Set in my Winged!Verse. Previous stories: Bird Bones (Chapter 196) / Rush of Wings (Chapter 197)/ The Mark of a Fallen (Chapter 202) / Winged Shorts #1 (Chapter 211)/ Winged Shorts #2 (Chapter 212) / Winged Shorts #3 (Chapter 222).

They are on a triple date - Jace and Clary, Magnus and Alec, Izzy and Simon, all of them squished together in the corner booth at Taki’s - when Alec’s phone rings: a werewolf attack in an abandoned factory nearby. Magnus refuses to be left behind, of course, so he tags along.

It’s an ambush, of course. Valentine’s new clique, determined to avenge their leader’s death, swarms them from all sides, until all they can do is to retreat through the portal that Magnus opened with a simple hand-wave. Simon, Izzy and Clary go through the gate first, while Magnus holds the gate open and Alec and Jace cover their retreat.

“Go, go, go!” Alec yells, shooting arrows whose supply never runs out. He’s backing towards the portal, only two or three steps away now, and that’s the only reason why Magnus allows Jace to drag him through - he’s certain that Alec will follow.

But when they step into the Institute’s dark backyard, the gate flickers, winking in and out of existence for a moment, then suddenly and with a loud whoomp, it implodes and the shock wave tosses them all to the ground, flattening them like grass.

Magnus hits his head pretty badly. His ears are ringing and his chest hurts as if someone kicked him, hard. He groans, muttering curses under his breath - and that’s when the screaming starts.

Magnus rolls onto his back and sits up quickly, which does not do his headache any favors, but it doesn’t matter, because it’s Jace screaming. He’s kneeling on the pavement, bent at the waist, his forehead almost touching the ground, one hand pressed tightly to his side…

And he’s yelling Alec’s name, over and over again, till he’s hoarse, till his voice gives out. And Magnus’ heart stutters and skips a beat, because he knows, he knows, and he won’t look down, at Alec’s feather strung on his necklace, he won’t look down, because if he does not look down, it won’t be real.

He looks. The feather, pure white at the tip and dark gray at the bottom only minutes ago, is now black, black and disintegrating, its ashes carried away on an unseen breeze.

They portal back, to the roof of the opposite building - it’s an old warehouse in a sea of warehouses - to the place from where they first scouted their decrepit target. And it’s as if they walked into hell.

There are flames everywhere and the air is thick with smoke and ash and burning things. And the factory is… gone, just gone. There’s nothing left of it but a big hole in the ground and piles of
debris, and in the distance, sirens are screaming, firemen and cops and ambulances en route.

And they stand there, at the edge of the roof, Izzy and Simon, Jace and Clary, and Magnus to the side, alone, and they stare and they can’t believe it. They just can’t believe it. Alec was right behind them, he was, he was. He should have made it!

But he did not.

And then Jace, already propped up by Clary, crumples in on himself. Clary is calling his name and Simon is there to help her lower Jace to the ground when his knees buckle…

But it’s all just distant noise to Magnus, because his husband just died. They were on a date together - yes, they still called them “dates”, it felt much more romantic that way - they were on a date together, and they planned on sleeping in tomorrow, and now Alexander is dead.

Then Izzy’s there, gripping his arm and crying softly, whispering his name, but Magnus is frozen. He’s simply frozen. His husband is gone and nothing can fix that.

They offer Magnus Alec’s old room at the Institute, just so that he isn’t alone. They offer to go home with him, just so that he isn’t alone. They offer him so many things, but nothing can make him feel not alone. He is alone.

Alexander is dead.

That knowledge is like a stone sitting on his chest, but it seems that he simply can’t cry. His emotions, his terrible, broken feelings, are weighing down on him, but he feels frozen, detached. Until he finds the box empty.

The box. The box with Alexander’s feathers that he wrapped in so many protective spells that it should’ve glowed with their magic - spells that should’ve preserved Alec’s feathers even after his death. And though Alec warned him that they wouldn’t keep, Magnus was so sure that he got it right, that he used the correct spells. And yet.

The box is empty. There are no feathers, not even ashes left behind. It’s simply empty. As if Alexander has never even existed.

And that’s when the dam finally breaks and he starts sobbing so harshly that his throat hurts. He’s making pained, keening sounds, curled up on their bed and hugging the box tightly, and he’s afraid he will never stop.

Please, Alexander, please, come back. I’m not ready to let you go.

And then… then a feather appears on Alec’s pillow.

Magnus calls them, Jace and Izzy and everyone else, first thing in the morning. He calls them and demands that they come over. He doesn’t ask, he doesn’t suggest - he demands! They’re in mourning, their hearts too broken for his “bullshit” as Jace calls it, but Magnus is relentless.

It’s about Alexander. Come.

Because it didn’t end with that one feather the night before. It appeared - and then turned into ash mere seconds later. And then another handful was there, just there, he never actually saw them materialize, they were simply there - and then they too turned into ash.
And Magnus reacted with puzzlement and grief and then with fury because it felt like torture, pure torture, a memory of Alexander, given and then snatched away again. And he raged and he screamed and he tried to hold onto one of the feathers, just one - but no, they all turned into ash.

It wasn’t till the morning painted the sky purple and pink, that it finally dawned on him what it meant, the feathers’ return and their following disappearance. *You fool, Magnus, you idiot!*

“You are saying that… Alec’s *alive*?” Isabelle asks in shock and disbelief.

Magnus nods, once, twice, thrice, because he feels jittery, overflowing with manic, uncontrollable energy. “Yes, that’s exactly what I’m saying. He’s not here, but he’s *somewhere* and he’s trying to reach us.”

Izzy exchanges an unreadable look with Clary. Simon’s standing in the back, looking like he would rather be anywhere else but here. And Jace is leaning against the table with his head bowed; he hasn’t said anything yet.

“Magnus…” Clary says reluctantly.

He waves his hands sharply. “I know how it sounds, believe me, I *know*. But you see, Alec’s feathers always find their way into our bed, even when he’s not here. I don’t know how or why, magic is fickle like that, but those feathers are linked to Alexander, without his angelic magic to sustain them, they turn into ash, disintegrate. They should not be here - at all - if he’s dead. And yet - it’s like his magic keeps punching holes through some *barrier*, and then is cut off again.”

Clary and Isabelle still stare at him uncertainly, their eyes puffy and red from crying and lack of sleep. Simon is still pretending he isn’t actually here, feeling rather awkward about the whole thing. And Jace…

“He’s right,” Jace croaks out and lifts his head. He looks haggard and his face is almost ashen gray. “I feel it too. From time to time, it’s as if Alec’s back, our bond is back, as strong as ever - and then it’s gone again.” He takes a deep, shuddering breath and hugs himself. “And I can’t take it much longer because whenever our bond cuts out, it’s like losing him all over again, the same agony, the same emptiness. I can’t take it!”

Clary walks over to him and strokes the bangs off his forehead gently. “Why didn’t you say something?” she asks softly.

He laughs painfully. “I thought I was going mad,” he admits just as quietly.

Izzy takes a shaky breath, pauses, then props her hands on her hips. “Fine. Alright. If you two are right - and that’s a big *if*! - then where is he? If he didn’t die in the explosion and he didn’t come through the portal…” Her voice trails off and her breath hitches. “No,” she whispers.

“What?” Simon asks, finally joining the conversation.

“He’s stuck in *limbo*,” Magnus replies, and now he’s hugging himself, too, shoulders hunched, because if Alexander is truly stuck in limbo, then Magnus has no idea how to get him out.

“That’s why the feathers appear and disappear again? That’s why Jace can feel the bond return and cut out again?” Clary reasons. “Because whenever someone somewhere opens a portal…”

“Alec’s alive again, in a way that we can actually perceive, if only for a few seconds, until the portal shuts down again,” Magnus confirms.
“Great. Then how do we get him out?” Clary inquires, looking from Jace to Izzy and to Magnus. “There must be a way.”

Jace swallows. “There’s not. Portals are basically dimensional gates that allow you to travel from one place to another instantaneously. When you lose yourself in-between the gates, there’s no way back.”

Isabelle whispers, “The explosion in the factory must’ve destroyed the portal the moment Alec stepped through. The discharge then destroyed the gate on our end and he never got through.”

“But there must be a way,” Simon argues. “Alec’s not dead. He’s just… stuck between dimensions. I’m sure he isn’t the first one. There must be a way to reach him!”

Magnus sighs. “No, he isn’t the first one. Many people were lost in limbo.”

“Great,” Simon exclaims. “Well, not great. You know what I mean. Someone must have found a way to get those people out by now, no?”

“It’s not that simple,” Magnus objects.

Simon throws up his hands. “Why not? It must be like… like fishing, right? Alec’s a fish and the limbo is a pond. Just throw him a line!”

Magnus runs his hands through his hair. “It’s not that simp…” he starts saying, but then he straightens quickly. “Or maybe it is!” he says, eyes gleaming. “We just need the proper line!”

He turns to Jace who stands up slowly, arms falling to his sides. “Our parabatai bond,” he breathes out, eyes growing wide.

Now Isabelle’s on it, too. “If you can use the bond to track down your parabatai in another realm…” She sounds thrilled. But then she soberes. “But that’s pretty dangerous, if you remember,” she tells Jace.

But Jace just shakes his head. “I don’t care. Can you do it, Magnus? Can you use our bond to get Alec out?”

And Magnus is grinning like a fool. “I can’t - but we can!”

The portal’s open, its purple shimmering surface filling the bedroom door. Magnus and Jace stand in front of it while Clary, Izzy and Simon move aside, nervous and jittery with both hope and fear. It must work, it just must!

The moment the gate opened, Jace took a deep breath and squared his shoulders as the bond fell back in place, humming with power again. “I’m ready,” he says now.

Magnus touches his shoulder. “Alright. Here it goes…” he warns and then he pushes his magic into Jace, fueling his bond with his parabatai, until a ribbon of glowing blue energy, the bond made visible, snakes out of Jace’s chest, almost blinding in its intensity, and flows out and out and still farther out - and into the portal.

And then Jace reaches out through the bond, looking, looking, looking - but not with his eyes or his mind, but with his soul. And a moment later… soul touching soul wrapping itself around soul clinging to soul…
“Got him,” Jace breathes out. “Now pull!”

And Magnus pulls, he pulls all his magic back, his power wrapped around the bond, entwined with it, and so the bond moves back, too - and Alec follows, dragged out like a fish on a line.

And when he slips out of the portal, he crumples to the ground, black clothes spattered with enemy blood, skin pale as snow, eyes closed and his wings, his beautiful, big and dove gray wings, spread limply around him.

For several heartbeats, nothing moves. And then: Magnus closes the portal, the glowing ribbon of Alec and Jace’s parabatai bond dissipates, both Jace and Magnus drop to their knees besides Alec and the others rush in. And they’re all calling Alec’s name. AlecAlecAlexander!

Alec groans softly and tries to raise himself on his hands, but his wings are getting in the way, so he tucks them back in, the process is slow and painful, though. When it’s finally done, he flops onto his back, exhausted, opens his red-rimmed eyes and croaks out, “Hey…”

“Alexander…” Magnus whispers, his voice thick, and touches his husband’s face with infinite tenderness. “You’re back. You’re alive…”

And then Magnus is crying and kissing Alec, on the lips and on the nose and all over the face, and Jace is crying and gripping Alec’s hand so hard his knuckles turn white, and Izzy and Clary are crying and hugging, and even Simon looks a little misty eyed. They did it!

Later on, much, much later on, they find out from Alec that, when the rune magic failed to help them achieve their goal, Valentine’s minions tried to use a very mundane way to stop them: a hand grenade. Why the explosion turned out to be so big, Alec doesn’t know.

And Magnus doesn’t care. All he cares about is Alexander, alive and lying next to him in their bed, his steady heartbeat under Magnus’ ear - and his feathers, hidden between the sheets and tickling Magnus’ fingertips.
Just Because

Chapter Summary

I felt like writing something sweet and mushy. Just because. (Unbeta'd)

“What are you doing?” Magnus asks, and standing on tippy toes behind Alec, he hooks his chin over his lover’s shoulder to see.

Alec laughs. “Cooking.”

Magnus smiles. “If you’re hungry, I have magic for that,” he says and raises one hand around Alec to snap his fingers and summon food.

“Oh-uh-uh,” Alec protests and raps Magnus lightly with a wooden spoon. “I like to cook. It’s calming. And it helps me recharge.”

Magnus rubs his nose behind Alec’s ear and whispers. “We could do other things to help you recharge.”

Alec laughs again. “We’ll have plenty of time for that later. But now, I want to cook for you.”

That sets Magnus back on his heels. He blinks. “For me?” he asks uncertainly.

Alec continues stirring something in a pot. “Yes, for you. I thought I would do something nice for you.”

Magnus stares at Alec’s broad back, puzzled. “Why?”

Shrugging, Alec responds, “Why not? I think you deserve to be treated kindly.” Then he pauses and looks over his shoulder a little shyly. “It’s not weird or… anything, right?”

And Magnus can’t speak, his throat is too tight, and his heart is brimming with emotions. He can’t remember the last time anyone did anything for him “just because,” simply to make him happy. He just shakes his head.

In response, Alec smiles brightly and his shoulders, that went a little rigid when he asked his question, loosen in relief. “Good,” he says and turns back to the stove. “I hope you like Italian.”

Blinking hard, Magnus whispers. “I love it.” And I love you.
It becomes their thing: whenever Alec can stay over for the night, he cooks for them. Alec cooks, Magnus steals the most delicious bits before they can find their way into the pot and gets rapped over the knuckles for his thievery, and they talk. It’s… cozy.

“Who did actually teach you how to cook?” Magnus asks curiously. He sits on the counter next to the stove that he magicked in for Alec, peering into one of the pans rather dubiously, because the gooey mass in it does not look edible. Yet.

Alec chuckles, cutting tiny chili peppers into even tinier pieces. “Would you believe that it was my father?”


“Alec pauses for a second, then replies very softly, “Yeah. I think it was the only time when I felt close to him, like we actually shared something. But… outside the kitchen, we had nothing to talk about,” he adds a little sadly.

And Magnus’ heart aches for him, because Robert Lightwood could move to Timbuktu and never come back for what he, Magnus, cares, but this is about Alec, not about Magnus’ deep-set resentment for the Lightwood elders - and Alec loves his father.

To lighten up the mood, Magnus suggests airily, “Then maybe I should send your father a gift for teaching you how to cook, what do you think?”

Alec looks at him and his suspicion deepens even more when he sees the mischievous little flames dancing in Magnus’ eyes. “What?” he asks slowly.

Magnus waves a hand, legs swinging from side to side. “Oh, I don’t know. Something edible… like bull testicles.” And when Alec sputters, Magnus adds very earnestly, “It’s a real delicacy, darling! But your father might take it as a threat, that’s true…”

Laughing, Alec sets his knife aside and steps between Magnus’ legs to kiss him, his melancholy forgotten.
Mission accomplished!
Chapter Summary

Just a short sad ficlet. (Unbeta'd)

The hallway is dark, the wood paneling swollen and moldy, peeling around the edges, and dust and debris crunch beneath the soles of his expensive shoes…

“You watch the people you love age and die.”

“Alexander…”

Everything’s shattered, all the stained glass windows, all the elegant railings, shards lying everywhere, strewn among overturned tables…

“If anything were to happen to you–”

“Magnus, I’m good.”

Cobwebs hang from the high, high ceiling like mourning veils, birds built their nests in the rafters and all the plants died a long time ago…

“Enough.”

A kiss…

It’s the year 2063 and the old church that used to house the Institute is being torn down - and Magnus Bane has come to say goodbye.

Because Alexander can’t anymore.
It’s 3:23am when the phone rings. Magnus jerks upright from where he fell asleep at the table, his
glasses are sitting askew on his nose and the file in front of him looks a little drooled on.
Disoriented, he grabs for the phone…

And freezes. The whole world just stops. Because it’s Lydia on the other end. Alec’s captain. And
that can mean only one thing.

“Is he alive?” Magnus asks breathlessly, because that’s the only thing he cares about right now. If
Alexander is dead, then what happened will not matter at all.

“Yes. Yes, he is Magnus,” Lydia assures him quickly. And the world starts moving again. “He’s a
little banged up, he and Raj, both, so an ambulance took them to the ER. He asked me to call you.
He was actually very adamant about it.”

Magnus can hear the smile in her voice, layered over her worry. “Yes, it’s because we have a
deal,” he explains to her. “Every injury, no matter how insignificant, will be immediately reported
in, not left to tell about later, not hidden. That’s the only way how I can deal with him risking his
buns every day.”

Lydia laughs a little. She has a very pretty laugh. Some other day, Magnus might have told her, but
today, his heart is still beating too fast and his hands are still shaking too much.

She tells him where the ambulance took Alec, then adds very pointedly, “Alec also told me to tell
you that you should not drive. He insisted that I should tell you to take a cab. You drive like a
maniac at best times and he did not want to end up sharing a hospital room with you. I quote: ‘The
bed wouldn’t be as cozy.’ Unquote.”

Something warm and fuzzy flutters in Magnus’ chest. Only his husband would be worried about
him while being taken to a hospital himself. His Alexander.

“Okay,” he agrees softly, his voice thick. “I will take a cab, I promise.”

Two hours, that’s how long he spends sitting around the waiting room, getting more and more
jittery, his anxiety closing off his throat and making his hair go limp. It takes him two hours to
notice that he put on only one sock.

Raj ends up holding his hand for most of those two hours.

Dirty and scraped and reeking of smoke, the bandage on his left arm starkly white, Raj holds
Magnus’ hand and actually calls him by his name. Magnus did not know that Raj even knew his
name since he has always called Magnus simply “Bane”.

Raj holds his hand and tells him about what happened in a voice roughened by smoke. They were in a burning building, he and Alec, just checking to make sure it was empty because the whole building was a bust by then, and the floor just fell away from under them. They were very, very lucky. Magnus thinks he would rather not know. At least not until he’s sure that Alec will be really, really, really okay.

And then Dot comes in - Dot, the girl who gave Magnus his first kiss in middle school, and who taught him all the secrets of make-upping and who went and became the best doctor in New York. But then, maybe Magnus is biased.

“Hello, Magnus,” she greets him with a warm smile when he jumps to his feet. “When I saw the name of the patient, Alexander Bane, I thought it would be your Alexander.”

“How is he?” Magnus asks, voice a little shaky.

“He will be alright, dear,” Dot assures him kindly. “He really will. Yes, he has broken ribs and a wrenched shoulder, a lot of scrapes and bruises, and he inhaled some smoke, but he will be alright.”

And Magnus’ knees buckle and he suddenly feels like crying. Which is when he realizes that he didn’t remove his make-up before zonking out at the table. By all that’s holy, he must look awful. Just what will Alexander think?

“You look like a raccoon.”

That’s what Alec thinks, apparently. It’s the first thing he croaks out when Dot lets Magnus in - “Just for a minute, Magnus, he needs rest.” - and Alec sees his husband in all his one-socked glory.

And Magnus really is crying now, because Alec looks all black and blue in the white, white bed, his scrapes red and raw, and there are just way too many bandages for Magnus to not still feel the last remnants of dread squeezing his heart. And since Raj stayed behind to wait for the rest of the team that finally managed to douse that “bitch of a fire” as he called it, and Magnus’ make-up is ruined anyway, he allows himself a sniffle.

“Come here,” Alec says gently and reaches out towards him.

And Magnus realizes he stopped by the door and is standing there like a tool instead of going to his husband and making the most of the minute he was given by Dot.

So he rushes forward and squeezes Alexander’s hand gently - even Alec’s knuckles are grazed, how can his knuckles be grazed when he was wearing his gloves? - and kisses one corner of Alec’s mouth tenderly, Alec’s overly active facial hair prickling his skin.

“I’m okay,” Alec whispers against his lips, his hazel eyes warm and all-knowing and all-seeing. “I’ll be back on my feet in no time. I promise.”

And Magnus can only nod, Magnus, who makes his living being as eloquent as possible, can’t find the proper words because his brain is buzzing with white noise, and he’s breathing funny because his throat is still too tight.

And then Dot’s in the door, shooing him out and promising that he can return in the morning
“You’ll be back the second you’re allowed in, I bet,” she mutters but there’s a twinkle in her eye - and Alec’s shooing him out, too, telling him to go to bed and sleep.

And Magnus almost leaves without actually saying a word, almost, but then he rushes back in - “Just a second, Dot, I swear!” - because he needs, he needs Alec to know something, to know this.

“I love you, Alexander. And I’ll be here when you wake up.”
Winged Shorts #4 (The One with the Bobbing)

Chapter Summary

Pure fluff. (Unbeta'd)

Set in my Winged!Verse. Previous stories: Bird Bones (Chapter 196) / Rush of Wings (Chapter 197) / The Mark of a Fallen (Chapter 202) / Winged Shorts #1 (Chapter 211) / Winged Shorts #2 (Chapter 212) / Winged Shorts #3 (Chapter 222) / The Significance of Feather (Chapter 224)

Alec spreads his wings wide - and steps off the roof. Which still makes Magnus cringe a little. Because, holy cracker, they’re ten stories up! You don’t just step off a roof ten stories up! You don’t step off a roof, period!

For a moment, Alec disappears over the edge, then he starts flapping his majestic wings and rises back up again, now facing Magnus, and just hangs there in the air with a grin, bobbing up and down like a cork in the ocean. It’s making Magnus a little dizzy.

“Come,” Alec says, reaching out towards Magnus.

“I don’t think so,” Magnus states, crossing his arms over his chest defensively. His black demon wings keep twitching behind him, betraying his trepidation. Who would’ve thought that those extra appendages would be such a tell?

Alec laughs. “Magnus, you need to learn how to fly.”

“But I can do that somewhere that’s not ten stories up!” Magnus points out.

Alec’s eyes spark mischievously. Magnus would like it better if said mischief weren’t aimed at him. “Are you telling me you’re afraid of heights?”

“I have a healthy respect for them,” Magnus responds with dignity.

“Magnus,” Alec coaxes, “you’re the High Warlock of Brooklyn, a powerful magic user. I’ve seen you fight demons. There’s nothing you can’t do. I’m sure of it.”


“Come,” Alec says softly, hand still outstretched. “I promise, I won’t let you fall.”

Magnus hesitates a moment longer, but… yes, he does trust Alec. He would trust Alexander with his life - which is what he’s apparently about to do, literally.

Uncrossing his arms, Magnus steps forward, to the edge of the roof, and his wings flutter a little in nervous anticipation. Then he grips Alec’s hand - and takes a leap of faith.

Alexander does not let him fall. But that learning how to fly thing? Turns out, Magnus is not a fast learner.
Chapter Summary

Follows after Winged Shorts #4. (Unbeta’d)

Set in my Winged!Verse. Previous stories: Bird Bones (Chapter 196) / Rush of Wings (Chapter 197)/ The Mark of a Fallen (Chapter 202) / Winged Shorts #1 (Chapter 211)/ Winged Shorts #2 (Chapter 212) / Winged Shorts #3 (Chapter 222) / The Significance of Feather (Chapter 224) / Winged Shorts #4 (Chapter 229)

Magnus starts dropping pieces of clothing the moment they step through the door, and by the time he reaches their bed, he’s clad only in his black boxers - black boxers with tiny little bats with tiny little grinning faces on them. He got them because, as he told Alec, he felt a strange affinity for them. They make Alec smile.

Groaning pathetically, Magnus keels over and hits the bed face down, bouncing a little on the sinfully thick mattress. “My shoulders hurt!”

Alec closes the door and picks up Magnus’ discarded clothes dutifully. Then he takes off his own jacket, and folding it all neatly, he says comfortingly, “It’s just strained muscles, Magnus. You’re not used to flying, that’s all. Why don’t you heal?”

“Can’t,” Magnus moans, his voice muffled by the soft bed cover. “I have no energy left. I’m drained. I’m dead on my feet.”

Rolling his eyes, Alec points out. “You’re lying on your face, not standing on your feet!” Then he steps towards the bed and sets his hands on his hips, smiling. “If it hurts so much, how about you take some of my energy and heal yourself? I don’t mind.” Because Magnus does look terribly pathetic. Even his hair is limp.

Magnus groans again. “My pride could not take another hit!”

Now Alec has to laugh. “Your flying wasn’t that bad.”

“I looked like a bat-winged chicken doing an interpretative dance!” Magnus wails. “Don’t think I haven’t noticed you snickering while you were holding me upside down by my foot!”

Well, it’s true. Still. “I helped you already once today—”

“Seven times!” Magnus corrects him, face still buried in the bed cover.

“—or seven times,” Alec amends, the corners of his mouth twitching again. “So, what’s once more in the grand scheme of things?” he coaxes.

“I really can’t,” Magnus sighs a little more seriously. “That’s for emergencies only. I don’t want to get too used to it. Such power, it’s… addictive.”

Oh. Alec didn’t know that.
But then Magnus turns his head to the side and stares at Alec over his shoulder contemplatively. “But a massage, now that would be something,” he suggests hopefully.

Alec narrows his eyes suspiciously. “Magnus Bane, are you trying to get me in bed?”

A mischievous little flame dances in Magnus’ one visible eye. “I would never!”

“Uh-huh,” Alec responds, unconvinced.

“All I want is a massage. My shoulders hurt so bad. Those wings are so huge and… heavy and… unwieldy,” Magnus complains, looking like a kicked puppy.

“Alright! Alright, enough with the whining!” Alec cuts him off. Damn that sneaky swindler, he knows exactly how to push Alec’s buttons. “Move up and I’ll bring the oil.”

Grinning, Magnus shimmies up the bed happily and crosses his arms under his cheek. “I’m all yours, darling.”

Heading for the bathroom, Alec hides a grin. Yes, you are.
They’re in Pandemonium, he and Luke. It was actually his idea to come here, to Magnus’ club, instead of going to Luke’s usual haunts; Alec knows he’s not exactly popular with the Downworlders right now, and he didn’t want to make it awkward for Luke.

“I just want to know why. Why would my parents, why would you and Jocelyn, join the Circle in the first place?” Alec asks. He ordered a beer but since he has never learned to appreciate the taste, he’s just rolling the bottle between his hands.

Luke takes a slow sip from his own bottle - not a generic brand, but something special; who would’ve thought that Luke would be a beer connoisseur? - and thinks about the answer for a while. Alec appreciates it. He wants to hear the truth, not empty platitudes.

“It’s actually very simple,” Luke says in the end, setting the bottle down. “We thought we were doing the right thing.”

“The right thing,” Alec repeats, looking down at the damp, peeling label on his brown beer bottle. “The right thing? The Circle murdered innocent people, Downworlders and Shadowhunters both!”

Luke shakes his head. “It wasn’t like that at first. Nobody really sets out to become a murderer. Nobody except for some wackjobs.”

“Like Valentine,” Alec says.

Elbows on their little table, Luke leans forward. “He wasn’t like that at first, either. He was very much like your Jace. Passionate, charismatic, loyal. We all sensed that he was destined for greatness, that’s why we followed him. His ideas were mind-blowing, revolutionary. And when he talked about them, they all made sense to us.”

Alec looks up at him. “And then it all went to hell?”

Luke shakes his head. “It was more like a gradual descent. So gradual that we didn’t really notice till we were there, and suddenly we were holding blades to people’s throats, and we were contemplating, when it all went so terribly wrong. And it’s so much easier to get in, then to get out.”

Dropping his gaze back to the bottle, Alec whispers, “Mom and dad did.”


“But only shortly before the Uprising itself, only when Valentine threatened to start killing Shadowhunters,” Alec adds a little bitterly. “Hurting Downworlders didn’t seem to phase them.”

Luke pauses for a while, drinking his beer. “You know, I’m not sure it was the possibility of
killing fellow Shadowhunters either what made them back out.” He waits till Alec looks up, then he points with his bottle at Alec, “It was you.”

Alec blinks. “Me?”

“Yes. Shortly before they dropped out of the Circle, Maryse found out that she was pregnant with you,” Luke explains. “And it’s all good and well to play at being a trailblazer who doesn’t give a damn about the rules, when it’s just you and your partner, two consenting adults. But when there’s someone else, someone who’s fully dependent on you, and who might have to carry the consequences of your bad choices? It’s not as easy.”

Peeling off the label, Alec starts tearing it into tiny pieces. It’s a strange idea that it was his mere existence that made his parents renounce Valentine. If he hadn’t been conceived at that time, would his parents now be living in exile, with a circle rune on their throat? A strange notion.

Alec shakes his head a little sadly. “They might have left the Circle, but when it comes to Downworlders, they’re still Valentine’s loyal disciples, especially my mom.”

Luke says kindly, “Alec, you have to understand that we’re all products of the society we are born into. It took me being bitten and turning into a werewolf to really get what it means to be a Downworlder. Both me and Jocelyn, we tried to stop Valentine, but we did it…” He pauses, trying to find the right words. “We did it out of a certain abstract sense of nobility, you might say. I don’t think we truly, down to our bones understood that what the Circle was doing was wrong because it hurt innocent people who couldn’t defend themselves. Because you can talk about it all you want and you can try to explain it, but unless you actually live it, it’ll always be other people’s problem, not yours.”

Alec mulls it over for a moment - his parents’ bad decisions and his own, his parents’ attitude and his own, the concept of right and wrong in the light of all that - and Luke lets him.

Then Alec says, “I guess… I guess, it’s a little like with me and Meliorn, then. I was following my orders and those orders said to bring Meliorn to the Silent Brothers. And I didn’t like it but as the Clave’s soldier, I trusted that the Clave knew better, saw the bigger picture, so I did what the Clave asked.”

Luke lets him talk, and it’s exactly what Alec needs to make sense of his feelings and thought. “I also thought I was doing the right thing. And when I realized that it was not the right thing to do, I couldn’t back out anymore. I’m not like Jace and Izzy. I’m hardwired to follow rules, to follow orders, to respect my elders, to observe hierarchy. To do anything else invites chaos. But now…” He runs one hand through his hair. “I don’t know what to believe anymore.”

Luke nods. “We were soldiers, too, the best of the best, trained to do what we were told, without thinking. And then we reached the same conclusion as you did: that the Clave was wrong. But our reasoning went in the opposite direction - you think that the Clave is too hard, we thought that the Clave was too lenient. We radicalized and we had to hit rock bottom before we - or at least some of us - realized our mistake. You,” he points with his bottle at Alec again, “have a head start here. You’re already headed in the right direction.”

Alec furrows his brows. It’s all so very confusing. The Clave is wrong, and his parents are wrong, too. But… but Jace and Izzy, they aren’t entirely right either. Rules have their place in every society, without rules, there’s anarchy.

Yes, that’s the question. What will he do? The answer is both very simple and very complicated, he realizes. He’s being pulled in opposite directions and neither side is completely right or completely wrong, so there’s only one thing he can do. He can’t even begin to guess what consequences his decision will have, but if he doesn’t change something, he will lose himself completely.

“I’ll forge my own path,” Alec replies, looking up, and both his eyes and his voice are surprisingly steady, considering his inner turmoil. “I’ll start thinking for myself. I think it’s time I stopped letting others control my life.”

Luke smiles and raises his bottle. “I’ll drink to that.”
Five Sentences About Loss

Chapter Summary

This is a death story. I mean, people were getting slightly paranoid because I posted so many fluffy pieces in a row, waiting for the other shoe to drop. Well, consider it dropped… I actually made myself sniffle, writing this. Beware! (Unbeta'd)

Magnus once told a friend that it did not matter that you weren’t there when your loved one died, as long as you had been there for them while they were still alive - and he believes it to be true, he really does, until Jace comes to tell him that Alec was killed, then the only thing Magnus can think of is, why wasn’t I there why wasn’t I why why why…?

Magnus is standing in front of the kitchen counter, staring at the two mugs sitting on top of it, two mugs, two mugs, one bright and twinkling in the morning sunlight, the other stark white in comparison, his and Alec’s mugs, and he just poured them both coffee, like he has always done these last few months - but Alec died last night and he’ll never pick up his mug again.

Magnus is there when they burn Alec’s body, standing hidden among the trees, far away from all the Shadowhunters gathered around the pyre, because he does not want to cause a scene, not now, but he needed to be there, at his lover’s funeral, and as he watches the flames swallow Alec’s shroud covered body, it feels like his whole world is burning down with it, turning into ashes.

Magnus pulls Alec’s shirt out of the hamper where he hid it from his lover only a few days ago, because a) he wanted to poke fun at Alec and b) he loved to watch the play of muscles under Alec’s runed skin, so to keep him half naked was basically the goal, but now the shirt, Alec’s toothbrush and his simple white mug are the only things he has left of Alexander - and the shirt still smells of him.

Magnus knows that Alec loved kissing best, not that he had anything against sex, gods forbid, but Alec always said that sex made the body feel good, but kissing, kissing was for the heart and soul, so they kissed as much as possible, hello and goodbye and I missed you and be safe, and Magnus would give anything, anything at all, just so he could kiss his Alexander one last time.
Magnus is sitting in the bed, reading a book, propped up on a small mountain of pillows, and the soft glow of lamps is making the room feel warm and cozy, when he hears the front door open and close softly. He peers at the clock on the bedside table: 4:31 AM, the sky is just turning pink in the east.

“Alexander?” Magnus calls out quietly, even though he knows it must be Alec since his wards didn’t fry the intruder on the spot.

Alec shuffles in, muttering something that sounds like a greeting. He’s dragging his feet and peeling off his clothes on his way to the bed, dropping everything carelessly to the floor. His shoulders seem heavy, his feet seem heavy, even his eyelids droop. Magnus feels exhaustion seeping into his own bones just from looking at him.

Only in his boxer shorts and a t-shirt, Alec climbs into the bed and crawls across the covers to Magnus. He slumps down with a sigh, then, and buries his face in his lover’s stomach, looping one arm around Magnus’ hips.

Smiling gently, Magnus sets his book aside and runs his fingers through Alec’s unruly hair. “Bad day?”

Alec hmmms. “Worse,” he admits, his voice muffled. “Why can’t the war be finally over? Why can’t the Clave stop being dicks over everything? Why can’t my parents just accept who I am? Why can’t Jace and Izzy learn to follow simple orders?”

Sounding like an exhausted, petulant child, Alec then adds, “Magnus, you’re a mighty warlock. Make it happen, please! Just wave a hand or snap your fingers and make them all get along - or at least turn them all into toads for a day.”

Laughing, Magnus rubs his lover’s scalp, and watches as Alec nestles himself even closer. Magnus’ heart aches with adoration. “If I could, I would, my dear. For you, I would,” he assures Alec. “But I don’t think there’s enough magic in the world to make pig-headed Shadowhunters see reason. The toads, though? That I could do.”

“Eh,” Alec mumbles sleepily, scrunching his nose. “Not a good idea, to make their brains even smaller.”

Magnus laughs again and continues running his fingers through Alec’s hair.

Alec snuffles, rubbing his face against Magnus’ stomach. “You smell really nice,” he whispers. A moment later, he’s asleep.

Magnus watches him, stroking his hair gently, and his heart is filled to bursting with love for this man, for Alexander, for whom he would change the world.
Chapter Summary

Names have meanings. (Unbeta'd)

When they first come across the ancient prophecy of *The Great Destroyer*, they think it’s Valentine. It *must* be him. All the signs fit. They’re actually living the prophecy and they dread its outcome, the world in flames…

And then Valentine dies. And his son dies. And there are no more enemies to fight and kill. And they think, they hope, they *believe* that it’s all over now, that they won.

Three months later, the world is burning, overrun by demons. Shadowhunters are scattered, Downworlders enslaved, mundanes murdered in their beds by creatures they never even knew existed.

And leading the armies of hell? Alec Lightwood, with a blood red sword in his hand and with his eyes aglow with power. Alec Lightwood, the chosen vessel of Asmodeus, one of the Seven Princes of Hell; a Greater Demon in the body of Raziel’s child.

In the body of Alexander *Gideon* Lightwood.

*Gideon, the Great Destroyer.*
Naughty, naughty! (Unbeta'd)

“Magnus? Where’s my underwear?” Alec asks, exasperated, as he walks out of the bathroom in nothing but a towel, followed by a billowing cloud of steam.

Magnus, who until now pretended to be reading, lifts his eyes from his book. “Hm?” he asks innocently.

Alec narrows his eyes. “Magnus?”

“Oh, your underwear,” Magnus says as if it took him a while to understand what Alec asked him about. “Here.” And he snaps his fingers.

Something black pops into existence just an inch or so away from Alec’s nose. Using his lightning fast reflexes, Alec catches it before it can drop to the floor - and stares at the thing.

“Magnus!” Alec protests, utterly scandalized. “Those are…” He can’t even finish the sentence.

“Silk boxers, I know!” Magnus nods sagely, a twinkle in his eyes. “Think about it, they could have been red. But we will work up to that.”

Alec sputters. “I don’t care about the color–”

Magnus lights up. “Really? Because I can turn them red!”

“–it’s the fact that those are silk boxers that I find disturbing,” Alec continues as if Magnus hasn’t said anything. “Give me back my briefs. Cotton, white. Now!”

Magnus sets his book aside, climbs to his knees and crawls across the bed towards Alec. He’s dressed in nothing but burgundy red pajama bottoms himself, and his movements are slow and seductive, just like his voice.

“Come on, darling,” he coaxes. “Just try them on.”

“Magnus…” Alec huffs in exasperation. “I need to go back to the Institute. I have a meeting in a half an hour!”

“For me?” Magnus tries, but when Alec won’t stop glaring, he says, “How about this: you try them on and if you decide you don’t like them, I’ll give you back your boring tighty whities and portal you back, so that you’re on time?”

Alec glares at him a moment longer, but seeing that Magnus won’t budge, he sighs. “Fine!” And he drops his towel.

Magnus makes a happy, appreciative sound that causes Alec to blush. Weeks and weeks, that’s how long it took Magnus to help Alec overcome his body shyness and to convince him that there’s
nothing inherently shameful about nakedness. But even now, Alec won’t stop blushing when he catches Magnus staring. Magnus finds it utterly endearing.

Bending down, Alec steps into the boxers and pulls them up quickly just to be done with this foolishness - and shudders at the sensation of the cool, almost slippery fabric sliding over his skin. A little gasp escapes him when the boxers finally settle on his hips, gently hugging his intimate places.

And Magnus grins, knowing how sensitive Alec must be after his early morning ministrations. And now that the material that feels almost alive, is touching him in all the places that Magnus paid such close attention to just a short while ago - it must feel like having Magnus’ hands all over him again, touching, stroking, petting…

Yes, Magnus is a very evil bad no-good man.

Raising himself up on his knees, he’s almost face to face with Alec thanks to the height of the bed, and he breathes into Alec’s ear, “You like it, Alexander?”

Alec shudders again and his eyes flutter close, breath turning heavy. And when Magnus lifts his hands and gently runs his fingers over the strip of skin above the waistband of the boxers - Alec breaks and pounces. He tackles Magnus back onto the bed, kissing his neck hungrily, and Magnus laughs out loud, digging his fingers into Alec’s back.

Even using Magnus’ portal, Alec barely makes it to his meeting on time.

The boxers stay on.
A What-If story. What if Robert and Maryse died and Michael Wayland - or should I say "Michael Wayland" - adopted Alec and Izzy. Trigger warning for abuse. Not a happy story. (Unbeta'd)

After Robert and Maryse die in a house fire, Alec and Isabelle are adopted by Michael Wayland, Robert’s parabatai, who takes over the New York Institute, too. But there are times when Alec wishes he died with his parents.

Alec spends his whole childhood, his whole teenage years in constant fear of his adopted father. Michael’s mood swings, from sweet affection to borderline cruelty, have Alec constantly on edge, constantly expecting punishment.

And it gets even worse once Alec realizes that he’s gay. Because Michael must not know, he must not find out, he must not, he must not, please, don’t let him find out! Alec can’t even imagine what Michael would do.

Alec becomes Jace’s parabatai - but not by choice, he has no say in this matter. Michael considers it given, he doesn’t present it to them, to Alec and Jace, as an option, but as an order. And Jace says, “Father is right.”

Over the years, it becomes Jace’s mantra, his response to everything: “Father is right.” Parabatai should be close, closer than friends, closer than brothers, but Alec keeps so many secrets from Jace that he wouldn’t know where to begin if ordered to reveal them.

Not even his sister, Isabelle, really knows him anymore. Alec’s too afraid to tell her anything, too afraid to have his secrets used against him. They used to be so close, he and Izzy, before Michael tore them apart, before he made Izzy too hard-edged and Alec too afraid to be more than strangers living under one roof.

Alec’s twenty-one when Michael orders him to marry, and marry well. He insists that the Wayland and Lightwood families need to ally themselves with a strong, respected Shadowhunter house to regain power. And Alec with his immaculate reputation is the best choice to get them what they need.

In the end, before Michael can force a woman of his choosing on Alec, Alec proposes to Lydia Branwell, the Inquisitor’s favorite, a widow slightly older than him, an envoy from the Clave, sent to inspect their work and pass judgment on the Institute, a regular thing necessitated by Michael’s involvement with the Circle years before.

Michael sees it as a wise political move, as an opportunity for them to enter the Inquisitor’s inner circle, to get a foot in the door and once again gain access to Idris’ high politics. Jace considers her a hot piece of ass. And Izzy hates her on sight.

What Alec sees in Lydia is someone as broken as he is, someone who looks at him and sees him and thinks, I know. Someone who makes him feel safe. And that’s all there is, that’s all he has
wanted ever since his parents died: to feel safe.

Sometimes, he wonders what his life would’ve been like if his parents never died. Would he have been happy? Would he have found someone to love? But as he stands at the altar with Lydia by his side, feeling Michael’s hard, calculating eyes on his back, it feels like such a naive, foolish notion. A thing unreal. There’s nothing but duty - and fear.
Magnus does not expect Alec to agree when he asks for his bow and quiver as a payment for services rendered, as a proof of how much Alec loves his sister, Isabelle. He doesn’t… he doesn’t actually want Alec’s weapons.

Yes, they’re magical items, artifacts of a kind that Magnus hasn’t encountered in many, many years. And if anybody else owned them, Magnus would have no qualms accepting them. But they’re Alec’s, and the last thing Magnus wants, is to leave Alec weaponless. If anything happened to Alec because he was forced to use mediocre, non-magical facsimiles in a battle - Magnus would never forgive himself.

And that’s why, when Alec hands Magnus his weapons with just a little sigh of regret after Izzy’s trial, Magnus gives them back to him, the bow and the quiver both, telling Alec that it’s for safekeeping, that he wouldn’t know what to do with them anyway. Which is blatantly untrue, of course, but - what else could he say? He knows that the truth wouldn’t be appreciated. Maybe he could add a joke? Something along the lines of asking Alec to think of him while he shoots his arrows? But no. There’s a time and a place for quips and this is not it. They’re both too hurt and hurting.

Magnus doesn’t know why exactly this moment is burned so vividly into his mind. But it is. And sometimes, while lying in bed, unable to sleep, he finds himself thinking of it, thinking of Alec standing there, bewildered, holding his bow and quiver in his hands, unsure of what to do or say. And Magnus can only hope that those magical weapons of his are keeping Alexander safe.
“Your magic is really pretty.”

Magnus startles at the whispered words and spins around in his chair, almost knocking the beaker containing the newly made healing potion off his desk. He didn’t even notice that he wasn’t alone anymore.

“Hey!” he says with a pleased smile. “When did you get in?”

Alec’s sitting on the couch with his arms looped loosely around his knees, and he’s watching Magnus with a soft, affectionate expression on his face. “A while ago,” he replies. “You were so focused on your work that I didn’t want to disturb you. Besides, I like watching you do magic.”

Magnus’ eyebrows shoot up in surprise. “You do?”

Alec nods. “Yes. I was taught that magic was something to be used - or eradicated. It has never even occurred to me that it could be, you know, pretty. Until I met you.”

A little ball of warmth glows in Magnus’ chest, and he feels his cheeks heat up. He can’t believe he’s actually blushing. Only Alexander seems to have this strange effect on him. “Nobody has ever told me that,” he admits quietly.

Alec shakes his head in mock sadness. “People are idiots.”

Magnus laughs.

Uncurling, Alec gets up and reaches out towards Magnus. “Come to bed?” he asks with a soft smile.

And Magnus still has work to do, potions to brew and spells to prepare, but… That can wait till morning. With a little smile of his own, he takes Alec’s hand and allows himself to be pulled up from his chair.
Chapter Summary

Angsty stuff. Not a happy story. (Unbeta'd)

After Magnus is kidnapped by his father, Asmodeus, it takes Alec months to track down a demon reckless - or stupid - enough to help Magnus escape, to go against the Prince of Hell himself. But the price the monster asks…

“I… I have to think about it,” Alec stammers out, his mind reeling, his heart beating hard with dismay.

The demon grins. “I’ll be back tomorrow night, Shadowhunter, and I’ll expect your answer then…” And with that he disappears in a puff of pungent smoke.

Alec goes home. He goes home and he watches his sister and his parabatai squabble in the Ops Center, looking for clues leading to Valentine and his army - and to Magnus, too, because they promised Alec that they would help him get his lover back. But it’s been months now, months with no usable leads in sight, and Alec has to do something or it will be too late for Magnus, he fears.

And as he watches them, Alec realizes that, if he takes the bargain, if he gives the demon what he wants in exchange for Magnus’ freedom - he’ll never be able to come back here again. He couldn’t stand it.

Still, when the demon returns the following night, Alec says yes.

It’s a cold autumn evening in New York and Alec’s sitting on a bench in the park a stone throw away from Magnus’ loft, watching as the windows in it light up with the approaching darkness. Magnus is home. And there are Jace and Izzy with Clary and Simon in tow, rushing down the street, towards Magnus’…

Life seems to go on for the people Alec left behind. And it hurts. But it also fills him with… peace. This was his choice, and seeing Magnus returned safely, it was the right one. It was worth it.

His friends disappear inside Magnus’ building without paying Alec any mind, and he decides that it’s time to go.

Slowly, he gets up, leaning heavily on his cane, and stifles a groan as the pain in his joints flares up, aggravated by the cold that seeped into his bones. With his shoulders hunched inside his thick parka and his hat pulled low into his eyes, he shuffles away, invisible among the crowds. Just another plain old person among many.

Because that was the demon’s price, the price of Magnus’ salvation: fifty years of Alec’s life, freely given away in one night - a lifetime for a life saved.
“Magnus? Magnus, you need to get up now.”

Magnus grumbles something, still half asleep. He worked till the wee hours of the morning last night and it’s way too early to be up. He turns onto his stomach, sticks his head under his pillow and pretends to be an ostrich.

There’s a soft laugh. “That won’t help, I can still see you, you know?” The bed dips slightly. “Need I remind you that it was you who told me - no, ordered me! - to not let you get away with ‘one more minute’ this morning? Because you have an important appointment at nine? Magnus?” Something pokes him in the ribs.

“G’way,” Magnus mumbles, squirming. Not fair when the intruder knows all the places where you’re ticklish.

More laughing. Then coaxingly, “I have coffee for you.”

Magnus peeks out from under the pillow. “Italian Roast?” he asks, voice raspy from sleep, and when the heavenly smell of coffee wafts in his direction he sits up reluctantly, still glaring reproachfully, though.

Alec, who’s sitting on the edge of the bed in his customary black, holding a mug in his hand, grins. “For you, only the best,” Alec assures him and holds out the mug.

Magnus reaches out as if to take it, eyes squinting, nose scrunched and hair flattened in a very unattractive way, but then he snaps his fingers, sends the mug back to the kitchen and grabs Alec by the wrist. And before Alec can do more than yelp, “Hey!”, he’s pulled down, turned and flattened on the bed by Magnus who attaches himself to his lover like a tick.

Rubbing his cheek against Alec’s chest and with one arm thrown across Alec’s stomach, Magnus grumbles, “I don’t want coffee. I want my boyfriend and sleep. Whoever invented mornings, I should turn them into a slug.”

Alec huffs out a surprised laugh and runs his hand up and down Magnus’ back affectionately. Magnus almost purrs like a kitten. That makes Alec smile even wider. Still, he says, though much gentler this time, “Unfortunately, that will have to wait. You really need to get up now if you want to be on time.”

Magnus moans pathetically and tightens his hold on his lover.

“Tell you what,” Alec says and lifts a hand to push Magnus’ bangs off his forehead. “I don’t have any missions planned for tonight and there should be no meetings either. So, unless there’s an emergency, I’m free. How about we spend the night like this, just the two of us? No work, just us. Doing nothing at all.”
Magnus raises his head and props his chin on Alec’s chest to look at him. “Is that a bribe?”
Magnus asks, eyes narrowed suspiciously.

Alec smiles at him. “Maybe? Is it working?”

Magnus sighs. “Alright, fine,” he agrees reluctantly. Then he raises a hand and runs his fingers featherlight over Alec’s cheekbone. “Be careful today?”

“Allways,” Alec swears.

“I was promised a whole night in bed with my boyfriend. And I plan to do very naughty things to him. Which means he needs to be in top form. Even a stamina rune might be needed,” Magnus says, his tone mock serious as he nods, running his surprisingly pointy chin over Alec’s ribs.

Alec laughs and squirms. “You horndog!”

Magnus grins, finally awake. “Always.”
“So, you did it, huh?” Lydia comments softly as she sits down next to Alec on the bench in a small park not far away from the New York Institute.

Alec turns his gray head towards her. “Yes. Yes, I did,” he replies.

“And was it worth it?” she asks, searching his face with her eyes.

Alec smiles. “He’s back, safe and sound.” And when she keeps looking at him expectantly, he nods and adds, “Yes, it was worth it.”

Lydia nods, though her expression is sad, and reaches out to squeeze his hand.

When Alec realized that, should he go through with his plan, he would need someone’s help, the choice of who that person would be was easy. He needed someone who would understand, who would accept his decision and not try to dissuade him from it. And that someone was Lydia, who, if she had been given the chance, would’ve switched places with her dead husband in a heartbeat.

Lydia reaches inside her jacket pocket and pulls out an envelope. “These are your new papers. You’re now Gideon Branwell, my great-uncle twice removed or something.” She smirks. “Welcome to the family.”

Alec takes the envelope with a grateful smile. Yes, he decided not to go back home, not to face his family’s pity or Magnus’ guilt, but that doesn’t mean he wants to leave the whole Shadowhunter community behind. He still needs a purpose in life - no matter how short it will be.

“I found you a place in Paris,” Lydia continues. “They’re looking for an archivist there, a new custodian for their cache of magical artifacts. Nobody over there, at the French Institute, knows your family or you, and the head owed me a favor.”

Paris. Alec smiles. Magnus wanted to take him to Paris one day, show him all the hidden places casual tourists don’t know about. It looks like he will get to see them after all, though on his own. It’s a bittersweet feeling.

He nods. “Thank you.”

Lydia is quiet for a while, watching people walking their dogs and little kids playing in the falling leaves of early autumn. “They will look for you, you know that, right? Jace and Izzy, your family, Magnus…”

Alec nods again, and touches the cloaking charm hanging on a leather cord on his neck. “I made sure they wouldn’t find me. They think I’m on a mission for the Clave. It’ll take a while before they realize that I’m not coming back.”

She looks at him. “But they won’t stop looking,” she warns.
He shrugs. “I’m old now, Lydia. Statistically speaking, for a Shadowhunter, I have little time left. I just don’t want to spend the rest of my days fielding off their vain attempts at saving me or their pity. A clean break is the best.”

Lydia blinks back tears and nods. She gets it, as he knew she would.

She gets up, then bends down and kisses him on the cheek affectionately. “I will miss you, Alec Lightwood,” she whispers, her voice thick with emotions. And then she leaves.

The vault full of scrolls and magical artifacts is masked as a little antique store in one of the oldest parts of Paris. A tiny shop in a quiet paved cul-de-sac with windows and balconies overflowing with flowers. Alec loves the place’s peace and serenity, its dusty shelves and the old grandfather clock ticking away in the back. It’s a good place to hide from the world.

His work consists mostly of researching artifacts and translating old scrolls. He lives in a small apartment above the store and he owns a cat now, too, an irritable ball of gray fur named Church that came with the building. He goes on long walks along the river and visits all the places that he thinks Magnus might have wanted to show him.

Autumn becomes winter becomes spring and he leads a quiet, content life.

Until one day, shortly before closing time, the bell above the door chimes, announcing a new arrival. Alec sets the old, brittle tome he has been reading aside and gets up to greet the person…

And it’s Magnus Bane standing in the doorway, larger than life and as glamorous as ever. Alec’s heart stutters and skips a beat.

Magnus smiles at him through tears and whispers, “Hello, Alexander. I missed you.”
Drawing the Line

Chapter Summary

A shameless h/c. Alec works himself ragged. Magnus is not pleased. (Unbeta'd)

There’s not enough time, not enough time for anything, it’s all just fighting-fighting-fighting, with Valentine and with the Clave and with his parents, trying to find Jace and working out an alliance with the Downworlders, balancing his life inside and outside the Institute, and there’s not enough time, not enough time for sleeping or eating or healing, not enough, just not enough…

And so he uses the runes, to stay awake and to heal and to not feel pain and to not feel hunger and to move faster-faster-faster, until…

“Magnus,” Alec whispers, reaching out unsteadily, his head spinning-spinning-spinning. “I don’t feel so good.”

… until his body finally runs out of strength and there’s no more to give, none left, just none. And he collapses, like a puppet with its strings cut, Magnus’ very alarmed, “Alexander!” the last thing he hears.

When he comes to, he’s lying in the big, sinfully comfortable bed at Magnus’, and everything hurts. Simply everything, as all the aches and pains and injuries of the last several weeks finally catch up with him, all at once. He can barely open his eyes and moving is out of question.

“Don’t you ever scare me like that, Alec. Don’t ever do that again!”

Magnus’ voice is hollow and disturbingly flat, and Alec slowly, oh so very slowly turns his head to the right where his lover is sitting in an antique armchair, pale and haggard looking and shivering slightly either from exhaustion or shock, Alec doesn’t know.

“What happened?” Alec croaks out, alarmed by the look of him. “What happened?” Magnus echoes, and Alec now can hear just how angry he is, furious even - and absolutely terrified. “Your heart just stopped, Alec. That’s what happened. It took all my magic to bring you back because your body was completely drained, there was not enough left of you to revive,” he grits out.

Magnus leans forward intently, elbows on his knees. “Those runes of yours, they are not omnipotent. Your body has its limits. There’s a reason for why we feel pain or exhaustion - it’s our body’s way of telling us that we need to slow down and rest.” He pauses. “When was the last time you slept, huh? When was the last time you ate anything?”

Alec looks away from the sharp, probing eyes. He has no answer for his lover because he simply doesn’t remember.

Magnus nods to himself as if that confirmed something to him. “I don’t ever want to go through that again, Alec, through those moments when I was trying to kick-start your heart,” he states, his voice uncompromising. “I accept that your job is dangerous, but this is taking it too far. And I’ll not stand for it.”
Alec’s once-again beating heart clenches. He has never heard Magnus so angry. And he’s dreading what will follow.

“Look at me, Alec,” Magnus orders firmly. “Look at me!”

When Alec complies, Magnus continues: “Know this: If you ever do something this stupid again, if you intentionally neglect your needs till you make yourself sick, if you do that…” He pauses, then, “I’ll leave you, Alec. No buts, no third chances. I will leave you.”

Alec’s heart is hammering so hard he can barely breathe. This cannot be happening!

Magnus continues, “I have to live with you risking your life every day to save and protect those in need, which is a worthy cause and I’m very proud of you. You put yourself in danger for the good of others and it can’t be helped - but this can, and I’m drawing the line here.”

“Magnus…” Alec tries to say something, but he can’t. What’s there to say? He knows it was a foolish thing to do.

“Do we have an agreement? You’ll never work yourself to exhaustion again. Ever. Promise me,” Magnus orders, his eyes unflinching.

Alec would promise him anything. “I promise,” he whispers.

And as Alec watches, Magnus’ whole body slumps in relief. All the tension flows out of him, his shoulders hunch and his head bends forward. And then Magnus moves, he gets up from the chair and crawls across the covers and he curls up around Alec protectively, head pillowed on Alec’s shoulder, one arm thrown across Alec’s chest.

“I was so scared, Alexander,” Magnus whispers brokenly, squeezing Alec tight. “When you collapsed, when you stopped breathing and your heart…” He chokes.

Alec lifts one aching arm and wraps it around Magnus’ shoulders, whispering, “I’m sorry. I’m so sorry. I didn’t realize…” He kisses the top of Magnus’ head. “It won’t happen again. I swear. I swear I’ll be more careful, alright?”

Magnus just nods, unable to speak, unable to do anything but hold Alec. And Alec realizes how close he came to losing this, to losing everything, to leaving Magnus all alone again - and that frightens him more than death itself. And he vows to himself while whispering sweet nonsense to his lover, that he will keep his promise to Magnus no matter what.
Loyalty

Chapter Summary

This is a missing scene from episode 110. For years, Raj had to watch Izzy and Jace get away with their stupid stunts with a slap on the wrist, with things less privileged people would’ve been severely punished for. And he’s fed up!

Based on the “Raj has feelings for Alec” prompt. Raj has definitely strong feelings for Alec in this fic. But what kind? Who knows? Maybe not even he himself. (Unbeta’d)

“Feel better now?” Isabelle snaps at Raj as he pushes her inside the plush room that Lydia ordered her to be locked in instead of one of the plain holding cells underground.

“No, I don’t, Isabelle,” Raj answers, stopping in the doorway. “But I would lie if I said I didn’t feel any satisfaction at finally seeing justice done.”

She twists around furiously. “Justice? Sending innocent Downworlders to their deaths? That’s your idea of justice?”

His eyes blaze, showing that he’s just as angry as she is. “And who said that Meliorn was innocent? You? Based on what? Because he said so?”

“Because I know him! Because his involvement with Valentine wouldn’t make any sense!” Izzy yells, throwing up her hands.

“Seelie politics never make sense to outsiders!” Raj spits back. “Because we never see the whole picture. We think in days, months - they think in decades and centuries! What we consider a nonsensical action can simply be one move of a pawn in a chess game bigger than we can even imagine for them!”

Isabelle shakes her head. “You just don’t get it. If the Silent Brothers tortured Meliorn, it would’ve led to a war with the Seelies.”

Raj snorts. “Higher principles? From you? Don’t make me laugh! This was not about politics, this was about saving your boyfriend, nothing more!”

“That’s not true!” she demurs coldly.

“Really?” Raj’s voice drips with sarcasm. “Then how about your unsanctioned attack on Camille’s vampires? Where was your fear of starting a war, then?”

“They held a mundane hostage!” Izzy snaps.

“And they would’ve kept him alive till the Clave sent reinforcements, an envoy to negotiate his release!” Raj protests angrily. “Then we would’ve known that Camille bit him and we could’ve quarantined him till the effects passed! He might not have been a vampire today! If you just used your head for once! If you just listened!”

Isabelle looks away, pressing her lips together.
Raj shakes his head and continues more calmly, “But that’s the problem with you and Jace both - and now with Valentine’s daughter, too. You never think, you never listen. It’s my way or the highway with you and consequences be damned! As long as it’s fun.”

She looks at him. “You don’t know what you’re talking about,” she responds flatly.

He snorts again. “Oh, but I do, Isabelle. I do. I’ve been watching from the sidelines long enough. You’re a spoiled princess who never had to take responsibility for her actions because someone always did it for her. For you and Jace both. And I’m sick of it.”

Izzy lifts her chin. “So, that’s what this is about? Revenge?”

Raj shakes his head. “No, justice. You went too far this time. You broke the Law. And unlike Alec, I feel no obligation to cover up for you.”

“Alec? What does he have to do with anything?” she asks, confused.

Laughing, Raj shakes his head again and points in the direction of the Ops Center. “Alec was in there, taking the blame once again, making himself look like a completely inept leader in the eyes of the Clave, just so nobody would even look your way - or Jace’s. And that was the last straw.”

She watches him with her jaw clenched, so he continues, “Over the years, I’ve seen him take the blame for you and get yelled at and get punished over and over again. He does it because he loves you. And I admire him for his loyalty, and I aspire to be just as loyal - to him, who’s my commander. And I’m fed up with watching you drag him down for kicks.”

Now it’s Isabelle’s turn to shake her head. “You think you’re doing him a favor by helping Lydia put me on trial?” she asks in disbelief.

Raj stares at her and his eyes are hard as stone. “You won’t be found guilty,” he replies with absolute certainty. “You will weasel out of it again, no worse for wear, just like always. I’m sure of it.” He pauses, then adds more softly, “But maybe it’ll knock some sense into you and you’ll finally start thinking of how your actions affect the people around you. Because they deserve better.”

And with that, Raj takes a step back and closes the door firmly, leaving Isabelle alone in her luxurious cell.
Max and the Mean Lady

Chapter Summary

A missing scene from episode 108, based on this pic set:
http://drakamena.tumblr.com/post/148161335778/lightwoodskies-shadowhunters-
episode-8-bad (Unbeta’d)

When Alec feels Max sway back against him in a reaction to the rising tension in the room, he feels compelled to rest a hand on his little brother’s shoulder and squeeze gently in reassurance. Max leans into Alec’s touch instinctively, but otherwise he remains frozen, all his usual exuberant energy muted.

It’s not until Maryse and Lydia move away - Lydia’s presenting her demands as the temporary head of the Institute while Maryse keeps protesting loudly - that Max looks up at Alec, and in a voice that’s too hushed for him, he asks, “Alec, is the lady kicking us out of our home?”

Alec looks down at him and frowns. “What? No! Why would you think that?”

Max keeps staring up at him nervously. “She said she was taking over from mom and dad.”

Crouching down in front of his little brother, Alec smiles at him and ruffles his hair affectionately. “You don’t have to worry about that, Max. I promise you, nobody is kicking us out. Remember when I told her that somebody important was coming to visit?” When Max nods, Alec continues, “Well, that’s her. She is the envoy from the Clave. They sent her here to make sure that we’re doing our job right.”


Alec takes a deep breath and thinks about how much he should tell his little brother. In the end, he settles for the truth, just simplified. “A very bad man we all thought dead appeared here in New York again. And the Clave wants to be absolutely certain that we do everything we can to catch him.”

Max keeps frowning when he replies, “Why wouldn’t we? If he’s such a bad man…”

“We do. But,” Alec pauses to find the right words, “we and the Clave, we don’t really agree on how to go about it, you know? That’s why they sent their envoy, so that together, we can find a way to catch our man,” Alec explains, bending the facts a little after all.

Max leans in and asks in a hushed voice, “But does she have to be so mean?”

Laughing, Alec pinches Max’s nose lightly. “She’s not mean, Max, she’s just doing her job.”

Max pouts and crosses his arms on his chest. “She could be nicer.”

Still grinning, Alec replies in a conspiratorial whisper, “And mom would have her for breakfast.”

Max ponders that for a moment, then nods gravely. “True,” he agrees, finally relaxing. Then his
eyes glint mischievously. “Now, about my *stele*…”

Alec groans, hanging his head. “Max…”
Chapter Summary

I love to explore Alec and Hodge’s relationship. This is a missing scene from 108. (Unbeta’d)

“Why didn’t you ever tell me that my parents were in the Circle, too?” Alec asks softly, standing in the doorway of the weapons room.

Hodge looks up from one of the chakrams that he has been sharpening. He sighs. “Who told you?” replies, sounding a little tired suddenly.

Alec walks in. “Lydia. And I felt like a fool, Hodge! I shouldn’t have had to find out the truth from her!”

Sighing again, Hodge sets his chakram down on the table in front of him. “As you’ve certainly noticed over the years, I can’t exactly talk about these things.” He points at the angry red circle rune on his neck. “Besides, that’s something your parents should’ve told you themselves. I’m not a snitch.”

Alec scoffs, grimacing.

Hodge’s expression softens as he leans forward, hands pressed flat against the top of the table. “Alec, your parents–”

But Alec cuts him off with a sharp gesture. “Are hypocrites! By the Angel, Hodge, how can you even stand living under one roof with us?” he asks in dismay. “You have been paying for your involvement with Valentine for almost twenty years now, while they got off scot-free, unmarked! They even got to head their own Institute! Where’s the justice in that?” Alec shakes his head.

Hodge pauses, apparently trying to find the right words, to skirt around the restrictions of his rune. “Maryse, Robert and I, we don’t really see eye to eye on many things. After they were pardoned by the Clave for…” He grimaces, the rune binding making itself known in a painful way. “After that, they felt they owed me something. We used to be good friends, after all. So they offered me a place at the Institute. I could either accept, go into exile, or stay in prison in Idris.”

Alec shakes his head. “That’s not much of a choice, if you ask me.”

“No, it’s not,” Hodge agrees, then adds carefully, “And I’ve never handled charity well.”

Alec crosses his arms over his chest and hunches his shoulders a little. “And yet you always treated us - me, Izzy, Jace… Max - like family. You’ve never let us feel it.”

Hodge smiles, his expression full of genuine affection. “Because you kids were the best thing that happened to me in these last twenty years. I couldn’t have love you more if you were my flesh and blood. What Maryse and Robert did or did not do in the past, none of it is your fault and you shouldn’t have to pay for it.”

“No, we shouldn’t have to,” Alec agrees. “But they should have, a long time ago.”
Hodge stares at him intently for a moment, then points out, “Alec, you do realize that I haven’t
done anything less than your parents, and yet you’re angry at them but not at me?”

“That’s different,” Alec says, shaking his head.

“How? We are no different,” Hodge reminds him.

But Alec keeps shaking his head. “But you are. You have been punished for your crimes. You have
been paying for them ever since I’ve known you. And publicly, too. But they…!” He falls silent,
too distraught to continue.

When he finally does, his voice is calmer, “They taught me that, when I screw up, I need to be
punished. That that’s how the world, how the Law works. And I accepted that, I came to expect
that, I took on any punishment they considered just, no matter how severe, and I never complained.
Because I thought that my parents were righteous people - yet they’re nothing but hypocrites.”

Alec looks Hodge in the eye. “I can accept - and forgive - mistakes, even crimes if people who
committed them own up to them. Like you did.”

A strange, undecipherable expression flickers over Hodge’s face and he looks away from Alec.

“But I’m not certain I can forgive my parents for trying to sweep their crimes under the rug and
pretend like nothing happened. It’s not just,” Alec continues. “It’s not fair to those who suffered
because of them - and it’s not fair to you either.”

And with that Alec turns and leaves, unaware of the pained look that settles on Hodge’s face as he
follows Alec out of the room with his eyes.
The muses have spoken. And yet another angsty death story was born. Yeah, listening to the Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows OST really didn’t help. I know this must feel like beating a dead horse, but I just love this scenario. TW for death and suicide. (Unbeta'd)

“If I do this, will you let Magnus go?” Alec asks quietly.

“I will,” Imogen Herondale says. “You have my word on it.”

Alec grimaces. “Excuse me, Inquisitor, if I don’t find that reassuring.”

She settles back in her chair. “Well, you can say no.”

And there it is. He can’t. Not when Magnus’ life is at stake.

“They will let you go in the morning,” Alec promises his lover.

Magnus steps forward, to the bars of his little underground cell in Alicante, his magical restraints rattling loudly. “What’s going on here?” he asks anxiously. “I don’t understand.”

Alec smiles in reassurance. “It was just a little misunderstanding that needed clearing up.”

Frowning, Magnus whispers, “Alexander…”

But Alec reaches in through the bars and touches Magnus’ face, runs his thumb over Magnus’ lower lip. “I love you, you know that, right?”

Magnus leans into Alec’s touch, but his frown deepens. “Alexander. Tell me what’s happening?”

Alec just smiles again.

Alec leaves Izzy and Clary, his only back-up, at the docks while he sneaks on Valentine’s ship. It took them months to locate it, months that Jace spent under Valentine’s control. But that will end now. Tonight.

He waits by the railing, under the cloak of darkness, for Jace to come out. And when he finally does, Alec moves lightning fast. He grips Jace’s shoulder and turns him around.

And when Jace gapes at him in surprise, Alec simply says, “Hello, Jace.” And then he punches his parabatai in the face, knocking him out.

Alec drops Jace into Izzy’s and Clary’s waiting arms, all of them now safely hidden from sight behind a pile of crates among the darkened warehouses.
“Stay here,” he tells them quietly.

Izzy grabs him by the arm before he can stand up. “Where are you going?”

He smiles at her. “I need to deliver a message.” And when she keeps staring at him anxiously, refusing to let go, he pats her on the hand. “Don’t worry. I’ll be okay.”

“Alec…” she protests in a hushed voice.

He quickly kisses her on the forehead. “Hey, have I ever lied to you?”

And then he’s off, leaving his *parabatai* in Izzy and Clary’s care.

Valentine’s standing alone on the bridge, in front of a table covered with maps, when he notices someone approaching. He turns. “Ah, Jace,” he calls out and grins. “Come here, I want to show you something!”

Jace closes the door firmly - and locks them both inside, which makes Valentine frown. “Son?” he asks suspiciously.

Moving closer, Jace pulls up the sleeve of his jacket and runs his *stele* over a newly drawn rune on his forearm - and suddenly he grows taller, his hair turns darker…

And Valentine takes a shocked step back, reaching for his Seraph Blade, when Alec Lightwood drops his glamour and comes to a halt on the opposite side of the table.

“What…?” Valentine breathes out.

Alec reaches into his pocket and pulls out a little black box, adorned with the fire rune on the lid. He looks Valentine directly in the eye and his gaze is hard and unflinching when he says, “Inquisitor Herondale sends her regards.”

Then he runs his *stele* over the fire rune, activating it.

And the ship explodes, taking Valentine and all of his army - and Alexander Lightwood - with it.

Of Shower Sex (Or the Lack Thereof)

Chapter Summary

Just something fluffy, mushy and domestic. To balance out the angst. (Unbeta'd)

“Just a moment, almost finished,” Alec calls out, rinsing the shampoo out of his hair, when he feels cold air wash over his back.

The glass door clicks shut, and a second later a very naked Magnus plasters himself against Alec’s equally naked body. “You can take as much time as you want, love,” he assures Alec, kissing his shoulder.

Alec laughs. “Magnus? What are you - hey!” he exclaims when Magnus’ hands start wandering down.

“Well, hello,” Magnus murmurs, grinning mischievously, as his dexterous fingers reach their desired destination.

“No. No way,” Alec protests and grabs Magnus’ curious hands firmly in his. “We are not having sex in the shower.”

Magnus pouts, nipping Alec’s shoulder. “Why not?”

“Because,” Alec says and turns, clasping Magnus’ hands to his chest, “it might sound like fun in theory, but in reality? Not so much. Just like broken bones.”

Magnus looks up at him, grinning, while the shower head keeps pelting them both with water. “Hm, tell me more.”

Alec raises his eyebrows. “About broken bones?”

“No, about the reality of shower sex. Speaking from experience?” Magnus leers.

Blushing a little, Alec clears his throat. “You know very well that I don’t. But some things do not need to be actually experienced for sane people to understand that they might end in injury!”

Freeing one hand out of Alec’s grasp, Magnus starts drawing circles on Alec’s chest, pulling the dark hair there into little tufts. “Well, if we happen to acquire a bruise or two, I assure you that I have enough magic at hand to heal us both.”

Alec sighs. “Magnus, I know that you’re a mighty wizard–”

“Warlock,” Magnus corrects him.

Rolling his eyes, Alec continues, “–a mighty warlock–”

But Magnus interrupts him again, “I’m no Harry Potter, you know?”

Alec stutters to a halt and frowns down at him. “Harry who?”
Now it’s Magnus’ turn to sigh and he pats Alec on the chest, flattening one of his artistic hair creations. “Never mind, love.”

Alec stares at him a moment longer, then he shakes his head. “Where was I?”

“You were being a spoilsport,” Magnus reminds him.

“Right. Yes, I know that you’re a might warlock, but how about you save your magic and we leave sex for places where sex should be had?” Alec suggests.

Magnus’ eyes sparkle devilishly. “Like the kitchen table?”

Alec stutters again. “What? No!”

Magnus pokes him in the chest with a finger. “You didn’t seem to mind last week. If I remember correctly, it was the kitchen table and the couch and the coffee table and the armchair—”

“You’ve made your point!” Alec stops him with a raised hand, blushing hard. “My point was that none of these places constitutes a slippery health hazard.”

Magnus leans into his lover. “Oh, but I do remember that some things were very slippery at the time,” he murmurs heatedly.

“Magnus!” Alec says sternly. Even the tips of his ears are now red.

Magnus sighs, pouting, and settles his hands on his naked hips. “You have absolutely no sense of adventure!” he complains.

“No, but common sense, that I have in spades,” Alec protests, mirroring his lover’s posture. “Apparently, that makes one of us!”

They keep glaring at each other a moment longer, neither one budging. Then Magnus deflates. “Fine! No shower sex,” he grumbles and turning, he opens the glass door to let Alec finish his shower. “But know that you’re making me feel very unwanted and deprived of affection,” he adds dramatically.

“Deprived of…” Alec stammers out and leans out of the door. “After the night we just had? You sure you’re not an incubus?”

Magnus twists around in all his naked and very wet glory, one hand pressed to his chest. “Yes, deprived, my love. Unwanted. Unloved. Un–”

“Alright! Alright! Just stop!” Alec interrupts him. “Give me five minutes and I’m all yours - in the bedroom!” he adds when Magnus takes an eager step back.

Still, Magnus leans in and kisses Alec hard on the mouth. When they finally part, Magnus whispers an explanation against Alec’s lips, “Down payment.”

Alec blinks at him a little owlishly and licks his lips. “Okay,” he breathes out.

“Three minutes, darling,” Magnus says, then turns to leave again, grabbing a fluffy towel on his way out.

“Five!” Alec calls out after him and closes the door.

Stopping in the bathroom doorway, Magnus grins mischievously - and snaps his fingers.
Alec yelps in the shower. “Alright, fine, three minutes, three! Now give me back my hot water!”
Have you seen Fringe? The amber… thing they used? Well *points* (Unbeta'd)

They’re running, running through the narrow, twisting corridors of the Institute, and people around them are scrambling like ants, because Valentine’s bomb just hit the building, and the amber-like substance it released is already creeping down the walls, filling the halls and trapping people like flies.

And they won’t make it, Magnus realizes, though the main entrance is just up ahead, they won’t make it because the golden brown viscous mass is already sliding down the stone wall above the door, dripping and pooling on the floor, and the damn wards are still up, they’re still up and they won’t let him open a portal, but Valentine’s unholy creation, that they did not stop of course, of course not…

Then suddenly, Magnus is airborne, flying through the door, pushed hard from behind and he hits the top of the cracked stone steps outside and rolls down, the bones in his left forearm snapping painfully, and when he comes to a stop in the weed overgrown courtyard in front of the church, hitting his head hard, he realizes that he’s free, that the amber didn’t trap him, but…

Alec stumbles through the door and hits the landing on his knees, gasping in pain, and Magnus jumps to his feet, ignoring his own throbbing injuries, and he runs back up the stairs, reaching out for Alec to drag him out…

“Don’t!” Alec shouts in alarm and jerks back, and as he sits down and leans against the wall by the door heavily, Magnus can see that the amber caught Alec, that it caught him, just his foot but it’s enough, and it’s creeping up his leg, pulling him in, encapsulating him.

“Alexander!” Magnus cries out. “Don’t move. I’ll get you out. I’ll…”

But Alec shakes his head. “You can’t. You know you can’t.”

And Magnus knows it’s true, he tried before, with other people, with Izzy and Clary, when that terrible glue-like stuff first rained down from the sky, this new, terrifying, terrible weapon of Valentine’s, and he failed, he failed every time so far. But it’s Alec, his Alexander!

The amber’s now up to Alec chest, climbing faster and they have just moments left and Magnus can’t take it, he can’t, he will not lose Alec to this, and though he knows that the people trapped inside the fast-hardening mass are not dead, just suspended in time and space, they still haven’t figured out how to free them, how to get them out!

“I’ll find a way to fix this!” Magnus blurts out quickly, his tone urgent. “I swear to you, Alexander. I’ll get you out. I’ll get you all out!”

Impossible, Alec smiles at him. “I know,” he whispers. And then the amber covers his face and within seconds hardens to a stone.

And then it all stops and silence settles over the church and its surroundings. Traffic is still
whooshing quietly nearby and the wards are still hiding the supernatural from mundane passersby’s eyes.

And Magnus screams and hits the hardened mass with his fist, again and again, his broken arm cradled against his chest, and he’s furious at the amber that’s keeping him away from Alec, furious at Valentine, furious at the stupidity of the Clave that didn’t listen when he tried to warn them, simply furious and enraged… and desperate and lonely and crumpling…

It takes a long time till he finally calms down and presses his forehead to the rapidly cooling amber. He stares at Alec, at his beloved face, and he whispers, “I will fix it, Alexander. I will. And I don’t care how long it takes.”

And then Magnus takes a deep breath, gets up and slowly walks down the steps in front of the church that’s now frozen in time. He snaps his fingers to open a portal and with one last glance over his shoulder, he steps through.

Magnus Bane, the High Warlock of Brooklyn, has a world to save.
It’s some time before they’re left alone in their home, before Alec’s family is ready to let him out of their sight. And Magnus doesn’t blame them, he doesn’t think he has looked away from Alec for more than a minute or two ever since they brought him back from the Limbo. All the fear and pain still lingers, too fresh and raw under his skin.

Jace is the last one to leave. The whole time, he’s been rubbing his chest as if it pained him, as if something broken was healing again. He hasn’t left Alec’s side yet, and Magnus can see how much it bothers him that Alec considers this place his home now, Magnus’ loft, that Alec won’t be coming back with them to the Institute tonight.

Before he follows the others out, Jace hugs Alec and he holds him tight, and standing on tippy toes, he leans heavily against Alec with his eyes closed. His emotions are so close to the surface that his wings simply burst out of his back involuntarily, raven black and shimmering almost blue, and they curl around them, hiding the parabatai from the world and in their own little universe.

When the door closes and silence finally settles over the loft, Magnus steps closer, and slipping his hand into Alec’s, he leans his head against his lover’s shoulder, taking a shuddering breath. He didn’t think he would ever have this again, this sweet intimacy that makes his chest ache.

Alec turns to him slowly, pale and exhausted from his ordeal, but his eyes are warm when he looks down at Magnus. He squeezes Magnus’ hand with one of his and strokes Magnus’ cheek with the other. But then…

“My feather - it’s gone,” Alec notices softly, staring down at the empty loop on Magnus’ necklace.

Instinctively, Magnus lifts his hand and touches the loop that used to hold the feather. He swallows hard, eyes burning. “You were dead. It turned to ash.”

Alec keeps staring at the necklace intently as if unable to look away. And then he takes a step back, letting go of Magnus, and before Magnus can ask what’s going on, Alec unfurls his wings, spreading them wide for a heartbeat or two, their tips reaching almost from the front door to the window. Then he curls them around himself and runs his fingers through the feathers, searching, searching, searching…

Alec smiles when he finds it, the perfect feather. He pulls it out with a sharp tug, then he furls his wings back in, hiding them again. “Here,” he says and offers the feather to Magnus.
Magnus takes it. It’s almost completely white with just a touch of gray at the tip. And it’s breathtaking. An angel’s feather. Magnus blinks hard.

“It could have waited till morning, you know,” Magnus says, his voice husky with emotions. “There will be enough of them between the sheets to stuff a pillow. You didn’t have to pull one out. At this rate, you’ll soon be bald.”

Alec laughs and it’s such a wonderful sound that Magnus’ heart clenches. “I know, but this time, I wanted to do it right, as our customs demand,” he explains, and taking a step closer, he curls his fingers over Magnus’ on the feather. “A gift for you.”

“I’m sorry that I can’t give you one back,” Magnus says quietly, looking up at Alec. “I wish…”

But Alec lifts a hand and presses his finger against Magnus’ lips. “I wouldn’t change a thing about you, Magnus. You grew wings for me! There’s no gift more perfect than that.”

And Magnus raises himself on tippy toes and throws his arms around Alec’s neck, the feather held carefully in his bejeweled fingers, and he kisses Alec deeply, passionately, lovingly on the lips.

Thank you, my love.
Some time ago, when I talked about the ep 112 BTS pictures, I mentioned that Matt looked James Bond and Harry like Q in them. An anon then said: “Now you know you have to write that Bond and Q au right?” (Unbeta'd)

“Hello? Magnus?” Alec calls out when he steps into the quartermaster’s lair, into the office of their agency’s - The Institute’s - very own Q.

The underground chamber gleams, all done in chrome and black and white - all except for the quartermaster himself. When Magnus Bane walks in, it’s as if someone splashed a bucket full of colors onto a monochrome painting.

“Alexander!” Magnus exclaims, his whole face lighting up. “Have you come to finally sweep me off my feet?”

And Alec stutters and stammers and his cheeks grow hot. Because that’s how he always reacts to this man’s presence. His brain simply stops working right.

“No! I… uh, I’ve come for… uhm.” Alec looks around, then just waves his hand at the various weapons displayed in the racks around.

Magnus’ eyes sparkle mischievously. “I’ll hazard a wild guess,” he says, then he leans closer and whispers conspiratorially, “Weapons?”

“Yes!” Alec confirms, then digs a list out of his pocket with all the weapons and electronics his team will need for their upcoming mission.

Magnus takes it and looks it over, his expression becoming serious. “That’s some heavy artillery,” he comments. Then he looks up. “Bad things are about to happen, huh?”

Alec stammers again. “I… I can’t–”

But Magnus stops him with a raised hand. “You can’t talk about it. It’s all hush-hush. I understand. And I’m not asking. I wouldn’t put you into that position.”

And Alec is grateful because there’s something about Magnus that makes Alec want to confide in him.

The quartermaster gathers all the weapons on Alec’s list while pointing out the modifications he made, giving Alec all the necessary details on how to handle the various gadgets, and it’s very… companionable. Nice. Like always.

Magnus then helps Alec put everything into a duffle bag, black like everything that Alec wears or carries. But when Alec zips the bag up and throws it over his shoulder, huffing a little at its weight, Magnus stops him with a touch on his bare forearm - which makes Alec shiver minutely.

“Promise me you’ll be careful, Alexander?” Magnus asks, his voice concerned, gaze imploring.
Alec stares at him for a moment, then nods slowly. “I will,” he promises. “And thank you,” he adds, patting the bag.

Now Magnus grins again, worry hidden behind a flirtatious mask. “For you, it’s always a pleasure.”

Alec’s heart skips a beat again, so he turns quickly and departs, almost hitting the door on his way out, his retreat accompanied by a soft laugh floating out of the room he just left behind.
Chapter Summary

A What-If story. What if Hodge’s little chat with Valentine, after Hodge handed over the Cup, went a little differently? (Unbeta’d)

“I promised you your freedom, Starkweather,” Valentine states firmly, “nothing more.”

Hodge can’t believe it. He sacrificed everything - for this? “Have I not proven my loyalty to you?” he asks, dismayed.

Valentine scoffs. “You’ve only proven your willingness to betray it.”

No, Hodge thinks, it can’t end like this. He won’t be a fugitive for the rest of his life! “Then allow me to prove it, once and for all. I’m your man, Valentine, and I’ve always been!”

Valentine narrows his eyes at him contemplatively. “Fine,” he says after a pause. “You want to prove that you’re loyal to me, to no one but me? And you’re willing to do anything to gain my protection?”

“Yes,” Hodge growls. In for a penny...

Taking a step closer, Valentine says intently, “Then go and kill my son’s parabatai, Alec Lightwood.”

Hodge can feel himself pale. “What?” he whispers, horror making him feel cold. “Why? He hasn’t done anything to you.”

Valentine smirks, backing away again. “No, he has not. But I think that his death would be a fitting punishment for Robert and Maryse, those cowardly traitors, don’t you think?”

Hodge stammers. His mind’s completely blank.

“More importantly, though,” Valentine continues, his voice calm and even now, “I won’t have my son tied to him, weighed down by a useless baggage that my son doesn’t fully trust anyway.”

Hodge’s staring at Valentine in disbelief, unable to form words. He can’t be serious…!

“So,” Valentine says, raising his chin and looking directly at Hodge. “What will it be: the Lightwood boy’s life for your protection - yes or no? Where does your loyalty lie, Hodge Starkweather?”

When Hodge doesn’t immediately respond, Valentine smirks. “Yes or no? It’s not a difficult question to answer.”

Hodge swallows hard. He has not only his freedom, but protection too in reach. All he has to do… all he has to do is kill Alec. The boy he watched grow into a man he would be proud to call a son.

In the end, it really isn’t a difficult question to answer.
“No,” Hodge says, his voice quiet but firm, looking straight at Valentine.

“Then I suggest you enjoy your freedom before I change my mind,” Valentine says and turns away, dismissing Hodge completely.

And Hodge leaves, angry and scared, already knowing that he’s doomed.
A Foolish Risk

Chapter Summary

Based on the 201 table read vid posted by McG: Why did Alec drop his stele?
(Unbeta'd)

Alec’s lying on the bed in Magnus’ apartment, naked to the waist, his stele hovering over his parabatai rune. They decided to do it here, away from the prying eyes of their little - and now further diminished - circle of friends, just in case that something goes wrong.

“You’re sure about this?” Magnus asks, sitting on the edge of the four poster bed, the blue flame of pain killing magic dancing in his palm.

Because he’s not. He’s not sure about this, at all. Actually, he thinks that this is a very bad idea. He heard about what happened the last time Alexander tried this, and Alec and Jace’s parabatai bond didn’t have the time to heal properly yet. This is a very risky undertaking. At best. At worst? Utter foolishness.

But Alec just nods, though Magnus can see the way his hand trembles, he can hear the way Alec’s breath is shuddering. Alec’s scared and it makes Magnus want to make everything alright for him again so bad his heart aches.

Alec breathes in deeply and touches his stele to his parabatai rune, but before he can activate it, the stele slips from his fingers. He takes a sharp, wheezing breath and cries out, his whole body going taut.

“Alexander!” Magnus exclaims, but before he can do anything, help somehow, Alec starts seizing so hard his back arches and his muscles stand out in sharp relief - and his parabatai rune breaks open, blood seeping from its burned lines and soaking into the bedsheets.

“Alexander!” Magnus calls out again, and leaning over Alec, he grips Alec’s shoulders and pours his magic into Alec’s shaking body to ease his tension, to soothe his pain, to… stop this, whatever it is, whatever is happening. Please, please, please, stop!

And then, as suddenly as it began, it’s all over and Alec slumps down weakly, his body bathed in sweat, his paleness in sharp contrast with the burgundy red sheets.

“Alec?” Magnus asks gently, fearfully, and touches Alec’s face. “Alexander?”

Alec’s breath is coming in small gasps and his cheeks are wet with tears. When he opens his eyes and looks at Magnus, they’re full of heartbreaking pain.

“He broke it,” Alec croaks out, his voice hoarse as if from screaming. “He broke our bond. Jace broke it…”

Magnus’ eyes widen and he opens his mouth to say… He doesn’t know what. Nothing comes to his mind. Nothing that could make this better.

And then Alec falls unconscious, his head lolling limply to the side.
Jace is curled up on his side, whimpering through clenched teeth, hands fisted into the plain white bedsheets on the bed in his cabin. Valentine’s ship is out on the sea, but he’s barely aware of the hum of the great engines.

Because his father just blocked his *parabatai* bond with Alec, blocked it, just blocked it with a rune, *he just blocked it*, it’s not broken, it’s not broken, it can be fixed, it’s not broken, not broken… *Please, please, don’t be broken.*

“There,” Valentine says, his voice decisive and ruthless, and gets up from the edge of the bed, returning his stele back to his pocket. “Now your boy won’t be able to track you anymore.” He grins down at Jace approvingly. “It’s good that you remembered that he *could* and *would* do it. Smart thinking, son.”

*Smart thinking?* Jace thinks bitterly, eyes clenched shut. He just destroyed the most precious and sacred thing in his life. And his father considers that “smart thinking?” Why didn’t he keep his mouth shut? Why did he have to bring attention to his *parabatai* bond?

Valentine heads for the door. “Rest for a while, then come back up. We have things to do.” And with that he leaves.

And Jace just lies there, hugging himself tight. His mind is full of despair and regret and his thoughts are running in circles of, *I’m sorry, I didn’t think he would do that, I’m sorry, Alec, I’m sorry, please, forgive, I’m so sorry…*
Magnus and the Big Black Dog

Chapter Summary

When Magnus returns home from running an errand, he finds a dog lying on his threshold. (Unbeta’d)

It's not a "puppy pile" but a dog's a dog, General_Zargon ;)

When Magnus returns home from running an errand - yes, even the High Warlock of Brooklyn does that from time to time - he finds a dog lying on his threshold. A dog. On the threshold of his apartment. Which is on the third floor.

“Huh,” Magnus says as he pauses on the second to the last step and stares at the animal.

The dog is big, black - and hurt, that much is obvious from the deep gash on its side; only now does Magnus realize that there are bloody paw prints leading up from the main entrance.

“Huh,” Magnus repeats, not really knowing what to do with the mutt. He’s more of a cat person himself.

In that moment, the dog opens its eyes tiredly and thumps its tail against the floor weakly.

Feeling a little foolish, Magnus clears his throat and asks, “Do we know each other?”

The dog thumps its tail a little harder and tries to get up from where it’s lying on its side right in front of Magnus’ apartment door. Moving must pain it because it whines a little. A cat person Magnus might be but that sound is just heartbreaking.

“Okay, okay, mutt!” Magnus exclaims softly and rushes forward to unlock his apartment door and help the dog on its feet.

The animal is heavy and Magnus staggers a little when it leans against his leg, allowing Magnus to take some of its weight. Its fur is wet but clean, just caked with blood around the wound. Which is pretty deep and jagged.

“Come,” Magnus whispers, helping the dog stumble inside. He will heal the poor thing and then find out if one of his neighbors maybe got a new pet.

He turns around to lock the door, while the dog pads on, dragging its paws and with its head hanging low. But when Magnus follows it into the living room, he sees the mutt put on some speed and jump onto Magnus’ couch.

“That’s not exactly…” Magnus starts protesting, but when the dog drops down onto the soft cushions and sighs contently, Magnus doesn’t have it in him to order the dog down. Oh well, magic makes cleaning easy.

Magnus takes off his coat, hangs it over the back of a chair and turns to the couch, feeling the dog’s eyes on his person the whole time. “Okay, mutt. First:healing. Everything else can wait. I guess.”
He approaches the couch gingerly, trying not to think of the dog’s undoubtedly huge teeth, and failing. “Mutt, if you bite me, I’m turning you into a chihuahua!” Magnus warns as he sits down next to the dog’s head - that suddenly moves and settles heavily into his lap.

Magnus looks down at the dog. The animal is watching him with so much trust in his eyes that Magnus feels his heart melt. He lifts a hand and gently rests it on the black head with its surprisingly soft fur. He pets the dog with long, calming strokes, and the dog raises its head a little and licks him. Magnus smiles.

“You’re not gonna bite me, huh?” he whispers and the dog thumps its tail again. “Okay. So, healing.”

Magnus takes a deep breath, holds a hand over the wound - which looks like a scratch from a really big claw - and pours his magic into it, carefully watching the dog for any unexpected reactions. But the dog just lies there, in his lap, and as its wound slowly closes, it sighs deeply in relief.

Smiling, Magnus keeps pouring his magic into the animal with one hand, while petting it gently with the other. He grins when the dog repays him with a lick or three.

He’s almost finished with closing the wound when the fingers of his free hand, the one stroking the dog, catch on something at the back of the dog’s head, a little bump, and the dog whines a little in pain.

Frowning, Magnus finishes healing the wound quickly, then he parts the fur on the dog’s head with care while whispering soothing nonsense to the dog. And his breath catches in his throat because what he finds there, is a pin the size of a pea stuck in the dog’s head - and not just any pin, but a jade one with an arcane symbol carved into it. It’s a transformation tool, dark magic, ugly thing used by the darkest of practitioners. And that means…

Magnus looks down at the dog with new eyes. “Who are you?” he asks the animal that’s no animal at all, it’s someone, a person turned into a dog by some very dangerous magic user.

The dog just watches him, blinking slowly, and Magnus realizes that the dog, the person inside this form, doesn’t understand him, the magic must be too strong - and yet, it… he came to Magnus for help, so he must remember something.

Magnus almost jumps a foot high when in that moment, his cellphone starts ringing in his pocket. Not taking his eyes off the dog, he pulls his phone out and throws a quick glance at the screen: Isabelle.

“Yes?” he answers because, call him paranoid, but he has a strong suspicion that Izzy’s call at this late hour and the dog in his lap are somehow connected.

“Magnus, do you know where Alec is?” Izzy blurs out, her voice high-pitched with anxiety. “We can’t find him anywhere! All that Jace could find, were Alec’s clothes and his cellphone, but Alec himself disappeared! Jace is frantic! He can still feel him through their parabatai bond but he says it’s muffled somehow, not fully there. He’s out of his mind with worry, we all are!”

Alec! Magnus looks down at the black dog with hazel eyes lying trustingly in his lap. “Alec?” he whispers and sees the dog’s ears perk up.

“Magnus!” Izzy yells into the phone.

“I’ll call you back,” Magnus says absentmindedly and hangs up. And when the phone starts ringing again a moment later, he turns it off and drops it onto the coffee table. He’s still staring at
“Alexander? Is that you?” he asks again softly, gently stroking the dog’s ears. The dog looks at him, tail thumping.

It’s Alec, Magnus is sure of it, he’s absolutely positive. He parts the fur at the back of the dog’s head again and hisses. He knows what he has to do - pull the pin out - but it will hurt. Black magic always hurts its victims.

He looks the dog in the eyes. “Okay, Alexander. I’ll turn you back now. But it’ll hurt and I’m very, very sorry about that. I swear I’ll make it all better once you’re human again.” He strokes the dog’s nose gently. “By the gods, I wish you could actually understand me.”

With a deep breath, Magnus grips the jade pin between the thumb and the forefinger of his right hand, and clenching his teeth, he tugs sharply, pulling the pin out all at once.

The dog yelps in pain and seizes in Magnus’ lap, and Magnus drops the pin, an ugly, darkly glowing thing almost two inches long, onto the coffee table. Then he leans over the dog, murmuring apologies and reassurances…

And suddenly his lap is full of Alec, naked and bewildered, curled up tightly on his side and with his head covered with his arms. Alec’s whimpering in pain and trembling, and Magnus hugs him tight and pours pain killing magic into him. It takes a few seconds - too long in Magnus’ opinion - but Alec finally relaxes, his whole body goes limp and the terrible noises he’s been making cease.

“Alexander?” Magnus whispers, and the blue flame of magic in the palm of his hand sputters out.

Alec takes his arms down slowly, uncurling, and looks up at Magnus, his hazel eyes full of confusion and fear. “Magnus?” he croaks out.

Magnus smiles down at him. Then his eyes flicker over Alec’s naked body and he snaps his fingers to summon a blanket. Once Alec realizes that he’s naked, he will be mortified, Magnus knows.

Alec clenches his hands into the blanket and swallows. “What happened?”

“I don’t know. But someone turned you into a dog using really dark magic,” Magnus explains, and carding his fingers through Alec’s hair, he heals the small puncture wound left by the pin. “And even though you didn’t remember pretty much anything, you came to me for help. I didn’t realize it was you until Izzy called and told me you were missing.”

Alec closes his eyes and frowns a little. “We were after a warlock who’s been summoning demons using blood sacrifices. I was… I was jumped from behind and then I felt this terrible pain in my head and… nothing.”

Narrowing his eyes, Magnus clenches his teeth. If Jace and the others didn’t get the warlock yet, Magnus will and he will obliterate him or her completely, that he swears.

Alec opens his eyes and looks up at Magnus. “Why didn’t the warlock just kill me?” he asks, bewildered.

Magnus has to swallow several times to keep down his anger. “I think he or she tried to turn you into their familiar and send you against your friends while the warlock ran. You must have fought hard, that’s why I found you injured at my door.”

Nodding, Alec leans into Magnus’ touch, unconsciously seeking comfort. “Why did I come to
you? If I didn’t remember anything?”

Now Magnus smiles again. “Instinct. Somehow, somewhere deep down, you must’ve felt that this was a safe place, that if you just got here, you would be alright.”

Smiling too, Alec lifts his hand and grips Magnus’ in it. “I’m safe with you, huh?”

Magnus turns serious. “Always, Alexander.”

They just stare at each other, but the tender moment is cut short by a ruckus on the stairs, by stomping and shouts, headed up and in their direction.

Magnus sighs and rolls his eyes. “I think your family has arrived, darling,” he comments dryly. “I guess I should go unlock the front door before your **parabatai** kicks it in in a heroic attempt at rescuing you.”

Alec laughs.

“And you,” Magnus says, looking down, “you should go and get dressed, or this situation will become very awkward in a minute or so.”

Alec takes a peek under the blanket and his eyes widen in panic. He scrambles off the couch and in a mad dash, he runs for the bathroom door. After it slams shut, Magnus chuckles and snaps his fingers to send Alec a change of clothes in. Then he sighs, gets up too and heads for the front door before his protection wards fry his unexpected guests.
In the Hands of an Expert

Chapter Summary

Alec goes undercover! (Unbeta'd)

“… so, Izzy volunteered to play the bait, saying that she actually liked biting,” Alec frowns, “which I didn’t really get.”

Magnus snickers and pulls Alec’s silk shirt open to showcase his sculpted chest dusted with just the right amount of dark hair. Nice!

Alec looks down at himself. “Does it have to be so… revealing?” he complains, squirming, and starts pulling the shirt back closed.

Magnus slaps his hands away. “Who’s the expert here?” he says sternly.

Alec sighs. “You are,” he mumbles reluctantly.

Fluffing up the shirt, Magnus watches in appreciation as the flimsy material flutters around Alec’s thighs. Very hot thighs, encased in leather! Why is he dressing Alec up instead of undressing him again? Oh yes, the undercover mission.

“So, how did you get roped into playing the bait?” Magnus asks, walking around Alec to inspect him from all sides.

Alec tries to turn with him, but when Magnus slaps his rear, he stops. “Turns out that our greedy vampire is into guys, so it was either me or Jace - and Jace’s foul mouth would scare the guy off, not draw him in.” Alec squirms again. “So, here I am.”

Magnus comes to a stop in front of Alec again and grins up at him. “And I’m glad you came to ask the expert for advice.”

Rolling his eyes, Alec huffs. “I came to ask you for a glamour, to help me hide my runes from the target. Not to play dress-up.”

Magnus raises a hand. “Please, don’t shatter my illusions.”

Alec shuffles his feet. “Are we done yet?”

Magnus grins. “Just one more thing…”

Pacing back and forth in Magnus’ living room, Jace growls impatiently, “What’s taking them so long?”

Isabelle, who’s sprawled on Magnus’ couch, grins up at him. “You can’t rush perfection. I would know.”

Jace throws her a sour look, but before he can snap something at her, the door to Magnus’ bedroom
opens and Jace twists around, barking, “Finally! I thought we would…” His voice trails off and he just stares.

Izzy peeks around him and whistles. “Holy smokes, brother!”

Alec’s dragging his feet, looking highly uncomfortable, but being prodded by Magnus in the back, he can’t but move forward. He’s dressed in a cobalt blue silk shirt which is sinfully revealing and in black leather pants which are sinfully tight. His runes are glamoured, so his skin is unmarked. But it’s his eyes that draw attention, tastefully set off with dark eyeshadow and black eyeliner that seems to make them even bigger. The whole image is stunning, Alec looks sensual yet vulnerable. And open to anything.

Isabelle gets up and stands beside Jace. “Well, if the guy doesn’t sinks his teeth into this bait…”

Magnus walks around Alec, frowns at Isabelle and points at her. “You make sure that your sucky vamp does not get his teeth anywhere near Alexander!”

Izzy salutes Magnus, then elbows Jace in the ribs, seeing that his silence and hard stare are making Alec even more nervous. “Say something,” she mutters.

As if woken from a trance, Jace clears his throat. “You… you look… good,” he mumbles curtly, shifting his eyes away. Then he turns around and marches towards the door stiffly. “Can we go now?”

Smirking, Isabelle follows.

Magnus turns to Alec, takes his hands in his own and looks up at him warmly. “Remember, no rubbing. You don’t want to look like a raccoon.” Then he raises himself on tiptoes and whispers against Alec’s lips, “And return to me quickly. I can’t wait to tear these clothes off you again.”

Alec blushes hard and kisses his lover goodbye. This mission can’t end fast enough.
Chapter Summary

Magnus and Alec trust each other. Completely. (Unbeta'd)

Magnus is sitting cross-legged on his rumpled bed, dressed only in his pajama bottoms, and he’s watching Alec dress with a rather pensive look in his eyes.


After a moment of hesitation, Magnus answers with a question of his own. “Do you trust me?”

Narrowing his eyes slightly, Alec replies slowly, “Yes. Why?”

Magnus nods to himself, then he scrambles off the bed, takes Alec by the hand and heads for the front door. Confused, Alec allows himself to be dragged.

“Are you kicking me out?” he asks uncertainly when they stop.

Magnus takes a deep breath, looks up at him earnestly, and says, “Remember you said you trusted me.”

Alec frowns a little and Magnus turns Alec’s right hand palm up, then he snaps the fingers of his free hand - and a bejeweled dagger appears in it. Alec’s eyes widen at that and he opens his mouth to say something, but before he can do that, Magnus slices Alec’s palm open and presses it against the front door.

Alec hisses in pain and jerks a little, while Magnus chants an incantation that makes the hair on Alec’s arms stand up. There’s a loud whomp and a wave of blue energy spreads across the door then farther along the walls of the loft. When the whole of Magnus’ lair is encased in it, the magic winks out.

Blinking, a little dazzled by the bright energy, Alec looks around. “What…”

Carefully, Magnus takes Alec’s hand off the door and they both watch as Alec’s blood seeps into the painted wood and disappears. Alec blinks again. The hell?

Then he feels a tickling warmth on his palm, and when he looks down, he sees that Magnus is healing the bleeding cut on his hand, taking away the pain and all the blood with it. The ornate dagger disappeared again.

“Magnus?” Alec asks when it’s all done.

Magnus holds Alec’s hand, healed and with no scar left, in both of his, rubbing it gently. His eyes are down and his head is lowered and Alec can’t remember the last time he has seen Magnus so… out of sorts, anxious, skittish even.

“Magnus?” Alec prompts again, more gently this time.
Magnus clears his throat and lifts his head almost reluctantly. “I wove you into the wards,” he explains softly. “Now you can… now you can come and go even when I’m not here. The wards will recognize you as mine and let you in.”

Alec’s eyes widen because he understands what this means, what a huge step this is for Magnus. Magnus trusts him. Really trusts him. So much so that he opened up his home to him, made himself vulnerable. Alec’s heart’s brimming with love for this man.

“So… I’m yours, huh?” Alec comments, smiling.

Magnus nods. Then he nods again. “Yes. Yes, you’re. And I’m never giving you back.” he replies firmly.

Alec laughs and leans down to kiss his lover.
“… I felt like redecorating, doing something I have never tried before,” Magnus informs Alec from the kitchen where he’s brewing coffee - alcohol would make the whole affair funnier, but there will be hammers and screwdrivers involved. Better play it safe.

“You mean putting furniture together with your own hands is a novelty worth exploring for you?” Alec’s voice, dripping with sarcasm, floats from the living room.

“Of course! That’s why I went for IKEA this time. It’s not like you can assemble yourself an original Louis XVI chair,” Magnus retorts.

“And I’m here because…?” Alec lets the question hang in the air.

“As a moral support, just in case frustration takes root and I start flinging parts that just don’t fit together around in fits of helpless rage,” Magnus responds. Alec snorts.

“Oh, soon, you won’t be laughing anymore, my dear,” Magnus warms, willing the coffee to brew faster. “From what I hear, assembling an IKEA piece equals solving one of those Chinese puzzle boxes where you have to move parts that you don’t know the purpose of to places that make no sense to you.”

This time, Alec laughs outright.

Frowning, Magnus decides that this won’t do, leaves the coffee to its apparent hibernation and heads for the living room. “Love, I’ll have you know…” he starts - and then stops and stares.

Alec has the bookcase with the unpronounceable name standing in the middle of the room, all assembled and screwed together - and with no extra bits left over.

How? Magnus started the project before Alec arrived, he saw how many parts that monster had, big and small, and mysterious things that he couldn’t make any sense of. And now it’s all put together and up and standing and without imitating the Leaning Tower of Pisa, too. Just… how?

He says it aloud, “How?” and walks into the living room. He circles first the bookcase, then Alec, who’s standing there with his sleeves rolled up and a screwdriver in his hand.

Alec raises his eyebrows. “Magnus, it’s quite easy. You just follow the manual. All the parts have their proper places and you can’t fit them anywhere else.”

Magnus highly doubts that. He’s seen some of the more… creative results that enterprising carpenters achieved with IKEA furniture on the Internet. And the World Wide Web never lies. Almost never. Okay, from time to time, occasionally. Still.
“Do it again!” Magnus demands and points at another box standing propped up against the wall.

Alec laughs. “What?”

“Assemble something else. I want to see!” Magnus explains.

When Alec opens his mouth to protest, Magnus steps closer, grabs Alec by the front of his shirt and pulls him down so that their noses almost touch. “Magic, Alexander,” he breathes out seriously. “This is magic and I want to see it happening with my own eyes!”

Alec blinks at him. “Okay…” he agrees reluctantly.

Magnus grins and pecks him on the lips. “Great. I’ll bring coffee!”
“I found him,” Magnus whispers softly.

He stands there a little longer, in the small, empty parking lot, looking around. Lush greenery hides this place from the highway - not exactly a smart spot for a business venture, then - so that only the whooshing of cars streaking by can be heard.

Finally, Magnus turns around, and taking a deep breath, he opens the door of the small diner and walks in. The tiny bell above the entrance chimes and he stops to allow his eyes to adjust to the dimmer light inside. Out there, it was a bright noon - in here it looks as if the sun were setting already, its rays golden and slanted.

Magnus looks around. He can hear the murmur of voices yet it seems that no one’s here, the faux leather boots are empty just like the row of stools along the long counter. There are no people in sight - no one except for the person manning the counter.

And Magnus’ heart skips a beat when he sees him. Tall and dark-haired, with warm hazel eyes and the brightest smile Magnus has ever seen. By all that’s holy, Magnus missed him so much!

“Hello!” Hazel Eyes greets him, looking a little surprised, and heads towards him. “What can I get you?”

Magnus takes a step closer, then another and another. He can’t take his eyes off the man. “Hi,” he breathes out in the end and drops onto one of the stools. “Coffee. And whatever is good here.”

Hazel Eyes grins again. “Coffee it is,” he says and pours Magnus a cup. “And Manuel here,” he waves a hand in the direction of the kitchen window, “makes the best hash browns you’ve ever tasted,” he assures Magnus and calls out the order.

Magnus looks towards the kitchen - from his seat, it seems empty, too, but a voice floats out in confirmation, mumbling something undecipherable.

Hazel Eyes leans against the counter and props his chin on his hand. “So, you here on business? Just passing by?”

Magnus stares at him for a moment, searching his face. “Visiting a friend.”

Hazel Eyes smiles. “Close friend?”

“Lover,” Magnus replies.

There’s a loud crash and they both look in the direction of the kitchen. An angry voice can be heard, though not a soul can actually be seen.

Hazel Eyes snorts. “Magnuel is a great cook, but incredibly clumsy.”
Magnus smiles a little, then asks gently, “And what’s your name?”

“Xander,” Hazel Eyes answers, smiling too.


For a second, Hazel Eyes - Xander - freezes and his smile disappears - and the whole diner shakes and rattles so hard it seems to blur. Then it’s all over, everything settles down and the murmur of voices of unseen people can be heard again.

Xander blinks. “Uh, sorry about that,” he apologizes and straightens up. “It happens sometimes, when heavy trucks drive by. You wouldn’t know it but there’s a highway nearby and–”

Magnus reaches out to cover Xander’s hand with his. The young man stares at him with wide eyes, a little frightened now. The diner falls completely silent, no more unseen people talking. All the noise just stops.

“Alexander,” Magnus says gently but very firmly, “It’s time to come home.”

This time, the sound of things breaking is almost deafening. Plates fall off the shelves, glasses shatter and a spiderweb of cracks runs up the windows and up the walls and across the ceiling… But none of it seems to affect Magnus or Xander. They’re safely tucked away in a protective bubble.

“I don’t…” Xander stammers, pale and wide-eyed and barely breathing.

Magnus reaches out and takes Xander’s hand in both of his. “Alexander,” he whispers, “please, come back. You can’t stay here. It will kill you. You have to come back with me. Please,” he begs, eyes full of emotions. “I love you.”

Sun pours in through the cracks in the walls and the whole room starts to bend and twist, as if some giant hand were squeezing it from the outside.

Xander’s mouth moves, but nothing comes out. His eyes are terrified and his hand is trembling. Then an uncertain question, asked in a shaky voice, passes through his lips, “Magnus?”

Magnus smiles brightly - and the whole diner explodes.

They wake up with a wheezing, painful gasp, like divers coming up for air in the very last second. Magnus and Alec are lying side by side on Magnus’ large four poster bed, holding hands. And there are people standing around: Jace, Clary and Izzy, and at least Jace and Isabelle seem on the verge of tears.

Alec’s back arches as he desperately tries to draw air into his lungs, and then he’s coughing and choking, panicking. But Magnus is there, sitting Alec up and allowing him to lean against Magnus’ chest.

Looking around, bewildered, Alec croaks out, “What happened?”

It’s Jace who answers, leaning forward and gripping Alec’s ankle. “We fought a demon and you were hit with a spell. We didn’t know what to do because you didn’t seem injured, but we couldn’t wake you up. So we called Magnus.” His eyes flicker to the warlock. “He ordered us to bring you here.”
Alec looks up and over his shoulder at his lover, and Magnus, who has his arms around Alec, hugs him. “Magnus?” Alec asks.

“You were stuck inside your head and we couldn’t get you out - so, I went in,” Magnus explains simply, keeping the fact that, if this hadn’t worked, he would have remained stuck in there too, together with Alec, to himself. Some things are better left unsaid.

“Thank you,” Alec rasps. He pats Magnus’ hand and entwines their fingers, warm and safe in his lover’s arms.

“You’re welcome,” Magnus murmurs in Alec’s ear and rocks them both gently from side to side, closing his eyes in relief. It’s over. Alexander is back. He’s back.

“And Magnus?” Alec whispers, and when Magnus opens his eyes and looks down, he finds Alec staring up at him again, hazel eyes still a little unfocused but brimming with emotions. “I love you, too.”
When Old Friends Come to Visit

Chapter Summary

Magnus is visited by an old friend... (Unbeta'd)

Magnus knows that he should be working. He has potions to brew and spells to create. But...

Alec’s cooking them dinner, dressed in nothing but boxer shorts and a tank top because it’s the middle of summer and the loft is nicely warm and cozy, despite the late hour. And… he’s swaying to the soft music coming from Magnus’ iPod. Swaying!

And so, instead of working, Magnus leans against the door frame of his little workroom and watches his boyfriend with a sappy look on his face. What? He’s allowed. Besides, nobody’s around to see.

“My, my,” a voice says behind him. “If I didn’t see it with my own eyes…”

Magnus freezes for a moment, then turns slowly. And there she is. Dorothy. Madame Dorothea. Sweet Dot. He just stares.

Dot grins and saunters closer to stand next to him in the doorway. “What happened to Magnus ‘I would never risk my life for a Shadowhunter’ Bane?” she asks, eyes sparkling with mischief.

When Magnus just keeps staring, she says, “What? Cat got your tongue?”

“I’m allergic to cats,” Magnus replies automatically, his voice barely audible.

Dot laughs. “True, true.”

She’s standing next to him and Magnus sees her - but he doesn’t feel her there. Still, it’s Dot. His friend. Whom he failed terribly. He has things to say to her, and this is his chance. “I’m sorry, Dot. I’m so sorry that I didn’t help you.”

Dot crosses her arms over her chest and looks at him. “Magnus, you’re the High Warlock of Brooklyn. I wanted your help, true, but I understood you had bigger responsibilities, like the safety of our people.

“Besides,” she adds, “it’s not like Jocelyn was your friend, you didn’t owe her anything. Yes, she came to you asking for a favor - and she paid you, it was a business transaction. And considering who her husband was, what the people she associated with had done, how much they hurt you?” She shakes her head. “I didn’t blame you that you wanted to stay far away from the whole mess.”

Magnus’ eyes burn and he blinks hard. “And yet, here I am,” he glances in Alec’s direction, “with Maryse and Robert Lightwood’s son. Seems rather hypocritical.”

She smiles again. “Love makes hypocrites of us all. It changes everything.”

He turns back towards the kitchen and watches Alec sway his hips while stirring something in a pan. “Yes, it does,” he agrees quietly.
“He’s very pretty,” Dot comments. “If I were a few centuries younger and actually alive, I would go for him.”

Magnus rolls his eyes. “He’s batting for the other team, and only for the other team.”

“Ah, shame,” Dot says, still smiling. “When Ragnor told me about your Shadowhunter boy, I couldn’t believe it and just had to see him for myself.”

Magnus freezes again. “Ragnor?” he whispers. “So, he was really here? He was… real?”

“Maybe,” Dot replies, throwing him a sideways look. “Maybe not.”

Magnus huffs in frustration. “Can’t you just give me a clear answer?”

She grins. “Oh, it’s not so funny to be on the receiving end of this cryptic mumbo-jumbo, is it?”

Magnus glares at her and she laughs. Then she reaches out and touches his face. Her expression is very gentle. Magnus can almost feel her touch.

“You take care of yourself, Magnus,” Dot says, her voice full of affection and sadness. “There are dark times ahead of you, but I promise you that, if you prevail, it will be all worth it.”

It sounds like a goodbye. “Will I see you and Ragnor again?” Magnus asks quickly.

“One day,” Dot answers and nods. “But hopefully, not for a long, long time.”

And then she’s gone, and Magnus almost gasps, his chest feels too tight and his vision blurs with tears. The pain of loss is still so fresh…

But then Alec’s voice floats out of the kitchen, calling him to dinner, warm and alive. Magnus shuts his eyes tight for a long moment. He’ll see his friends again. Maybe not tomorrow or next week, but one day. And in the meantime, he’ll make the most of his life.

Alexander is waiting…
“Alec, don’t!” Jace whispers and grips Alec’s arm to drag him back.

But Alec shakes his head and pulls away. “I have to do it, Jace. This happened because of us, because of me. Because he wanted to help me. And now I have to help him.”

Jace opens his mouth, but before he can say anything, Alec drops his bow and his quiver on the floor and starts walking slowly across the dark warehouse - there, in the distant corner, a creature is crouching in the shadows.

A creature that Magnus turned into after he was hit by a bolt of magic thrown by the demon they were fighting. Alec will never forget his lover’s scream, so terrible and full of agony, turning from a roar into an otherworldly screech, as Magnus’ demon side was brought to the forefront, reacting to the dark magic that weakened and overwhelmed his humanity and pushed it down, down, down.

“Magnus?” Alec calls out gently, holding his arms out in an unthreatening gesture. “Magnus, it’s me, Alec.”

The creature in the dark corner stirs, then slitters out - and Alec draws in a shocked breath. Magnus’ skin is all scales - not fur as he would’ve expected, considering Magnus’ slitted cat’s eyes - black and dark green, glistening almost wetly in the moonlight. He’s crawling on all fours, belly low to the ground, the long black claws on his hands and feet scraping on the cement floor.

His face is still Magnus’ face, recognizable underneath the scales, but his mouth is full of long, pointy teeth. And he’s making a low, hissing, growling sound that makes the hair on the back of Alec’s head stand up.

Alec stops and reaches out. “Magnus? I know you can understand me, I know it!” he says, and though his heart is beating hard, he refuses to allow his voice to shake.

Magnus darts forward quickly and in the blink of an eye he’s in front of Alec, almost in reach. Alec can hear Jace gasp in the back, but he doesn’t flinch, he doesn’t take his eyes off Magnus.

Slowly, Alec sinks to the floor, arm still outstretched. He’s now at eye level with his lover. “What do you need, Magnus? How can I help?” he asks imploringly.

Magnus crawls closer - and leans his cheek against Alec’s open palm. His skin is cool to the touch and very soft. He’s watching Alec intently while Alec strokes his scaly cheek with his thumb.

“Aaaaaaaalec,” Magnus growls.

Alec’s eyes light up and he grins. “Yes, yes, that’s me. Tell me, show me what you need, Magnus. Anything, anything you need, you can have it. Just come back to me,” he whispers.
Magnus gives out a hissing growl and lunges forward. He wraps himself desperately around Alec and his growls turn into tiny scared sounds.

And Alec doesn’t see the terrible claws so close to his own vulnerable neck, he doesn’t see that Jace picked up his discarded bow and is now aiming an arrow at the beast that’s Magnus - *Jace will not allow the monster to hurt Alec, he’ll shoot it, kill it, even if it’s Magnus, he will not allow Alec to get hurt* - all Alec’s focused on is Magnus in his arms, trembling.

“*Can’t… turn… back,*” Magnus manages to get out. “*No… strength…*”

Alec hugs Magnus tight, regardless of his otherworldly skin, and whispers, “Then take mine. It’s yours. Take as much as you need. It’s all yours.”

“I’m… sorry,” Magnus growls - and then he *tugs*, tapping Alec’s core, and starts siphoning Alec’s strength through every square inch of naked skin where they touch, soaking it up like a lizard soaks up the warmth of the sun.

Though Alec can feel himself grow weaker and the tug in his chest quickly turns into a sting, then sharp pain, he doesn’t say a word, he doesn’t make a sound, too afraid that Magnus would stop and not come back to him, not turn back, that his lover will lose himself to his demonic half.

It takes a small eternity, but in the end, the black and green scales disappear, Magnus’ skin gains back its human color and his body becomes warm again, wonderfully, *humanly* warm. And the outpour of energy from Alec’s core stops, leaving Alec weak and panting.

And deliriously happy, because Magnus is back. *His* Magnus is back, both of his sides - the demonic and the human part - perfectly balanced once more.

They still cling to each other, rocking almost imperceptibly from side to side, shivering slightly, both from exhaustion and fear - and cold, since Magnus is completely naked, kneeling in Alec’s lap - when Jace clears his throat and drops what’s left of Magnus’ torn clothes on the floor next to them.

They both look up at him, but for once, Jace’s eyes are full of understanding and there’s compassion, not dry sarcasm in his voice when speaks. “Take as long as you need. I’ll stand guard.” And when Alec nods and smiles gratefully, Jace leaves them alone again.

“He can be very kind,” Magnus comments quietly, curled up into Alec.

“Don’t tell anyone,” Alec replies softly, “he has an image to preserve.”

Magnus smiles into Alec’s chest and Alec strokes Magnus naked back gently. His knees are killing him and he feels as weak as a newborn kitten, but he wouldn’t move for the world, having a lap full of Magnus.

“Thank you,” Magnus whispers, digging his fingers into Alec’s shoulders.

Alec smiles down at him and kisses his ear. “You’re welcome.”

*I love you.*

*I love you, too.*
“What are we doing in the park, Magnus?” Alec asks, looking around rather uncertainly, while he allows himself to be dragged along.

Magnus, who’s doing the dragging, says, “We’re going to have a picnic.”

Stumbling after his lover like a reluctant puppy, Alec reminds his lover rather pointedly, “It’s the middle of the night.”

“And the moon is brightly shining,” Magnus responds.

Alec narrows his eyes. “Are you sure you’re a warlock and not a vampire?”

“Quite sure. But I can nibble if you want, I’ll not shame your kinks, my dear.”

“My wha—” Alec starts saying, but before he can finish his sentence, Magnus whirls around and tackles him.

With a muffled oompf, Alec lands on his back on a soft blanket - one that he could swear wasn’t there a second ago - with Magnus straddling him with a wide grin and a wicked gleam in his eyes.

Magnus leans down till their lips almost touch and whispers, “Hi.”

Alec smiles in response and settles his hands on Magnus’ hips, gripping them firmly. “Hi,” he answers.

“And now I’ll tell you of my nefarious plan to have my wicked way with you under the stars, Alexander,” Magnus informs him as if revealing a deep, dark secret.

“Oh yeah?” Alec replies, brushing their noses together. “I thought this was supposed to be a picnic, not an orgy. And by the way, picnics usually have food.”

Magnus grins again. “Oh, there will be food aplenty.”

“We have no food with us,” Alec points out.

“We had no blanket with us either, and yet!”

Alec nods sagely. “True, true. We’re also lying in an anthill, if you haven’t noticed.”

Magnus sits up, annoyed, and frowns down at the many-legged beastsies crawling around. “Shoo, shoo,” he orders and with the snap of his fingers he relieves them of the mood-destroying intruders. Once done, he grins down at his lover again. “Where were we?”

“Besieged by ants.”
“Not anymore,” Magnus assures Alec, then wiggles his butt mischievously.

But Alec grips Magnus’ hips firmly once more, stilling him, and narrows his eyes. “What did you do with those ants?”

Magnus tsks and tweaks Alec’s nose. “You have a very suspicious mind, you know that?”

“And for a good reason. What did you do with those ants, Magnus?” Alec asks again and pokes Magnus in the ribs.

Magnus squirms, then yelps, “Alright, alright, *stop it*. I hereby solemnly swear that I sent those ants to a place where they can do little harm to undeserving people. And now,” he says and grabs Alec by his shirtfront, “can we go back to my having a wicked way with my boyfriend?”

Alec smiles and kisses him.

Meanwhile, a loud yelp echoes through the halls of the Institute, followed by Jace’s disbelieving roar, “Why the hell are there ants in my bed?!”
“Alec, please, come back to the Institute with me,” Jace asks. “Please.”

He’s standing at the foot of the large four poster bed in Magnus’ apartment and he’s pleading with his parabatai, pleading with him, because he can feel Alec’s pain, his despair, seeping through their bond.

But Alec just sits there, with his back against the headboard and arms looped around his bent knees. His face is pale, almost gray, his eyes red-rimmed but dry - he has run out of tears a long time ago. He’s staring into space, oblivious to everything around him, it seems.

Jace tries again. “Alec—”

“No,” Alec interrupts him, his voice raspy. It’s the first word he has spoken in days. “I’m never going back,” he adds, and his eyes are flinty when he slowly turns them to Jace. “I’m done with the Clave, I’m done with Shadowhunters.”

Jace’s eyes widen. “You don’t mean that,” he whispers.

“I do,” Alec replies, and his firm, decisive tone allows for no doubts - he means every word.

“Alec…”

Alec stares up at Jace. “Ever since I came out, they hated me—”

“That’s not true!” Jace protests.

“Yes, it is, Jace!” Alec snaps coldly. “They hated me, and they did everything they could to make my life miserable. Out of spite, for no other reason. And I dealt with it. I kept my mouth shut and did my job. But this time, they went too far.” He swallows, and whispers, “I’ll never forgive them.”

“Alec, you can’t know that they—” Jace starts, but Alec won’t have any of it.

“Yes, I can,” Alec cuts him off. “I called for back-up, I called for help, I begged them to send someone, anyone, because we were surrounded, and they did nothing.”

He shakes his head and adds softly, his voice breaking, “And now Magnus is dead. He’s dead because of them!”

Jace stands there and stares at him, blinking hard to push back tears, because he saw. He arrived too late to do any good, but he saw. He saw Alec cradling Magnus in his arms, both drenched in blood, he heard Alec begging Magnus to take his strength, to take all of it, if need be, he heard him pleading with Magnus not to leave him…

And then Magnus did, Magnus died. Eternal, immortal, ageless Magnus Bane died saving his
lover, and Jace will never forget Alec’s pain-filled scream, the way his *parabatai* sobbed his heart out, and still begged Magnus to come back - or to take Alec with him, which scared the living daylights out of Jace.

And now, here they are, in Magnus’ apartment, and it’s been days, days in which Alec refused to talk to anyone or see anyone, until Jace simply kicked the door in, because he couldn’t stand the feeling of… of *drowning* anymore, because that’s how it feels to him, this unadulterated pain that’s been filtering through their bond ever since Magnus died.

Something’s about to crack, Jace knows it. And it fills him with dread.

His *parabatai* continues, “Magnus should’ve survived us all, and now, because a bunch of bigoted assholes decided that their prejudices were more important than someone’s life - my life, Magnus’ life, it doesn’t matter - he’s gone.”

Alec’s voice turns as cold as Jace has ever heard and it sends shivers down his spine. “And I *will* make them pay. Every single one of them, that I swear to you.”

And Jace swallows because he realizes that it’s not just grief talking, that Alec actually means every word. “What do you want to do?” Jace asks.

Alec just stares at him a moment longer, and then he smiles - and it’s a terrible smile, one that makes Jace a little afraid even, afraid of Alec and *for* Alec - but mostly *for* him, because whatever Alec’s planning, Jace fears that there won’t be a way back for his *parabatai*.

So… there’s only one thing that Jace can do.

He takes a step closer to the bed and demands to know, “How can I help?”
Sleep, My Love

Chapter Summary

This is a death story. And I bawled my eyes out writing it. Which is telling. (Unbeta'd)

“All these years, I’ve been looking at the immortality thing wrong,” Alec says. His voice is weak and a little hoarse, just… exhausted. Tired to the bone.

Magnus, who’s leaning against the headboard of their bed, looks down at his lover. Alec’s resting wearily against Magnus’ chest, light as a feather. Magnus remembers how solid and strong Alexander used to be, and his throat grows tight

“Oh yeah?” Magnus asks, resting his cheek against the top of Alec’s gray head to hide his tears. “How so?”

Alec sighs. “I’ve always seen it as something that will one day tear us apart, but…” He shakes his head a little. “Every person wants to leave something behind, a proof that they were here, alive and living. Everyone wants to be remembered.” He pats Magnus’ hand that’s resting on his chest, over his sluggishly beating heart. “I’m glad that I’ll be remembered by you.”

Magnus blinks hard and tightens his hold on Alec. Because he knows. He knows. He swallows, and tries really hard to sound lighthearted when he replies, “Well, you’re quite memorable, darling.”

Alec laughs a little. “True. Our first kiss - that one made history, didn’t it?”

Magnus laughs, too. “You’ve always excelled at grand gestures, Alexander. But I should’ve known that, considering the very first time we met, you saved my life.” Magnus’ eyes shine when he adds softly, “My knight in denim.”

Alec huffs out a laugh and snuggles deeper into Magnus’ embrace. “Tell me about it? It’ll help me sleep better,” he whispers, then sighs contently. “You’re so warm, Magnus.”

And Magnus bites his lip so hard he draws blood, fighting down a sob. He knows. He knows and he can’t! But he will. For Alec, he’ll do anything. “Of course I’ll tell you about it. You just sleep, my love. Goodnight.”

He kisses Alec’s head and starts talking.

Alexander doesn’t hear how the story ends.
Magnus is putting away elixir bottles and herb pouches when he hears Majana, the nixie woman who came to him seeking help for her sick child, draw in a sharp breath.

He turns to find her standing frozen in the doorway of his little workroom. Her little boy with his chubby teal cheeks flushed with fever is squirming in her tight hold. Magnus frowns and steps forward to see what scared her.

And he smiles softly because there’s Alec at the large living room window with Majana’s daughter in his arms, pointing at something outside, much to the blue child’s delight. He’s holding the girl gently but securely, the way he used to hold Max, Magnus reasons. The girl giggles and wraps her arms around Alec’s neck.

“Barka…” Majana whispers and glances fearfully at Magnus who joined her in the doorway. “Shadowhunter!”

Magnus touches her back gently in reassurance. “That’s just Alexander, my lover,” he explains.

“Shadowhunter!” Majana repeats, dismay making her blue skin pale.

Magnus’ voice softens with compassion. “I promise you, he will not harm your child. Just the opposite. He would die to protect her. He’s a good man.”

In that moment, Alec notices them and turns, his cheeks reddening. “Ah, I’m sorry about, uh,” he stammers and looks down at the little girl with algae hair who’s watching him with wide, slitted eyes and an adoring expression on her face. “I guess she became bored and wandered off into the kitchen…”

“Aaaaaaaaaalec,” the girl, Barka, gurgles happily, patting his cheek with her webbed hand.

Alec laughs and Barka joins in. But then he notices Majana’s tense look and his smile fades. “I’m sorry for…” He lifts the child a little, as if in explanation. “I just didn’t want her to get hurt,” he adds quietly.

Majana moves her son to her left arm and reaches out towards her daughter. “Barka, come.”

The girl squirms in Alec’s arms and he gently sets her down and pats her back. Barka runs to her mother and grips her hand - but she’s still grinning at Alec, oblivious to her mother’s tension. With a silent thank-you to Magnus, Majana then hastily leaves with her children, throwing one last fearful glance over her shoulder at Alec.

Alec stares after them, distressed. “I didn’t… I wouldn’t have hurt the child,” he says unhappily, and looks at Magnus imploringly. “You know I would never hurt her, right? She’s such a sweet kid…”

Compassion

Chapter Summary

Alec and a child. And sadness. (Unbeta'd)
Magnus walks up to Alec and rubs his back soothingly. “I know. I know, love,” he assures his lover. He feels sorry for Alec, and for Majana, too. So much fear and pain and none of it their fault. “But she does not. She’s been hurt badly by Shadowhunters before, by bigoted, prejudiced men and women who saw only the blue color of her skin, her… otherness - and she doesn’t know you.”

Alec hugs himself and Magnus’ heart breaks a little for his lover because he knows how much Alec, who’s suffered his fair share of bigotry from his fellow Shadowhunters, hates to be feared and despised for who he is. How hard he has been trying to change the world for the better, to make a difference.

“It will get better, love,” Magnus whispers, still rubbing Alec’s back. “Not today, and maybe not even tomorrow or next week, but it will. We will make it better - together.”

Alec leans into Magnus’ touch, soaking up the affection, and turns his head to look at him. “Promise?” he asks imploringly.

Magnus raises himself on tippy toes and kissed Alec on the lips gently. “Cross my heart.”
It’s their first date and Alec couldn’t be any more nervous if he tried. He wasn’t this nervous when he was about to marry, actually marry, Lydia! But then, Lydia was a good friend - still is, which Alec considers a blessing! - but Magnus is...everything.

And if that weren’t enough, it’s Alec’s first date. Ever. And he has no idea what he’s doing. He suspects he’s making a right fool of himself.

“Alexander?”

Alec’s head jerks up. “Yes?”

Magnus smiles at him - the really, really nice smile that causes Alec’s heart to jump a little - and hands him a drink. Which Alec takes gratefully. Yes, drinks, those they had already. Once. Still, he’s a little bit more at home now. By the Angel, he sounds like an old alcoholic! When in reality, he doesn’t even like the taste of alcohol. Maybe he should tell Magnus?

“Nervous?” Magnus asks kindly.


Now Magnus is grinning. “Alright, then.”

Magnus takes a step closer. Slowly, as if he’s afraid that Alec will bolt. They’re almost touching now and Alec can smell Magnus’ cologne. It’s heavenly.

“I know that you’re quite the literal man, Alexander, so, I’ll be upfront with you,” Magnus says, staring up at Alec intently, which makes Alec even more nervous. “I’m going to shamelessly flirt with you. I’m going to take you out for dinner, and I’ll flirt and if possible, hold your hand. And kiss you.”

Alec’s eyes drop to Magnus’ mouth and he licks his lips as if he can still taste their very first kiss. He likes kissing Magnus. He likes it a lot.

Magnus groans and hangs his head. “But if you insist on doing that, I’ll forget about my dinner plans and just ravish you on the spot!”

Alec’s eyes widen. “What? What did I do?”

Magnus looks up in disbelief, as if certain that Alec’s pulling his leg. But Alec has no idea what Magnus is talking about. What? What just happened? Did he mess up already? He didn’t want to spoil Magnus’ plans. Plans are important.

Smiling, Magnus shakes his head. “You’re really one of a kind, aren’t you?” he whispers fondly.
Alec hopes it’s not a bad thing.

“And that’s not a bad thing,” Magnus adds as if reading Alec’s mind. “Not a bad thing at all.”

Alec’s relieved. And it must show because Magnus throws his head back and laughs. Alec can only stare, his heart fluttering madly in his chest. Because Magnus is beautiful.

Magnus sets his drink, barely touched, aside, then takes Alec’s glass away and puts it down, too. Still smiling he reaches out towards Alec. “Dinner?” he asks, eyes sparkling.

Alec takes his hand and smiles too. “Yes,” he agrees. Then, after a moment of hesitation, he adds quietly, as if sharing a secret, “But Magnus? I don’t really, you know, like alcohol?”

Laughing, Magnus drags Alec out of the loft. And Alec thinks that it’s not such a bad start, making Magnus laugh. Maybe their date won’t be a disaster after all.
The Healer

Chapter Summary

Magnus asks Catarina for help. (Unbeta'd)

“Who died?”

It’s the first thing that Catarina Loss barks out when she picks up her phone.

“I beg your pardon?” Magnus replies, startled. “Why would you think someone died?”

There’s an impatient huff on the other end of the line. “Because it’s the only reason why you’ve been calling lately. To tell me that one of our friends died. So, who is it this time?”


“Then why are you calling?”

Isn’t she a charmer? “Can’t I call just to chat?” he protests, a little peeved now.

“You? No. Besides,” she continues, “I just came off a fourteen hour shift at the hospital, so even if you did call just to chat, I would tell you to stuff it. Get to the point or I’m hanging up.”

But Magnus hesitates. Instead of answering, he stares forlornly out of the bedroom window, chewing his lower lip.

“Magnus?” Catarina inquires and her voice turns gentler in reaction to his uncharacteristic silence.

Taking a deep breath, Magnus rests his forehead against the cool glass and asks softly, “Will you teach me more about healing?”

There’s a pause. Then, “What’s going on, Magnus?” All the sharpness is now gone from Catarina’s voice.

Magnus turns around - towards Alec, who’s lying in Magnus’ - their! - bed, pale against the burgundy sheets and barely breathing. Still, considering the state in which Jace and Izzy brought him in, it’s a miracle that he’s even alive.

“Alec was hurt last night,” Magnus whispers, throat tight.

“Do you need help? I can be there in a minute,” Catarina offers immediately, and it makes Magnus smile a little.

He shakes his head. “No, there’s no need. I patched him up. You know that I’m good with the big stuff.” Yes, bleeding wounds, torn flesh - and there was a lot of bleeding and a lot of torn flesh last night.

“But…?” she prompts.
Magnus hugs himself with one arm. “But last night’s incident, it was just one of many in the past few months, what with Valentine on the rise again and a war brewing. And it made me realize that,” he swallows, “this will never stop. Even once we defeat Valentine, Alec will continue fighting, he will keep getting hurt. And I should… I think I should be prepared for that.”

“You could always leave him,” Catarina suggests.

“No.” Magnus’ short response leaves no room for debate.

There’s a smile in Catarina’s voice when she replies, “I figured when you said ‘once we defeat Valentine.’”

He did? He did. Huh.

“Alright. I’ve been trying to get you to branch out since forever. You’re powerful enough to be anything you decide to be - not just a fighter, but a healer, too - and be the best. So, I should put my money where my mouth has been for years, I guess.”

Magnus smiles. “Does it mean that you’ll teach me?”

She sighs. “Yes. Come by on Saturday, and we will see what we can do.” Then she snorts. “Magnus Bane, helping Shadowhunters for free. Who would’ve thought?”

“Love makes fools of us all,” he responds, watching Alec sleep with a soft smile on his lips.

“Some more than others,” Catarina mutters. “See you on Saturday. And unless someone actually gets dead, don’t bother me till then.” And she hangs up.

Magnus’ smile widens. For a healer, Catarina’s bedside manners leave a lot to be desired.

Then he sets his phone aside, walks up to the bed, his bare feet making no sound on the hardwood floor, and crawls across the covers. He lies down by Alec’s side, and touches his lover’s hand gently, reassuring himself that Alec’s still there, alive and breathing.

For Alexander, he’ll become the best healer he can be. Anything to keep the man he loves safe.
The Intimacy of Touch

Chapter Summary

Yeah, I know I just wrote a story where Alec was turned into an animal, but this time, I wanted to take a different approach: Jace’s POV. So, once again, Alec is turned into an animal for Reasons™ - don’t go poking holes in my Reasons™ - and Jace has to deal. (Unbeta'd)

The fight has taken Jace to another room, away from Alec, that’s why he has no idea what actually happened. But suddenly, it feels as if someone threw a blanket over their bond. It’s so heavy that he almost forgets how to breathe, it’s choking him!

Quickly, he dispatches the beasts he’s fighting and runs back, to where he left his parabatai - only to find the room empty. Except for the dead monsters, the warlock they were after among them, and a pile of clothes at the foot of the wall opposite the dead magic user. Alec’s clothes.

“Alec?” Jace yells, looking around frantically. “Alec, answer me!”

There’s a soft sound, coming from the pile of clothes, and Jace startles. Very slowly, he walks towards the pile and prods it carefully with his foot - only to jerk back when a pitiful whine sounds in protest.

Jace drops to a crouch and pushes the black leather jacket aside gingerly. And he gasps, because there, tangled up in Alec’s t-shirt, is a cat, a black kitten with a small white spot on his right ear. The cat’s lying on its side, its head matted with blood. It makes the tiniest of sounds, then it falls silent again.

No way. There’s no way, Jace thinks, but when he reaches out and touches the kitten, his parabatai bond with Alec flares up again, as strong as ever. The cat moans and tries to move, and its eyes open a little, revealing hazel colored irises.

“Alec?” Jace whispers, and in response, the kitten tries to nuzzle his hand, only to whine in pain again. “Shh, don’t move, just… don’t move. I’ll…” He looks around helplessly. “I’ll take you to Magnus, okay? He’ll know what to do. He’ll know.”

Jace takes his hand off the cat, and gasps because their bond grows muffled once more, and suddenly it’s hard to breath again - and not just for him, the kitten starts wheezing, straining against the magic that’s blocking their bond.

“Shh, shh,” Jace whispers, “it’ll be just a moment, I promise.”

Quickly, he spreads Alec’s leather jacket on the ground, grateful for how soft and padded it is, then he turns back to the cat, its rattling gasps tearing at Jace’s insides. Carefully, he lays his hands on the kitten and feels the bond realign again - only for it to flare up with agony when he tries to pick the cat up.

Jace can feel broken bones shifting under the black fur. The warlock must have smashed the cat - Alec, it’s Alec! - against the wall before he succumbed to the injuries Alec inflicted upon him. And
now, every tiny movement is causing his *parabatai* agony.

“I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry,” Jace keeps on repeating, over and over again, as he as gently as possible picks the kitten up - it’s so small it almost fits in the palms of his hands! - and settles it down onto the jacket.

When it’s all done, he picks up the pitiful bundle, settles it on his right arm and rests one hand on the cat’s chest to maintain contact and strengthen their bond. And then, with a deep breath, he runs.

Jace has never been more grateful for Magnus’ level-headed disposition than in this moment. The warlock takes one look at Jace’s dismayed, desperate face, then at the bundle in his arms and lets him in.

Settling the cat on the table in Magnus’ workroom, Jace tries to explain what happened in a halting, stuttering voice. He’s holding the kitten by its paw - the only thing that doesn’t seem broken - and he can feel Alec’s pain, his agony.

And yet, when Magnus examines the cat’s still bleeding head wound, it - he, *Alec*! - licks Magnus’ hand gently. And Magnus smiles.

“Oh, Alexander,” the warlock whispers fondly, “you know how to keep me on my toes, don’t you?”

“Can you help him then?” Jace blurts out, his nerves shot, voice hoarse. He did not even entertain the possibility that Magnus would not know what to do or be able to help. Magnus Bane is… well, *Magnus Bane*. No matter Jace’s frazzled relationship with the warlock, he will give credit where credit is due!

Magnus glances up at him, then returns back to work, blue sparks dancing around his fingertips. “Yes, but one step at a time. First, I need to heal Alec’s wounds, that’s the most important thing. He’s bleeding internally.”

Jace’s eyes widen and he swallows hard. “Alright,” he responds softly. “And will you be able to change him back then? Our bond, when I’m not touching him, it feels like it’s dying.”

Magnus sighs, and strokes the kitten’s ear, the one with the white spot, when it whines in pain. “Yes. Yes, I know how to change him back. But,” he adds when Jace breathes out in relief and Jace freezes, “it won’t be tonight. I’ll heal his wounds, but then he’ll have to rest, regain strength. It feels like half the bones in his body are broken. That has taken its toll on him. His mind might still be his own, Alec’s, but his body is that of a cat, with all its weaknesses.”

Jace looks down at the kitten, lying motionless and with its eyes closed on the table, and his throat closes up. “So, tomorrow, then?” he asks, his voice choked.

“At the earliest,” Magnus replies. “You’ll have to maintain physical contact with him till then. Any more stress and it might kill him.”

Jace looks up at Magnus, and he realizes that the warlock isn’t as calm and collected as he tries to pretend to be. Actually, he’s worried sick, healing his lover with one hand and gently petting him with the other - to reassure whom, Alec or himself? Jace wonders.

Because if Alec dies… Jace’s soul will die with him.

In the morning, Jace wakes up in Magnus’ bed with the black kitten nestled on his chest, its small head tucked under Jace’s chin. It’s purring in its sleep and Jace smiles, feeling their bond humming contently. He reaches up and strokes the cat’s soft black fur.

“You’re lucky I’m not the jealous type,” sounds from the doorway.

Jace looks that way and finds Magnus standing there with his arms crossed on his chest and a smile on his lips. “There’s no need,” Jace whispers, reluctant to wake the kitty. “He loves you, you know?”

And Magnus’ smiles falters as he blushes a little. “He does?” he asks softly, uncertainly. “He never said anything.”

“Magnus, he licked your hand last night. Can there be a better declaration of love?” Jace replies, trying to keep the mood from turning maudlin.

Magnus laughs, startled, and shakes his head. “I guess not.”

In that moment, the cat stretches luxuriously and yawns. It lifts its head and turns its hazel eyes first to Jace - there’s a happy jump in their bond - then to Magnus - and there’s another happy, happy bounce that seeps through their connection. Alright, Magnus might not be the jealous type, but it turns out that Jace definitely is.

Magnus walks up to the bed and smiles down at the kitten. “Ready to turn back, Alexander?” he asks and lifts one hand, magic dancing in his palm.

And a moment later, when Alec’s back to his Nephilim self and their bond is back in place without the need for physical closeness, Jace watches Alec - a very naked Alec, mind you - kiss Magnus hello… and he finds himself missing it, the powerful, heady intimacy of touch.

But just a heartbeat later, he realizes that there’s absolutely nothing keeping him from experiencing it again, nothing at all. And with a grin, he grabs Alec by the shoulder, pulls him back - much to Magnus’ annoyance and Alec’s surprise - and hugs his parabatai tight.
He Would Never

Chapter Summary

Based on this gif set
(http://thehemingwaygoldfish.tumblr.com/post/148943172618/simeonlewis-alec-lightwood-is-suicidal-pass-it)! Trigger warning for suicidal thoughts. (Unbeta'd)

“I get paid in secrets,” the demon hisses as it circles around them, trailing its unnaturally long fingers across their shoulders and chests and then shoulders again. “The pain they cause when they’re revealed, the shock... the **disgust**, oh so delicious.” Its tongue slitters over its jagged teeth.

“We keep no secrets from each other,” Jace states firmly, quelling the urge to move away from the thin, gray-skinned monster with its slitted reptilian eyes. It fills him with revulsion but he stands still, knowing that they need its help, the information the beast can give them. “There is nothing to reveal.”

The demon flashes its sharp teeth in a grin. “Oh, there’s always something, little Shadowhunter,” it assures Jace as it continues circling around them. “I know that you know that *this one*,” its fingers scuttle over the naked skin on Alec’s nape making Alec jerk away, “loved you, loved you so much that you were his whole world.”

Jace looks at Alec, watches him close his eyes and turn away slightly, paling a little. Jace’s heart goes out to his parabatai, because yes, he knew, he *knows*, but they have never talked about it, not really, Alec’s feelings for him are too fragile a thing to mention out loud without the risk of doing irreparable damage to their relationship even know that Alec’s with Magnus.

“Too bad, too bad,” the demon continues, almost purring, “it must’ve been marvelous when it all came out. Oh, the pain and horror and **self-disgust**, it must’ve been a bliss.”

Alec’s still turned away, his whole body screaming of shame, and Jace wants to kill the monster, kill it right now, murder it, and the Book of White that got stolen from Magnus’ apartment be damned. He wants to - but he can’t, knowing that if there’s an enemy strong enough to breach Magnus’ wards, they need to know more about them.

But he’s at least grateful that it’s just Alec and he there, nobody else, that there is no one else here to witness Alec’s humiliation. Because they can deal with anything between them, they can overcome *anything*. Everything that they’ve gone through made them all that stronger.

Suddenly, the demon stops, its ash gray hand pressed against Alec’s chest, and its eyes widen in delight. “Oh!” he breathes out. “**Wonderful**. Something hidden, something painful, something... **tasty**!”

And Alec stiffens and takes a step back, but the monster moves with him, hand still pressed to Alec’s chest, as it rifflses through Alec’s mind, digging up things better left buried.

The demon, as tall as Alec, stares into Alec’s eyes now, a ghastly grin on its wrinkled face. “Does your parabatai know?” it whispers gleefully. “Does he know what you wanted to do? What you thought of doing, in the dark corners of your mind, when everything seemed too much and all hope
seemed to have fled from your life?”

Alec’s face turns almost as gray as the demon’s. “Stop it!” he orders hoarsely.

“He does not, does he?” the demon exclaims, its eyes glowing unholy red.

Alec takes another step back and his hand slides down towards his seraph blade. “Stop!”

“Alec?” Jace asks uncertainly and turns to him more fully, reaching for his weapon as well. He has no idea what’s going on but seeing his parabatai so distressed? No information, no book of spells is worth it!

But before either of them can stop it, the demon hisses, “Does your precious parabatai know that you wanted to die?”

And all of a sudden, it seems to Jace that the whole world has stopped, frozen solid like the breath in his lungs. Because, no, just no, there’s no way that Alec would ever consider something like that. Alec would never think of dying, of killing himself. He would not! Alec would never leave him! Alec would never even think of leaving him!

Alec does not refute the demon’s claim, though. He just stands there, his eyes wide and unseeing, and he trembles slightly, unable to move, unable to react, unable to… do anything. And the demon is cackling in delight, downright hooting with laughter.

“Alec?” Jace whispers again, his voice a little desperate.

“Such a delicious secret!” the demon cries out in joy. “Oh, the pain, the horror - so sweet. A fitting price.” In the blink of an eye, it turns serious. “You want to know who has the Book of White? Who stole it from Magnus Bane’s warded lair? Ask him who Asmodeus is, then!”

And with that, and before they can stop it, the demon fades away, returning to its underground home to wait for another “customer” come to trade in secrets.

They stand there, Jace and Alec, still and unmoving, for a long while, the answer that they came for irrelevant in the light the secret revealed.

In the end, Jace whispers, his voice breaking, “Tell me that the… thing lied. Tell me that you’ve never thought of killing yourself. Tell me that it’s not true. Tell me!”

Alec swallows hard and opens his mouth, only to close it again, studiously looking away from Jace, still as pale as before.

Jace takes a step closer and grabs Alec by the shoulders. “You’ve never thought of committing suicide, have you, Alec? You would never…” His voice falters. He takes a deep breath and shakes Alec hard. “You would never leave me here alone. Would you, Alec?”

Alec looks at him then and there’s pain in his eyes. Pain and fear and something even more terrible: the truth. “I’m here, am I not?” he answers quietly.

“That’s not the point!” Jace yells, then he calms down a little. “That’s not the point,” he continues. “The point is that you thought about it, that you even considered it. And you’ve never told me!” Jace’s voice breaks. “Why?”

“I didn’t…” Alec takes a deep breath. “I didn’t want you to worry–”
“Worry?” Jace interrupts him. “I worry, Alec! You’re my parabatai. I would do anything for you. I want to keep you safe, I want you to be happy. I worry all the time! And now even more than before, knowing that you keep stuff like… like that from me!”

He steps even closer, so that they’re almost touching now. “We can deal with these things together, like parabatai. We can beat anything together, anything at all! I thought you knew that.”

“I do,” Alec assures him quickly. “I do. And I would never leave you. I would never do that to you, that’s why I’m still here. For you. Even when it got really bad, the way I felt, it was the thought of you that kept me here.”

Jace hears what Alec’s saying, he hears him, but the knot of anxiety still sits firmly in his chest. “Was it your feelings for me? The reason why you thought of… dying?” It’s hard to even say it aloud!


“That’s not true!” Jace objects. “You’re not a failure. You’re… you’re perfect the way you are. I’ve always tried to be more like you! That’s why I wanted you to be my parabatai. I wanted to be like you!”

Alec blinks at him in surprise and Jace feels a sharp pang in his chest, realizing that Alec really did not know, did not realize. Jace should’ve told him much, much sooner.

Jace hugs Alec tight. He raises himself on tiptoes and hangs on to his parabatai with all his strength, his fear still all too present.

“Do not ever do that, alright?” Jace whispers into Alec’s ear. “Don’t die on me, ever. And if you start feeling that way, as if dying were a good idea, just talk to me, okay? I’m here. I’ll always be here. Alright? Promise?”

Alec slowly lifts his arms and wraps them around Jace, hugging him back just as tightly, and he whispers back, “Alright. I promise.”

And something hard and cold and sharp in Jace’s chest loosens and his world, though shaken to its foundations, realigns itself again. His parabatai is here, they both are and neither of them is going anywhere!
Jace’s standing by the window in his old room at the Institute, arms hanging by his sides, hands clenched in fists, eyes tightly closed. He’s trying to slow down his breathing - in and out, in and out - but it seems impossible, his chest is too tight, so tight that he’s gasping, unable to get enough air into his lungs.

_Gone, she’s gone, she’s gone, gonegonegone… running through his mind like a broken record, incapable of stopping, incapable of moving forward, just… stuck._

The door to his room opens and someone walks in, without knocking, without asking, without permission, without Jace wanting him or her or whoever it is there._Go away, just go away and leave me be, go away, go away!_

Then he feels arms going around him, the intruder having reached him without Jace noticing, familiar arms, warm arms, that envelop him in a tight, sheltering hug - and it’s the only person Jace could tolerate right now, the only one who’s as close to him as… as _she_ was.

Alec. His _parabatai._

Jace starts to tremble, falling to pieces one shard at a time. Without opening his eyes, he leans back against Alec’s solid chest, his _parabatai_ now the only thing keeping him upright. Alec’s arms are hugging Jace from behind, around his shoulders and chest, a much needed sanctuary.

“She’s gone,” Jace whispers.

“I know,” Alec responds softly.

“She’s dead, Alec,” Jace says, his voice broken. “She died. _Clary died._”

“I know,” Alec replies, his words still very soft.

Jace lifts his arms and finally opens his eyes to look down at his hands. “I held her in my arms when she died. I promised to keep her safe and I failed her and she died!”

Alec’s voice is firm when he responds, “It wasn’t your fault! You couldn’t have done more. You did your best.” He shakes Jace a little.

“And it wasn’t enough!” Jace snaps.

Alec sighs. “No, it was not,” he agrees sadly. “Sometimes, you do all that’s in your power and it’s still not enough. But that doesn’t make it your fault. You did _not_ summon the demon that got loose. You did _not_ stab Clary. It was _not_ your fault. You did your job and sent the monster back. You did not fail.”

“But Clary _died!”_ Jace objects hoarsely.
“And tomorrow, it could be you - or me. We fight and we die, Jace. And when it happens, only one person, one monster is at fault - the one that attacked us.”

Jace shudders at the thought of Alec dying, too, and he grips Alec’s forearms tight, clinging to him.

“What will I do now?” Jace asks forlornly, swallowing hard. “My wife is dead, Alec. What will I do?”

Alec tightens his hold and pulls Jace closer. “I don’t know,” he admits gently, his warm breath wafting over Jace’s ear. “But whatever you decide, I’ll be by your side and we’ll do it together.”

And Jace closes his eyes once more and lets go, allowing his parabatai to carry his weight. At least for a little while.
I have written a similar story before - Demoted (Chapter 105) - but I wanted to try a different approach this time. I wanted Alec to be given a choice - and choose.
(Unbeta'd)

“I didn’t expect to see you tonight,” Magnus admits, a little surprised, as he lets Alec in.

With a smile, Alec follows Magnus into the living room. “I remember you saying you were free tonight. Is it still so?”

“Yes, actually it is. I know it’s quite shocking, what with me being such a social butterfly, but–”

The moment Magnus turns around, Alec kisses him, cutting off whatever he planned on saying next. Alec grips a fistful of Magnus’ silky shirt, wrinkling it beyond repair, and just plunders Magnus’ mouth - not that Magnus feels like protesting, he moans and opens his mouth, giving himself over to Alec.

When the kiss ends, the need for oxygen finally driving them apart, Alec keeps pecking Magnus gently on the lips, rubbing their noses together, and mixing their breaths.

“What brought this on?” Magnus whispers, his eyes sparkling with happiness.

Alec stares down at him for a moment, searching for something in his face, then he says, “I want you to make love to me.”

Magnus blinks rapidly. “Really?” he squeaks in a very undignified way, then he clears his throat and continues in a much more composed manner, “Really? Are you sure? Not that I’m complaining, mind you, but are you sure? I mean, are you? Sure?”

Alec’s responding smile is warm and wide and honest, the one that makes his eyes crinkle. “Yes, I am sure. Very sure. Absolutely positive.” Then he pauses, his expression turning a little uncertain. “Unless you don’t want to…”

Magnus raises himself on tiptoes and latches onto Alec’s mouth, as if Alec’s kisses were more important than air. “I want to,” he breathes out when they part, licking his lips. “I want to, so much.”

Alec smiles again and whispers back, “Then I’m all yours.”

In the morning, Alec wakes up spooning Magnus, hugging his lover - his lover! - from behind, nose buried in the short hair at Magnus’ nape. Grinning happily, he kisses Magnus’ neck. Then, with a glance at the clock, he climbs out of the bed, careful not to wake Magnus, and goes to take shower.

Once dressed, Alec crouches down by the bed, and with a soft smile, he strokes Magnus cheek with a thumb - and he laughs when Magnus crinkles his nose at being woken before his usual time.
“Good morning,” Alec whispers when Magnus finally opens his eyes to slits.

“’ning,” Magnus mumbles unintelligibly.

Alec leans in and kisses Magnus on the forehead. “I have to go back to the Institute.”


Alec laughs again. “I have an important meeting this morning or I would not be leaving, I promise.” Magnus snuffles unhappily and Alec tweaks his nose, only to grin when Magnus crinkles it once more. “But I’ll come back tonight. If you have time?”

Now Magnus opens his eyes fully and catches Alec’s hand to kiss his palm. “For you, I have always time, Alexander,” he assures Alec earnestly.

Alec blushes a little. “Alright. Go back to sleep.” He strokes Magnus’ cheek one last time and gets up. “I’ll see you tonight.”

“Have you made your decision, then?” Maryse asks in lieu of a greeting when Alec walks into her office. She doesn’t look up and her voice is cold, back rigid.

Alec stops in front of her desk and stares down at her. How strange, he thinks, that there are no doubts in his mind, no regrets, only a little sadness - and a lot of anger. “Yes,” he replies firmly.

She sets down her pen and looks up, her expression closed off. “Well? What will it be? Magnus Bane or your leadership position? Because you can’t have both, I made it very clear. We can’t have the acting head of this Institute dally with a Downworlder and shame us so.”

Alec clenches his jaw and narrows his eyes. “You’ll have my resignation within the hour,” he replies. Then, with his palms on her desk, he leans forward, and adds icily, “I will not be blackmailed, especially not by my own mother!”

Maryse’s eyes widen in shock and she opens her mouth, but before she can say anything, Alec turns and leaves, making a point of closing the door gently.

His mother gambled and lost. Alec will now follow his own path. It’ll be thorny and hard, but with Magnus at his side, the possibilities are endless.
Chapter Summary

A self-indulgent AU h/c with some family bonding. (Unbeta'd)

When Alec’s diagnosed with leukemia, he enters the fight swinging - and with Magnus being every thing he needs him to be, from a sympathetic ear and a caring nurse to their household provider.

But weeks later, when there’s still no suitable bone marrow donor - the one thing Magnus desperately wants to be for Alec and can’t - Alec is slowly losing strength. And hope.

And so, when the doctor once again asks if there really is no relative Alec can think of, someone who could be a donor, and Alec says no - Magnus loses it.

Because he knows it’s not true, he knows his lover has a perfectly healthy set of parents. And siblings, too! They just don’t get along much. Or at all. But this is different, this is not a matter of prejudice against the gender of one’s lover! This is a matter of life and death.

“I don’t get you!” Magnus yells on the verge of tears because the love of his life is ill and he can do absolutely nothing about it! “Why don’t you just call them? Are you too proud to pick up the phone when it could save your life?”

And Alec, sitting on the sofa in their apartment, hunches down, suddenly looking too small for someone of his stature. And it’s breaking Magnus’ heart.

“I’m not too proud,” Alec whispers finally, looking down at his clenched hands. “I’m afraid.”

That knocks the wind out of Magnus. He walks around the coffee table and sits down next to Alec. “Of what?” he asks softly.

Alec glances at him and his hazel eyes are too big for his thin face. “What if…” He swallows. “What if I call them, mom and dad, and tell them about… all this,” he waves a hand, “and they don’t care? What will I do then, Magnus? I don’t think… I don’t think I could take it.”

And if Magnus’ heart weren’t broken by then, now it definitely is. He hugs his lover tight, terrified at the sharpness of bones he can feel under Alec’s warm hoodie, and when Alec leans against him, trembling slightly, Magnus arrives at a decision.

Something needs to be done.

Alec might be afraid of reaching out to his family, even in a matter as serious as this, but Magnus definitely isn’t. His fear of rejection isn’t greater than his fear of losing Alec. His pride isn’t greater than his fear of losing Alec.

He googles Alec’s parents - Lightwood & Lightwood, Law Firm - and marches into their office. And when the receptionist refuses to let him in, Magnus makes such a scene, causes such a ruckus,
that in the end, Robert Lightwood comes out of his office to see what’s going on; his wife Maryse being in court that day, apparently.

And Magnus is ready to drop to his knees and beg, if need be, just to convince this man to give Alexander a fighting chance - but turns out, it’s not necessary. The moment he mentions Alec’s name, Robert’s eyes go wide–

“Alec sent you?”

“Not exactly…”

–and Magnus is ushered into Robert’s office where a barrage of questions follows, a salvo that Magnus stops with the simple, yet horrifying words, “Alec is very sick. And he needs your help.”

Robert pales and for a long while, he just stares at Magnus, his expression utterly blank.

And then he takes charge.

Magnus takes Robert Lightwood to his and Alec’s apartment, a neat little affair where they’ve been happy for years now. Their conversation along the way is pretty stilted–

“What do you do for a living, Magnus?”

“Me and my friends, we own a moving company.”

“Oh.”

–and it cuts off completely when Robert’s gaze finally settles on his son, for the first time in five years.

Alec’s lying asleep on the sofa, thin and pale and almost ethereal looking, yet still with a head full of hair, quite the odd thing considering his father’s baldness. He’s huddled in yet another warm hoodie and under a pile of thick blankets, his illness making him cold all the time. Magnus’ heart clenches a little, for the umpteenth time that day.

Leaning against the door frame, Magnus watches Robert shuffle over to the sofa and sink down heavily on the edge of the coffee table lined with a battalion of Alec’s pill bottles. He doesn’t take his eyes off his son.

Magnus can’t see Robert’s face, but when the older man presses his hand to his mouth, his shoulders shake, and Magnus knows that he’s crying. Without making a sound. Magnus has to blink back tears, too.

Alec wakes up sluggishly - he’s been exhausted for weeks now, what with all the pains and aches disrupting his sleep - and when he notices his father, he breathes in sharply and pales even more, so much so that his skin gains an ugly grayish color.

“Dad?” he rasps.

Robert quickly wipes off his tears and there’s a smile in his voice, when he responds, “Hello, Alec.”

“How…” Alec’s eyes dart over to Magnus in an accusatory way but Magnus refuses to even look apologetic.
“Your boyfriend came to visit me,” Robert answers the unfinished question. “Why didn’t you just call me yourself?”

“I…” Alec lowers his eyes and admits truthfully, “I wasn’t sure you would come.”

Robert shakes his head. “You’re my son. Of course I would come!”

And now it’s Alec who has to blink back tears. “Thanks.”

Robert just nods. “On our way here, I scheduled an appointment with your doctor first thing in the morning. We’ll fight this together.” He reaches out and squeezes Alec’s shoulder, gently as if he knows how easily Alec bruises these days. Then he touches his son’s face kindly and smooths back Alec’s sleep ruffled hair. “We will beat this, Alec.” Robert glances at Magnus. “All of us, together!”

And Magnus finally peels himself off the door frame, walks over to the sofa and sits down by his lover who surreptitiously seeks out his hand and squeezes it. Magnus returns the grip, emotions almost stealing his breath as he watches father and son.

Finally, hopefully, Alec will be given a fair fighting chance - and maybe, on top of everything, he will get his family back, too. Just maybe. As long as there’s time, there’s hope…
At the Tailor's

Chapter Summary

Based on Matt Daddario's latest photoshoot. (Unbeta'd)

Magnus is at his tailor’s in Brooklyn, an exclusive little shop with the owner’s name - Ragnor Fell - etched into a bronze plaque by the frosted glass door - yeah, it’s a bit pretentious in its simplicity, but definitely worth it - when he sees… him.

“Who’s that?” he whispers to his best friend, said owner of the shop, who always knows how to dress Magnus impeccably.

“Who?” Ragnor mumbles around a couple of pins in his mouth. He’s adding the last finishing touches to Magnus’ new suit, an elegant peacock blue affair.

Magnus points discreetly. “Him. Tall, dark and heavenly.”

Ragnor slants an equally discreet look at the other customer in the shop who’s being taken care of by Madame Dorothea, Ragnor’s head seamstress. The man, who really is heavenly, is being fitted for a gorgeous black tuxedo.

“That’s Alexander Lightwood, of the Lightwoods,” Ragnor responds quietly. “New York’s up and coming ADA?”

Magnus’ eyes sparkle with interest. “Lightwood, a district attorney? That must’ve went over so well with his parents - Maryse and Robert, right? - those two would defend the devil in court if he had enough money to afford them.”

Ragnor snorts and agrees. “I heard it was quite the family scandal that their eldest son decided to defect and go over to the enemy. It seemingly started a family rebellion since his siblings then joined the police force.”

It’s Magnus’ turn to snort, amused by the way Ragnor said the last part, with so much drama and abject horror. His reaction to his friend’s antics makes the object of their conversation glance his way - and smile before turning away quickly. Interesting!

Ragnor’s next words make Magnus stiffen, though. “Our lovely ADA will have his hands full for the foreseeable future, I guess. He’s prosecuting Valentine Morgenstern.”

Magnus knows very well who Valentine Morgenstern is. And he also knows that the last person who tried to bring Valentine to justice, Imogen Herondale, the DA nicknamed The Inquisitor, went sleeping with the fishes, so to speak, in an apparent boating accident. He definitely does not want tall, dark and heavenly to end up the same way.

“Who’s Valentine’s attorney?” Magnus asks tersely.

Ragnor looks at him and pulls the pins out of his mouth. “Funny you should ask - Hodge Starkweather, dear Alexander’s godfather. Yes,” Ragnor responds to Magnus’ incredulous look, “that’s what you get when your family’s in bed with the enemy - or you are, from their point
of view, I guess.”

Magnus munches it over, then nods, decision made. “I’m going to talk to him.”

Ragnor narrows his eyes. “Why, pray tell? I know you hate Valentine, but…”

“Yes, I do, but that’s not why.” Yes, he hates Valentine and for a good reason. After he had helped Valentine’s ex-wife, Jocelyn, and their daughter, Clarissa, disappear - Jocelyn used to tend the bar at Magnus’ very first club, so he felt he owed her - he paid for his involvement by having said club blown to pieces. With the staff still inside!

But Valentine really isn’t the reason. This man, Alexander Lightwood, simply fascinates Magnus. And not just because of his pretty, pretty face. Alexander -Alec? - decided to abandon his parents’ ways, and now he’s going against someone like Valentine, despite his own family’s involvement with the man! Magnus can’t help but admire such integrity. Not all heroes wear capes.

“So, what is the reason?” Ragnor demands suspiciously.

And Magnus grins, keeping his real thoughts to himself. “My gaydar is pinging like crazy, my friend. And I can’t let an opportunity like this just slip between my fingers, can I?”

Ragnor groans. “Magnus, not in my shop! I’m a tailor, not some… some modern cupid with pins instead of arrows!”

Magnus claps him on the shoulder. “You know how to multi-task, you can be both! Besides,” he adds mischievously, “you wouldn’t deny me the chance to meet the love of my life now, would you?”

Ragnor mutters something unsavory, and Magnus claps him on the shoulder again. “That’s the spirit! Now, wish me luck!”

And with that, Magnus girds his loins - figuratively - and marches off to meet his destiny.
That Lovely Couple in Ancient Egypt

Chapter Summary

Jace's birthmark. Book spoilers!!! (Unbeta'd)

“Can’t you knock?” Jace snaps as he jumps up from the couch where he was sitting with Clary when Magnus, with Alec in tow, walked into the room.

Magnus stops. “Why? I’m not entering a lady’s boudoir. This is my own living room.”

Then he narrows his eyes at Jace, more specifically at his state of undress - the young man is decidedly lacking in the shirt department - and twirls a finger between Jace and Clary. “What were you two doing on my couch, considering your familial status?”

Alec chokes in the background.

Now Clary scrambles to her feet, too, very red in the face. “Nothing. Really, it’s not what you think. Jace was hurt and I was just tending to his wounds, that’s all. I swear!” The words fall from her lips like a small avalanche: in a loud rush.

Magnus keeps staring at them suspiciously. “Children, I know I told you about that lovely couple that I’ve met in ancient Egypt–”

“Magnus, you’re four hundred years old,” Alec reminds him pointedly, rolling his eyes.

“Hush, you,” Magnus shushes him, and continues, “–but it wasn’t meant as an example worth following. At least not in today’s prude society.”

Alec snorts again, then he grabs Jace’s t-shirt from the coffee table and throws it to his parabatai. “Here.”

Jace, who until now restrained himself to uncomfortable feet shuffling - quite unusual for him, which just proves how embarrassed he must be - catches the t-shirt with a grateful nod and starts putting it on.

“Hold!” Magnus exclaims suddenly, and when Jace freezes and looks over at him, Magnus points with his finger. “Shirt - off!” he orders and with laser-sharp focus, he stalks over to Jace.

“What?” Jace grumbles, when he lowers his arms and his t-shirt, too, and then adds a loud, “Hey!” when Magnus grabs him by the arm and turns him around - apparently to take a look at his shoulder.

Both Alec and Clary step closer and Alec, peering over Magnus’ shoulder, asks, “What is it?”

“Interesting,” Magnus mumbles, studying closely something on Jace’s skin.

Jace, now twisted into a pretzel to see what caught Magnus’ attention, huffs, “Oh, that birthmark? What’s so special about it?”
Magnus straightens up and with a grin, he slaps Jace on the back so hard that Jace stumbles. “That star-shaped birthmark, dear descendant of an old friend of mine, means that, the ancient Egypt story I mentioned before? Does not in any way apply to you and the lovely Clarissa here, after all. Because I’ve seen a birthmark like that before, the exact same mark, to be precise - and not on the shoulder of any Morgenstern.”

And met with his companions’ blank stares, Magnus proceeds to explain…
Valentine promised him that he wouldn’t hurt his friends. Jace can’t believe he was so stupid and actually believed the man.

Jace knows that there’s something going on on the ship that he isn’t privy to. The crew members are whispering among themselves, throwing furtive looks his way whenever he walks by… and there’s a door that’s always locked, that he isn’t allowed to open, even after weeks on board.

And so he watches, pays attention to the ship’s routine, follows the newly made Shadowhunters, members of Valentine’s inner circle, as they unlock that one particular door… and he times his move perfectly.

Before the thick door can latch shut behind the men, Jace races forward on silent feet and sticks the hilt of his Seraph Blade in the narrowing gap - and he sneaks in, into the narrow corridor behind it, deep in the belly of the ship. And he hides and waits, motionless and barely breathing, for the men to depart again, which he knows will happen in just a few short minutes.

And then he’s alone, the men having left without noticing him clinging to the ceiling, in the shadows of the bulkhead. He drops down, his fall making barely a sound, and quickly moves forward - he knows he will be discovered, he’s not naive enough to think that Valentine won’t notice that he was here, but at least Jace will know what’s being kept from him, behind the door on the other end of the corridor. It’s always better to know.

When he opens the door, though - this one’s not locked - he freezes, his eyes go wide and he feels himself pale. *No. Please, no.*

Because in the small and otherwise empty room illuminated by harsh fluorescent light, there’s a mundane hospital bed standing there, right in the middle, and in it, in thick restraints and with an IV line stuck in his arm, lies *Alec*, his *parabatai*, pale and with dark, bruise-like circles under his eyes, slumbering in an artificial sleep.

“So, you finally figured it out,” a voice says behind Jace, making him jerk and twist around. It’s Valentine. He’s standing there, in the corridor, looking at Jace steadily. “Took you longer than I thought.”

Jace backs away from him, into the room, closer to the hospital bed and Alec. “You promised,” he accuses hoarsely. “You promised not to hurt them!”

Valentine walks in calmly and stops at Jace’s side, looking down at Alec. Jace wants to pull him back, get him the hell away from his *parabatai*. Just seeing Valentine this close to Alec makes Jace’s skin crawl.

“And I kept my promise,” Valentine responds smugly. “I didn’t hurt him, just…*removed* him from
the *playfield.*” Valentine looks at Jace. “You didn’t really think that I would leave a weapon like
him, one that could be easily used against you, in the enemy’s hands, did you?”

Jace stares at him in horror and his heart’s beating so fast that it’s hard for him to breathe.

“I could’ve easily killed him,” Valentine continues casually. “Or I could’ve gotten rid of him the
way I rid myself of Lucian. But I know how much you hang on to your *parabatai* bond. You’ve
always been dangerously sentimental.”

Jace is starting to tremble, the need to kill this man, his father or not, to murder him for all he has
done, choking him.

“But I’m a man of my word and I promised to spare your friends,” Valentine says and waves a
hand at Alec. “And so I came up with a different solution. Here he won’t be of any danger to you,
and he’ll be perfectly safe.” Then he turns to Jace again, narrowing his eyes. “As long as you keep
up your side of our bargain and do as you’re told.”

Jace swallows hard and turns to the bed, gripping the steel frame, because his knees are buckling
dangerously. He went with Valentine to keep his friends and family - his *parabatai*! - out of
Valentine’s hands. Instead, he played right into them. And now that Valentine has Alec, there’s no
way out for Jace, none. Not even in death, because Jace has no illusions of what would happen to
Alec should he, Jace, die.

Valentine claps Jace on the back heartily, then squeezes the back of his neck in a mock affectionate
gesture. “Come now, Jonathan, let your *parabatai* sleep,” he tells. “We have a raid to plan.”

And Jace goes, stumbling in his father’s grip, because there’s no strength left in his body. He
throws one last glance at Alec, and then the thick door clangs shut.
When one of their own betrays them and a bomb goes off inside the Institute - Valentine’s little present - Isabelle’s family’s caught in the blast. And nothing will ever be the way it was before. Nothing.

Isabelle manages to crawl out of the debris, bloody and bruised and aching, but alive, and she falls into the waiting arms of her mother and father, all their petty squabbles seemingly unimportant right now, silly even - but then they realize that her brothers, Alec and Max, are still in there, inside the shifting, falling, crumbling ruin of their home.

Without a second thought, Isabelle calls Magnus Bane, and when he hears what happened, he arrives immediately. The purple shimmering portal pops into existence just a few feet away before Izzy has the chance to hang up and Magnus strides out purposefully - and for once, neither Maryse nor Robert say a word.

But before Izzy can ask Magnus to help them search for her brothers, the bell tower that’s still somehow standing, groans and cracks and starts tilt-tilt-tilting, and the survivors, still crawling out and gathering in the courtyard, scream in panic, because they will die, they will all die!

Suddenly, though, the falling tower freezes in place, outlined in sparkling blue energy, and Magnus is there, standing in front of the church remnants with his arms raised, holding up the ruin with a strained look on his face.

“Quickly,” he grits out. “Get everyone out. I don’t know how long I can hold it!”

“Can’t you just, I don’t know, send it somewhere? Like you do when you clean your apartment?” Izzy asks frantically.

Magnus shakes his head, eyes trained on the toppling tower. “Some of the wards are still intact and their purpose is to prevent exactly that. I’m holding it up by the broken pieces.”

And they all nod in understanding, Izzy, Robert and Maryse, and knowing that speed is now of utmost importance, Maryse runs to the gathered survivors to divide them into search parties for those still missing - seven in total by Raj’s count - while Izzy and Robert go searching for Alec and Max.

“Itsabelle?” Magnus strains to say, and when she turns to him, he glances at her. “Please, find him. Bring him back to me,” he whispers and she nods. She will do anything to find her brothers.

It seems to take much too long to find Alec and Max - Lydia remembered she last saw them in the Ops Center - and on the way there they find two of their staff dead. Izzy tries not to think about her brothers’ chances.
In the end, they almost miss them. Izzy and her dad are crawling through a narrow, almost impassable space, gaining even more bruises and scrapes, while the bell tower trembles and groans above them, when Robert stumbles across the little pocket that hides his two sons. And when they creep inside carefully…

Robert breathes in sharply and Isabelle strains to see what made her father freeze - and then she sees and cries out in pain more agonizing than any physical blow could ever be. Because there’s Alec, lying on his stomach, covering his youngest sibling, protecting him - but in vain.

When the wall fell down on top of them, a pipe loosened from the brickwork and it went straight through Alec’s torso, in through his back and out of his chest in the front… and then through little Max whom Alec was holding in his arms. Max is dead, his face pale, wide open eyes unseeing, and Alec…

“Isabelle. Izzy!” her father calls out to her repeatedly until finally, he just shakes her out of stupor. She looks at him and her eyes swell with tears. “Max is dead,” she breathes out.

“Yes, but Alec is not and if we want to keep him that way, we have to move!” Robert orders, and when Izzy just stares at him blankly, he snaps sharply, “Move, now!”

Izzy jerks and anger bubbles up inside her because her little brother is dead and does her father have no heart? And she wants to yell back at him - but then she notices that her dad, the steadfast Robert Lightwood, is crying, that there are tears running down his cheeks, even while he tries to find a way to separate the son whom he can still save from the one who’s beyond saving now.

Her anger dissipates like a snuffed candle and she moves closer to help. She can - and will - cry later.

In the end, they have to lift Alec a little off Max - Izzy will never, ever forget the wet, sucking sound that seems so loud in that little pocket of space when they move Alec up the pipe running through him - and while Robert holds him up, Izzy uses her Seraph Blade to cut the pipe below and above her older brother since they can’t risk pulling it out completely lest he bleeds out.

Then they pull Alec out gently, as gently as they can given that debris keeps shifting around them. Izzy holds his legs, Robert his shoulders. She throws one last look at her little brother, looking so very small and alone in that hole, then she grits her teeth and blinks back tears and heads for the exit while all around them bricks from the shaking, tilt-tilt-tilting tower rain down with sharp cracks.

The moment they set Alec down, Magnus allows the tower to fall. He hides the survivors - out of the missing seven Shadowhunters only two were found alive - under the bubble of a shield, protecting them from the flying bricks and shards and billowing clouds of choking dust.

And then Magnus is by Alec’s side, frantically running his hands all over his boyfriends chest and stomach, trying to assess the damage, and until now, Izzy hasn’t realized just how pale Alec is under the thick layer of dust caked with blood.

“I have to get the pipe out and then close the wound immediately,” Magnus says and his voice, his hands, his whole body is trembling because this isn’t some stranger from the street, this his boyfriend, his lover, his… his everything. “But I don’t have enough strength left, I don’t… I just don’t have enough.”

And Robert, kneeling by his side, bruised and scraped, and red-eyed from crying silently, reaches
out, offering Magnus his hand. “Then use mine,” he says quietly, but firmly. “Use it all, if need be. I’m not losing another son today.”

That’s when Izzy hears a sharp gasp behind her, and when she turns, he sees her mother standing there, staring wide-eyed at them, at Alec and at Robert, searching around for… for someone who will never be there again.

And Izzy gets up from the ground slowly, feeling much too old and much too broken, and she goes to her mother whom she can seem crumpling right in front of her eyes, falling to pieces and it’s a terrible thing to see, agonizing.

“Max is dead, mom,” Izzy whispers. “My little brother is dead.”

And while Magnus and Robert are frantically trying to save Alec’s life, Izzy and Maryse sink down, their knees hitting the pavement hard, and they are holding each other tight, crying, sobbing, rocking from side to side, and their hearts are irreparably broken.

Max Lightwood is dead, and he’s never coming back.
Maryse and Magnus talk. (Unbeta'd)

Maryse is standing in the doorway of the private infirmary room at the Institute, watching as Magnus keeps pouring his magic into her son, more and more of the blue, sparkling energy, in an attempt to close Alec’s gaping wounds as fast as possible.

She’s hugging herself, trembling slightly, and her heart’s slamming against her ribs so hard it makes breathing nigh impossible. This is her baby lying there, in the bed, bleeding and fighting for his life. *Her son!* How much she wishes she could trade places with him.

Maryse is staring at Alec’s face, slack and gray and spattered with blood, so intently, that she doesn’t even notice that Magnus is done healing Alec, till he sits down heavily on the edge of the bed.

“All done,” Magnus says quietly, his shoulders slumped with exhaustion, and reaches out to squeeze Alec’s hand. “He’ll be fine, eventually. His injuries were grave, it’ll take some time before he heals fully. Even my magic can do only so much.”

Maryse breathes out in relief and closes her eyes for a moment to push back tears. Her son is going to be alright, *Alec’s going to live!*

When she opens her eyes again, she clenches her jaw tightly. After a moment, though, she swallows her pride and says blandly, “Thank you, Warlock Bane.”

Without looking at her, Magnus asks, “Why don’t you call me Magnus, Maryse? Or are you still so dead set against me dating your son?”

Dropping her hands to her sides, Maryse clenches them in fists. She doesn’t respond, thinking it better to keep her opinions to herself. Bane did just save her son’s life.

When she doesn’t reply, Magnus finally turns to her and looks at her with his deceptively human eyes. “Why? I just don’t understand it. Do you really think that I will hurt Alexander? Because I won’t, not ever. I would rather die.”

“I’m not afraid of you hurting him,” Maryse corrects him. “It’s everybody else that I’m worried about.” And when Magnus just stares at her, she points at Alec who’s still unconscious. “Why do you think he was hurt tonight? Why do you think he was out there, fighting, alone?”

Magnus draws in a sharp breath and turns back to Alec, squeezing his hand even tighter.

Maryse continues, “There are so few Shadowhunters left here willing to go out with him on patrol - Izzy, Raj, a handful of others - that when they’re otherwise occupied, he’s going out alone!” She pauses, then adds, “I knew it would come to that, I knew it from the moment he kissed you there, in the church. Because I know these people. All I’ve ever wanted was to keep my boy safe. Can you understand *that*, Bane?”
Swallowing, Magnus reaches out and runs his fingers gently over Alec’s face, using the remnants of his magic to clean Alec’s face of blood. “He’s never said anything,” Magnus whispers, his voice contrite.

Maryse hugs herself again. “He never does.”

Then she takes a deep breath. “I won’t lie and say that I’m okay with my son dating a man and a warlock, too, I’m not. But I’ve learned to live with Isabelle’s dalliances with Downworlders, so I would learn to live with Alec’s choices, too. But I’m worried about him - no, I’m terrified, Bane, because his choice of a partner? Is a spit in the Clave’s face - Isabelle’s partners were, at the very least, of proper gender. The Clave’s not forgiving. They’ll find a way to retaliate. And I’m scared I won’t be able to do anything to protect him.”

When Magnus turns to her again, she looks him directly in the eye. “Can you understand that?”

“I understand that you love your son, Maryse,” Magnus says gently, then he adds, “As do I. So, what do we do with that?”

Maryse looks at her son, now breathing more easily and with a healthier color in his face. Staring at him, she shakes her head slowly. “I don’t know, Bane. I just don’t know.”
**Playful**

Chapter Summary

Just Alec and Magnus being all domestic and playful. (Unbeta'd)

“How?” Alec breathes out when he follows Magnus into the warlock’s library.

Because the room they enter would put the library at the Institute to shame. Alec looks around in wonder: at the vast space, at the floor, a checkerboard of black and white tiles, and at the dark wooden bookshelves, reaching up three stories high.

Where ever they are, they’re not in Magnus’ apartment anymore, Alec thinks, studying the beautiful ceiling frescoes depicting pudgy cherubs doing… Alec quickly drops his eyes, his cheeks uncomfortably hot.

“A pocket dimension, Alexander,” Magnus answers as he strides farther into the room. “You didn’t think that the spell books and scrolls that I have lying around my apartment are all there is, did you? I’m smart, but not even I can keep everything in my head.”

Alec’s still following Magnus while looking around in awe. He has never seen so many books and scrolls and old tomes brittle with age and shedding dust. It makes him giddy, just thinking of all the knowledge stored here…

“But how do you find anything in here?” Alec asks, and almost stumbles into Magnus when the other man stops suddenly.

Magnus turns to him. “Believe it or not, I do have a system,” he states dryly.

Alec smiles and raises his hands. “I believe you, really,” he assures Magnus, then he looks around again, searching for… “But how do you get them down, the books? I don’t see a ladder or anything?”

Magnus grins and dances on his toes, as if eager to show Alec his favorite trick. Lifting his right hand, he raises his forefinger - and a tiny blue light flares up on the tip of it. And when Magnus blows gently, the blue speck flies away, bouncing and flitting around, until…

“Healing Spells in Ancient Egypt,” Magnus whispers.

… which is when the speck shoots away, headed straight and true for one of the old tomes on the uppermost shelf on their left. The blue dot expands and envelopes the book, allowing it to gently float down into Magnus’ waiting hands. With a proud grin, Magnus then presents it to Alec.

Alec laughs, awed at this playful display of magic. “Amazing,” he whispers.

Magnus’ eyes positively glow with happiness, only to turn mischievous a moment later. “Or, now that I have you, I could always do this,” he says - and points at Alec.

And Alec yelps, his arms pinwheeling, because all off a sudden, he’s two feet off the ground, levitating, rising up and above Magnus who’s now grinning like a loon.
“Magnus, what…?” Alec exclaims, flopping around, turning upside down and then right-side up again.

Magnus laughs, but when Alec crosses his arms over his chest and glares - the fact that he’s bobbing up and down does make the gesture look kind of ridiculous, though - Magnus stifles his laughter and smiles up at him fondly. “Don’t worry, love, I would never let you fall.”

And Alec really can’t hold on to his annoyance in the face of Magnus’ playful affection. He smiles a little, too, then he drops his arms to his sides and - flips over in the air, keeping his balance with spread arms as if afloat in water. And then he does it again and again, with more confidence, laughing merrily.

And when Magnus sets him back down again gently, Alec grabs him by the front of his shirt, and still grinning wide, kisses him.

“Thank you,” he whispers against Magnus’ lips, both of their smiles full of fondness. “Your magic is beautiful.”
Bennu

Chapter Summary

Today, the world’s coming to its end. A (happy?) death story. (Unbeta'd)

When NASA sent the OSIRIS-REx spacecraft to Bennu in 2016, it was with the knowledge that the little asteroid could cause havoc on earth one day.

That day is today and the devastation caused by the unavoidable collision is expected to be much greater than anyone could’ve suspected back then, over a hundred years ago.

Today, the world’s coming to its end.

Magnus is sitting on the slanted roof of his little house, looking up at the sky. He decided to go out with his eyes wide open, not to cover and hide. There’s no place to hide from this anyway, so… why bother?

He sits there, arms loosely looped around his bent knees and the only thing he regrets is, that he’s here alone today; all his friends, all the people he has considered family are dead, gone long before now.

The sky’s getting brighter, too bright to look at directly, so he squints and tries to keep at it. He wants to know what death looks like…

“It’s kind of beautiful, isn’t it?” a voice states next to him.

Magnus jerks and twists around, his burning eyes growing wide, mouth falling open. “Alexander…” he whispers in disbelief.

And it really is him, Alec, his dear Alexander, as he had been when they first met - young and strong and glowing with health and well-being. He’s leaning back on his hands, staring up at the sky. And when he turns his head towards Magnus, he’s smiling.

“You didn’t think I would leave you alone, did you?” Alec asks, his voice soft and full of affection.

Magnus’ heart’s beating hard and he can feel himself trembling. “Are you really here?”

Alec sits up and touches Magnus’ cheek gently. Magnus’ breath stutters in his chest. He can feel Alexander, for the first time in over a hundred years he can feel his husband’s touch. His eyes swell with tears. He doesn’t know how it is possible and he doesn’t care.

“I love you, Alexander,” Magnus says the words that he has kept tucked inside for a century. “I love you. Nobody could ever replace you in my heart.”

Alec’s smile turns a little sad. “I know. I saw and I ached for you. I hoped that you would find someone and be happy again.” He strokes Magnus’ cheek with his thumb. “I’ve never stopped loving you, either.”
Magnus turns his head and kisses Alec’s palm, enjoying the glorious feeling of his love’s touch again, soaking up every second.

They sit there like that, leaning against each other, and they watch the sky turn brighter and brighter while sharing secrets of love and life and death.

And when Alec finally says, “It’s coming,” and reaches out, asking, “Will you come home with me?” Magnus takes his hand and nods, his smile reflecting his husband’s. “With you, anywhere, Alexander.”

The world explodes.
It should’ve been a training mission, a few of the older Shadowhunters taking Jace and Alec out to show them the ropes in a fairly secluded but well swept area with no demon sightings in ages, nothing dangerous, nothing that could cause the two boys still finding their feet after their parabatai ceremony any harm…

…and suddenly, they’re surrounded by a horde of demons, led by an ugly beast that nobody’s ever even seen before, and the older men and women are suddenly fighting for their lives, fighting to protect the two untested youngsters in their midst, but there’s just too many of the things, too many claws and tails and gaping mouths with razor sharp teeth…

…and then Alec’s down, struck by a monster’s tail that went straight through his chest, and Jace can feel it, he can feel their bond burning, their connection that’s been until now a warm, fuzzy, glowing things in his chest, is now burning as if acid were pouring through it, and he knows it’s the poison in Alec’s veins…

…and Jace drops to his knees by Alec’s side and curls up around him to protect him from the lashing demons, and Alec’s wheezing and growing paler and paler by the second, and Jace’s not panicking, he’s not panicking, except that he is and he can’t lose Alec now that he found him, what should he do, what should he do…

…and then the ugly beast, the demons’ leader is there, right in front of Jace, staring him in the face, roaring in his face, and it’s grasping, reaching out as if wanting to take Alec away from him, snatch him away from Jace, and that will not happen, not on Jace’s watch…

…and Jace throws himself forward, across and over Alec, slashing and stabbing and swinging his Seraph Blade, determined to protect his parabatai, to save him or die trying, he would rather die with Alec than live without him, but the beast is strong and it rips the blade out of Jace’s hand, at thirteen Jace is no match for it, and it grabs Jace by the neck and drives him down to his knees…

…and Jace can feel the terrible pull as the beast, dark gray and scaly and with red glowing eyes, starts sucking all the life out of him, all his Nephilim strength, and he can feel himself fading, the Angelic Rune on his chest burning away together with his angelic half, his soul’s breaking apart…

…and all he can think is, Alec…

…and then someone’s touching his limp hand, skin on skin, and there’s a charge so hard it feels more like a kick, and Jace realizes that it’s Alec touching him, it’s Alec’s hand in his, Alec must’ve rolled over, moved closer, and despite his grave injury, Alec’s giving Jace his strength, sharing his life energy with his parabatai through their bond, helping Jace resist the beast…

…and their bond is all ablaze and Jace’s chest hurts and his head hurts and he’s squeezing Alec’s hand and Alec’s squeezing his, and when the beast’s grip slackens, the monster’s shock at the
power suddenly coursing through its victim’s body evident, Jace pulls out the small knife hidden in his boot and with a defiant scream he attacks and stabs the beast in one of its terrible, glowing eyes…

… and the monster roars and stumbles back, letting go of Jace completely, and then the other Shadowhunters are there, finally, and they move against the beast en masse, driving it away from the boys…

… and Jace sinks down to the ground slowly, exhausted, bruised and weaker than he has ever been, and all he can manage is turn to Alec, their hands still linked, and their bond is singing, though they are both terribly hurt and hurting and still in danger of dying, and Jace’s Angelic Rune’s gone, as he will find out later on, but that’s okay, Alec will help him draw a new one, and they stare at each other, panting and pale…

… and Alec lifts his free hand slowly and with trembling fingers he touches Jace’s cheek, the soft skin below his left eye, and whispers hoarsely, wonder coloring his words, “Your eye…,” and Jace doesn’t understand then, but soon he will and he’ll wear his heterochromia, the little blotch of brown that seeped into his eye from Alec’s through their bond, as a badge of honor, as a proof that his and Alec’s parabatai bond’s stronger than any demon out there!

And then they both lose consciousness, their bond humming like a live wire, while the battle still rages all around them…
Max is 9 on the show, which means he doesn’t have his first rune yet, so… Lightwood family feels, ahoy! Or, Alec’s a wonderful big brother! (Unbeta’d)

When their parents gather them to announce that in the upcoming days, Max will receive his first rune, much celebrating and back-clapping ensues. Maryse and Robert glow with pride while Jace and Isabelle swing Max around, telling him how awesome it will be, to have Max train with them, and everyone’s all smiles and laughter…

Everyone except for Max himself, Alec notices.

Later on, when Alec finally finds a moment alone with Max, he drops into a crouch in front of the boy to look him better in the eye, and asks him what’s wrong.

Max lowers his eyes and confesses in a whisper, as if wanting to make sure that nobody but Alec will hear him, “I’m scared.”

Alec’s expression softens and he strokes Max’s hair gently. He wants to say that it’s normal to be anxious, he wants to reassure his little brother, but before he can do that, Max continues.

“Ajay, my friend in Mumbai, he almost died when they drew the first rune on his skin,” Max whispers, eyes still trained on his shoes. “The Silent Brothers said that Ajay couldn’t handle the runes, that he couldn’t be a Shadowhunter.” His voice becomes even quieter. “They *exiled* him. They made him go away.”

Alec’s heart breaks a little. “Is that why you used the fire rune in your class and almost burned down the Mumbai Institute?”

Still not looking up, Max nods. “I wanted to come *home*.” He glances up quickly before dropping his eyes again. “I wanted to see you all again, before… before my own ceremony. Just… in case.”

The idea of his little brother hurting, let alone being exiled - he won’t even *think* of Max dying! - makes Alec’s chest ache. He pulls Max close and hugs him, and his eyes burn when he feels Max wrap his thin arms around his neck.

When they finally pull apart, Alec strokes Max’s hair again and wipes off the boy’s tears with his thumb. Then he rests his hands on Max’s shoulders and squeezes gently.

“Max, I promise you - *I swear* - that nothing will happen to you,” he says as solemnly and firmly as possible. He knows he cannot promise that, not really, sometimes, Shadowhunter children simply can’t handle the runes and nobody knows why, but he will be damned if he lets Max be afraid.

Max rubs his nose with the back of his hand and blinks hard, his eyes a little red-rimmed. “You can’t know that,” he protests quietly.

“Yes, I *can. I’m your big brother,*” Alec replies, as if that explains everything. “And I’m also the acting head of this Institute, there are things that I simply know, it comes with the job, to know
stuff like that. So, when I say that your ceremony will go off without a hitch, it’s a fact.”

Seeing the doubtful look in Max’s eyes, Alec frowns at him and pretends to be wounded. “You don’t trust me? Didn’t I promise to get you your stele back and got it for you, too?”

Max’s eyes widen and he nods quickly, vigorously, still rubbing his nose.

Alec nods, too. “See? There you have it. So, when I say you will be fine, you will be fine. I know what I’m talking about!”

Max nods again. “Okay,” he whispers, staring at his big brother with absolute trust in his eyes. Alec can’t but hug him again.

When the ceremony does go off without a hitch, nobody’s more relieved than Alec. But he doesn’t show it, of course, he just winks at Max who’s grinning up at him, and ruffles his hair. Alec’s the big brother, after all, he knew everything would be alright.
Magnus is sitting on the stone steps leading up to the Institute’s main entrance. It’s a balmy autumn night and he’s just sitting there, looking up at the few stars visible in New York’s polluted air, and he’s contemplating his life’s choices. He just helped a bunch of Shadowhunters fight off Valentine’s attack, and he did it *voluntarily* and *for free*. How did it ever come to this?

And then he feels something warm and soft settle over his shoulders, and the by now familiar spicy scent of cologne envelops him like a hug - and Magnus smiles, because here’s his answer, the reason why he keeps risking his life for Shadowhunters - or more specifically, for one Shadowhunter.

Magnus burrows into Alec’s leather jacket, soaking up Alec’s body warmth still trapped in the material, and turns his head to the side, towards his boyfriend - his boyfriend! That still makes him want to giggle in a very undignified way.

With a sigh, Alec settles down on the step next to him, only in his shirtsleeves, and loops his arms around his bent knees loosely. He looks exhausted, there are ugly scratches on his left cheek and a dark bruise mars his jaw, and yet, he’s still the most beautiful sight in the world for Magnus.

Bumping their shoulders together lightly, Alec asks in a soft voice, “You okay?”

Magnus *hmms* and leans into Alec, resting his head on Alec’s shoulder. And when Alec then lays one arm around Magnus’ shoulders to pull him close and kisses the top of Magnus’ head, Magnus sighs, letting his eyes fall shut, and thinks, *Now I am.*
“Why? Why did you do this?” Alec whispers, his voice breaking. He’s sitting on the hardwood floor in the corner of Magnus’ guest room, curled up on himself.

Jace shakes his head unhappily. “There was no other way, Alec,” he insists imploringly, “you would’ve died—”

“I did die!” Alec interrupts him sharply. “And I would’ve rather stayed dead than become this!” He sticks his hand out, into the beam of sunlight that managed to find its way into the bedroom through the heavy velvet curtains.

His hand immediately starts smoking, the skin on the back of it blackening then peeling off, flesh burning—

Jace throws himself forward and slaps Alec’s hand aside, away from the sun that’s now deadly to his friend… to his vampire friend.

Slowly, Jace sinks to his knees in front of Alec and gently takes his injured hand in both of his, rubbing the quickly healing spot tenderly. Only yesterday, there were runes on Alec’s skin, now it’s unmarred and so vulnerable to as simple a thing as sunlight.

“I didn’t want this, Jace,” Alec croaks out.

“I know,” Jace replies softly, not looking up from Alec’s hand.

“I’ve never wanted to be a vampire."

“I know.”

“I would’ve rather died.”

“I know.”

Alec clenches his now healed hand into a fist, trapping Jace’s fingers in it. He’s so strong now that one squeeze would be enough to shatter Jace’s bones - but Jace doesn’t flinch. He keeps perfectly still.

“Then why?” Alec asks hoarsely, despairingly. “Why did you allow them to turn me after… after Camille… after she…?”

*After she ripped your throat out, out of pure jealousy,* Jace thinks, eyes still down. But Alec can’t say it, none of them can, not yet, it’s too fresh. That does not mean, thought, that Jace will ever forget the sight, the smell, every minute detail.

He finally looks up. “Because I couldn’t lose you. I know that you didn’t want this. I know that I
didn’t respect your wishes. Hell, I went straight against them. I know that what I did was selfish and I did it anyway, all for myself. I know all of that. I knew it before I did it. But I could not lose you. I couldn’t bear the thought of you gone. You’re my parabatai—”

“But I’m not!” Alec interrupts him again, letting go of Jace’s hands. “I’m not, not anymore, Jace. Our bond’s broken! We are not parabatai anymore!”

“The hell we aren’t!” Jace snaps right back. “Being parabatai means more than… than some supernatural connection! It means so much more than that. It’s all in here!” He reaches out and touches Alec’s chest - where Alec’s heart isn’t beating anymore.

“You’ll always be my parabatai. My best friend. My brother!” Jace insist, his voice and look desperate. “When you died, when I felt our bond break,” he shakes his head, “I thought I would go insane. If there had been any chance to save you as you were, a mortal Shadowhunter, I would’ve given my life in exchange. But there was not. It was either this, turning you, or letting you go. And I could not let you go. I could not.”

He really could not do that. When Alec’s heart stopped, Jace literally lost a piece of himself. He would’ve been damned if he let Alec simply go. For the first time, he truly grasped the dilemma that Clary faced with Simon all those years ago.

“I’m not sure if I’ll be ever able to forgive you,” Alec admits in a whisper.

Jace feels a sharp pang in his chest, but he steels himself and nods firmly. “I get that. But you’ll actually have to be here for it. And I’m aware that it makes me a selfish bastard, but I would rather take your anger over watching your body burn on a funeral pyre.”

Alec looks away, hugging himself.

“Now you’ll take my blood,” Jace says, and when Alec recoils, Jace grips his chin and turns Alec’s head towards him. “Listen to me. You will take my blood and you will drink it and you will walk in the sun again and you will spend the rest of eternity with Magnus - you did not see him when you died.”

At the mention of Magnus, Alec shoots a glance towards the living room where Magnus is waiting to see his husband, pacing back and forth anxiously. And if Jace lived a hundred years, he would never forget the depth of Magnus Bane’s heartbreak when Alec died in their arms. And if something actually good comes out of his mess, Jace will be grateful.

“Now drink,” Jace says, his voice much gentler now, and lets go of Alec’s chin, offering Alec his wrist. “I don’t want to see any more burns on your skin, I don’t want to see you hurting anymore.”

And when Alec finally succumbs to his body’s needs and lets Jace feed him, when he sinks his fangs into Jace’s wrist and they both shudder in a horrible, terrifying, delicious bliss, Jace allows himself to slump in relief, allows himself to hope that maybe, somehow it will be alright after all.
Perishable Goods

Chapter Summary

Alec and Camille talk. (Unbeta'd)

“What do you want, Shadowhunter?”

Slowly, Alec turns away from the river, from the railing he was leaning against, and towards Camille. She looks impeccable in her midnight blue dress, but her beauty is marred by the sneer on her face. Alec wonders what Magnus ever saw in this woman…

“Well?” she demands belligerently. “It was you who asked for this meeting. I’m here, so don’t waste my time. I don’t have the whole night.”

Alec takes a deep breath. “I want to ask something of you.”

Camille stares at him for a moment with her eyebrows raised, then she throws her head back and laughs. “A Shadowhunter, asking something of a vampire? That’s rich!”

“No,” Alec corrects her calmly, “I am asking something of you.”

She crosses her arms over her chest. “Go on, now I’m curious.”

Alec pauses, then says, “Lately, where ever we turn, Magnus and I, you’re there, always hanging out in places where you know you’ll find us, coming to Magnus’ apartment…” He looks her directly in the eye. “I want you to stop.”

Camille grins, her sharp fangs glistening in the moonlight dangerously. “And why should I do that, Shadowhunter? Do you feel so threatened by me? Are you afraid that your boyfriend will come to his sense and leave you? Or are you simply jealous?”

Alec shakes his head. “I’m not afraid and I’m not jealous. I know how Magnus feels about me. But I am tired of your histrionics. I’m asking you to let us be.”

“And I’m asking - again - why I should do it,” Camille responds, her expression cold and hard and her voice devoid of false merriment. “I was here first. I had Magnus first!”

Alec once again wonders what made Magnus fall in love with a woman like her: beautiful on the outside, but rotten to the core. He replies, “And you might have him again, if you both wish so, but not now.”

Camille stares at him. “I’m listening, Shadowhunter.”

“My time with Magnus is limited,” Alec starts, and his heart aches when he says it, he doesn’t show it, though. “We have half a century ahead of us, if we’re lucky, probably much less considering who I am. You two are both immortal, ageless. After I’m gone, he’ll still be here.”

One corner of her mouth quirks up ironically. “So, what? You want him now and I can have him later, when your bones turn to ash? Do you plan on handing him over to me once you’re old and
decrepit? Does he know that you’re here, bargaining him away?”

Alec shakes his head again. “No, he doesn’t know I’m here. And I’m not trying to ‘bargain him away,’ as you so eloquently put it. I cannot and I will not speak for Magnus. I have no idea if he’ll be actually interested in you after my death - or ever again, for that matter.”

Camille narrows her eyes dangerously, the hint of a smile slipping away from her lips.

Alec continues firmly, “What I know is that he isn’t interested in you right now, and with what you’re doing? You’re just alienating him more and more. If you ever want to have a chance with him again, if all your melodrama is not just petty jealousy - then stop and leave us be. Let us have the next few decades, they’ll pass in a blink of an eye for you.”

Camille watches him with narrowed eyes. “Or,” she whispers threateningly, and then moves so fast she becomes a blur, and suddenly, she’s at Alec’s side with one hand wrapped around his throat tightly, her nails digging into his skin, “I could just kill you right now and be done with you once and for all.”

And though Alec’s heart’s hammering in his chest, he replies dispassionately, “You can try.” And then he prods her in the chest with the sharp point of his Seraph Blade that he managed to pull out without her noticing, its glow now illuminating their faces from below, giving them both a demonic appearance.

Looking down, Camille blinks and then laughs. She lets go of Alec and takes several steps back, both from him and from his dangerous weapon. “I see that Magnus’ new toy has teeth. I did wonder what he saw in you, Shadowhunter.”

Alec lifts his weapon, still pointed in Camille’s direction. “I asked nicely, Camille, but I will kill you if you cross me. I would rather not do that, though, for Magnus’ sake. So, will you leave us alone or not?”

Camille studies him a moment longer with hooded, unreadable eyes. Alec’s hand doesn’t tremble, his look is firm. He just wants her out of their lives. And if he has to kill her to achieve his goal, he will do it.

In the end, Camille replies, “I’ll think about it, Shadowhunter. You’re right, I’m immortal and ageless. And you…” She laughs cruelly. “Soon enough, you’ll turn into an old, wrinkled husk of a man and Magnus will see you for what you truly are: perishable goods.”

Camille starts walking backwards, away from Alec who still hasn’t lowered his weapon yet. “But I liked our talk,” she calls back. “We should do it again soon!”

And with that, she’s gone.

Alec drops his hand and deactivates his weapon. He got what he wanted, more or less, yet he doesn’t feel like a winner, just the opposite. For there was truth in her words… and that’s the worst part.

Perishable goods…
Alec’s heart skips a beat when he sees Jace, his parabatai, standing over the fallen Valentine with the Mortal Cup in his hands. Jace’s staring at the blasted thing and Alec can almost read his mind, hear his thoughts, see the gears shifting in his head.

“By the Angel,” Alec whispers. “He’s going to destroy the Cup!”

Magnus, who brought them all here, Alec and Izzy and Clary together with a good half of the New York based Shadowhunters, who are even now fighting with the last of Valentine’s cohorts, steps forward and says urgently, “You can’t let him do that. There’s an immense amount of power stored in the Cup. The resulting explosion…” He shakes his head.

Izzy turns towards Magnus. “Can’t you do something? Snap your fingers and summon the Cup to you? I’ve seen you do it.”

Magnus looks at her with regret. “I wouldn’t dare,” he admits. “Who knows how the Cup would react to a demonic power. It is an angelic artifact, after all. It could blow us all up.”

Clary’s face is set with determination when she says, “Then we’ll go and take it from him. We - I won’t allow him to destroy himself, I will not let him die!”

But before she can move forward and up the ladder to the bridge, Alec takes her by the arm and stops her. When she turns to him angrily, prepared to snap at him, he says, “I will do it.”

“But-” she protests.

“He asked me to watch out for you,” Alec interrupts her, his voice kind. “He would never forgive me - or himself - if something happened to you because of him. He wouldn’t be able to live with it, Clary.”

She stops trying to pull away and looks at him. “The same goes for you, Alec! You’re his parabatai—”

“Exactly,” Alec interrupts again. “If he died…” He shakes his head and admits softly, “It’s likely I would follow him anyway.”

Izzy takes a sharp breath. “Alec…”

He looks at her. “Get everyone off the ship, Izzy. Just throw them overboard, if you have to, it’s not far to the docks.” He points at the rows of lights blinking in the distance, shining like a beacon into the night.

Coming closer, Izzy quickly stands up on tiptoes and kisses Alec’s cheek. “Be careful,” she
whispers into his ear. And when he nods, she takes Clary by the hand and starts pulling her towards the stern where their fellow Shadowhunters finally managed to overpower Valentine’s minions. Unlike Clary, she doesn’t look back.

“Alexander…” Magnus whispers imploringly.

Alec smiles at him softly. “Don’t worry, Magnus. Everything will be fine. Jace won’t hurt me.”

Magnus throws a nervous look over at the bridge and at Jace, who’s looking all wild-eyed and a little unfocused. His hair is matted with blood, his forehead and left cheek streaked with it. “Normally, I would agree, but…”

Alec reaches out and squeezes the fingers on Magnus’ left hand affectionately. “It’ll be fine, I promise. Now go, get everyone off the ship - yourself included!” he adds sternly.

“Didn’t you just say that it would be–” Magnus protests.

Alec presses a finger to his lips. “Go.”

Magnus hesitates a moment longer, searching Alec’s face with his eyes, then he nods and leaves reluctantly.

Alec takes a deep breath and turns towards the ladder leading up to the bridge.

Jace…

Jace’s standing on the bridge of the ship, cut and bleeding, swaying slightly, while Valentine’s lying at his feet, unconscious and finally beaten, beaten by his son, who did it, Jace finally did it, he beat Valentine…

… but it’s not over yet, it’ll never be over while this damned Cup exists, he has to destroy it, and then and only then will the fight be won, the war will be over, the temptation to play God gone!

Yes, Jace will destroy it, that’s what he will do - and if the resulting blast takes out both him and Valentine? Then good riddance!

He lifts the Cup to smash it to pieces once and for all, when a desperate cry makes him freeze, his breath catching in his throat. No, not Alec! Alec should not be here!

“Jace, don’t!” Alec pleads as he lunges forward, towards Jace.

But before he can grab the Cup, Jace takes a step back, pulling away. The fast move makes his pounding head spin and his stomach roil, and he has to blink several times to clear his sight. He reaches out to wipe something warm off his forehead - and it’s blood, dripping into his eye. Oh…

“Jace,” Alec begs, reaching out imploringly. “Please, give me the Cup. Please!”

But Jace shakes his head. “I have to destroy it, don’t you see? I have to. As long as this thing exists, people will keep coming after it. And it will never be over. Never…”

“Alright, alright,” Alec agrees soothingly, “then we will do it together, we will find a way. A safe way. Magnus will help us. But not like this. If you just break it, the power stored inside will kill you, it’ll destroy everything in its vicinity!”

Jace nods solemnly. “That’s the point,” he replies softly.
Alec’s eyes widen in shock and he drops his hand slowly. “What…?”

“That’s the point. No Cup, no Valentine, no me. And it’ll be finally over,” Jace explains reasonably. “That’s why you have to go, get as far away as possible. I don’t want to hurt you.”

And Jace doesn’t, he really does not. Alec deserves to be safe and happy and to never be hurt again.

In that moment, Valentine groans at their feet and starts moving sluggishly, and Jace clutches the Cup and takes another step back, away from his father.

*Valentine won’t get the Cup again, he will not,* Jace decides firmly. But then he groans. By the Angel, his head hurts so bad. He remembers that Valentine hit him, hit him with… something, while they grappled on the ground. The pain makes it hard to think.

Almost absentmindedly and with barely a glance, Alec kicks Valentine in the face, knocking him out again, as if he were unimportant, not the most terrible villain in recent Shadowhunter history. It actually makes Jace laugh, which only deepens Alec’s worry, he notices.

“Jace,” Alec says softly. “I’m not leaving. I’ll never leave you. We’re *parabatai,* you’re my brother. We’re bound together. So,” he continues and much to Jace’s frustration, he takes a step forward instead of back, “if you really want to do this, then I guess you’ll have to take me with you.”

And Jace’s face twists because this is not fair, he can’t do it, end it once and for all, if Alec’s here. He can’t harm Alec like that, but if he doesn’t do it now, there won’t be a second chance at obliterating all the bad there is in their world all at once… Alec’s *good,* though, Alec’s the best part of him, and if it comes down to choosing between his *parabatai* and his father… there’s no contest.

“Jace…” Jace croaks out, and then Alec’s there, his hand’s there, on his own, gripping the Cup, making sure it does not drop and shatter. And Jace looks down, blinking at their fingers, entwined on the thick stem.

“I’ve got it,” Alec promises in a soft voice, “I’ve got you.”

Jace leans into him, drained and aching - beating Valentine came at a heavy cost! - and when his knees buckle, Jace lets himself be held and supported, allowing his *parabatai* to take his weight. “I don’t feel so good…” he whispers.

Slowly, they sink to the ground, to their knees, and Alec’s hugging him now, the Cup tucked away safely, and he whispers into Jace’s ear, “I know, I know, Jace, but we’ll fix it, together we can fix anything.”

And Jace sighs, eyes falling shut, and lets himself believe it.
Chapter Summary

Robert and Alec talk about Alec’s homosexuality and Robert’s past. Or, how I wish to see their relationship progress in S2. I love Show!Robert (I’m a huge fan of Paulino Nunes and the father figures he plays!). BOOK SPOILERS! (Unbeta'd)

“What are you doing up so early?” Robert asks quietly as he walks into the living room of their house in Idris.

Alec, who’s standing in the open French door, looking out into their garden hidden in the morning mist, turns around. “Couldn’t sleep,” he replies.

Robert steps closer, joining him at the door. “Why?”

Alec sighs, crossing his arms over his chest. “I had a fight with mom last night,” he admits.

Robert frowns. “What about?”

Alec just looks at him, mouth twisted unhappily.

“Ah,” Robert says with understanding.

Alec sighs again. “Her reaction, it’s…” he stutters to a halt. “It’s exactly what I feared and what I hoped would not happen.”

Robert pats Alec on the arm in a gesture of comfort. “She’ll come around, son, you’ll see.”

“I don’t know.” Alec shakes his head, then looks at his father. “Why aren’t you…?” He waves a hand. “You seem to be taking it remarkably calmly.”

Robert pauses, thinking it over. Then he looks over his shoulder, inside the house, and apparently coming to a decision, he beckons. “Come, walk with me,” he requests and steps outside.

With a little bewildered frown, Alec follows his father outside, into the garden, and joins him on the dew covered grass. Together, they head for the apple trees, walking side by side.

“Have I ever told you about Michael Wayland?” Robert asks after a while.

Alec looks at him. “I know that he was your parabatai. And we thought he was Jace’s father.”

Robert nods. “Yes, he was my parabatai, my best friend at one point. And,” he adds without looking at Alec, “he was also gay.”

Eyes widening in shock, Alec almost misses a step.

“I found out a long time ago,” Robert continues, walking slowly and staring into the distance, hands clasped behind his back. “He told me himself. And he told me he loved me.” He falls silent.

After a moment, Alec asks softly, “What happened?”
“I… reacted badly,” Robert admits bitterly. “Actually, badly is not a strong enough word. I condemned him for it. It’s what drove me into Valentine’s clutches and what made me marry your mother.” He looks at Alec pointedly. “That’s why I was so dead set against you marrying - anyone, not just Lydia.”

Alec’s eyes widen again and he stutters, “You… you knew? Even before the wedding fiasco? You knew that I…?”

Robert smiles sadly. “That you liked boys? Yes, I knew. I could see it in the way you looked at Jace.” He shakes his head. “I was so worried about you, so worried that Jace would react as badly as I did and hurt you. It was… it was as if the past came back to haunt me.” He sighs. “Luckily, Jace is a much better man than I ever was.”

Alec opens his mouth, then closes it again and swallows hard. “What… what happened with Michael?”

Robert sighs, staring ahead again. “After that, it has never been the same between us again. He started to avoid me, stayed as far away from me as possible. I think, I think he feared me, because I knew and I could’ve easily destroyed him.” He shakes his head again. “Nobody should have to fear their own parabatai.”

“What about your bond?” Alec asks quietly.

“My own stupidity destroyed it,” Robert replies honestly. “It became so weak that I didn’t even feel him die, that’s why Valentine could use Michael’s identity against us. By the Angel, I was such a…” His voice trails off again.

They walk in silence for a while, then Robert continues, “When I heard that Michael died and that his son needed a place to stay, I immediately offered to take him in. I hoped that I could, I don’t know, that I could fix what I broke through Jace.” He laughs bitterly. “A stupid thought, I know.”

Alec shakes his head. “Jace doesn’t think so. He thinks you’re a great dad.”

Robert looks at him, his eyes a little brighter. “Really?” he asks, pleased. “Then I did something good after all, even if Jace isn’t actually Michael’s son. I did something good,” he repeats more quietly.

Then Robert takes a deep breath, stops and turns to Alec. “But why I’m telling you this,” he says, looking his son directly in the eyes. “I realized too late what an idiot I’ve been, too late to help Michael, to stand by his side, to be there for him. When he died - when I thought he died - shunned by others for his involvement with Valentine, and shunned by me, his parabatai, for who he was and for whom he loved, I decided that I would never be that person again, I would never judge someone like that again.”

Alec stares at him for a moment, then he looks away, his shoulders a little rounded. “Still,” he says softly, “you must’ve been disappointed when you realized that I was gay.”


Alec turns back to him and points out, “You don’t seem exactly happy about me and Magnus.”

Robert sighs. “That has more to do with Magnus Bane as a person, rather than with him being a man. Or a warlock, for that matter. Your mother and I, we have a,” he pauses, searching for the right word, “history with Bane, and not a good one. Also, I’m worried that dating him will
complicate things for you even more.”

Seeing Alec’s pained look, Robert adds, “But if this is what you really want, then I promise, I’ll reserve my judgment. And I’ll do what I can for you.” He squeezes Alec’s arm again. “I’ll always be on your side, son.”

Alec blinks hard. “It means a lot,” he whispers hoarsely.

Robert smiles a little. “I’m glad,” he replies. Then he turns back towards the house, and adds more briskly, “Now come, let’s have breakfast. I’m starving and my shoes are all wet…”

And Alec follows his father with a smile.
Insanity

Chapter Summary

This is a weird one. It started with a simple bunny: Alec’s insane, has always been, and only his parabatai bond is allowing him to keep his marbles. But, as I was writing it, I started thinking: Is Alec actually insane or is there something else going on with him? So yeah, one of the stories that just ran away from me. (Unbeta’d)

They all think that Jace is the screw-up, the damaged one, the boy with issues, straightened up by his parabatai bond with the responsible, sensible and restrained Alec Lightwood. By the Angel, they don’t know anything. Nothing at all!

Izzy, Clary, Lydia, they don’t understand why Alec would risk trying to track Jace though their parabatai bond again, so soon after the first time, so soon after he almost destroyed them both with this stunt. They don’t get it and he can’t explain it to them, why he’s so desperate to get Jace, because if they knew…

Alec can see the world shifting around him, he can feel his reality tilt-tilt-tilting again, time’s slipping between his fingers. It’s always been so, his ability to distinguish between what’s real and what’s not, skewed, broken beyond repair. He has never been anchored in the here and now, and he doesn’t know why, he doesn’t understand, never had.

And then Jace came around and asked him to be his parabatai, and the bond, their bond, Jace and his physical proximity, the link between their souls, turned out to be a tether, holding Alec together, stopping him from falling apart or just floating away…

But now Jace’s gone and their bond’s the weakest it’s ever been, Alec almost doesn’t feel it anymore, and the safety net that has kept him sane for the last 8 years is slowly dissolving, and his mind’s starting to live a life of its own once more, without his say so, taking him to strange places that he’s terrified of.

He needs help, he needs someone to glue him back together, all the pieces that are falling off, and he needs help finding Jace, whatever it takes. He needs someone he can trust, someone who won’t tell on him, someone who will keep him safe from his own insanity.

“Alexander!” Magnus exclaims excitedly, when he opens the door. “Come in, come!”

And Alec goes, enters the place he hopes will be his sanctuary, a place to hide from the ugly things creeping in. Everything seems to spark and glitter around him and he feels like he’s walking on water…

… and Magnus’ eyes are glowing with inner light, golden and cat-like, and there’s a black shadow hanging on Magnus’ back, almost like an angel’s wings, only so dark that they swallow light, and it’s a strange thing indeed but Alec trusts him anyway, he does. It’s… it’s Magnus, after all.

He trips and stumbles, almost falling, because the world’s warping around him again, and Magnus catches him and holds him up, his burning eyes wide with concern. “Are you okay, my dear?”
And Alec shakes his head, finally, finally admitting to someone besides himself that he’s not okay, that there’s something seriously wrong with him, and whispers, “Magnus, I need help. Please… please, help me.”
If Valentine was never defeated and the Circle stayed together, Valentine and Jocelyn would raise Jonathan and Clary together, Jace would be a Herondale, and there would be the Lightwood kids, and Jonathan and Jace would vie for Valentine’s favor. So, what if… (Unbeta’d)

“… is to finally get rid of Magnus Bane and Lucian Greymark, the leaders of the Downworlder rebellion, as our intel indicates,” Valentine states, walking up and down the lines of black clad Shadowhunters standing at ease in the vast hall of the Morgenstern mansion that serves as The Circle’s headquarters.

“Of Lucian - or Luke, as he apparently calls himself now, having debased himself and joined the ranks of our enemies - I’ll take care myself,” Valentine continues. “I’ll show him exactly how we deal with traitors to the cause. But the warlock, him I’ll leave to you–” he stops at the end of the line, in front of one of the young men there and looks him in the eye, “–Alec.”

Everybody but Jace, who’s standing at the other end of the line, keeps staring ahead, not moving a muscle. Jace, though, Jace looks sharply to the right, at his parabatai, and breathes in sharply when Alec replies, softly, but firmly, “Yes, sir.”

Because Jace knows, he knows why it’s Alec who was given the order to take out Magnus Bane, the former High Warlock of Brooklyn, one of the mightiest magic users in the world, and the biggest threat to the Circle’s crusade against the Downworlder plague. He knows who’s behind this.

His eyes ablaze with anger, he looks up, at the young man leaning against the second floor railing with an ugly smirk on his lips. There’s an unholy glee in his eyes when he salutes Jace with two fingers…

Jonathan!

Soon after, they are dismissed and Jace immediately seeks out his parabatai. He drags Alec into a side-room and slams the door shut to give them at least a semblance of privacy - you never know who’s listening in this house.

“Alec, you don’t have to do this,” Jace whispers furiously.

“Yes, Jace, actually I do,” Alec replies just as softly, and though he tries to act as firm as when he presented his expected answer to their leader, his voice sounds bleak, resigned. “I was given an order and I’ll carry it out.”

Jace throws up his hands in frustration. “But you won’t! You can’t! Not one person we’ve ever sent after Bane made it back alive,” he reminds Alec angrily, still trying to keep his voice down. “You can’t kill him. No one can. You know who he is! You studied him almost religiously.”

Alec crosses his arms over his chest, though it looks more like he’s hugging himself. “Yes, I did.
And that’s why I…” He pauses and swallows. “There’s an angle I can use to get to him.”

“Angle? What angle?”

Though they’re alone, Alec looks around furtively and lowers his voice even more. They both learned the hard way that walls have ears in this house. “Magnus Bane, he is… bi.” There’s deep discomfort in his voice when he says it and he’s studiously not looking at Jace.

Jace just stares at him. He knows that Alec’s gay - Raziel forbid anyone else found out, but just Jace does know. They have no secrets from each other, Alec’s the only person in the world Jace knows he can trust implicitly. But what Alec’s suggesting…

“So, what? You’ll give yourself over to the guy so you can slice him to pieces in bed? And you being… you makes that somehow okay?” Jace was angry before but now, now he’s seething. No way is this happening. “Besides, you think Bane’s so dumb that he’ll allow himself be led around by his dick?”

Alec flinches at that. “Then what do you suggest I do, Jace?” he demands, now angry, too. “We tried going straight for him and we failed. We tried sneaking into his lair and we failed. We tried everything else - but this! And I have to come up with something because Valentine will not accept failure.”

Jace clenches his jaw and shuts his eyes tight. No, Valentine’s not known for his benevolence, they both carry the scars to prove it because in Valentine’s opinion, pain’s the best cure for incompetence. Jace wants to kill someone. Preferably Jonathan, Valentine’s precious heir.

“You know that you were given this order only because you’re my parabatai, right?” Jace whispers and now there’s only despair in his eyes when he looks up at Alec. “That this is a suicide mission, concocted by Jonathan, right? He’s doing it to punish me for choosing you over him as my parabatai. He wants to hurt me by hurting you - by getting you killed.”

Alec sighs and his shoulders slump in defeat. “I know, Jace. But it’s not your fault. I hope you know that. I still wouldn’t trade our bond for anything in the world - my parabatai.” He smiles brokenly.

And Jace grabs Alec and pulls him in, hugs him tight, standing on tiptoes. “Come back, Alec. Don’t give that creep Jonathan what he wants. Kill the warlock and make Valentine proud - but most of all, come back to me.”

Alec returns the hug, sighing deeply again. “I’ll try, Jace. I promise, I’ll try.”

Alec does not come back…
As It Should Be

Chapter Summary

Prequel to The Circle, Unbroken (Chapter 286). Jace and Jonathan, with Alec as the pawn. Or, why does Jonathan hate Alec so much. Warnings: DARK stuff, abuse. (Unbeta'd)

Jace’s putting away his weapons when he senses someone come up behind him and drape themselves all over him. Jace stiffens, shuddering in revulsion, because he recognizes the person immediately: Jonathan.

He would like nothing more than to punch the creep in the face, but he knows he can’t. One punch, no matter how satisfying, wouldn’t be worth the pain that would follow, considering that Jonathan’s their leader’s, Valentine’s, eldest child and heir.

“What do you want, Jonathan?” Jace grits out, tightening his grip on his Seraph Blade.

“I wondered if you reconsidered my offer,” Jonathan murmurs, his breath wafting over Jace’s ear. “As my parabatai, you would gain standing, my father’s approval… and maybe even my sister’s affection. We would be unbeatable together.”

Raziel, Jace would rather slice his wrists open than bind himself for life to Jonathan Morgenstern. No matter what it could get him, he will not share his soul with this man.

“My answer stands, Jonathan,” Jace replies firmly, his voice cold and hard, leaving no room for doubts. “I’m not interested in becoming your parabatai. Leave it at that.”

Jonathan tightens his hold on Jace from behind, digging his fingers into Jace’s flesh. “Why?” he growls, and when he continues, venom drips from his words, “Because of that Lightwood fool?”

Jace freezes when he hears Jonathan mention Alec. He wants Jonathan as far away from Alec as possible. He should’ve known their friendship would make Jonathan angry - and what’s worse, jealous.

Jonathan snorts. “That idiot doesn’t have it in him to follow our creed, to fight for our cause! Just last week, I had the pleasure to administer his punishment, twenty lashes for insubordination. That coward couldn’t even kill a werewolf kid, would you believe it?”

Yes, Jace believes it, because he was there when Alec refused to follow Jonathan’s order and let a little werewolf girl escape during a raid. And Jace was also the one who nursed Alec back to health, after he was forbidden to use an iratze on Alec after his punishment. Alec’s pointless suffering only reinforced Jace’s decision that one day, he will kill Jonathan Morgenstern.

Right now, though, Jace keeps quiet, hoping that if he doesn’t stand up for Alec, if he lets Jonathan’s jeers slide, Jonathan will forget about Alec again. Nothing is worse than to bring up something you care about to Jonathan’s attention. He destroys it, just to watch you suffer.

But it’s too late, Jace understands a moment later, when Jonathan continues, “Or maybe I should ask him, your precious Alec, to become my parabatai. You know, make him an offer he can’t
Jace’s eyes widen in fear, and before he can stop himself, he blurts out, “You can’t.”

“Oh?” Jonathan says, plastering himself even more heavily against Jace’s back, touching him from head to foot. It’s sickening. “And why is that?”

Jace’s mind’s racing because he has to come up with an answer now, right now, or Jonathan will do it, he will force Alec to become his parabatai. And Alec has a younger sister and a little brother, he will do anything to keep them out of Jonathan’s clutches, even sign away his soul. Jace can’t let that happen.

And so he says the one thing that’s certain to stop Jonathan from bonding with Alec. “Because I already asked Alec to become my parabatai and he agreed.”

Jonathan freezes for a heartbeat, then hisses like a snake and pushes away from Jace furiously, almost driving him to his knees. Fortunately, Jace catches himself in time and twists around fast to face the unpredictable madman.

“You can’t do that! You wouldn’t dare!” Jonathan states, his voice full of icy rage.

Jace straightens up and looks Jonathan in the eye unflinchingly. He needs to see it through now. One sign of weakness and both he and Alec will be done for. “I can and I did, Jonathan. I’ll be asking your father for a permission to go through with the ceremony tonight, at dinner.”

Jonathan pales, but his eyes are blazing unnaturally and his fists are clenched tight. He’s shaking hard and breathing even harder. But instead of exploding, he whispers in a terrible voice, “You’ll regret this, Jace Herondale. I swear to you, you’ll both regret this!”

And with that, Jonathan turns on his heel and leaves, slamming the door of the weaponry shut behind him.

Jace’s trembling, too, and his hand is clenched on the hilt of his Seraph Blade so hard he has to pry his fingers open. If Jonathan didn’t let go, if he continued touching Jace - Jace would’ve lost it and slashed his throat. Or cut off his balls, and damned the consequences.

He runs his hand over his forehead, wiping away the sweat, and lets out a shuddering breath. Now… now all Jace has to do is keep Jonathan away from Alec till the ceremony, till Jonathan can’t do anything to stop it from happening anymore. And he should probably go and actually ask Alec to be his parabatai before his ruse blows up in his face.

Still, despite everything, a part of him feels that this is right, Alec Lightwood as Jace Herondale’s parabatai. It’s good and it’s right and it’s as it should be. As if something long lost found its way back to him and made him whole again.

The other half of his soul.
Whispers

Chapter Summary

Last night, I realized that the SH cast will be filming over the winter. And then the whole Alec kerfuffle with Todd Slavkin on Twitter happened (You can read more about that here: http://drakamena.tumblr.com/post/150902895842/im-sorry-but-i-cant-agree-with-todd-slavkin-that). I was overwhelmed with feels, so I swept them up and put them into a ficlet. There. (Unbeta'd)

Over the last few months, Alec had to make peace with so many things, things that meant very little in the grand scheme of everything, but for him, they were - and still are - hard to bear…

The fact that Jace will never love him the way Alec wants him to. The fact that Magnus does, but his ageless immortality makes their relationship feel almost unbalanced, as if there’s an expiration date to it for one of them. The fact that he’ll never head the New York Institute as has always been his wish, not when he chose a male Downworlder for a lover. The fact that he’s a disappointment to his parents, that he’ll never again make them proud. The fact that…

Alec sighs, a cloud of white vapor wafting from his lips. He closes his eyes and turns his head up to the sky with its low-hanging clouds, heavy with snow. It’s the middle of the night and he’s standing in the Institute’s backyard, all alone, listening to the whisper of snowflakes settling in thick layers on the ground…

And there’s a deep sadness in his heart, as it sometimes happens, when for no reason at all everything catches up with him, when all the issues he thought he dealt with rear their ugly heads again to make him feel small and insignificant. There’s no way to deny those feelings or to push them away, Alec has learned that the hard way over the years. When this sadness washes over him, all he can do is wait it out, wait till it goes away on its own, and the world rights itself again.

And so Alec stands there, in the quiet winter darkness, breathing in the cold air, and just allows himself to feel.
No Longer Young (and Beautiful)

Chapter Summary

I listened to the song Young & Beautiful by Lana Del Rey and this ficlet was the result. Warning: homophobia, slurs.

An AU story: what if Magnus left with his people to protect them from Valentine, just like he did at the beginning of the show - but never returned? (Unbeta'd)

Since the appointment ceremony of Clarissa Herondale as the new Consul is to take place at the New York Institute, what with Alicante still in ruins after the brutal and decades long war with Valentine Morgenstern, Magnus Bane, being the High Warlock of Brooklyn, is invited to attend. *Drats.*

Magnus goes, albeit reluctantly. He grabbed his people and left New York the moment Valentine and the remnants of his Circle cronies resurfaced, thirty or so years ago, and hasn’t been back since. But now that the war’s finally over and the Shadowhunters have won - quite the Pyrrhic victory, considering their losses - he decided it was safe to return, for those in his care and for him, too. So now, he’s here, attending a Shadowhunter ceremony, dressed in his best - and least flashy - clothes.

*What a farce!*

He remembers Clary as a little red-headed tornado, but the woman receiving her blessings from the Silent Brothers in the front of the church has very little in common with that child: she’s dressed all in black, her gray-streaked red hair is pinned up severely, and there’s a big, ugly scar running down her right cheek, from her brow down to her chin. And her eyes… her eyes are those of a woman who fought in a war and lost much.

Her husband Jace, the last of the Herondales - now and forever since he and his wife didn’t have any children, having been too busy with the war - is by her side, dressed in black, too. From what Magnus heard, Jace runs the New York Institute now, ever since the war ended. Maryse Lightwood, the previous head, was killed in the war, in the early years, together with her husband and two of their children. Magnus was not a fan of the Lightwoods, but nobody deserves that.

Magnus lets his eyes slide over the people gathered in the church, already bored. Which is when something catches his attention, a movement, there, in the shadows of the balcony above the main entrance, by the door leading up to the belfry. He frowns. There’s… someone standing there.

Looking around furtively, Magnus checks if someone else noticed, but no, he seems to be the only one. Should he go and investigate or just forget about it? He sighs inwardly. He really should, shouldn’t he? If it’s nothing, fine. But if it *is* something, better stop it now, one war just ended, after all, *thank you very much.*

He sneaks out and runs lightly up the stairs by the door, up onto the balcony, where there’s a man’s standing there, by one of the stone pillars, a tall man with his arms crossed over his chest. He’s dressed all in black but his paleness makes the runes adorning his skin stand out. A Shadowhunter. But a friend or a foe?
With a spell on his lips, Magnus walks up to the man and stops beside him. From up close, he sees that the man is striking. In his youth, he must’ve been quite the looker. He seems to be in his early fifties, his black hair is streaked with gray just like his trimmed beard and his hazel eyes are following the proceedings downstairs wearily. Actually, everything about him screams of exhaustion.

“Nice ceremony, huh?” Magnus remarks, watching the stranger out of the corner of his eye.

The man doesn’t startle, proving that he must’ve known Magnus was there. Magnus guesses the man must’ve seen him leave his seat, must’ve heard him come up.

“What do you want, Mr Bane?” the man asks softly, turning to Magnus.

And Magnus realizes the reason for the beard - the left side of the man’s face is burned, though the beard covers the worst of it. Ouch.

Magnus shrugs. “I saw someone up here. It made me… concerned.”

The man snorts quietly, though his bitterness is obvious in his voice when he responds, “I wish you had been this… concerned… thirty years ago, when we actually did need your help.” With that, the stranger turns away, effectively dismissing Magnus.

And Magnus cringes a little inwardly, because it’s as if he were hearing his friend Catarina again, their old arguments, always running in circles - “Magnus, they need help!” and “I have to think of our people first, Catarina!” Would he have made a real difference? Who knows. Most likely not.

Not letting himself be dismissed, Magnus holds out a hand. “You have me at a disadvantage, Mr…?” He lets his sentence hang in the air suggestively.

The man looks down at his hand, then into Magnus’ eyes. The moment seems to last an eternity, but in the end, the stranger does shake Magnus’ hand, after all. “Lightwood. Alec Lightwood.”

And now Magnus has a hard time fighting off a real cringe. Ouch and double ouch. The eldest Lightwood. Who lost his whole family in the war. No wonder he’s so bitter.

“Nice to meet you, Mr Lightwood,” Magnus responds with forced cheer. “What brought you to this wonderful place?”

Alec crosses his arms over his chest again. “My family used to run the Institute, as you certainly know, and now it’s my parabatai’s,” he replies, nodding at Jace Herondale in the front of the church.

Magnus blinks and raises his eyebrows. “But if your family was running the Institute before the war, why aren’t you the head now?” he asks, curious.

“But because, Mr Bane,” Alec says and his voice is dripping with bitterness now, “unmarried fags don’t get to take up leadership positions in time of peace, not even those who were hailed war heroes just a few weeks back.”

And now Magnus does actually cringe. Hello mouth, foot here! “I’m sorry to hear that,” he whispers, clasping his hands tight in front of him, and he really means it. He has been on the receiving end of this prejudice - and of many others - many times. One never gets used to it.

Alec must hear the sincerity in his voice, because he relaxes a little. He sighs and shakes his head. “The Institute’s in good hands. Jace’s a good man. Both he and Clary will do their best for
both our people and yours, Mr Bane, that I can promise you.” He looks at Magnus.

Magnus believes him. Maybe times are really changing. Which brings him to…

“Mr Lightwood, since we both seem rather superfluous for this whole pomp, would you do me the honor and have a drink with me?” And when Alec just stares at him blankly, he adds, “To put it very clearly, I’m asking you out.”

Alec furrows his brows. “Why?” he asks, genuinely bewildered. “I’m old and scarred, and a Shadowhunter to that, Mr Bane. You could have anyone.”

Well, that’s true - Magnus hates false modesty - but Alec Lightwood seems…special. Magnus has known him for all of five minutes and the man fascinates him to no end. He wants - needs - to find out more about him.

“Anyone isn’t you, Mr Lightwood,” Magnus responds honestly.

Alec stands there, staring at him. A roaring applause echoes from downstairs, and they turn to the new Consul, watching as her husband kisses her deeply in front of the hooting and hollering audience. Magnus catches the pained flash in Alec’s eyes at the display. Oh.

Taking a deep breath, Alec turns towards Magnus fully. None of his previous pain is visible in his eyes now, only determination. As if he finally arrived at a decision that was a long time coming.

“Alright, Mr Bane. I would love to have a drink with you,” Alec replies strongly, but then his voice falters a little when he adds, “Just… please, don’t make me regret this?”

And with his heart aching with sympathy, Magnus reaches out and squeezes Alec’s arm gently. “I won’t, I swear… Alexander.”
Alec’s room would surprise anyone who saw it. It’s not a spartan cell, it’s not a room devoid of all personality. No, it’s a window into Alec’s soul, revealing its undisclosed depths. It radiates an unexpected warmth and coziness, from the carpet so thick one could get lost in it to the dark blue micro cotton sheets as light and soft as a feather. And there are books everywhere, stacked piles high on the groaning shelves of the antique bookcases and on every other available surface, old tomes and new paperbacks and everything in-between, mixed in with sea shells and beautifully colored autumn leaves and small stones rubbed smooth. And together with the stained glass windows and old lamps with milky white shades, it all makes up for a room that breathes personality as wonderfully warm and loving as Alec pretends not to be.

Luckily, Magnus Bane’s an astute observer, he sees Alec’s kind soul reflected in his eyes. And when he’s finally invited into Alec’s closely guarded sanctuary, into his room with all its whimsical knick-knacks strewn haphazardly among genuine antique pieces lovingly preserved, he looks up at Alec and with a soft smile he whispers, “Hello, Alexander.”
I Will Go Now

Chapter Summary

I’m trying to unclutter my brain - and my drafts! - and since there are many bits and pieces of scenes that popped up in my head, unconnected, and would not go away, I’ll just put them down on paper - so to speak - to get rid of them.

Jace and Alec. And Jace’s love for Clary. Canon? AU? Who knows. (Unbeta’d)

“I love her, Alec!” Jace shouts. “I love her!”

The obvious - Not you! - doesn’t follow but it doesn’t need to. It’s clear what Jace meant. The silence that settles over them is so heavy that it muffles all the sounds seeping in from outside.

They stand there, in Jace’s room, frozen, shocked by what Jace just said. They toppled over the lip of the chasm that they’ve been teetering on for a long time now, and there’s no way to get back from that.

Alec slowly drops his eyes to the floor; it’s his only reaction for what seems like eternity. Jace, on the other hand, is breathing harshly, almost trembling. He already regrets his outburst; he didn’t lie, but the way he said it…

“Right,” Alec says in a very soft voice in the end, and without looking up, he steps around Jace. “I think I will go now.”

Jace reaches out to catch his arm. “Alec, I didn’t mean–”

But Alec evades him, still looking away. “You did, Jace. And I understood you perfectly. I think we both understand each other perfectly now. Have fun with Clary tonight,” he adds as he reaches the door.

Jace twists around. “But you’re coming with us, right?” he asks anxiously, because he can feel that something’s breaking, irreversibly so. “It’s Clary’s birthday, she was looking forward to having all of us there, at her mom’s.”

Alec stops with his hand on the doorknob; he doesn’t look back at Jace when he replies quietly, “I think that, considering the circumstances, it’ll be better - for all of us - if I don’t go. But wish her a happy birthday from me, okay?”

“Alec…” Jace breathes out, his voice thick with undefinable emotions, but this time, Alec doesn’t stop.

The door closes gently, without a sound.
A Future Foretold

Chapter Summary

Alec, a dying warlock seer and a future foretold. (Unbeta'd)

Alec tries so hard to save the young warlock girl, a pretty thing with seaweed green hair and skin like ebony. He tries \textit{so hard}…

“Just… take my strength,” he begs her, holding her in his arms, squeezing her hand, “I know you can do it, use my energy to save yourself. So do it. \textit{Please}.”

But she just smiles at him. Blue blood is seeping from the corner of her mouth; her stomach wound, inflicted upon her by Valentine’s men, is ugly and gaping. “I would… have to… take it \textit{all}… to heal. Can’t do that,” she whispers raggedly. “I swore to myself… I swore that I would… never hurt another… living being.”

Alec shakes his head vigorously. “Then take just a little, just enough to keep yourself going till we get you help, \textit{please}!”

But the girl whose name he doesn’t know just lifts her free hand and touches his cheek gently, leaving a blue smear on his skin. She’s fading fast and Alec knows it and he wants her to live \textit{so bad}. \textit{Please}!

“Oh,” she breathes out, looking deeply into his eyes, while her own suddenly glow with fierce green light. She looks sad. “He won’t get to see you grow old, Alexander…”

And Alec freezes, his eyes widening when he realizes that she’s talking about \textit{him and Magnus}, that she’s a \textit{seer}, and that she just had a flash of their future - one where Alec doesn’t grow old with his lover.

But before he can say anything, \textit{ask} anything, her hand drops, hitting the wet pavement limply, and the glow in her eyes fades. She’s dead, the prophecy her last words…

Alec doesn’t tell Magnus. He keeps the seer’s revelation a secret, knowing that a future foretold cannot be changed. He hopes fervently that all it means is that \textit{he}, Alec, dies young, that he simply doesn’t get to live to a ripe old age, which only a rare few Shadowhunters get to do anyway. That it’s \textit{just that}.

That it doesn’t mean that \textit{Magnus} dies first. Because it can’t be that. It can’t be. Right?

\textit{Right?}
“What are you grinning about, Goldilocks?”

Jace’s leaning against the door frame, with his arms crossed over his chest and a wide smile on his lips. He looks over his shoulder at Magnus who just stepped out of his workroom, and nods towards the kitchen from where the sounds of pots and pans banging can be heard.

Magnus walks up to him, and leaning forward, he peers in curiously. Then he grins too when hears the raised voices, arguing back and forth about the merits of… liver?

“No… no, no, no, Izzy, you can’t just… no wonder that every time you try to prepare liver, it tastes like an old shoe—”

“Liver tastes like an old shoe, Alec. It’s disgusting!”

“No, it’s not - when prepared correctly. Besides, it’s healthy. It’s full of vitamins and minerals and… Raziel! You can’t mix…! Gimme that! And step away or I’ll whack you with a spoon!”

“Ah,” Magnus says quietly. “Should I prepare for a fire? Or maybe a food poisoning?”

Jace laughs softly, watching his siblings putter around the kitchen - well, Alec’s puttering around, Izzy’s mostly getting underfoot, much to her big brother’s frustration.

“Nah,” Jace replies just as quietly, then he adds in a conspiratorial voice, “See, we actually do know how to cook, Izzy and me, at least well enough not to die of starvation. But it’s so much fun to rile Alec up. Besides, since he won’t let us anywhere near the kitchen when he can help it, he does all the cooking.”

“Sneaky,” Magnus notes, impressed, eyes glinting with amusement.

Jace shrugs modestly. “Years of practice.”

There’s a shout from the kitchen. “No, no, no! You can’t… Izzy, you just made raw liver burst into flames.”

Grinning, Magnus whispers, “I think that’s my cue.” And he’s off to rescue his flat.
“Hey, what’s up?” Jace asks as he enters the kitchen and beelines it for the fridge. He pulls out a box of orange juice and takes a big gulp, then he turns towards Alec who’s sitting at the kitchen counter, brooding.

“Hey,” Alec replies softly, not looking up from the sheet of paper in his hands. He looks terribly serious.

Jace steps closer. “What’s that?” He points at the paper.

“Nothing,” Alec says, quickly stuffing the document back into an envelope, still not even glancing at Jace.

He obviously doesn’t want Jace to see the paper, so it’s Jace’s holy duty as his brother to take a peek anyway. Setting the orange juice down, he grins widely and steals the envelope right out Alec’s hands, ignoring Alec’s yelp of protest.

But when he actually takes a look at what he’s holding, the smile slips from his face. “It’s from a hospital,” Jace notes, and when he raises his eyes, he sees Alec looking away. “Alec…?”

Sighing, Alec wrings his hands on the counter, staring at them. “I had my physical earlier this week,” he explains in a quiet voice. “And my doctor didn’t like some of the results.”

Jace can feel his heart start beating faster. “What results?”

Alec glances up, then he drops his eyes again. “My… my blood work. It was a little… off.”

There’s a high-pitched sound screaming in Jace’s ears and his vision turns a little gray around the edges. Because he has heard something like that once before already. “How… off?”

Alec shrugs. “Not much. It could be anything, too much stress… something similarly innocuous.”

Or not. “The doc just wants to make sure, she wants to stay on top of things. Considering.”

Considering their little brother, Max, died of leukemia three years ago, Jace fills in in the privacy of his mind. He’s looking down at the envelope in his hands, so white and innocent. He notices that his hands are trembling. He can’t lose another brother. Not Alec, not his best friend. Max’s death was a blow that he’s still recovering from. Losing Alec… it would destroy Jace.

“So, what’s the plan?” Jace asks in a hoarse voice.

Alec sighs and rubs his face with his hands. “More tests? And depending on the results, maybe a stint in the hospital? I don’t know. I haven’t even tried thinking further than that? It’s all… white noise,” he admits.

Jace nods, his mouth twisting. “Have you told Magnus yet?”
“God, no!” Alec blurs out, dropping his hands back on the counter.

Jace frowns. “Why not? He would catch the next flight home if he knew, you know that!”

Alec blows out a breath. “And that’s why I won’t tell him anything. Until there’s actually something to tell.” He shakes his head. “This tour means so much to him. And it’s going great, all his gigs have sold out so far. It’s a hit. This…” He waves his hand at the envelope in Jace’s hands, “Is the last thing he needs right now.”

Jace stares at him in disbelief. “You think he would care about that? That you aren’t more important to him than his music? And what about Izzy? You think her dancing would be her priority now, considering? Hell, one word and both would drop everything and come running! And what about our parents—?”

“I know that, I know,” Alec interrupts him, sounding miserable. “But… It’ll sound crazy, but I feel like…” He tries to find the right words. “As long as I don’t tell them, it’s not real, it’s okay, it’s nothing. It might be nothing, after all.”

Jace rests his elbows on the counter opposite Alec with barely a foot of space between them, the offending envelope still held in his dangling hand. “Alec, and what if it’s not nothing?” he asks gently. “Do you want to go through it alone?”

Alec smiles at him sadly. “I’m not alone. I have you, right?”

Jace’s eyes soften. “You know you do.” He reaches out and squeezes Alec’s hand with his free one. His heart breaks a little when he feels the tightness of Alec’s grip, the coldness of his fingers - when he realizes just how scared his brother is. “I’ll always be there for you. But you have to tell them. They love you.”

Alec sighs, still hanging on tight. “I will… after the new tests, okay? After… we know more. Just… not yet, okay? Not yet.”

Jace stares at him for a moment, then he nods slowly. “Okay,” he agrees. “Not yet, brother.”

_Hopefully, not ever. Hopefully, there won’t be any reason to. Hopefully, it’ll be alright._
“Your siblings are cheating cheaters who cheat,” Magnus states that night while they’re lying in bed.

Alec laughs. “You mean the cooking thing?”

Magnus lifts his head from his pillow to look down at his lover in surprise. Alec’s curled up on his side, head resting on Magnus’ chest, and he’s drawing circles on Magnus’ stomach with his finger. “You know?”

Alec laughs again. “Of course I know, I’m their big brother, there’s very little they can hide from me. Or from Max, the little ferret, who then tells me.”

“Then why?”

Moving his head, Alec rolls his eyes up to look at Magnus. “Why do I let them get away with it and cook? Well, because I like cooking, and just because they know how to do it well enough to not die of starvation, that does not mean it’s actually all that tasty. Besides,” he grins, “I make them do the dishes. And if I use five pots when two would suffice? Who would count…”

Slowly, a broad smile spreads over Magnus’ lips, and he buries his hand in Alec’s unruly hair to tug at it gently. “And I thought they were the sneaky ones!”

“Well, they had to learn from someone, right?” Alec shrugs.

Magnus tugs at Alec’s hair some more to get his lover to move up so that he can kiss him. “You, my dear, have undiscovered depths,” he whispers against Alec’s lips.

Alec’s eyes sparkle. “Care to poke around in them?”

Magnus blinks at him, then guffaws. “Oh my God, that was the worst pun I’ve ever…”

But before he can finish the sentence, Alec captures his mouth again. He then rolls them over, settling Magnus on top of him, and runs his rough hands up Magnus’ naked back.

Not much is said after that. Poking does follow, though. A lot of it.
Still the Same Silly Boy

Chapter Summary

Another piece I wrote to unclutter my brain. It’s an alternate ending for book #6 - City of Heavenly Fire. A what if scenario that doesn’t fit with any of my fics.

What if, after they returned from Edom, after the war ended, Alec came to visit Magnus in the infirmary the next morning - and found him gone? I’ll leave it up to the reader why Magnus left, if it’s a solvable misunderstanding or a real end. (Unbeta'd)

“What do you mean, he’s gone?” Alec asks the Silent Brother in a shocked voice. He came to the infirmary to visit Magnus, to see how he was doing - only to be told that Magnus left that morning. “He wouldn’t just leave, not without telling me, not without saying goodbye…?”

The Silent Brother whose name Alec doesn’t know just shakes his head, not knowing what else to tell him. The High Warlock of Brooklyn departed with the first light and, no, he didn’t tell anyone where he was going nor did he leave any messages for Alexander Lightwood, I’m sorry.

Alec exits the building in a state of numbness and starts walking through the streets back towards their home, stepping over rubble without really noticing it. His mind is simply blank. He can’t seem to think. It’s all white noise.

He stops crossing a little bridge, a graceful stone arch over a small brook, and leans against the railing, suddenly too exhausted to move. He stands there, staring at the water gurgling happily below and he feels… unreal, out of touch with the bustle around him.

But then, in a split second, he’s seized with such a fury that his gaze turns red and he starts to shake. He’s angry, so very, very angry - not at Magnus, but at himself. For his own stupidity, his foolishness, his… naivety.

Alec thought - Alec hoped - that after everything, all he had done before and all he did after would actually mean something to Magnus, that everything they’ve been through together would mean more to him than one mistake that Alec made out of… out of a juvenile sense of insecurity. Apparently not. By the Angel, even after everything, Alec’s still the same silly boy, running after Magnus and begging for scraps of affection. Stupid, stupid, stupid.

Sharp pain brings him back, it makes its way through the veil of his self-hatred, and he looks down at his hands; his knuckles are grazed bloody from where he clenched his hands into fists and pushed them hard against the ancient stone. What a fitting metaphor for him and Magnus: him as the bruised flesh and Magnus as the unmovable piece of old rock.

Enough. It’s… enough. Alec’s done. Just done. He won’t keep running with his head against the wall any longer or he will end up permanently maimed. Or worse. It’s over.

He sets off for home again, and this time, his strides are firmer, faster and more determined, his back is straighter, head held higher, eyes blazing.

“How’s Magnus?” Izzy asks the moments he walks in through the main door.
“I don’t know, and I don’t care,” Alec responds sharply, and walking past her, he runs up the stairs, heading for his room to pack.

A moment later, Isabelle appears in the doorway. “What happened?” Her voice is puzzled. Her expression turns into one of alarm when she sees what he’s doing.

Alec stuffs a pile of clothes into his duffle bag haphazardly, without really paying attention to what he’s packing. He just wants to be gone from here. “He left, Izzy,” he answers his sister’s question. “He left Alicante without telling me, without leaving a message, without even saying a damn goodbye!”

She blinks at him in shock. “But… I thought…” she stutters.

“You and me both. So apparently, we were both wrong,” he says coldly. “And I’m done begging, I’m done apologizing. I’m done!”

Isabelle steps closer. “What are you going to do?” she asks anxiously.

Alec zips up the bag and straightens up. “I’m going home, back to New York,” he explains. “Mom and dad have their work cut out for them here. Jace…” He sighs. “Jace can finally be with Clary, in peace and safe. Besides, they’re the heroes of the hour, the Clave will be all over them. But just because we won the war, it doesn’t mean that all the monsters out there disappeared together with Sebastian. Someone has to go back to New York and check on things there, rebuild if necessary. And with so many losses…” He shakes his head. “Even someone like me will be good enough for that.”

“Then I’ll go with you,” Izzy decides in a quiet, but strong voice. And when Alec looks at her in surprise, she adds, “There’s nothing left for me here, either.”

And in that moment, Alec feels ashamed of himself for thinking just about his issues, his problems with Magnus. Because Isabelle lost just as much - no, more than he. At least Magnus left by choice - Simon was taken from her.

How ironic that they both lost their lovers over memories - but where Simon’s were stolen from him, Magnus refuses to let his go.

Alec steps away from the bed and opens his arms. Izzy slips into them and hugs him tight. Her breath shudders and Alec pretends he didn’t see just how red and shiny her eyes were before she hid her face in his chest.

Resting his cheek on the top of her head, Alec whispers, “Yeah, let’s go home. Together.”
Allowed

Chapter Summary

Alec and Magnus, trying. (Unbeta'd)

Alec sits down on the floor by Magnus’ feet. “Hey,” he says softly.

Magnus, who’s sitting on the couch, reading a book so ancient dust puffs into the air every time he turns a page, *hmms*, not looking up.

“I’m sorry I flinched away today when you touched me in front of the others,” Alec whispers, and leaning back against the couch, he loops his arms around his bent knees. His head is down and he’s not looking at Magnus.

Magnus shrugs in fake disinterest. “I guess it’s something I’ll have to get used to—”

“Don’t.” Alec interrupts him urgently, glancing up, then back down again.

Now Magnus lowers his book a little to look at Alec over the top.

“Don’t get used to it,” Alec clarifies, “please. It’s not your fault, it’s all on *me*.”

Magnus sets his book aside, his expression softening a little. “Alec…”

But Alec shakes his head. “I realize that… that they all *know* now, that I’m gay, that it’s not a secret anymore. I realize it in here,” he touches his temple. “But in here,” he rests his hand on his chest, “I’m still not convinced that…”

“That it’s okay?” Magnus hazards a guess when Alec falls silent.

Alec looks up at him. “That I’m *allowed* to have this. I’ve been hiding for so long that… that it still feels unreal sometimes that I don’t have to do it anymore.”

All the tension and disappointment disappears from Magnus’ face, replaced with tenderness and sympathy. “Oh, Alexander,” he whispers and runs his fingers through Alec’s unruly locks.

Alec rests his head against Magnus’ knee and closes his eyes, enjoying the intimacy. “Be patient with me, please? I’m *trying*, I promise you, I am. And I really want this - *you*.”

Magnus smiles, rubbing Alec’s scalp as if he were a giant cat. “I’ll be as patient as you need me to be. Because I want this - *you* - too. And you’re worth the wait.”

Sighing, Alec melts against him and whispers, “Okay, okay…”
Alec and Jace and their unbreakable bond. TW: death story. I bawled. Based on the S2 trailer. (Unbeta'd)

In the end, they kill Jace.

Alec’s not there to see it, to stop it - but he does feel it, the soul-ripping pain so terrible that his mind flees from it.

He falls into a coma and doesn’t wake up for three months.

They’re sitting on a hill by the Lightwood mansion in Idris, he and Jace. Their arms are touching, the grass is warm and the sky is clear. It’s a beautiful summer day.

“You have to go back, you know?” Jace says softly, bumping their shoulders together and looking at Alec from underneath his bangs grown way too long. “It’s been three months now.”

Alec mmmms, but his face is turned to the sun, eyes closed. He’s content where he is. At peace.

“Come on, man. They’re talking about taking you to the City of Bones, to the Silent Brothers!” Jace says, frowning. “They will pick your brain apart just to wake you up. You definitely do not want that.”

Alec shrugs. “I don’t care. They can’t make me go back.”

Jace sighs. “Look, not that I’m not grateful for the company, but you don’t belong here - yet. Hopefully not for many years,” he adds quietly.

Alec looks at him. “Well, you shouldn’t be here either. You didn’t deserve this. And yet, here you are. So, I’m staying, too. You’re my parabatai.”

Rolling his eyes, Jace huffs. “And I’ll keep on being your parabatai, no matter what. Even if you’re out there, actually alive, not imitating a veggie!”

Anxiety passes through Alec’s eyes. “Are you sure about that?”

Jace huffs again. “Look at us: I’m dead, you’re not - and we’re still together, are we not?”

Alec looks down. “I don’t want to risk it.”

Jace’s expression softens. “Hey, and what about Izzy and Max? What about Robert and Maryse–”

“Don’t!” Alec snaps, his eyes ablaze now. “If she hadn’t… Just don’t!”

“Okay, okay,” Jace soothes, hands raised in surrender.

Silence settles over them again, interrupted only by the chirping of birds and the wind rustling in
the tall grass around.

Then Jace tries again. “And what about Magnus?”

All of a sudden, the hills disappear, replaced by the Institute’s infirmary. Jace and Alec are standing by the bed in which Alec’s body lies, pale and unmoving, and there he is, Magnus, sitting on the edge of the bed, holding Alec’s hand. His blue magic is dancing around the fingertips of his free hand, skipping over Alec’s brow.

“Come on, Alexander,” Magnus begs in a whisper; his eyes are desperate and face haggard from exhaustion. “Wake up, please. If they take you to the Silent Brothers, I’ll never see you again. So, please, wake up!”

And then they’re back on the hill, Alec and Jace, sitting side by side, and it’s a warm summer day again. But Alec’s head is down now and his hands are clenched into fists in his lap.

Jace bumps their shoulders together again. “Come on, go back to him,” he coaxes gently. “He misses you - and you miss him.”

Alec turns towards him. “But I miss you, too,” he whispers and presses his hand against his chest. “You’re gone and I’m empty. How can I go on without my parabatai by my side?”

Jace touches their foreheads together. “Knowing that I’m watching over you, always. And that once you’ve lived a long and full life, I’ll be waiting for you - right here.”

Alec squeezes his eyes shut. “Promise?” he whispers.

“Entreat me not to leave thee, or return from following after thee,” Jace replies softly.

And Alec picks up, “For whither thou goest, I will go, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge…”

“Goodbye,” Jace whispers.

And Alec wakes up.
Isabelle and her plan gone awry. Based on the promo/sneak peek and my theory regarding Izzy and Alec (http://drakamena.tumblr.com/post/151556001402/so-victor-threatened-to-have-isabelle-de-runed-if). (Unbeta'd)

All Izzy wanted was to protect her family, to do everything in her power to keep them safe, to keep her brothers safe… Then how did it come to this? How?

She’s standing in the long dark corridor deep underneath the City of Bones, its stone walls dotted with rusting metal doors hiding even darker cells, all empty - until now. She’s standing there surrounded by Victor Aldertree’s people, men and women in dark utilitarian uniforms, but not as their prisoner - as one of them!

And she’s standing there, watching wide-eyed and speechless as her brother, Alec, is led away away in chains…

Victor turns to her with a big smile. “I have to say, Isabelle, I’m impressed by your dedication to our cause. If it weren’t for you, we wouldn’t even be here.”

Victor’s praising words echo down the corridor and Izzy’s heart lurches when she sees Alec stiffen and miss a step, only to be roughly shoved forward by his captors. Silently, she begs him to turn around, to look at her, but he walks on until he’s dragged to a stop and unceremoniously thrown into one of the cells, the heavy door clanging shut behind him.

Victor continues talking as if he didn’t notice her distress, “It’s very sad that it turned out to be your brother, the traitor who aided and abetted Jace Wayland, but don’t worry, his crimes won’t blemish your reputation, I’ll make sure of it.” He pats her on the shoulder in a sympathetic gesture and adds, “You’re on a good track to set things right with the Clave and restore your family’s name now that you’ve proven your loyalty. Great job!”

And with that he turns and goes, taking his people with him, and Isabelle is left standing in the cold damp corridor alone - alone with the armed men guarding her brother’s cell.

To know your enemy, you have to become your enemy. By the Angel, it wasn’t supposed to be like this…
Heartbeats

Chapter Summary

Based on the S2 trailer. Jace and Alec and heartbeats syncing. TW: abuse. (Unbeta'd)

“… ace! Jace…?”

Someone’s touching him. Jace flinches away violently, because touch means pain means agony, terrible terrible terrible terrible things. No…!

“Dammit, hold on. Just… hold on, I’ll get you down…”

And Jace knows that voice. He thinks he knows that voice. Alec, it’s Alec, Alec… but it can’t be Alec, it won’t be Alec, it wasn’t him before, never him, it’s not Alec now, go away, just…

But then his chains jerk and his arms drop - he’s falling! - and he cries out in pain, or he tries to but only a hoarse groan passes through his cracked lips, because his shoulders hurt, his arms hurt, he can’t feel his hands, his back is all fiery agony…

But someone - Alec? must be Alec? is it Alec? please, be Alec! - catches him and gently lowers him down to the floor, and it’s cold and wet, but he’s down, not… not up there anymore, not dangling there like a piece of meat, and then…

… then there’s something soft around his shoulders, soft and so warm and the smell of it, after such a long time of nothing but blood and his own stink, it’s so so… familiar - home and laughter and I love you, too - jacket, a leather jacket.

Alec?

“Yeah, Jace, yes! It’s me. Let me…”

There’s a blinding light that Jace’s aware of even through eyelids swollen shut, and then the agony is less, turned into just pain, he’s used to just pain, he can handle just pain, and then even that’s lessening. What? Oh, an iratze. Lovely…

And as the pain disappears, his body goes limp, his muscles and bones go limp, he hasn’t felt no pain in so long, no pain stopped existing in his world a long time ago, and now he’s toppling and sinking down and he can’t stop himself…

“Hey, no, no, here.”

The voice is warm and gentle, but the hands, they’re even warmer and gentler, and suddenly, Jace’s leaning against something, something firm and warm and covered in a fresh smelling fabric, and there’s a familiar thu-thump under his ear.

… thu-thump… thu-thump… thu-thump…

And his own stuttering, racing, struggling heart’s calming down, allowing itself to be led, following, the two heartbeats slowly syncing.
... thu-thu-thump... thu-thump-thump... thu-thump...

... thu-thump...

Alec.


And Jace’s finally able to. He finally *can*. Because his *parabatai* is here. And everything will be okay now.

He sighs.

... *thu-thump*...
Conduit

Chapter Summary

Magnus to the rescue. And Alec to Magnus’ rescue. And… well. (Unbeta'd)

Shortly after Jace returns to them, they manage to capture one of Valentine’s henchmen.

They should’ve known it was way too easy…

When the man goes up in flames in the middle of the Ops Center - a perfectly timed spell hidden among the runes on his body turns him into a living bomb - it’s Magnus Bane who saves them all. Magnus Bane who was brought in, to the Institute, under the suspicion of… who knows what this time, harassed once more for dating one of them.

And still, he saves them, throwing his hand up and engulfing the burning man in a protective bubble, a shimmering blue barrier, to keep the blast contained - but the explosion keeps expanding anyway, burning brighter and brighter until it’s hard to look at sphere directly.

“What can we do?” Alec asks, standing by Magnus’ side.

Magnus grits his teeth. His face is sweat-soaked, his eyes amber and cat-like. “Get them all out,” he orders. “I don’t know how much longer I can keep the explosion from spreading!”

Alec nods, then turns around and shouts. “You heard him, everyone out! Now! Move it, people!”

There’s a stampede of people running towards the exists, their fear driving them forward. Soon, there are only Magnus and Alec left.

Magnus throws a quick glance at Alec. “You, too!”

But Alec refuses to move, his eyes trained on Magnus’ hand because Magnus’ veins are turning bright red, glowing from the inside. Whatever is happening to him, it’s spreading fast up his arm. “What’s going on, Magnus?”

Magnus’ voice is breathless. “Alexander. I can’t contain so much energy. It will blow up. And I don’t want you anywhere near it when it happens.”

Alec frowns. “And what will happen to you?” he asks.

Magnus sets his jaw and doesn’t answer, staring straight ahead, at the expanding sphere.

Breath catches in Alec’s throat. He looks at Magnus, at Magnus’ hand, at the protective barrier, then back at Magnus… and asks, “Can you give it to me?”

Magnus turns to him in shock and for a second, his concentration fails, which results in the bubble’s sudden expansion, a good two feet in diameter, before he catches it again. Sweat’s now dripping into his eyes.

“What?” Magnus breathes out with effort.
Alec steps closer. His voice is urgent now. “The energy, can you give it to me? Like when I shared
my strength with you, just in reverse. Can you give it to me?”

“No way!” Magnus snaps sharply. “It could kill you!”

“But it’s not impossible, right? You could do it?”

Magnus glances at him again. “I could - but I won’t. I will not risk your life like this!”

Alec glares at him. “Well, tough, because I’m not going anywhere. So, either it blows up and we
both die, or we can actually try and do something about it.” When Magnus doesn’t respond, Alec
prods him, “I didn’t think you were a quitter, Magnus Bane.”

Now it’s Magnus’ turn to glare, but when Alec just stands there, holding his hand out, Magnus’
eyes soften. “Stubborn as ever,” he whispers.

Alec quirks a smile. “That’s why you like me.”

“I do. A lot,” Magnus responds hoarsely and his eyes convey so much more than his words. So
much that Alec’s heart skips a beat.

Then, with a whispered, “Here goes nothing,” Magnus takes Alec’s hand and lets go.

And Alec gasps and drops to his knees under the sudden onslaught of power, and Magnus sinks
down together with him, holding Alec’s hand tight in one of his, the other still outstretched towards
the sphere, that’s slowly shrinking as Magnus pulls more and more energy from it and sends it to
Alec.

There’s light everywhere, Alec’s heart is stuttering and every cell in his body is burning. He can’t
feel anything but the power and the pain that’s quickly turning into agony, but he’s accepting it,
embracing it all, opening himself up to the power that would otherwise consume and destroy
Magnus.

But it’s not enough, it’s still not enough, and Alec can feel himself falling apart, and there’s still so
much power left, and Magnus must feel it, too, he must feel that Alec has reached his limits
because he’s trying to pull back, but Alec won’t let him, he clenches his hand around Magnus’,
because to let go means to let Magnus die, and he won’t allow that!

But, by the Angel, it hurts…!

And then someone’s gripping his other hand and when Alec manages to turn his head slowly,
painfully, he sees - Jace. Jace’s there, kneeling by Alec’s side, holding Alec’s hand in his, and his
shirt is pulled up and he’s running his stele over his parabatai rune to activate it and…

Alec cries out because it feels as if a dam broke and all the power’s rushing out of him, through
him into Jace, his parabatai’s sharing his pain, his ordeal, and he’s staring at Alec, wide-eyed and
anxious.

Then Magnus closes his hand into a fist and the protective bubble bursts, and the blast residue
rushes over them, knocking them down, overturning tables and chairs, making computers spark
dangerously and blowing out windows…

And then it’s over and they’re lying on their backs on the floor, among shards and splinters and bits
of debris, eyes closed and breathing ragged - but alive!
“I turn my back for one minute and you go and almost blow yourself up,” Jace comments dryly. “Do it again and I’ll strangle you, parabatai or not!”

But Alec smiles because the tightness of Jace’s hand around his tells another story completely, a story of I’m here. By the Angel, Alec missed his parabatai so much.

And then Alec turns his head to the right, towards Magnus. He opens his eyes - and catches Magnus staring at him in wonder.

“You really never cease to amaze me, Alexander,” Magnus whispers.

And Alec blinks and blushes a little, because it wasn’t anything extraordinary, what he did, really.

“Well, I was here, too,” Jace reminds them both, sitting up, “but since this will probably lead to smooching, I’ll go and be elsewhere. And you should, too. We don’t want to scandalize the Institute - again!”

And now Alec’s really red and Magnus is grinning and Jace’s still grumbling about something - and everything is alright in Alec’s world, at least for now.
Jace holds a vigil for the dead. TW: death story. Based on the S2 trailer and this theory (http://drakamena.tumblr.com/post/15167798262/whoischristinee-said-what-if-lydia-used-the). (Unbeta'd)

She came to him in disguise, wearing the face of Clary, and nobody on the ship stopped her, they were used to the mind games Valentine played with his son. But then they were discovered and they had to flee - he couldn’t let them simply kill her, he had to try to save her. He had to.

She came to him with a message of hope - “We’re not giving up on you, Jace!” - and now…

Now she’s dead, Lydia Branwell, one of the strongest women Jace has ever known, lying soaking wet and unmoving among piles of drying seaweed and garbage that the sea has washed out on the beach, pale and blue-lipped and with pink stains of blood that has long stopped flowing on her pale blue shirt.

From a much abused pay phone by the beach he calls it in - “Lydia’s dead…” - he tells the people at the Institute where they can find her, and then he hangs up, and sinks down to the ground, forehead pressed against the beaten, graffiti covered phone.

Jace needs to go back, return to Valentine, or his father will rain hell on Jace’s family and friends, a thing that he abstained from only because he promised it to his son, he promised it in exchange for Jace coming with him and staying voluntarily. So, he knows he needs to return, back to the ship…

But he’s just so tired and hurt and hurting. And he can’t leave Lydia alone. She deserved so much better than to be left lying on a beach like a piece of useless driftwood. She was smart and strong and beautiful and funny and loyal and… and if they had met under different circumstances, years before or maybe many years later, they could’ve been - would’ve been! - good friends.

And now she’s dead. Because of him. If Jace were stronger, smarter… better - or maybe if he didn’t exist at all - she would be still alive…

Jace picks himself up and heads back down to the beach. He hides among the trees and sits there, watching as the cold water laps at Lydia’s unmoving feet, determined to wait for someone to come for her.

And then they come and he hoped, hoped and prayed, that it wouldn’t be them, Clary and Izzy and… and Alec. His heart seizes and his eyes burn when he sees them again, his family. They shouldn’t have come. Maryse shouldn’t have sent them, not here, not for Lydia, they shouldn’t have had to see her like this.

Clary and Izzy stop a good ten feet away from the body, Clary slowly sinking down to the sand and Izzy going down with her, holding her, hugging her. Isabelle’s pale but stoic, but Clary, Clary’s crying, she’s crying as if her heart were breaking. And it is, Jace knows it is.

And then there’s Alec. Jace hoped that he would never have to see a look like that on his
parabatai’s face, this frozen mask of pain and horror and guilt - and something else, something dark and terrible that makes Jace a little afraid and very, very sad.

Alec drops to his knees by his one-time fiancée and gently touches her face, pushes her matted hair off her forehead… and even from a distance, Jace can see that there are tears in his eyes. Jace has never seen his parabatai cry, and the weight of those tears is crushing Jace’s chest, making it hard to breath, his own grief compounded by Alec’s.

He can’t take it anymore. Jace just can’t. He gets up and goes, without looking back once. Unnoticed, he disappears again. Alone… again.

Valentine’s certainly waiting already…
Yearning Souls

Chapter Summary

Luke and Alec and the trouble with parabatai. (Unbeta'd)

When Luke knocks Alec off the werewolf boy - who’s an annoying loudmouth, sure, but he still doesn’t deserve to have his throat slashed for being an idiot - and yells at the covering pup to run, the boy rabbits it.

He and Alec hit the ground, rolling apart, and square off. Alec’s crouching low with his Seraph Blade still out and blazing and he’s staring at Luke with nothing but cold murder in his eyes. There’s no recognition in his gaze, none at all - and Luke wonders if he can actually take Alec.

That thought brings him back to his senses, though - God, what is he thinking? - and he straightens up slowly, hands out in a calming gesture.


Slowly, awareness returns to Alec’s eyes. He blinks several times, and finally, he looks away from Luke, down at his hand, at the Seraph Blade in his white-knuckled grip. With brows furrowed in concentration, he loosens his fingers one by one and lets the blade drop to the ground where it de-activates.

All of a sudden, it seems as if all his strength has left him. He sits down heavily, rests his arms on his bents knees and allows his hands to dangle limply. “I’m sorry,” he croaks out.


Alec shakes his head slowly, staring off into the distance. “I don’t know what’s wrong with me lately. I can’t… I can’t seem to keep it together.”

Luke can see that. He sees how pale Alec is, his eyes are fever bright and his hands are trembling, his breathing is ragged and his heart - Luke listens in - is racing, skipping beats here and there.

And suddenly, Luke feels a strong urge to kick himself. He, of all people, should’ve realized!

“It’s Jace,” Luke says, and coming closer, he drops into a crouch in front of Alec.

Puzzled, Alec looks at him. “What is?”

“He’s the reason why you feel so lousy,” Luke replies.

Alec snorts. “That’s one way of putting it.”

Luke explains, “Parabatai are meant to fight together, be together. You can’t separate them forcibly without dire consequences. You and Jace, you are soul-linked, and the distance, the not knowing where he is and what’s happening to him, it’s straining your bond, making you fray around the edges.”
Alec buries his trembling fingers into his hair. “I’m just so angry all the time. I can’t seem to think straight; it’s getting harder and harder. I’m falling apart - how will I be able to help Jace if I’m such a mess?”

The tortured look in Alec’s eyes makes Luke’s heart clench. He remembers his own parabatai bond, his and Valentine’s, when it was still good, when just the idea of losing Valentine made him feel exactly like Alec’s feeling now. But it turned out that Valentine wasn’t worth all the pain and suffering - is his son?

Luke hopes that he is, that Jace - Jonathan Christopher - is worth a thousand Valentines, if only because of Alec’s faith in him. And if Alec’s wrong, like Luke was wrong about his own parabatai all those years ago, well, then Luke will end Jace, just like he should’ve ended Valentine when he had the chance.

He reaches out and squeezes Alec’s forearm. “You’ll help each other, once we find a way to get Jace back. Because I’m sure that he feels just as out of sorts as you. Your souls yearn for each other. And once you are reunited, it will all solve itself, I can promise you that.”

Alec takes a deep, shaky breath, and nods. “Okay, okay,” he whispers. “Get Jace back and everything else will fall into place. Just... get Jace back. All I need to do, is keep it together till we get him back. Okay, I can do that.”

Luke grins and nods. “I know you can. But could you please not hack any of my pack mates to pieces till then? They might not be the brightest bunch in New York, but I still prefer them alive.”

Alec gives him a small, tremulous smile. “I’ll try.”
“Alright, what’s actually the point?” Clary asks.

They’re sitting on the floor in the training room - she and Izzy, Jace and Alec - trying to catch their breath and cool down after a heavy training session. And since this thing has been bothering her for some time, she thought this was a good time to ask.

Izzy looks at her, stretching her tired muscles. “The point of what?”

Clary waves her hand between Alec and Jace. “The parabatai bond? Because so far, all I’ve seen of it, are its downsides. And some glowing magic tracking. But mostly the downsides. You guys have been pretty miserable when apart. So, what’s the point of it? Why would anyone subject themselves to it?”

Jace snorts. “You mean besides the fact that there’s someone always there for you, someone who will never leave you, someone whose presence you feel in here,” he touches his chest, “24-7?”

His light, slightly sarcastic tone makes it sound like he’s joking - but he’s not, Clary can see that in his eyes. He’s deadly serious. And Alec, who’s staring at Jace now, seems to soak up his words like a sponge.

Clary nods. “Yeah, besides that. Because, no offense, but I just can’t see the Shadowhunters using anything just because it makes them feel good. You’re not exactly the touchy-feely types. In general, I mean,” she adds hastily. “Present company excluded.”

Now it’s Alec’s turn to snort. “The bond is a weapon, very hard to beat.”

Izzy grins. “How about you show her?”

Jace perks up visibly and looks over at Alec. “Hey, that’s a great idea! We haven’t done that in a long while.” He jumps to his feet and reaches down to help Alec, who’s grumbling in fake annoyance, up. “Come!”

Izzy gets up, too, and takes down two staffs from the rack. She throws them to her brothers, then pulls out two black scarves from a carved box on the shelf. Clary watches, curious, as Izzy blindfolds both Alec and Jace, who’re facing off in the center of the training room now; Jace’s grinning while Alec still looks vaguely irritated.

When Izzy returns to Clary and pulls her to the edge of the mat, she whispers, “Now watch.”

Without any obvious signal, Alec and Jace charge as one, and Clary can’t help but be mesmerized by their almost dance-like movements. They both twirl their staffs lightning fast, going through offensive routines and defensive motions, stabbing, slashing and hitting hard - but the weapons always pass the other harmlessly, sometimes barely an inch away from vulnerable flesh, so close that they must feel the air moving, but they don’t flinch, both entirely secure in the
knowledge that they’re perfectly safe in their parabatai’s hands. And they are, but their enemies? By now they would be shish-kebabbed or sliced to pieces without mercy or hesitation.

And Clary… Clary finds herself envious. A little. She can admit it, at least to herself. To experience such harmony with someone, to be so in sync with another person… What must it be like? What must it feel like to be a part of someone else, not just figuratively, but literally? And to carry a piece of that person’s soul with you, all the time?

They stop, again without any obvious signal, just one last stab, Alec’s staff a finger-width away from Jace’s ear, Jace’s almost touching the shirt on Alec’s left side but not really. And then they straighten up, pulling off their blindfolds, and they just… stare at each other, their hard breaths overlapping as though they shared one pair of lungs.

And seeing that, Clary feels a little bit like an intruder. Because the intensity of their gaze speaks of more than just a brotherly bond and it’s different than the passion of lovers. It’s much deeper than that. It’s like watching one person split into two, one soul in two bodies but inseparable. She feels like she’s witnessing something entirely too private to be stared at by outsiders.

And then Izzy leans in close and whispers into Clary’s ear, “And that’s what having a parabatai means.”
Of Hearts & Souls

Chapter Summary

Giving someone a piece of your soul is better than giving a piece of your heart.  
Because souls are eternal. –Helen Boswell

This quote gave me a very sad bunny. I was encouraged to write it anyway, so here it is. It’s a death story set many years in the future. (Unbeta’d)

They lay them to rest the way they lived and died - together, the bodies of Alec and Jace lying side by side on one funeral pyre, parabatai till the very end.

Clary’s standing there with her head held high and her back straight. Her eyes are dry, her tears spent. Here and there, through the dancing flames, she catches glimpses of Magnus; the ageless warlock seems… old now, as if all the joy has fled his life when Alec’s heart stopped beating, his face is pale, his shoulders rounded with grief. He’s drowning in pain too profound to be shared with others.

“You knew, didn’t you?” her daughter, Grace, asks quietly, and Clary turns.

Grace is tall and strong, but for the first time Clary notices the touch of silver in her short-cropped auburn hair. Yes, they’re all growing old, even their children now.

“Knew what, honey?” Clary replies.

Grace looks at her and Clary’s heart skips a beat because Grace has her father’s eyes, heterochromatic, though hers are more brown than blue.

“When Uncle Magnus called that Uncle Alec was dying, that we should come and say goodbye, that it was time…” Grace swallows and aims her look back at the blazing fire. “You knew dad would follow him, didn’t you? That he would not be coming back with you that day…”

Clary turns towards the funeral pyre, too, and sees Magnus again; he’s surrounded by his Downworlder friends, people who came to pay respect to Alec, and yet he seems so alone. They’re both alone in a sea of people who mean well but who’ll never get it.

“Yes,” Clary responds finally. “I knew your father wouldn’t survive Alec’s death, not for long. That it was the end for both Magnus and me…”

Grace shakes her head sharply. “Then why? Why did you let him go? He… he was okay. Healthy and strong and…” She chokes on her words. “He should’ve stayed with us! He should’ve helped you lead the Shadowhunters into a new era, he should’ve helped me with the Institute, he should’ve… he should’ve… not died!”

Clary’s silent for a long time. She understands her daughter’s anger because she was angry, too: at Jace, at the unfairness of it all… at Alec, of all people, for getting sick and dying and taking Jace from her, from them! But…

She glances to the left, to where Simon’s standing with his arm around Izzy’s shoulders. He was so
torn over whom to comfort, for whom he should be there, Clary, his *parabatai*, or Izzy, his wife. Because they *both* lost Jace and they *both* lost Alec. Clary told him to stay with Isabelle, that she would be fine, that she would deal…

Because she was prepared, unlike Izzy, Clary knew that they would lose both Alec and Jace. She has known one would follow the other into death from the moment her own *parabatai* bond came to be - because that’s how she felt about Simon.

And that’s why, when they returned to Alec’s bedroom where they left Jace to say goodbye in private, and found Jace lying on the bed by Alec’s side, Alec’s hand gripped in his, their heads together, unmoving and not breathing… *dead*, their hearts having stopped simultaneously, nobody was less surprised or shocked than she.

Clary sighs and answers her daughter’s question, “You assume that there was a choice, that Jace got to choose if he wanted to stay or go.”

Grace swallows a sob. “But he *loved* us,” she protests brokenly. “He loved *you*. You were his heart! So why? *Why*?”

With a gentle smile, Clary looks at her sadly. “Because, my dear, hearts are for the living, for the here and now. But souls, souls are forever. You can survive a broken heart, but not a shattered soul.”

And she can see that Grace still doesn’t get it, she probably never will, having no *parabatai* of her own, not knowing what it truly means to own a piece of someone’s soul, but that’s okay. Some things simply cannot be explained, only experienced.

Clary turns back to the pyre and watches the searingly hot flames dance with a deep ache in her heart, yet with peace on her mind. Because, though she did lose her husband, the love of her life, he’s where he needs to be - and how could she begrudge him that?

The fire burns long into the night.
Chapter Summary

Seriously, what’s up with my muses lately? This time, though, the ending is up to the reader…

AU, present time, no powers. Magnus and the unhappy reality of a small town. TW: homophobia. (Unbeta'd)

When Magnus’ car breaks down in the middle of nowhere, he takes it as a sign and decides to spend his few days off right there, in this little town with exactly one street called - very unimaginatively - Main Street and one - how should he put it? - saloon with no name whatsoever. “Just go to the Lightwoods,” he’s told by the mechanic when he asks where he could get something to drink.

And now he’s here, sitting at the bar in this saloon slash inn slash diner, and he’s simply charmed. After the hectic year he’s had, the simplicity of the little town in the middle of the woods feels… soothing.

Well, there’s the gorgeous bartender slash cook, too, of course. Impossibly tall with unruly dark hair and the biggest, most beautiful hazel eyes Magnus has ever seen. And with a very sweet smile, when Magnus manages to coax it out of him.

Magnus flirts with the man shamelessly, and the blush that creeps into his bartender’s cheeks every time Magnus makes a playful, dirty innuendo suggests that Magnus’ interest might be reciprocated.

That is, until the other bartender slash waiter sends Magnus’ man away, to do something in the back. The impossibly tall one goes, though he throws one last glance over his shoulder at Magnus before letting the kitchen door swing shut behind him. Which is when the new guy, a blondie with strange eyes, leans with his elbows against the bar and glares at Magnus.

“Whatever you think you’re doing, Mr…” He lets it hang in the air.

“Magnus Bane,” Magnus introduces himself. “But you can call me Magnus.”

Blondie ignores Magnus’ outstretched hand. “Mr Bane,” he says pointedly. “Whatever you think you’re doing, just drop it. Leave Alec alone.”

Ah, Alec. Alexander, probably. Nice. “And it’s your business why exactly, Mr…”?

Blondie glares at him for a moment longer, then says, “Jace, everybody calls me simply Jace. And it’s my business because Alec’s my brother and my best friend and I look out for him.”

Magnus’ eyebrows climb up. “And he needs looking out for because…?”

Jace clenches his jaw, then breathes in and out slowly. “Because his wife died recently, Mr Bane. And he deserves better than to have his feelings trampled by a callous stranger who doesn’t care enough to tread lightly.”
Magnus blinks at him, then drops his gaze. “Oh,” he says, deflating a little. He was so sure that Alec was at the very least bi; Magnus gaydar is never, ever wrong. “I didn’t know. I thought he… shared my interest.”

Sighing, Jace softens a little. “He does,” he admits quietly, making sure they’re not overheard. “But it doesn’t mean that the people around here - our parents included! - would be happy about it. Why do you think he got married in the first place?”

Jace sighs again. “Look, I’m sure you’re a nice guy, and Alec deserves a nice guy. And if the circumstances were different, if you were at least considering to stay for a while, I would pat you on the shoulder and tell you to go for it - Alec’s worth it, more than you’ll ever know. But you’ll leave in a few of days and you’ll probably forget you’ve ever been to our little backwater town before you’re halfway to your destination, where ever that might be. But Alec,” his odd colored eyes harden again, just like his voice, “he’ll have to deal with the mess you’ll leave behind. Do you get it, Mr Bane? So, please, I’m asking you: don’t make his life even harder for him than it is, alright?”

With that Jace turns away and heads over to pour beer to another customer.

Magnus is left sitting there alone with his half-empty glass, brooding. Through the little window in the wall behind the bar he can see Alec puttering around the kitchen; he’s cooking something with a focused look on his face and an adorable little crease between the eyebrows.

And suddenly, Magnus is not charmed by this place anymore, he’s simply sad for the young man with the beautiful hazel eyes who definitely deserves better.
Grim Picture

Chapter Summary

Today, I saw people talking about how Magnus would worship Alec’s body, scars included. And my muses ran with it. Of course they did, of course. (Unbeta’d)

It starts as a little bit of fun, just Magnus trying to satiate his curiosity, to learn all he can about his lover.

“Where’s this scar from?” Magnus asks, running his dexterous fingers over a barely noticeable white line along Alec’s ribs.

Alec squirms a little at the ticklish touch. “A rogue vampire tried to cut me to pieces after I knocked his teeth out.”

Magnus laughs, amused, and goes on mapping all the injuries that Alec sustained over the years; a bite here, a stab there, all of them healed, the scars faded, thanks to iratzes applied promptly…

But slowly, Magnus loses his cheer. His playful mood evaporates as the list of injuries grows longer and longer, painting a grim picture of a life lived in constant danger.

“And this one?” Magnus’ voice is barely a whisper when he gently touches the jagged scar on Alec’s neck, almost entirely covered by the large rune there.

Alec, who’s lying with his head pillowed on Magnus’ chest, mumbles sleepily, “Spider demon. Bit me. I was lucky it didn’t nick the artery. I hate spiders. So much.”

And Magnus’ heart skips a beat when the realization hits him that Alexander could’ve died many times over before they even met. That this is the everyday reality of his beloved’s life. And that it’s not funny at all.
Like a Melody

Chapter Summary

Todd Slavkin mentioned he wanted to see Jace play the piano. And my muses ran with it, like they're wont to do. (Unbeta'd)

Jace knows how to play the piano. His father actually insisted that he learn, he wanted Jace to have a well-rounded education. Secretly, Jace loves it.

After his father’s death, after the Lightwoods take him in, Jace stops playing, though. The joy seems to have fled from his music. It takes months for him to crawl out of his shell and seek out the grand piano in the Institute’s library, but only under the cover of the night, when everybody’s deeply asleep. His fingers barely stroke the elegant keys, the melody so soft it doesn’t pass through the thick stone walls. And something inside him starts to unwind slowly, minutely. He finally feels like this place could maybe, possibly become home.

And then the Lightwood’s eldest, Alec, sneaks inside, padding in on bare feet, and when Jace doesn’t tell him to go away - like he has done so many times over the past few months - Alec sits down next to him on the bench by the piano, and watches in fascination as Jace’s fingers fly over the keys.

He falls asleep like that, Alec, in his sky blue pajamas with little bears on them. He nods off, gripping the back of Jace’s t-shirt in his fist, listing more and more to the right, until his head bumps against Jace’s shoulder and stays there, his breath warming Jace’s skin through the thin gray cotton.

And Jace freezes for a moment, skipping a few notes, and looks down at the boy leaning so trustingly against him, asleep without any fear that Jace might hurt him; Alec has no guard up when it comes to Jace, and Jace finds it… a little bit terrifying, to be honest. But also wonderful.

He drops his left hand into his lap, so as not to jostle Alec, and continues to play with just his right one, the melody now incomplete while the piano player finally feels whole. Jace stares down at Alec and thinks, this is right, this is how it should be…

The soft tones of the piano echo through the dark room for a very long time, a lullaby for Jace’s parabatai-to-be.
On a Dark Rainy Night

Chapter Summary

A self-indulgent Malec h/c. Haven’t written one in some time… (Unbeta'd)

When the phone starts ringing, it’s been only an hour since Magnus went to bed. To say that he’s annoyed would be an understatement.

He grabs the phone and without checking the caller ID, he barks, “What?!?”

There’s a pause. “Uhm, Magnus? Did we move?”

And suddenly, all Magnus’ irritation’s gone. It’s Alec and he sounds confused. “Alexander?”

“I mean, did we move? I can’t, hm, I can’t seem to find my way home.”

Magnus frowns, staring at the dark ceiling. “No? You know I wouldn’t move the furniture around, let alone the flat, without telling you.” *Too many stubbed toes.*

“Hm,” Alec replies.

Magnus’ frown deepens and he sits up, snapping his fingers to switch on the lights. “Alec? Are you okay?” He really doesn’t like the way Alec sounds.

“I don’t…” Another pause. “I hit my head. I guess.”

“You *guess*?”

“Hm? Guess what?”

Magnus’ heart lurches uncomfortably. “That you hit your head?”

“Oh. I did?” Alec sounds so puzzled.

*That’s it.* Putting his phone on speaker, he drops it onto the nightstand, and jumps out of the bed to throw some clothes on. “Love, tell me where you are, I’m going to pick you up.”

There’s silence on the other end.

“*Alexander!*” Magnus prompts sharply.

“What? Oh. I don’t…” There’s a sharp intake of breath and then a soft sound, almost a moan. “My head really hurts, Magnus. And everything’s… uh, fuzzy.”

And now Magnus is really freaking out. “It’s okay, darling. Just… stay where you are. Don’t move from the spot. I’ll find you, I’ll come to you. Just don’t go anywhere. Alright? Alec?!”

“Yeah, yes, don’t move from the spot. Got it.”

Staying on the line, Magnus looks around, then grabs the ratty t-shirt that Alec insists on sleeping
in; it’s full of holes and the color is, well, undetermined, but it’s also so soft that Magnus loves to bury his face in it. Now he uses it to track down his lover, who is…

... small alley... dark... rain... a neon sign in the distance... the Jade Wolf!

“I’m on my way, love!” Magnus promises and without waiting for a reply, he hangs up, opens a portal and steps through.

He finds Alec sitting on the ground in the rain; he’s soaked through and he’s staring off into the distance with a distraught expression on his pale face; it sends shivers down Magnus’ spine. His neck is red because the rain water keeps washing the blood out of his hair…

“Alexander!” Magnus calls out as he skids to a halt in front of him.

Alec blinks once, twice, and only then looks up. “Hey, Magnus. What are you doing here?” he asks.

Magnus drops into a crouch. “You called me, remember?” he says, touching the hand in which Alec’s holding his phone.

Alec looks down. “Oh.”

They’re both getting more and more wet, but Magnus is afraid to move Alec until he knows what’s actually wrong with him; he really doesn’t like the look of Alec’s pupils, one only a pinprick, the other blown wide. “You told me you hit your head.”

“I did?” There’s surprise in Alec’s voice, then he furrows his brows. “I… did. My head really hurts.”

“May I take a look, honey?” Magnus asks softly and reaches out.


And Magnus snaps his fingers to make light - that makes Alec flinch and groan in pain - and leans forward. His heart skips a beat when he sees blood trickling out of Alec’s right ear, but he forces himself to very, very gently prob the part of Alec’s scalp that’s most matted with blood.

Alec almost whines when Magnus hits a sore spot, he drops his phone to the ground and fists his hands into the loose material of Magnus’ silk shirt. With a whispered, “Sorry, sorry, sorry,” Magnus runs his fingers over the wound and feels sick to his stomach because he can feel not only split skin, but pieces of bone moving beneath it.

He pulls back to look down at Alec. “Love, I have to heal the fracture… make your head stop hurting,” he amends, seeing that Alec’s not really getting what he’s saying. “Just… don’t move, alright? I’ll make it all better and then we can go home, okay?”

Alec’s eyes are closed when he sighs, “Home? Would be great…”

And Magnus has to swallow hard, his throat’s suddenly too thick, and after he places a very gentle kiss on Alec’s forehead, he sets on healing him.

It takes what seems like hours and Magnus feels a sharp pang every time Alec moans in pain, but in the end, he manages to put all the splintered pieces back together, reduce the swelling and hunt down all the broken vessels and hidden clots. He spends almost all of his strength, almost all of his magic, because he wants to, no, needs to be absolutely positive that there’s nothing left there that
could put his lover’s beautiful, unique, lovely brain in danger.

When all’s done, they’re leaning against each other heavily, Magnus drained, Alec almost asleep, and the rain has long stopped. Magnus is hugging Alec, carding his fingers through Alec’s wet hair, luxuriating in the feel of unbroken, unbruised skin under his fingertips.

“What actually happened tonight?” Magnus asks quietly.

His question rouses Alec. “I don’t know. I had a meeting with… someone… in the Jade Wolf and…” He thinks hard, his brows furrowed, but then he carefully shakes his head. “I really don’t remember.”

Magnus’ face hardens. “Don’t worry, we will find out.” And I will make them pay.

But they never find out what happened that night. So Magnus at the very least makes it widely known that should the person or persons who hurt his lover on that rainy night ever fall into his hands, he plans on cutting them to pieces and keeping them in a jar on a shelf in his workshop. Alec’s mildly horrified by that prospect, but Magnus…

Magnus remembers Alec’s pain and confusion that set Magnus’ heart thundering with fear - and he considers it a punishment fitting the crime.
“You went behind my back!” Lydia calls out, stopping Maryse in mid-step in the short corridor leading away from the Ops Center.

Maryse turns to her haughtily. “I did what needed to be done.”

Lydia walks up to her. “Really? And was losing the Institute a part of your plan, too, Maryse? Because Victor won’t give it back. All this could’ve been avoided!”

Her eyes ablaze, Maryse takes a step forward and whispers belligerently, “Yes, it could’ve been! If only you hadn’t stepped aside when Magnus Bane came to ruin everything!”

Lydia stares at her, stunned. “You wanted me to force your son to marry me?”

Maryse looks around furtively to make sure they can’t be overheard; still, she keeps her voice down. “If you hadn’t let him go, he would’ve married you, he wouldn’t have gone back on his word - if only you had asked him to keep it! Instead, you aided his downfall - and ours, too!”

Now Lydia’s surprise turns to disgust. “You would really sacrifice anything and anyone just to wash your family’s reputation clean, wouldn’t you? Be it Alec’s happiness - or Jace’s life!”

Maryse straightens her back and lifts her chin. “I do what needs to be done.”

Slowly, Lydia shakes her head; there’s sorrow in her eyes. “You shouldn’t have done this. You don’t know Victor Aldertree like I do. Believe me, you’ll come to regret that you invited him into your home.”

And with that, Lydia turns around and walks away.
Chapter Summary

Written for a friend who loves Matt Daddario's hands. The shortiest short that ever shorted! (Unbeta'd)

Magnus loves Alec’s hands, his long fingers and calloused palms, every little scar that makes them perfect in their imperfection. Alec’s hands are made for loving and for killing, for holding babies and for fighting evil, they’re dexterous but sometimes clumsy, too… They’re made for holding Magnus’ heart and for keeping it safe.
Jace's world tips sideways. (Unbeta'd)

Jace has never considered himself a jealous person. Just the opposite, he has always wanted his loved ones to have fun, to be happy, to… enjoy themselves.

Until…

“Come on, Alec! We gotta go!”

Jace barges into Alec’s room like he’s wont to do - and stops, staring, because Alec’s getting dressed. But that’s not what makes him pause, his brain screech to a halt, he has seen Alec in various states of undress many, many times over the years.

It’s the bruises that knock the wind out of him, low on Alec’s hips and all over his back… And then there are the scratches, thin red lines on Alec’s pale skin… Jace knows this type of marks, he wore them many times himself, proudly so. But… Alec?

Alec, his Alec, his parabatai, had sex. The wild kind that leaves one aching for days. Alec and Magnus have been having sex. Since when? Since when have they…? He knew, Jace knew, of course he knew, and he was happy - is happy - for Alec. And yet…

Yet he wants to draw an iratze on his parabatai’s skin and erase all the marks from his body. He wants to… he wants to punch Magnus and stake a claim on Alec, because Alec’s his! Not Magnus’, not anybody else’s! His.

He swallows hard, his throat suddenly dry. He realizes how… messed up his thoughts and feelings are, but it’s as if a wave of emotions welled up inside him and is choking him. His mind is reeling.

Then Alec turns around, calm and collected, and says, “Coming!” as if nothing has changed, as if this is a day like any other - as if Jace’s world didn’t just turn upside down and then tilted sideways for good measure.

And Jace just nods dully and goes. Because… what else can he do? But the image of someone else’s fingerprints all over his parabatai’s body is forever seared into his mind.
They label Alec a traitor. *Alec*, of all people!

Jace doesn’t get the logic behind that. If they went after him or Clary because of their connection with Valentine, or even if they went after Izzy - she *did* free Meliorn and didn’t make a secret of it - he could get it. But Alec? He’s certain that there must be more behind it. But right now? That’s not important. Right now, the only thing that matters is keeping Alec out of the Clave’s hands.

As they march out, he and Izzy among the guards sent out to arrest Alec, ordered to join the manhunt to prove their loyalty - the “*or else*” was heavily implied! - Jace pulls out his cellphone, and with Isabelle shielding him from prying eyes, he quickly types a message, short and succinct…

“Grab Alec and run!”

… and sends it to Magnus. He doesn’t try to contact Alec; Alec would argue, Alec wouldn’t want to leave, Alec would never go on a run, too afraid that his family would pay for his alleged crimes. But Magnus? Magnus won’t stop to ruminate on the hows and whys, not after everything he’s been through with the Clave. “*Forewarned is forearmed*” is not just a saying for Magnus.

Once the message is sent, Jace smashes the phone’s screen with his stele, then breaks the case apart, and quickly disposes of the parts when nobody’s looking. Nothing can be traced back to them, him and Izzy. They seem to be Alec’s only chance in this.

When they arrive at Magnus’ apartment, it’s empty, just the bare bones of a loft left behind, and Jace meets the Clave’s enraged accusations of aiding a traitor with an insolent smirk. “Prove it!”

They can’t. Both Izzy’s and his phone records come back clean - Jace glances at Raj who just stares back at him inscrutably; *thank you, Raj!* - and there’s not a trace of magic on either of them, so no fire messages were used either. They have their suspicions, the people sent by the Clave to investigate, yet they can’t but let Jace and Izzy go. Under strict surveillance, of course, but Jace knows that there are ways around that. There always are!

So now, with Alec safe - Magnus will make sure of it, of that Jace has no doubt - it’s time to untangle this mess. And when Jace finds out who’s behind it, who framed his *parabatai*? There will be hell to pay!
What I Want

Chapter Summary

A missing scene from 112, set directly before the wedding. (Unbeta’d)

Alec’s standing by the stained glass window in his room, staring down at his bare wrist. Soon, a wedding bracelet will adorn it. A wedding bracelet and a wedding rune… He rubs his unmarked skin.

“You don’t have to marry her.”

But I do.

“Life is not about what you want to do, it’s about what must be done.”

I really do.

“Hey,” Jace calls from the doorway, “we need to go. Everything’s ready.”

Alec takes a deep breath and squares his shoulders. “Right,” he mutters and turns around.

Jace frowns. “You okay, buddy?” he asks, concerned, and walks up to Alec.

“I’m fine,” Alec assures him, though he doesn’t sound all that convincing, even to his own ears.

Looking down at the wrist that Alec’s still rubbing unconsciously, Jace reaches out to take Alec’s hand in both of his. Alec lets him and Jace runs his thumbs over the reddened skin on the inside of Alec’s wrist.

Jace looks up. “You can still call it off,” he says mildly. “Just say the word and I’ll go and tell everyone that the wedding’s canceled.”

Alec takes another deep breath. “No, it’s.. it’s fine. It has gone too far already, anyway.”

Jace stares at him in disbelief. “And you think that this is a healthy basis for a marriage?”

Alec looks away.

“Alec, don’t you get how messed up this is?” Jace implores. “You should be happy thinking of your own wedding because you’re about to marry someone you love! It should give you butterflies in your stomach - for the right reasons, not because you’re anxious not to let people down!”

“Well, we both know that I can never have a wedding like you just described, not unless the Clave seriously reevaluates its laws,” Alec replies quietly. It’s as close as he has ever come to admitting the truth about himself to anyone.

Jace’s eyes soften. “Alec…”

In a stronger voice, Alec adds, “And if I have to do it, I would rather it was on own my terms, with someone like Lydia who deserves my respect and who’s a true friend.”
Frowning, Jace asks, “What do you mean, have to?”

“I forgot, you weren’t here for the best part.” Alec responds; he can’t help the jab, Jace’s little cringe does not bring him any satisfaction, though. “Mom and dad decided that I needed to marry. Refusal didn’t really seem like a feasible option.”


And Alec wants to tell him the truth, that all the unsanctioned missions on Clary’s behalf tarnished the Lightwoods’ already damaged reputation beyond repair, that only drastic measures action can save their family, their home and their standing now, things that his siblings have always taken for granted.

He wants to, but he doesn’t. What would be the point? Like he just found out, making Jace feel bad wouldn’t make him feel better. It would simply add to Jace’s own pain and guilt. And that would be just cruel.

Alec shakes his head. “It doesn’t matter. All that matters is that I’m going to marry Lydia today. And I will try to make her happy.”

Jace looks at him for a moment longer, as if sensing all the things that Alec’s not telling him, then he looks down at Alec’s hand that he’s still holding in his own. The inside of Alec’s wrist lost its redness. Jace strokes the soft skin there with his thumb.

“All right,” Jace says softly. “If this is what you want.”

“What about love? Even Shadowhunters fall in love, Alec.”

Alec takes a deep breath to steel his resolve. “Yes, it is.”

Jace nods. “Then let’s go.”
Collateral Damage

Chapter Summary

This has been sitting in my drafts since before the show even started airing, so the whole thing was debunked by S1. But since I already wrote it…

AU. How it could’ve gone down - and luckily it did not. A dark and depressing piece. TW: suicidal thoughts! (Unbeta'd)

Alec wipes the condensation off the mirror and leans against the sink; the porcelain’s cold against his naked skin. He just took a shower but he doesn’t feel clean, he feels sticky with filth that cannot be washed off.

He stares at himself, his reflection slightly hazy with dampness, and he doesn’t recognize the person staring back. His eyes are dull, dark circles making them stand out, his cheeks are pale and hollow… When did he turn into this impostor he doesn’t recognize? The change was so gradual that he didn’t even notice. Too many concessions made, too many pieces of himself surrendered.

And it’s still not enough.

“If you love your siblings, you will do this. For them. For your family.”

They want him to marry a woman he doesn’t even know, all for the greater good, nothing but a pawn in a much bigger game, easily sacrificed for the gain of a more favorable position. Collateral damage.

He used to have it all: parents, siblings, a parabatai… When did he become nothing more than a chess piece to his parents, a burden to his sister, a nuisance to his parabatai… a stranger to his little brother? Where did all the good in his life disappeared to?

Alec smiles, and closing his eyes, he touches the bruise on his shoulder. A love bite. Magnus Bane. The only sliver of happiness left in his life. But what is he to the High Warlock of Brooklyn? A pleasant distraction? A taste of the forbidden? Alec doesn’t know - and he’s too afraid to ask. He couldn’t take another disappointment, another rejection.

He has already given too much of himself to everybody around and there’s nothing left to give. And his parents’ latest polite - but unrefusable - request has become the last straw. Alec feels that if he gives in, there will be nothing left of him, he’ll simply disappear, cease to exist.

He opens his eyes and stares at himself in the mirror, a warrior measuring up his enemy, the seed of a thought taking root in his mind. Would it be so bad? No more demands and disappointed looks, no more pain and grief. Once upon a time Alec hoped for an afterlife where he would meet his parabatai again, maybe his lover - but his parabatai abandoned him, their bond fraying more and more with each passing day, and his lover… is immortal, he will go on living long after Alec becomes nothing more but a memory. Now…

Now Alec hopes for nothing but oblivion, the end of everything.

Still staring at himself Alec comes to a decision that, strangely, allows him to breathe easier: He
will do it. He will marry Lydia Branwell. He will make sure his family is safe, taken care of, under the protection of the Branwells, untouchable to the Clave… one last sacrifice for his family.

And then he will end it all, a thing easily achieved in their line of work, just a hunt gone wrong, a fight against unbeatable odds. Nobody will suspect…

For a moment he wonders, if anyone will even miss him, and then he’s glad he won’t be there to find out. At least one disappointment spared.
All the Little Pieces

Chapter Summary

I took the plot from the Born to Endless Night short story - Magnus’ refusal to marry Alec until the Clave changes its laws - and that one cruel thing Magnus said to Alec in the 4th book, changed a thing here and there and applied it on the show. And voilà, another sad story. How… surprising. Not. (Unbeta'd)

That night, Alec asks Magnus to marry him; again. And Magnus gives him his usual answer: not yet, love. But this time, they don’t laugh it off. This time, they fight. And something precious is irreversibly broken.

Magnus can feel himself becoming angry because they seem to be running in circles, the same arguments and counterarguments every time Alec brings it up.

“I don’t want to marry you until the Clave actually acknowledges our union, until they acknowledge me, a warlock, a demon spawn, as your husband! I want our marriage to mean something to your people, too!”

“I don’t care what the Clave thinks! I’ve cared too much about it for years and it almost destroyed me! I don’t care if we marry in a mundane or a Downworlder ceremony. I just want you to be my husband, officially, undeniably!”

But this time, tonight, it just seems that it’s happened one time too many, their little dance around the issue. He doesn’t understand why Alec keeps pushing and he’s fed up with the fact that Alec doesn’t seem to get what he’s trying to tell him, that Alec’s dismissing Magnus’ need to be acknowledged as an equal!

And Magnus knows that he should let it go, he knows that when he becomes angry, he can be callous and downright cruel, and the last thing he wants is to hurt Alec - he loves Alexander, he loves him so much! - but he just can’t help himself.

“What is it actually about, Alec, huh? Is this your way of making me pledge my eternal loyalty to you? Should I swear off any other lovers till my dying breath, even after you’re gone?”

And it’s the wrong thing to say, he realizes it the moment the words pass his lips, and he wants to take them back, he wants to wind back time and unmake this moment.

Because if Alec simply argued back, yelled at Magnus, threw his words back in his face, it would be salvageable, this situation. Eventually, it would be okay, forgotten, like most of their arguments over the years.

But Alec becomes quiet, completely still. He just stares at Magnus, his face blank. And then he drops his eyes and replies very quietly, “No, that would be selfish of me, unreasonable, considering that in a few decades, maybe even sooner, I’ll be dead. And you’ll live on for centuries to come. I don’t expect anything from you once I’m gone.”

And Magnus’ heart stutters painfully because he can feel their conversation shifting, their
argument shifting… the ground itself shifting. This is not what he meant, this is not it! And he wants to say it, he even opens his mouth to say it, but Alec gets up and leaves. Without another word, without a glance.

He doesn’t ask Magnus to marry him again.
They’re walking down the dimly lit stairwell in Magnus’ building, headed for the main entrance, when Jace grabs Alec by the arm and pushes him hard against the chipped wall on the last landing.

“What the hell was that, Alec?” Jace growls in his *parabatai’s* face, eyes ablaze with barely contained anger.

Alec’s heart kicks up a notch, galloping even faster than before. This is it, his worst nightmare coming true. “I…” he stammers, eyes wide.

Izzy who was walking following them together with Clary steps forward quickly, “Jace, it’s…”

But Jace lifts a finger in her direction to silence her without taking his eyes off Alec. “This is between Alec and me, Izzy. Give us a moment, please. Both of you.”

Alec turns his head to the side, away from both his *parabatai* and the girls. He doesn’t want to have this conversation… especially not in front of witnesses, in front of Clary!

As if sensing that, Izzy whispers, “We’ll wait outside.” And with one last stern look at Jace, she takes Clary - who’s been watching the exchange with wide eyes - by the hand and leads her away.

Jace waits till the main door bangs shut, then he lays into Alec furiously, “What were you thinking? Tell me, Alec, what was going through your frickin’ head?!”

Alec clenches his hands into fists at his sides, still looking away. “It’s all my fault, I know,” he says, “and I’m sorry—”

Jace interrupts him in disbelief. “That’s why you tried to go toe-to-toe with a *greater demon* tonight, unarmed? Because you felt guilty?”

Alec turns to him uncertainly. “What…?”

Jace hits him in the chest, still angry. “I’m talking about how you almost handed your ass over to that monster, you idiot! Did you completely lose your marbles? Are you trying to get yourself killed or something?”

Blinking, Alec stares at him. *This isn’t…? Jace didn’t…? Jace doesn’t know? He still doesn’t…?* Alec feels so relieved that his knees go weak.

“What was your genius plan, huh? Tell me!” Jace continues. “Give yourself up to that thing and hope that it would simply go away, satisfied? Do you realize how scared I was when I saw you…” He swallows his words and looks away.

Alec’s still trying to gather his thoughts. “It *was* my fault, that it broke free, that Clary lost her
memories, *everything*… I wanted to make it right,” he adds softly.

Jace gogles at him. “By *dying*? And since when do we dish out blame? We deal with problems together, like *partners*, like *brothers*… like *parabatai*!”

And yes, Alec understands now how stupid it was, what he did back there. But - what *was* actually his plan? He honestly doesn’t know, he just… *reacted*! He can’t help that his first instinct always is to step between his family and danger.

“I’m sorry,” he says and he means it. He’s sorry. For everything. He messed up so badly tonight.

Jace sighs and pats Alec on the chest. “Just… don’t do it again, okay? Because if you ever - *ever* - try a stunt like that again? I’ll punch you!” he swears, anger - and *fear* - still coloring his voice.

Alec nods, but remains standing there even after Jace quirks up a smile and runs down the steps lightly. Alec’s heart’s still hammering too hard with relief, with the realization that he got a reprieve - *this time*!

Finally, he pushes himself away from the wall and follows his *parabatai*; slowly, though, his knees a little too unsteady to run.
From time to time, for no apparent reason whatsoever, Magnus wakes up in the early hours of the morning with his heart beating a little too hard and his breath a little too fast, all knotted up inside. And he looks to the left, to where Alexander’s lying asleep, just to make sure that he’s really there.

On those nights, Magnus doesn’t dream of Alec dying, of his lover bleeding out in some dark alley somewhere, while Magnus remains unaware; no, those nightmares are reserved for special occasions, for near misses and close calls. But these dreams, they’re much more unnerving in their mundane normalcy.

On those nights, Magnus dreams of being late. Of opening the church door and stepping through and finding Alec with the wedded union rune burned into his wrist. Of missing his chance at happiness by a single minute, maybe less.

It still haunts him, you see, the dread he felt when he walked in and saw Lydia holding Alec’s hand, her glowing stele hovering a hair’s breadth over Alec’s still unblemished skin. If he had stopped even just to take a deep breath, to gather his courage instead of just barging in heedlessly…

*Alec would be someone else’s now, not mine,* Magnus thinks and reaches out to touch his lover, the need to *feel* Alexander almost overwhelming.

When skin meets bare skin, Alec sighs a little and still deeply asleep, he rolls over, towards Magnus, and snuggles in, head now pillowed on Magnus’ chest and one arm thrown over Magnus’ stomach.

Magnus hugs his lover tight and pulls him close, with no intention of ever letting go. He kisses Alec’s sleep tousled hair lovingly and ponders, wide awake, what a difference a single minute can make in one’s life.
“Shadowhunters don’t celebrate Christmas, as you know,” Alec says, “but Izzy thought that you might and, well…” He shrugs.

It’s Christmas Day and Magnus’ loft is all warm and cozy while outside snow is falling thickly, covering everything several inches deep already. Alec and he are sitting on their rumpled bed, both cross-legged and bare-chested, facing each other, and drinking hot cocoa.

“I’m not Christian,” Magnus replies. “Over the centuries, I’ve dabbled in many religions and every one of them disappointed me, in one way or the other.”

“Oh,” Alec mumbles and quickly closes his hand around something, trying to hide it.

Noticing it, Magnus rushes to add, “But I’m all for any holidays that come with presents! So,” he grins and sets his cup aside, “what did you get me?”

Alec shifts uncomfortably and blushes a little. “Well, turn around.”

And Magnus does, he even closes his eyes for good measure. He can’t wait to see what Alec got him, but the anticipation is just as thrilling as the present itself.

When something heavy settles on Magnus’ chest, he opens his eyes and looks down. It’s an old-fashioned arrowhead on a leather cord, and when he takes it in his hand, he notices that there are runes etched into its silvery surface, one on each side.

“What is it?” he asks curiously and rubs his thumb over one of the runes.

Alec moves closer and hooks his chin over Magnus’ right shoulder. He winds his arms around his lover in a loose embrace and takes the arrowhead in his long fingers.

“I know that runes don’t work for you, that you have your own magic, but… “ He shrugs again, “It’s the only magic I know how to use, so. I made you an amulet, for protection.”

“You made this?” Magnus asks in awe. “It’s beautiful.”

“Yeah, well.” Alec clears his throat. “This rune,” he runs his thumb over a large squiggle, “means ‘protected’. And this one,” he turns the arrowhead and strokes the smaller, simpler rune, “means ‘bridge’.”

Magnus smiles. “I get the ‘protected’ part. But why the ‘bridge’?”

“It symbolizes a connection,” Alec explains, “Jace and I, we use the rune for tracking, and when we both activate it, as parabatai, its magic becomes even stronger. But in this case,” he kisses Magnus’ ear, “it’s to remind you that I’m always there with you, no matter what.”
Magnus has to blink hard to push back tears. He’s deeply touched. He can’t remember anyone ever wanting to protect him from harm, thinking he even needed it. Everyone has always seen him as the mighty, unbeatable warlock - it has never occurred to anyone that he might be as easily broken as them.

Until Alexander.

“It’s wonderful,” Magnus whispers in a thick voice. He leans back and turns his head to capture Alec’s mouth in a gentle kiss. “Thank you.”

Alec tightens his hold on Magnus and pulls his lover more snuggly against his chest. “You’re welcome.”
In the S2 trailer, Izzy tells Clary: “Jace is tough, Valentine will never break him.” But what if he did? This story has been sitting in my drafts for months now and lo and behold, suddenly it became relevant. (Unbeta'd)

To protect Valentine Morgenstern, their leader, *his father*, that’s Jonathan’s mission. Which is why, when the cursed Shadowhunters attack, Jonathan and his men stand their ground, determined to defend their position until their very last breath.

It’s one big melée, confusion and tumult on the battlefield, and Jonathan is slashing and stabbing and punching, not giving an inch. His enemies are trying to avoid him, which baffles him, they’re yelling something at him, but he doesn’t pay any attention to them, nothing matters but protecting their leader.

And there’s a man headed his way, cutting through Jonathan’s forces with surprising dexterity and determination, and when their eyes meet, his and the stranger’s, Jonathan knows that he’s the man’s target, and he nods with a smirk, inviting the man to *bring it*.

Finally, the man’s there and everyone takes a step back, as if they sense that this is their fight and nobody should interfere. And Jonathan hefts his weapon and rushes forward, intent on making it a quick kill, because the man might be good but nobody’s better than *him*!

But instead of taking up a defensive position, the man just stands there, his arms lowered, his weapon deactivated - and it suddenly occurs to Jonathan that it might be a trap, but he can’t stop anymore, so he yells and stabs!

And everything seems to freeze. The sharp point of his weapon rests against the man’s chest, over his heart, one push and the stranger’s dead, *just one push* - but Jonathan… can’t. *He can’t!* He growls and grits his teeth and tries again, he pulls back and whirls around, lightning fast, to cut the man’s head off, but the moment his blade touches the man’s throat, all muscles in Jonathan’s body lock and freeze and he can’t move! *What is this?*

“Jace…” the stranger whispers, still not moving, still not doing anything to defend himself. “Jace, *please*, come back to me.”

And Jonathan looks up sharply, breathing hard, frustration making him growl. *Jace*, that’s what the others were yelling at him, but he did not pay them any mind, their words meant nothing to him. But this stranger’s voice… it’s setting Jonathan’s mind on fire, all the nerves in his body seem to be vibrating. *What is going on here?*

The stranger’s hazel eyes are pleading with him, imploring him to listen. “Jace, my *parabatai*, my brother, *please*, come back to me.”

And now Jonathan’s head is starting to hurt. His hand is trembling, the glowing Seraph Blade dancing dangerously close to the man’s throat. *I’m begging you, my parabatai, my brother. Please, Alec, come with me*, flits through his mind, a flash of a memory, of this man, sitting on the ground
“Kill him, Jonathan!” Valentine orders, his voice carrying above the din of the battle. “Kill him and be finally free!”

And Jonathan breathes in harshly and steps closer, he leans against his blade and grits his teeth… but he just can’t! His head’s now pounding so hard he can barely think straight, and the man’s just looking at him, just looking, asking for Jonathan’s trust with his eyes alone, giving himself over, trusting that Jonathan will not hurt him, and Jonathan…

Suddenly, there’s a weapon, a knife, a flash that Jonathan catches out of the corner of his eye, and he whirls around and cuts down with his blade, dropping the knife in mid-flight, and he steps between the stranger - no, not a stranger, Alec, his name’s Alec, and he means something to Jonathan, he’s important to Jonathan! - and his father. It was his father who threw the knife that would’ve killed Alec. And Jonathan took Alec’s side.

Valentine stops then and shakes his head in disgust and disappointment. “Still as weak as ever. You’re a useless failure, nothing more!”

And his words hit Jonathan so hard they drive the breath out of his lungs, the blow is so painful it feels as if he were stabbed through his heart. He never wanted to disappoint his father, never.

He stands there, an apology on his lips, and yet - he still won’t move from his place in front of Alec, because disappointing Valentine is painful, but allowing Alec to be hurt, to be killed… that would be life shattering.

Valentine’s about to shoot him, to kill him, a failure discarded, and all Jonathan can think of is, huh, what a mundane way to die…

But then he’s tackled from behind, tackled and pushed down and covered and protected, every inch of his body, and when the shot rings out, it passes harmlessly over him and… Alec, it’s Alec covering him, Alec exposing his own back, making himself a target instead of Jonathan… Jace, instead of… Jace.

Because that’s him, Jace. Jace Wayland. And he’s staring wide-eyed at the muddied ground, weapon lost somewhere, and the Shadowhunters are closing ranks around them now, and Alec’s still holding him down, whispering, whispering something in his ear.

“Stay down, Jace, stay down, I’ve got you, just stay down, please.”

And Jonathan… Jace, Jace feels as if a glass shard was driven into his brain, it hurts so much, and he knows that Valentine’s running, his father is leaving him behind, you’re a useless failure, nothing more, but Jace realizes with startling clarity that he doesn’t want to follow him, he wants to stay where he is.
He goes limp, completely limp, all the fight has gone out of him. He’s breathing harshly because his reality is falling to pieces and different pieces are falling into place, one picture replacing the other, one reality erasing the other.

There’s a hand in his hair, long fingers brushing his blond strands aside with gentleness that Jace hasn’t felt in months - years?

“I’ve got you,” Alec promises softly and he’s hugging Jace now rather than holding down. “You’re safe, you’re finally safe.”

And Jace believes him, don’t ever doubt me and you love me, so? I love you, too, Alec. He lets go.
In Memory

Chapter Summary

Alec and Magnus, a carved pumpkin and some plastic bats - and the memory of Ragnor Fell. A Halloween story. (Unbeta'd)

When Alec comes by that evening, he finds Magnus sitting at the kitchen table. The lights are set on low and there’s a carved pumpkin on the table in front of Magnus, its maniacal grin lit by the candle burning inside its gutted body.

“Hey,” Alec says softly and drops into a crouch at Magnus’ side when he sees his lover’s slumped shoulders. He touches Magnus’ knee and looks up at him. “What’s going on?”

Magnus shrugs. He’s tearing at the corner of the pumpkin’s broad grin with his nails, staring into its triangular glowing eyes. “It’s Halloween tomorrow.” He falls silent, then adds, “Ragnor loved Halloween.”

Ah, Alec thinks and squeezes Magnus knee gently.

“It was his favorite holiday, the only one he celebrated here, in the States. He always said that it was the only day in the year when people like us, you know, warlocks, could go outside looking like… like us without fear.” He turns to Alec and looks down at him with his cat’s eyes aglow.

Alec reaches up and runs his thumb over Magnus’ cheekbone. He loves his lover’s eyes.

Magnus leans his cheek into Alec’s palm, his eyes turning back to human again, and continues, “I was looking forward to Halloween - I love it, too, you know? - and I carved the pumpkin and I decorated the flat–”

Only then does Alec notice the plastic bats and more pumpkins and other silly things - everything except for spiders, Alec hates spiders and Magnus knows it - hanging all over the walls and windows and furniture and cluttering every available surface.

“–and then I picked up the phone to call Ragnor to ask him about his plans this year, and…” His voice falters. He looks down at the dark cellphone lying on the table, and Alec lets his hand drop. “And then I remembered that he was dead. My best friend for centuries died and I didn’t even have the time to mourn him properly with everything that was happening.”

Alec’s heart aches for Magnus. And for Ragnor, the warlock he never had the chance to meet. And who would’ve never died if it weren’t for them, his friends and him, and their baggage.

“I can’t replace Ragnor, I can’t replicate what you had with him, the sense of kinship he gave you,” Alec says quietly. “But maybe I could listen? Would you tell me about Ragnor Fell, Magnus?”

Magnus turns back to him again and slowly, the corners of mouth quirk up in a small smile. He reaches out, catches Alec’s face in his hands and pulls Alec into a soft kiss.

“Yes, Alexander,” he whispers against Alec’s lips. “I would love to tell you all about Ragnor Fell.”
Chapter Summary

I borrowed a plot from the books, tweaked it here and there, and then slapped it onto the show setting. Mainly because I wanted to see that one character be all bad-ass!
TW: gore. (Unbeta'd)

All the wards are down in Alicante, its famous Demon Towers have gone dark. Magnus and the Silent Brothers have been working on the problem hard, but they still haven’t been able to figure out what Valentine actually did to bring the shield down. They need more time. And the Shadowhunters will do everything in their power to give it to them.

The battle has been raging since dawn, for hours now, the battlefield drenched in hard driven rain and sleet. The ground is muddy and torn, puddles of water tinged red with blood everywhere. And then there are the bodies, corpses of both friend and foe, cut and gutted, some even unrecognizable...

Alec knows that even if he survives this day, he’ll never be able to erase it from his memory, the sights, the smells, the sounds, just all of it, it’s etched into his memory forever. If he had a moment to spare, he would retch.

When the first tentative rays of dawn lit up the steel colored horizon, the lines of defenders were three deep, Shadowhunters standing shoulder to shoulder to protect their home from Valentine’s assault. Now, several hours later, there’s only one line left and it’s buckling, threatening to break. And if it does, all’s lost.

They asked the Downworlders for help, they downright pleaded, but only Luke and his pack came, everybody else decided to stay out of it, to see which side won first, if Valentine or the Clave. The Seelies, the vampires and the warlocks, even most of the werewolves, they see no difference between Valentine’s army and the Nephilim, if they destroy each other then good riddance. They don’t ask who would fight the demons once all Shadowhunters were gone. Not yet.

Only Magnus came and without needing to be asked at all, without demanding any kind of reward. He did it for Alec, and Alec loves him for it even more, if it’s even possible. He just hopes he’ll get to see his lover again.

But he can’t think of that right now. Actually, he doesn’t of anything at all, his mind’s strangely blank. All he’s focused on is hacking, slashing and stabbing, on killing as many enemies as possible. He knows that his parents and Izzy too are fighting somewhere to his left - at least he hopes that they still are, he can’t even spare the second to check - and Jace and Clary are somewhere to the right. At least Jace’s alive, of that Alec’s sure since their bond’s still humming strongly. At least that. But even with all his runes activated and new ones drawn, he’s getting tired, and the enemies still keep coming, their ranks seemingly endless. It’s just a matter of time.

And then the woman next to him falls, killed by a thrown dagger, and Alec has to step in to fill the gap, but he knows he won’t be able to keep it up long. Or at all, actually, because suddenly, he’s faced with three men at once, and though he cuts the first one’s head off and guts the second, the third manages to slip through his defenses and he stabs Alec in the side. Alec turns lightning quick
and slashes the man’s throat but it’s too late, the damage is done.

He stays on his feet a moment longer, but then he’s falling. He hits the ground with a wet splash, water and mud and blood - so much blood - everywhere and the enemy soldiers flow over him. The Demon Towers are still dark and he let the line break. He failed.

There’s a man standing above him, grinning down at him with a sharp blade raised to finish Alec off, but Alec can’t even move to defend himself, he’s just too weak, too cold. He stares at the slate colored sky and his mind is flooded with regrets.

But before the man can stab down, there’s a sharp cry and he’s tackled and thrown aside. Alec turns his head slowly. Rain’s pelting down hard on his face, forcing him to squint, so for a moment all he can make out is a whirlwind of black leather and a long hair, a Seraph Blade slashing so fast it’s become a glowing blur.

Mom? he thinks, shocked. Because it really is Maryse, like he has never seen her before, a veritable goddess of war, cutting a swath through their enemies to protect her son, and Alec think he has never been more in awe of her than in this moment. This is my mother, Maryse Lightwood, beware.

When she wins them a moment of reprieve, bodies piled up high at her feet, and some of the Shadowhunters around them regroup and tighten up the line again, Maryse drops to her knees next to him, getting even more mud on her already stained leather pants. She’s saying something, her dark eyes big and frightened in her pale, blood spattered face, but he can’t hear her. He tries to reach out, but his hands are shaking too badly.

And then she’s pulling up his shirt and activating the *iratze* on his flank - it was her idea that he place it there, “See, son, it has to be easily reachable…” - and drawing another one, a temporary one, and another, and then a pain killing rune, even though he’s too numb to feel anything at all, and the one that slows down bleeding. And Alec loves her so much.

So he tells her. “I love you, mom.” And he sees her falter and almost drop her stele and there are tears in her eyes now, actual tears. He has rarely seen his mother cry. Almost never. And he never wanted to be the cause.

And as the runes start taking effect, the loud whooshing sound in Alec’s ears quiets down, and he can hear now what she’s saying to him. It’s a litany of, “You will be okay, you will be fine, you won’t die here, I promise, I won’t let you, you will be just fine.” There’s so much despair in her voice that he wants to reassure her, to tell her that it is already okay, that they are okay.

But in that moment, bright light floods the battlefield from behind them, almost blinding in this dim daylight under an overcast sky, and the fighting stops and everybody turns - the Demon Towers are glowing again, the shield is up. And the enemy is running. They made it. They actually made it.

Alec rolls his head around and back to see and it’s such a beautiful sight, the glowing spires stabbing up into the low-hanging clouds, that a smile slowly spreads over his face.

“Magnus did it,” he whispers proudly. “He did it, mom.”

She’s touching his face now, her palm on his cheek, a loving touch, and when he looks at her, she’s smiling down at him through her tears, nodding. “Yes, he did, baby, he did.”

And on that thought, Alec lets himself fall, he closes his eyes and drifts away. It’s done. They won
the day. He can finally rest now.
This is a dark, depressing story all about death. It’s also a very uncomfortable story. It made me uncomfortable when I was writing it, and I think it’ll make you uncomfortable while you’ll be reading it. Just a fair warning. TW: race issues, gore; it’s dark, I’m not kidding! (Unbeta'd)

“Isn’t it amazing? Isn’t it fantastic, Magnus?” the purple skinned warlock with a thick, long rat’s tail shouts, almost vibrating with joy. “They’re dead. All dead! All of them! Not just Morgenstern and his cohorts, but all the Nephilm, all of them, the devil take them!”

Magnus looks uncomfortably at the closed door of his bedroom. It was a really bad idea to let his old friend in. “Finkus–”

Finkus turns to him. His yellow eyes are glowing. “Can you even imagine it? A world without Shadowhunters? We’re finally free! No more threats or bigotry, no more oppression, no more anyone thinking themselves our betters!”

Magnus tries again. “Finkus–”

But Finkus doesn’t let him finish. He steps closer and grabs Magnus’ hands in his, pumping them in unrestrained, vengeful glee. “We’re all going to celebrate! Our people are calling for a big party. Tonight, in Pandemonium. My friend, you will make a fortune on drinks alone, that I can promise you!”

“Finkus!” Magnus finally snaps. “Shut up.”

Furrowing his brows, aggrieved, Finkus lets go of Magnus’ hands and takes a step back. “What’s up with you, old friend?” And then, as if remembering, he snorts and rolls his eyes. “Don’t tell me it’s about your boy toy! You can have ten others - on each finger. You can do anything you want, anything, now that they’re gone.” He chuckles. “Who would’ve thought that Valentine Morgenstern of all people would do us a favor and destroy his whole race?”

“Enough!” Magnus roars and his cat eyes glow brightly, dangerously. Because he was there, he was right there when Valentine’s spell went wrong and wiped out everyone, every single person with even just a droplet of Nephilim blood in their body. He saw the mangled bodies, turned inside out, he saw everything! And there was absolutely nothing funny about it. “Get out! Out before I forget that we’re friends!”

Finkus cringes before Magnus’ unleashed power, then quickly scampers off without another word. The door of Magnus’ flat slam shut behind him.

Magnus takes a deep breath, heavy and shuddering, and lets go of his power. Then his shoulders slump and he turns towards the closed bedroom door again. He swallows anxiously and reluctantly walks up to it. With one hand on the doorknob he stands there for a moment, gathering his courage. Then he opens the door.
The bedroom is dark, the only light’s coming from outside - and his lover is standing at the window, silhouetted against the lighter sky. He stands there with his back straight and head held high, staring out. Only the tension in his shoulders and his arms tightly crossed over his chest reveal his distress.

“I’m sorry,” Magnus whispers, when he closes the door and leans against it. “I’m sorry you had to hear that.”

Alec doesn’t turn around. “My friends, my family, everyone I’ve ever known, they’re all dead. And your people are celebrating,” he replies hoarsely.

Magnus winces. “Many of them have suffered terribly under the Clave’s rule,” he whispers; it’s not an excuse, but it’s an explanation. “They’ve lived so long in fear of the Nephilim; Valentine wasn’t the only ‘bad apple’ and you know it. And now they feel like they’re finally free. Safe.”

“So, we were all guilty by association and we deserved to die, is that what you’re saying?” Alec says, his voice bland, empty.

No, it’s not what he’s saying at all, but Alec’s too grief-stricken, too bitter to listen.

Alec continues, “You could say that my parents deserved to die. That I deserved to die for bending my head and following the Clave’s rules and laws. But Izzy? She risked everything to save Meliorn. And what about Max? He was a boy! What did he do that he deserved to be murdered? Why do your friends celebrate a child’s death, Magnus?” Alec turns to him now, his face remains in the shadows, though. “Explain it to me, because I can’t wrap my mind around that, I really can’t.”

But Magnus has no answer. Because even though he does understand the Downworlders’ gleeful reaction to the Nephilim’s extinction, the feeling of all-encompassing freedom they now experience - he can’t empathize or agree. He knows it’s misguided. It’s wrong. And not just because his lover’s one of them.

Alec turns back to the window. He stares out into the growing dusk listlessly and his face, what Magnus can see of it, looks haggard in the dim light. “You should’ve let me die with my people,” Alec whispers.

Magnus’ heart clenches at that. Because he couldn’t. He couldn’t!

When the Shadowhunters started to fall one by one, when their bodies started to twist and burn from the inside, when Magnus realized what was going on - he couldn’t let that happen to Alec. He just couldn’t. Even the thought of Alec dying such a torturous, painful death causes cold sweat to run down his back.

And so he erected a protective barrier around Alec - he couldn’t do more, as much as he wanted to, not against angelic magic of that magnitude - and then a shield around the loft, wards that have kept the effects of Valentine’s spell - the spell that ferreted out every child of Raziel’s on earth and killed them gruesomely - away from Alec ever since, that have kept Alec safe. But should Alec ever step outside them… Magnus shivers. He needs to find a way to cancel out that spell once and for all!

Alec sighs and leans against the window, forehead pressed against the cool glass. “It doesn’t matter,” he whispers and Magnus looks at him sharply. “It’ll all come to an end soon anyway. Because when the demons come - and they will come now that nobody stands guard - the world will burn. And we’ll all burn with it.”
And Magnus shudders at the prophetic words.

Five months later, the demons attack in droves, laying waste to everything in their path - and there’s no one to stop them.

Nobody’s laughing anymore.
Of the Deep Desire to Punch Raziel

Chapter Summary

There are several things that Magnus hates about Alec being a Shadowhunter...
(Unbeta'd)

There are several things that Magnus hates about Alec being a Shadowhunter, most of them pertaining to all the dangers that Alec has to face every day.

And then there are the *runes*.

Oh, Magnus can appreciate their power and all the advantages they give to his lover, they represent angelic magic at its best and strongest. But they also turn Magnus’ stomach.

It’s not the way they look, Magnus doesn’t mind the patterns and scars on his lover’s skin. What bothers him is how they’re created. Because there are many that are permanently etched into Alec’s body, very similar to tattoos in that way - and then there are the temporary ones that need to be drawn over and *over* again, whenever they are needed.

And they’re *burned* into the skin, its top layers sizzling and smoking, turning black, parting and revealing the glistening, raw flesh underneath. And the smell is just *sickening*. Like burned pork.

And the fact that it’s Alexander’s lovely skin that’s being burned away, however temporarily? Yeah, Magnus might turn into a vegetarian one of these days.

And then there’s the *pain*. Magnus can’t not notice how Alec furrows his brows, how he bites his lip when the rune is a complicated one and drawing it takes its time. Nobody should suffer like this just to be strong enough to protect others from beasts of dark magic. Nobody, but *especially* not Alexander. Magnus would enjoy punching Raziel in his undoubtedly perfect teeth for that.

But since that wouldn’t help Alec much, Magnus at least insists on making this a collaborative process - Alec indulges him with a smile; “Magnus, I’m used to it, you don’t have to… alright, *alright*, just stop making that face!” - and when the application of a rune becomes too painful, Alec allows Magnus to dull his pain with a pulse of sparkling blue magic.

And Magnus is happier that way. And Alec doesn’t hurt as much. And the runes work regardless, so there. Still, Magnus finds himself eating much more greens these days than ever before. Alec is curious but he doesn’t ask.
“Hey,” Magnus says quietly as he sits down next to Alec on the stone steps leading up to the side entrance of the Institute.

Alec raises his head from his crossed arms that he has resting on his bent knees and looks at him bleakly. “What are you doing here?”

Magnus mirrors Alec’s pose. “Lydia called. She said you needed me.”

Sighing, Alec runs his fingers through his tousled hair. “Did she tell you why?”

Magnus shakes his head. “No, only that I should come.”

Alec’s quiet for a very long time while Magnus waits patiently. Then he says softly, “We lost the Institute.”

Magnus’ eyes widen slightly. “What?”

“The Clave sent a new representative, Victor Aldertree, to take over, for good this time, not temporarily,” Alec explains in a flat voice. “From what Lydia told me, they consider her judgment compromised, and she’s been relieved of her position, too. There’s a chance that we might even be recalled back to Idris, to face an investigation into our involvement with Valentine.”

“Alexander…” Magnus whispers.

Alec shakes his head. “Mom and dad’s past, all the unsanctioned missions to help Clary, Valentine’s daughter, Izzy’s involvement in Meliorn’s escape, the fact that Jace left with Valentine—”

“He did it to save us!” Magnus protests.

Alec makes a sharp, cutting gesture with his hand. “I know that. But they don’t care, Magnus. They just do not care.” Alec fists his hands into his hair. “It was the Branwells who brought it all up before the Clave and pushed for a thorough investigation, for our demotion, Magnus. They supported Aldertree as the new head of the New York Institute. This… this is not about justice, it’s payback.”

“Oh,” Magnus breathes out, swallowing hard. “For the canceled wedding.”

Alec clenches his eyes shut. “It’s all my fault. I ruined my family, I ruined Lydia, everything she’s managed to scrape back together after John’s death. Apparently, her family has had it with her and her scandals, and they don’t care that it wasn’t her fault this time. I destroyed everyone because I
was selfish, for once in my life, I was selfish and look at how it turned out.”

“Do you regret it?” Magnus asks warily.

“How could I not, given the consequences?” Alec responds bitterly, but when Magnus tries to move away, Alec snatches his hand and grips it tight. “I don’t regret this, Magnus,” he says, lifting their joined hands. “I could never regret this. But I do regret how it came to be, that I was a coward. I hurt so many people!”

Magnus squeezes his hand. “You’re no coward, Alexander. To hide when you have every right to fear the consequences should the truth come out, isn’t cowardly. I know all about it, believe me,” he implores. He can’t take the self-disgust in Alec’s face.

Alec shakes his head. “But I did more than hide, Magnus. I hurt people!”

“We all make mistakes, Alexander.” His voice turns slightly bitter. “Another thing I know from experience.”

Snorting, Alec responds dryly, “I think that leaving a woman standing at the altar - a woman who’s been nothing but kind to me - is more than a mistake.”

Magnus reminds him gently, “And yet, the same woman called to tell me that you needed me. What does it tell you?”

“That she’s a better person than me.”

“That she doesn’t blame you, and that she’s forgiven you already,” Magnus corrects him.

Alec drops his eyes. “Maybe so, but that doesn’t change the facts.” He shakes his head. “I don’t know what to do anymore, Magnus,” he admits despairingly. “Every time I try to… to… fix something, I only make a bigger mess of things. Sometimes, I honestly wonder if everybody wouldn’t be better off without me.”

Magnus grips Alec by the chin and turns Alec’s head towards him. “Don’t ever - ever - say or even think anything like that again,” he rebukes Alec sharply. “Not one person who loves you would ever think they were better off without you. Not your parents, not your siblings, and not your parabatai. And definitely not me!” he adds more softly, gentling his touch into a caress.

Alec closes his eyes and leans into Magnus’ hand. “I don’t know how to make it right, for anybody,” he confesses.

“Alexander, other people’s mistakes are not yours to fix,” Magnus says kindly. “As you said, this all came to a head because one family’s slighted pride, but it all started long before that, long before you were even born. Don’t let anyone convince you that this burden is all yours to bear.”

Alec sighs. “So, what should I do?”

“As someone who has faced many huge, seemingly unsurmountable problems in his lifetime, I would advise you to take it one step at a time - one problem at a time,” Magnus says. “Set your priorities straight. What’s most important for you right now?”

“To get Jace back,” Alec replies immediately, without having to think about it.

Magnus smiles. “There you have it. For now, forget about Aldertree, forget about the Institute, and focus on Jace.”
Alec breathes out deeply and nods. “Right. I can do that.”

“And, if you would like my help with it…?” Magnus leaves his words hanging in the air suggestively.

Alec smiles at him. “Always.”

Magnus grins brightly. “Alright, let’s do it, then. Together.”
Not Right Now

Chapter Summary

By popular demand, another story in my Dancer!Magnus series. Sequel to Earthbound (Chapter 159) and Guilt (Chapter 169) and From Afar (Chapter 213). (Unbeta'd)

Magnus is cleaning his dance studio after the last class of the day when his cellphone chirps merrily.

“Hello, Magnus Bane speaking!” he singsongs when he picks up.

There’s only silence on the other end, and then, just as Magnus is about to hang up, a soft voice says, “Hi. Uh, hello.” And then it - he, it’s a man - falls silent again.

Magnus blinks. “Hello?” he repeats, rather amused.

“You left your phone number? At the desk downstairs? With Mrs Palicki?” The voice in the phone is deep but very nervous, almost anxious.

Magnus brightens. “Yes! Alexander?” he blurts out and rushes to the window. And yes, there! In the flat opposite and slightly above his studio, the lights are on and there’s the handsome man there, in his wheelchair at the window. Magnus waves and grins when the man waves back awkwardly.

“Yeah. Yes. But nobody calls me that. It’s Alec,” the man replies reluctantly.

Grinning, Magnus concedes, “Alright, Alec, then. But don’t be surprised if I call you Alexander occasionally. It would be a shame to shun such a noble name.”

There’s a pause. “Okay.” And another pause. Then, “Why did you want me to call you?” And now the anxiety’s back in Alec’s voice, Magnus would even say it borders on fear. And that wouldn’t do.

“Oh, it’s nothing bad, don’t worry, nothing bad at all, I promise,” Magnus assures the other man quickly and he could swear he sees Alec’s shoulders slump in relief. “I just wanted to talk to you, but the pint-sized general at the reception desk insisted that you weren’t home.”

Alec chokes; he must’ve swallowed a laugh for sure. “I asked Mrs Palicki to tell anyone who would come by that I wasn’t home.”

“Bad day?” Magnus asks sympathetically and leans against the window.

There’s another pause. Magnus suspects that Alec’s not used to talking to people, especially not about the bad things in his life. “I had physical therapy this morning,” Alec replies finally and there’s a world of misery buried in his words.

Magnus stares up at him. “Not good, huh?” he presumes gently.

“No.” Nothing more.
Magnus doesn’t pry.

They’re both quiet for a while, simply staring at each other across the deep chasm of a busy New York street. It’s a comfortable silence which is strange. Magnus doesn’t think you should feel comfortable with being quiet on the phone with someone you don’t really know.

Then Alec clears his throat. “Why did you actually want to talk to me? You still didn’t say.”

“Ah! I wanted to ask you something,” Magnus replies, straightening up. “It’ll probably sound really weird - and if so, then I apologize - but…” Here goes nothing, he thinks, then plunges in. “The rose - was it from you?”

There’s silence, absolute silence on the other end.

“Alec?” Magnus prompts gently, resting one hand on the glass since he can’t actually touch the other man, though he wants to badly. “Alexander, it’s okay. I’m not angry. I’m not… I’m not weirded out or anything, I swear. I just want to know.” He falls silent for a moment, then adds very quietly, “It was a beautiful gift.”

“I didn’t want you to know it was me,” Alec whispers.

Unhappiness grips Magnus’ heart. “Why not?”

“Because you’re… you’re you. And I’m… me.”

Alec started the sentence in a voice full of awe, and ended it on a note so bitter that Magnus aches for him. He watches while Alec moves back and forth, back and forth with his wheelchair. It’s a tiny gesture, barely noticeable from across the street, but it speaks volumes.

“I think you’re beautiful, too, you know?” Magnus says quietly.

Alec snorts softly. “You don’t even know me.”

Magnus smiles. “Well, you don’t know me, either,” he points out very smartly, “so don’t try to muddle things with logic, it won’t work.”

There’s a very quiet, very small laugh. Magnus feels like the king of the world.

He gathers his courage and says, “But maybe we could change that? Us not knowing each other, I mean. If you wanted to, that is.” He takes a deep breath. “What I’m asking is: would you go out with me, Alexander? On a date?”

The silence in the phone’s almost deafening.

“I would rather not,” Alec replies in the end.

“Oh,” Magnus breathes out. His disappointment is so profound that he can’t think of anything else to say.

Alec continues, “I haven’t… since the accident, I haven’t really been anywhere yet. Out, I mean. And I’m…” He falls silent.

Magnus stares up at him, his disappointment replaced with understanding and sympathy. “Scared?” he suggests carefully so as not to spook Alec.

“Yeah,” Alec admits in a voice so tiny that Magnus can barely hear him. “Could you… would
you… be willing to wait? For a while? Till I put myself together? I’m not saying no, just…”

“Not right now?” Magnus finishes for him.

“Yeah.”

Magnus smiles. “Of course I’ll wait, Alexander. Something’s telling me you’re more than worth the wait.”

There’s silence on the other end but Magnus senses that Alec’s pleased. Blushing for sure, but the tiny back and forth movement of the chair stopped, and that’s saying something.

“But in the meantime, I insist on a phone date!” Magnus states in a stronger voice, determined to add levity to their conversation.

“Phone date?” There’s a smile in Alec’s voice.

Magnus waves a hand airily. “Of course! Just you and me and our phones. It’ll be just like a proper date, only… across the street.”

Alec laughs a little again.

“Besides,” Magnus adds in a more serious tone, “I really want to get to know you better.”

After a moment, Alec says, “Okay. Same time tomorrow, Magnus?”

And Magnus’ heart skips a beat, hearing his name from Alec’s lips for the first time. It’s ridiculous but he can’t help it. “Yes, I’ll call you as soon as I’m done with the classes,” he promises.

“And I’ll pick up,” Alec promises back.

Magnus grins, impossibly happy. “Goodnight, Alexander.”

“Goodnight, Magnus.”
For the Right Reasons

Chapter Summary

Eh. I’m not sure where I was going with this. Inspired by what Dom and Matt said at NYCC, that Izzy isn’t moving forward but rather sideways in S2. (Unbeta’d)

There’s a knock on the door and when Izzy calls out, “Come in!” Alec steps in.

“You didn’t come down for dinner,” he says as he closes the door. “You okay?”

Izzy, who’s sitting cross-legged on the bed in only her pajama bottoms and a tank top, sighs and shrugs. “Yeah. I just wasn’t hungry, I guess.”

Alec walks up to the bed and sits down. “What’s wrong?” he asks worriedly.

Isabelle plays with the covers for a moment. “We visited the Adamant Citadel today.” She glances up and when Alec nods, she continues, “What I saw there, the work the Iron Sisters do, the weapons they craft… It’s so incredible, you know? It really means something! Their lives mean something!”

Alec lets her talk. He just reaches out, takes her hand in his and squeezes it gently in encouragement.

Izzy looks down at their joined hands, then she turns hers around and hooks their pinkies together, just like when they were kids. “Lately, I’ve been feeling like I’m standing in place, like I’m not going anywhere, like I’m not moving forward at all. It’s stifling, this feeling, it’s choking me. I watch you and Jace go places, do things, and I’m just here, not doing anything… meaningful.”

She blows out a frustrated breath because she feels she’s not explaining it right. But Alec still nods as if he understands her perfectly. His next words come seemingly out of left field, though.

“I was ten when I realized that I was… different,” he says, staring down at their hooked pinkies, “and I thought I could make it up to you all, my not being normal, that I could make you all proud of me despite my… lacking nature by joining the Silent Brothers.”

Her head shoots up and her eyes widen in shock.

Alec laughs softly. “I was a kid, mind you! It was a long time ago. But I actually went as far as talking to Brother Zachariah about it.”

Izzy’s not sure if she remembers who Brother Zachariah is. She finds all the Silent Brothers spooky. “What did he tell you?”

Alec’s still smiling a little. “He was very kind - but also very blunt. He told me he didn’t think that I wanted to join the order for the ‘right reasons’. I was confused by that, so he asked me outright if I wished to become a Silent Brother because I wanted to be a Silent Brother or because I wanted to run away from who and what I was. And then he told me to come back in five years if I was still convinced that this was the path my life should take.”
“But you didn’t go back,” Izzy reasons.

Alec looks up at her and shakes his head. “No. By then, Max was born and Jace came to live with us and he asked me to become his parabatai… And I realized that Brother Zachariah was right. I was just trying to run away.”

Breathing in deeply, Alec tugs at Izzy’s pinky. “What I’m getting at is, if you want to join the Iron Sisters for the ‘right reasons’ - because you feel it’s your calling - then I’ll do everything in my power to support you, even if I would hate to lose you like that.”

Isabelle stares at him, speechless. How did he know? She didn’t even dare to admit that idea to herself, to consider it feasible.

“But, Izzy,” Alec continues and enfolds her hand in both of his, “if it’s not for the ‘right reasons’ or if you’re not sure about your reasons in the first place, then please, please, don’t rush into anything, alright? This is not something you can take back and I don’t want to see you unhappy for the rest of your life.” He leans closer. “Alright?”

She blinks hard to push back tears. “Alright,” she agrees.

Alec kisses her hand before letting go and smiles. “Now, are you sure you aren’t hungry? I think there’s a slice of apple pie left over in the kitchen.”

And Izzy laughs; the reminder that she has Alec in her corner, always, makes her feel lighter. “Fine, let’s go forage!”
I'll Raze Cities to the Ground

Chapter Summary

Sequel to Some Go Free (Chapter 209) and Some Must Suffer (Chapter 210).

I don’t know if anyone even remembers these stories, but… well. Found this in my drafts. Set several months after Some Must Suffer. The war with Valentine and Sebastian is won. Alec’s still missing… Book spoilers. (Unbeta’d)

This time, Jace follows Robert.

Every time he and Clary visit Alicante, Robert looks more and more haggard, broken… old. And yet, when they ask, he insists that nothing’s wrong. Neither Jace nor Clary believe it. And so, when they hear Robert leave in the middle of the night again, Jace follows him.

Deep, deep underground he follows his adoptive father, through corridors and rooms he did not know existed, Robert’s witchlight, the only source of light, far in front of him. It’s easy not to lose him, Robert does not suspect he’s being followed.

One last turn into a narrow tunnel hewn from solid rock, and Jace hurries to catch up before the dim light disappears altogether, when–

“You again!” An old voice, raspy and full of disgust.

“Oh, in there, Inquisitor,” the stranger, a woman, replies pointedly. “And he’ll be still in there long after we both join our ancestors’ ashes in the City of Bones. It was his choice, his sacrifice for the good of us all. Respect it!”

Robert laughs harshly. “Choice, Warden? It was either this or let his sister be exiled. That was not a choice, that was blackmail!”

The woman - the Warden - huffs impatiently. “It was a choice many were given and few took. People are inherently selfish. He could’ve easily let his sister go into exile. She wouldn’t have been the first, it wouldn’t have killed her. Let it be. Live out your life in peace. You have other children, let this one go…”

Jace leans against the rough stone wall, one hand pressed to his mouth to keep his harsh breathing down. Alec… Alec’s in that room. And Jace wants nothing more than to rush in and go to his parabatai. It’s like a physical pull, the need to be with him. After so many months, Alec’s in his reach!

And yet, he hides. Because Robert knew. Robert has known for who knows how long and did nothing! If Jace rushes in, would Robert and this Warden person try to stop him? He can’t risk it, not when he might be Alec’s only chance.
So, he stands there, in the black corridor and waits, waits while the other two argue, back and forth, back and forth. And when Robert finally turns to head back, Jace jumps up, quietly like a cat, and tucks himself against the ceiling, props himself up between the walls, betting on the fact that nobody ever looks up - and Robert does not.

Jace waits till Robert’s witchlight dims and then disappears altogether, only then does he dare to drop down. The Warden’s still in there somewhere, but Jace needs to see, he needs to know…

Carefully, he sneaks around the bend and - his breath catches in his throat. Because at the end of the short passage, there’s a big, dark, cavern-like room, empty except for the big glowing sphere sitting in the middle. And inside…

Like a moth to the flame, Jace is drawn to the sphere. It’s twice as big as he’s tall and perfectly round, shining with pure white light, and inside… Alec, floating, curled up in a loose fetal position, his runes stark black on his naked skin.

“I thought I felt someone sneaking around, sneaking like a thief, like a spy.”

The Warden’s voice echoes from behind Jace and he twists around, bringing up his Seraph Blade, its glow no match for the sphere’s glare.

“Are you a thief, Jace Wayland? Or are you a spy, Jace Morgenstern? Did you come to destroy, Jace Herondale? Or were you just curious, curious like a cat, Jace of No Name That’s His?”

Jace stares at the woman, brown and wrinkled, shuffling forward with a mad gleam in her eyes. “What’s this?” he croaks out. “What did you do to Alec?”

The woman cackles. “I did not do anything to your parabatai. It’s all his own doing. His life for his sister’s. His life to protect us all. His life for the Demon Towers of Alicante!”

Jace’s heart skips a beat. Impossible. The towers, their glow, the wards - that can’t be Alec! He shakes his head. “No!”

“Yes!” the woman replies sharply. “When that demon child brought the wards down, it killed our previous source. It was really wise of Inquisitor Herondale to have provided us with a new one in advance. All we had to do was pull the dead one out and put his one in. No unnecessary delay. Herondales have always been smart. Are you smart, too, last of the Herondales?”

Jace feels like throwing up. Inquisitor Herondale, his own grandmother, did this to his parabatai! “Get him out!” growls.

The Warden cackles and pounds his cane against the floor. “Impossible. Didn’t you hear a word I said? You precious parabatai is powering the wards.”

“I do not care!” Jace snaps, his eyes ablaze, and points his Seraph Blade at the woman again. “I do not care if the wards go down or if the Demon Towers never glow again. The demons can choke on this city for all I care. Get him out!”

She glares at him. “No!”

“Fine,” Jace retorts. “Then I’ll do it myself. I’ll tell everybody what you’re doing here. I’ll bring in my warlock friends and we’ll take this place apart if need be!”

With a screech, the hag launches herself on him, and though Jace manages to duck, her speed and strength surprise him. With a twist, the woman pulls a thin Seraph Blade out of her cane and turns,
slashing across, then follows through with a stab, but Jace jumps back and deflects the blow, their blades clanging against each other.

The Warden leans against her blade, and she might be old, but she’s as tall as Jace and there’s a fanatical gleam in her eyes when she spits out, “I won’t let you do it. I’ll kill you first! I’ll kill him first!”

Jace reacts with a growl, suddenly absolutely livid. All the months of fear and misery and loneliness crystallize into a red-hot fury pulsating in his chest. He steps back and invites her in, and when she tries to stab him again, he twists past her blade and punches her with a tightly closed fist right in the face.

The Warden is thrown back and she hits the floor hard, rolling and rolling, her old bones snapping like twigs, until she hits the cavern’s wall. She chokes and wheezes, blood dripping from her split lips. “You would damn us all for one man?” she croaks out.

Jace looks her straight in the eyes and starts walking towards her. There’s not an ounce of doubt in his voice when he replies, “For this man? Yes.”

The woman’s yelling curses at him as she tries to pick herself up, to scramble for the Seraph Blade that she dropped, but Jace kicks the weapon aside, and when he gets to her, he drops into a crouch and roughly searches her robe, slapping her hands aside when she tries to stop him.

After Jace finds what he’s looking for - her stele - he gets up again and moves away, out of her reach. And then, without taking his eyes off her, he drops the stele, the only thing that can heal her broken bones, on the floor and stomps on it hard, breaking it with the heel of his boot and grounding it to dust.

The Warden screeches in horror.

“You’ll not get anywhere near Alec again!” Jace tells her and there’s so much menace in his voice that the old woman cringes away. “You can stay here and rot or crawl back to where you came from, I don’t care. But you’re not coming anywhere near him ever again!”

And then Jace turns away from her, and heads for the sphere, slowly, almost reluctantly. He stops in front of the glowing thing and presses one hand against its cold surface. He just stares, drinking in the sight of Alec right there, in front of him - and yet, unreachable.

“I’ll find a way to get you out,” Jace whispers, his voice thick with emotions. “I will not leave you in there! I’ll bring you home, I swear, my parabatai.”
"What? Did you think I would never find out?"

Those words, they keep echoing through Robert’s mind long after Alec marches off and leaves him standing there. Alec’s words, his look… There was so much anger, so much hurt and disgust in his face, in his voice.

"Did you think I would never find out?"

That was exactly what Robert thought - what he hoped and fervently prayed for - that his children would never find out about the terrible things he had done in his youth. Because he feared their judgment more than the Clave’s.

And yet, his past caught up with him anyway…

Robert remembers how little Alec clung to him while sick, how he followed Robert around, stating proudly that one day, he would be just like his daddy, his dad… his hero. Robert hasn’t been a hero for a very, very long time.

As he stands there, unable to move, his thoughts run in useless circles like a stuck record, an old, broken thing, because his son despises him and all his hopes and prayers were in vain. Robert wants to turn back time and feel his son’s little hand in his again. He wants those days back so badly.

“I’m going to fix what you broke. And I’m going to do it on my terms.”

But they are irrevocably gone now and he’ll never be his son’s hero again.
Jace asks Alec to become his *parabatai* because of how the other boy makes him feel.

Alec makes him happy. He makes Jace’s heart race and his mind go quiet. He chases away Jace’s ghosts and he stands guard over Jace’s dreams.

Jace can’t imagine ever losing Alec.

Years later, Jace meets Clary Fray and his heart goes wild, his body’s abuzz with happiness and his mind is filled with sunshine…

And all these feelings, they’re familiar to him, as familiar as the gentle fluttering of another person’s soul in his chest.

*Oh*…
Restored

Chapter Summary

Written for a friend's b-day. Just a little parabatai scene. (Unbeta'd)

In the aftermath of the battle, Izzy goes looking for Alec; she hasn’t seen him since Valentine’s people broke through the wards and stormed the Institute.

She’s stepping over debris, over shards of colored glass and pieces of broken furniture, over puddles of blood and dropped weapons, too exhausted to think, her own aches and pains a distant annoyance. She just wants to find Alec and sit down and rest and sleep.

There, a blond mane, Jace. Jace who came back and warned them and gave them a fighting chance. Jace who’s finally back. Yes. He’ll know where to find Alec, for sure. Maybe. Probably. Raziel, she’s tired.

She follows him, weaving her way through people milling about and nursing their own hurts; some look grim, some shell-shocked. Most of their personnel has never seen battle before. And now they had to fight one in the middle of their home. Terrible.

Jace leaves the Ops Center and disappears, down one corridor and another. Izzy quickens her steps; she doesn’t want to lose him, but she doesn’t want to shout either. Loud noises in the aftermath of a battle? Not a good idea.

She turns a corner, and there he is, in the short passage leading up to the side entrance, only a few more steps and she’ll catch up with him. But… she stops.

Because the door at the end is open, framing the early morning sun warming up the five steps leading down to the overgrown parking lot. And there, on the top step, Alec’s sitting there, his rounded shoulders making him look as tired as Izzy feels. He’s okay.

Jace walks up to him slowly and Alec lifts his head - his face is pale and streaked with blood - and they look at each other. They just stare without a word, seemingly even without blinking. And then Jace sits down heavily and brushes his arm against his parabatai’s.

And then, then it’s like watching puzzle pieces fall into place, at least that’s how it feels to Izzy, a shattered image reformed, a broken connection reestablished.

Alec leans into Jace. And Jace drops his head wearily on Alec’s shoulder. And Alec slowly lifts his right arm and lays it across Jace’s shoulders, pulling him in. And Jace fists his left hand into the back of Alec’s leather jacket. And Alec rests his head on top of Jace’s.

Click-click-click. Balance restored.

Izzy smiles. Alright, then. Now she can finally rest.

She turns and leaves, unnoticed.
Alec’s feelings for Jace never go away - they’re still as strong and intense as ever - his love for Magnus simply grows alongside them, just as strong and true, like parallel tracks running in the same directions.

It worries him because it shouldn’t be like that, should it? It should be just one person and one person only for you, always. Right?

“Am I doing it wrong, this love thing?” he finally asks Izzy one day. Because what if he is? What does he know about love anyway?

His sister just smiles, though, and touches his cheek gently. “Alec,” she says kindly, “there’s no wrong way to love. Love is not a finite thing, your heart’s full of it and there’s always more to give.”

“But isn’t it unfair?” He tries to but can’t shake off a vague feeling of guilt.

“How can it be unfair, to be loved by someone?” she replies with a question of her own. “Love is not quantifiable, it can’t be measured and labeled and given a price tag, this love is more precious than that one.” She presses her hand against his chest. “What is your heart telling you?”

“That I want them to be happy, that’s all, and that it makes me happy when they are,” he answers truthfully.

Her smiles widens. “Then you’re doing it just right, big brother, trust me.”

And Alec still doesn’t really get it, but maybe he doesn’t need to. Maybe love truly is an inexplicable, mystical thing - like magic. And it’s enough to know that it exists.
Alec doesn’t see Jace again before he heads out on his mission. He knows very well who’s at fault - the man who does *not* fail to come and see him off. Jonathan.

The main door’s already open and Jonathan’s leaning against the door frame, blocking the way out. He knows that Alec will have to squeeze past him, brush against him, but he doesn’t move. No, he stands there with his arms crossed over his chest and he’s watching Alec with a knowing smirk on his lips.

Alec pauses, but then he takes a deep breath, squares his shoulders and goes, tightly gripping the bow slung over his shoulder. He tries to step around Jonathan, but the other man sticks his hip out, making sure that Alec *will* have to touch him to get out. Alec shudders in revulsion and without having to look he knows that Jonathan’s smirk widens at that.

“Happy hunting,” Jonathan calls after him gleefully. “And don’t worry,” he adds and this time, there’s a threat in his voice, “I’ll look after Jace.”

Alec almost stumbles and the surge of anger that Jonathan’s words provoke in him nearly steals his breath. He can deal with threats against his own person, but not against Jace, never against his *parabatai*.

But he doesn’t stop. He doesn’t go back and punch Jonathan, as much as he wants to, because he knows that it would make everything only worse. Worse for Jace who’s staying behind. And so Alec goes, Jonathan’s laughter floating after him.

Alec makes sure he isn’t followed; he has become good at losing a tail over the years, because if he were ever discovered, he would die a torturous death, of that he’s sure. Still, he arrives at the meeting place on time.

“I got your message,” whispers a voice in the shadows of a large oak tree; it sounds concerned. “Is everything alright?”

Alec closes his eyes and his shoulders droop in relief. He wasn’t sure if his contact would come at such a short notice and he had no idea what he would’ve done if that were the case. “No, nothing’s alright,” he replies just as quietly. “I was ordered to assassinate Magnus Bane.”

“Shit,” echoes from the darkness - and then Luke Garroway steps out. “I think you better come with me, then.”

Luke takes Alec to the Downworlders’ rebel base whose entrance lies deep in the woods, in an
inconspicuous little cave in the hillside.

“The Spiral Labyrinth?” Alec whispers in awe while they’re heading down and down the steps, deep underground, through corridors hewn from hard rock lit by witchlights mounted on the walls.

Luke glances over his shoulder with a smile. “A bit on the nose, right? But then, it’s so on the nose that it hasn’t occurred to anyone yet, that we might be using it as our base of operations.”

Alec’s running one hand along the wall while he walks. “And even if it did, how could anyone attack a place that nobody knows where to find.”

On the way, they meet warlocks, werewolves and even the occasional vampire - but no Seelies, which Alec finds interesting. Some stare at him with curiosity, even intrigue, but most with hostility and hatred. Alec doesn’t blame them. It just makes his heart heavier.

Finally, Luke leads Alec down a long corridor with a single door at its end. He knocks sharply and without waiting for invitation, he walks in. Alec follows him and… stops.

Inside, namely, there’s no cave, no old-fashioned chamber, but a modern flat and its windows - yes, there are windows; Alec doesn’t question how there can be windows here when they were clearly underground just a second ago - offer a beautiful view of the Brooklyn Bridge, twinkling merrily in the dark night.

And there’s a man curled up in a chair by the fireplace, reading a book, a big old tome. When they enter, he lifts his head, and Alec recognizes him right away - Magnus Bane, the High Warlock of Brooklyn.

“Luke!” Magnus exclaims. And then, when he sees Alec, his eyes light up like lanterns. He snaps his book shut, and setting it aside, he jumps to his feet and marches towards Alec with one hand outstretched. “Magnus Bane, at your very willing service.”

Alec can’t help but blush. He didn’t lie to Jace, he did study Magnus Bane with avid interest, but simply because he was fascinated by the man, not because he saw Magnus as a potential target. He allows his hand to be gripped and pumped vigorously. “Erm… Alec? Alec Lightwood?”

Magnus’ eyes twinkle. “Are you asking or telling me this?”

Alec blushes even harder and drops his eyes. Because the High Warlock of Brooklyn is barefoot. Dressed in a shimmering blue shirt and loose pants - but barefoot.


Magnus immediately drops his merry act. He takes Alec’s hand in both of his and looks Alec earnestly in the eyes. “I’ve heard a lot about you, Alexander, about what you’ve done for us over the years. If it hadn’t been for you and for your information, so many of our people would’ve perished. And I want you to know that we… that I appreciate the risk you’ve taken.”

By now, even the tips of Alec’s ears are red. He never expected gratitude, he just did what was right. It all started with the little werewolf girl he let go and it turned into so much more when Luke contacted him covertly to thank him for saving a child of his pack. He became a spy, and nobody suspected, not even his own parabatai…

“It was nothing,” Alec mutters, not knowing where to look. He’s hyper aware of his hand still being held; his skin’s tingling.
“But now it’s Alec who needs our help,” Luke says.

Magnus finally lets go of Alec’s hand and frowns. “How so?”

Alec clears his throat and clasps his hands behind his back. “I was ordered to kill you. And saying no really wasn’t an option.”

“Oh,” Magnus says with understanding. “Did they start to suspect you? Is this a test?”

Alec grimaces. “No, it’s petty revenge.” When Magnus makes an inquiring noise, Alec continues, “Valentine’s son, Jonathan, doesn’t like me.”

Luke’s mouth twists. “I know that brat. He’s a real psychopath.”

Magnus nods. “What did you do? Steal his girlfriend?” His eyes twinkle again. “Or a boyfriend?”

And Alec’s blushing once more. “I stole his parabatai, or that’s how he sees it. He wanted Jace, Jace Herondale, to become his parabatai, but Jace chose me. Since then, Jonathan’s been making my life miserable. This assignment was his idea.” Alec sighs. “I couldn’t refuse the carry out a direct order and I can’t simply fail, he would make me pay.” He shivers involuntarily.

“I see,” Magnus says softly, and Alec feels that he really does. “And since I can’t let you kill me, not even for show, because even that would hurt our movement…”

“… and I can’t join you openly, not when Valentine has my family - my parabatai! - in his power…” Alec adds.

“… we will have to kill you,” Magnus finishes.

Alec nods, his heart heavy. “That’s what I thought, too, there doesn’t seem to be another option. But I’ll have to warn Jace somehow because he’ll obviously know that it’s a ruse–”

“No,” Luke interrupts him firmly, and when both Magnus and Alec look at him, he continues, “Jace must think you’re dead, too, Valentine has to see him react to your death, or he’ll never believe it. I know him, he was my parabatai, after all.” His voice is very bitter at the end.

Alec’s throat tightens as he touches his parabatai rune. The thought of making Jace think that, of hurting his parabatai like that… “But how?” he asks hoarsely.

“There are ways to–” Magnus starts saying.

But Alec stops him. “I will not let you break our bond. I won’t. I won’t. I will rather go back and face Jonathan’s wrath. But I won’t give up my parabatai bond.”

Magnus’ eyes become soft. “You won’t have to, Alexander,” he assures Alec kindly. “I’m aware of how much the parabatai bond means to Shadowhunters. I would never suggest breaking it. But there are ways - spells, wards - that can make it look like the bond’s broken. Just for a while, until Valentine and this… Jonathan person believe you were killed.”

Alec presses his hand harder against his parabatai rune. “But Jace… Jace will think that I’m really dead. He’ll think…” That he lost me.

“Yes,” Magnus says. “His reaction needs to be genuine or they’ll never believe it. And you’ll never be safe.”

Alec stands there, breathing harshly. He can’t do it to Jace, he can’t!
There’s a hand on his shoulder. Luke. “Alec, I had a parabatai once, and before everything went bad, I would’ve done anything, I would’ve suffered any pain to keep him safe. If your Jace loves you at least half as much as I used to love Valentine, he would tell you exactly the same thing, trust me.”

Alec takes a deep, shuddering breath and closes his eyes for a moment. When he opens them again, he looks from Luke to Magnus and nods. “Alright.”

_I’m so very, very sorry, Jace. Please, forgive me._

An hour before dawn, Jace wakes up screaming. His parabatai is gone, their bond is broken. Jace is alone.
*cracks knuckles* So, whom didn’t I hurt yet? Or, Lightwood family feels. AU, present time, no powers. (Unbeta’d)

(The story is very personal to me since this happened to my mom. She’s okay now *knocks on wood*)

Back and forth, back and forth Jace paces, up and down the hospital corridor, thirty steps from the door that’s closed to him to the window at the end of the hall and thirty steps back. Over and over, hour after hour, endlessly. His feet hurt but he can’t sit down. He can’t.

He’s alone here now. He told Maryse to take Max home, a hospital is no place for a child - and besides, if something went wrong, Max shouldn’t find out from a stranger, even a well-meaning one. And he promised to call the moment he learns anything. And Robert, Robert’s stuck at the Chicago Airport, snowed in at the least opportune moment.

Jace stops in front of the closed door hiding the operating rooms and the ICU - places he can’t go! - and feels nervousness, anxiety… fear climb up his throat. Fear, the feeling that hasn’t gone away ever since they found out that Izzy was sick; it stayed right there, nestled in his chest, throughout medication and tests and dialysis treatments, throughout a kidney failure witnessed first-hand.

Throughout the search for a donor, in the closest family first. Jace has never, ever felt like an outsider in the Lightwood family before, it never mattered that he wasn’t blood. But now it did matter. He underwent the tests anyway, of course, hoping against hope that he would be a match after all. He wasn’t.

But luckily, Alec was, the closest one, young and strong and healthy - and willing, more than willing to be a donor for his sister, to save his sister’s life.

So now, Jace is pacing the corridor, back and forth, back and forth, and he’s waiting-waiting-waiting, while his siblings - his best friends - are being taken apart and put back together, in there, behind the closed door. And as he stops at the large window and watches the snow fall hard outside, he’s praying, he’s praying like he hasn’t prayed since his father died and left him all alone in the world…

Please, God, please…!

The door opens with a soft hiss and a tired looking doctor in crumpled scrubs comes out. “Mr Wayland?” she calls out softly.

Jace turns around sharply and with his heart in his throat, he rushes forward. This time, he doesn’t need thirty steps, eighteen are enough. Please!

And then… the doctor smiles.
Love in the Time of Allergy

Chapter Summary

Just a funny little AU story, present time, no powers. I was told I came up with way too many sad AUs. I can do fun. Really. See? See? (Unbeta'd)

Magnus Bane, the owner of Bane Antiques, has visited Lightwood Floral, the little flower shop at the corner of his street, every single day since it opened. He comes in at nine on the dot, buys ridiculously expensive bouquets, flirts with Alec, the co-owner of said little flower shop, and then he leaves again - only to repeat the whole process the next day.

On Thursday, exactly one week after the shop's opening day, he does not simply come in, though, oh no, he barges in forcefully, making the little silver bell above the door peal almost hysterically.

“Alexander!” Magnus calls out - no, he yells! - as he makes his way through the little jungle set up in the shop, and when he arrives at the counter where Alec’s standing, wide-eyed and straight-backed, he slams his hands down onto the granite top, making Alec jump. “I need to know, Alexander!”

Alec eyes him, shears and a pink ribbon raised defensively. “Yes?”

“Will you go out with me?” he blurs out and leans forward for good measure - and the moment the question’s out, he turns away and sneezes, three times in a row.

Alec waits till Magnus is done achoo-ing, only then he replies. “Yes?”

Magnus slumps against the counter in relief, groaning. “Oh, thank God! One more day of this and I would’ve had to lay my life down on the altar of love, murdered by greenery. It wouldn’t have been pretty.”

He snuffles loudly and coughs, before shooting upright and sneezing again, his eyes now streaming like a fountain and nose red and running. “Out! I need out! Out-out-out-out-out…” And he all but runs for the door, making the bell that just about stopped pealing, squeal again.

“I’ll call you!” Magnus yells at Alec over the bushes before diving out into the street and slamming the door shut behind him.

Alec stands there, blinking, the shears and the pink ribbon still clutched in his hands. “Huh.”

Isabelle pops her head in from the office in the back. “What was that noise?” she asks.

Alec frowns. “I think… I think Magnus Bane just asked me out on a date?”

Izzy laughs. “That’s good. But what will he say when he finds out you can’t set a foot in his shop without your sinuses swelling up like a balloon because you’re allergic to dust?”

Alec smiles a little. “Oh, I don’t know. I think he’ll understand…”
5 Sentences About the Parabatai

Chapter Summary

I wanted to try something different. This used to be a big thing years back, in my anime days, to write a mini-story in just one sentence. Let’s give it a try… (Unbeta’d)

AND IT'S MY ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY! I started posting these ficlets here exactly one year ago. Happy b-day, my precious! *throws confetti*

Alec: (103)

*You’re not listening*, Alec says to Jace, and he feels frustrated and annoyed… afraid - yes, it’s fear that makes Alec lash out, that’s choking him and making his heart race, because Jace has always been reckless and pig-headed and he did whatever he wanted, but he still listened to Alec, but ever since that girl came into their lives, it’s as if Jace has grown deaf to Alec’s reasoning… and Alec fears he’s losing him.

Jace: (105)

Jace knows that he can be insolent and callous, show complete disregard for other people’s feelings, and he’s okay with that, that’s just who he is, after all, but when he casually throws Maryse’s words in his parabatai’s face in anger, when he sees the pain in Alec’s eyes, in the eyes of the one person who should be - and is, he really is! - closer to him than anyone else in the world, he ponders with a hard pang in his chest when his arrogance turned into cruelty.

Hodge: (110)

Hearing Alec’s angry and betrayed words - *Jace is dead to me!* - Hodge can only whisper his name in shock, because, yes, Jace is reckless and cocky and sometimes even ruthless, but there’s no doubt in Hodge’s mind that Jace also loves Alec deeply, and Hodge has seen a couple of parabatai bonds break in his lifetime but neither was as true as these two boys’ whom Hodge loves like his own sons; and that’s why, when Alec strains his bond to its limits while tracking Jace, Hodge holds on tight to Alec’s hand, intent on protecting what Alec’s all too willing to throw away in anger.

Alec: (111)

*Our intentions*, that’s what Jace says, *our intentions*, and Alec can only stare at him in disbelief, he even repeats those words - *our intentions*? - since they feel so alien to him in that context, because for years, *our and we* has always been Jace and *him*, them as brothers and best friends and parabatai against the world, now though, the meaning of those words shifted for Jace and *our and we* now means Jace and *Clary*, them against *him*, against Alec, and he can’t help but wonder just how fragile the foundations of their relationship have been if the mere presence of one girl could break them so horribly in only 14 short days.

Jace: (111)

Jace doesn’t realize how much it means to him that Alec considers him family, not a stranger
intruding, but a part of them - *You’ve never been a stray!* - until Alec looks at him coldly and calls Izzy *his* sister, *his* not *theirs*. Until then, until that moment, Jace doesn’t realize how distant they’ve become, how deeply they’re broken. And he doesn’t know what to do, how to fix it…
This is an Alpha/Beta/Omega story. I had this weird idea:

Only Shadowhunters are an A/B/O society, mundanes or Downworlders are not. And the Shadowhunters’ nature, if they are an Alpha or a Beta or an Omega, is not revealed till they start being sexually active, until then, there’s no indication, no hint of what they will turn out to be. So, imagine if Alec were an Omega - but Magnus NOT an Alpha? And Jace were an Alpha - but Clary a Beta? And yet, Malec and Clace were still couples because Alec and Clary were virgins before, so they didn’t know? And now imagine Alec being in heat - and Magnus being unable to help him. So, these four people come to this very strange arrangement of Malec/Clace/Jalec, where it’s Malec and Clace normally, but Jalec during Alec’s heat, twice a year.

Thus, at least a shortie! (Unbeta'd)

For three days every six months, Alec is his - bodies sprawled on messed up sheets, neck kisses and gently bitten skin - before they both return to their respective partners…

Because they’re a bonded pair - Jace’s Alpha to Alec’s Omega - yet not a real couple. Because Alec is with Magnus and Jace is with Clary, and yet they need each other, too, like oxygen, so deeply that their feelings sometimes scare even them with their intensity.

How odd, this arrangement of theirs, unfathomable to people on the outside, but that’s okay, it’s not meant for strangers’ eyes anyway, and they sacrificed so much to make this work, so much; they don’t need - nor do they strive for - other people’s approval.

Sometimes, Jace wonders if you can love two people at once, differently yet just as intensely, if you can slot two people into your heart, side by side, like two puzzle pieces. Because he doesn’t think he could give up either, that he could live without either of them, Clary or Alec…

What an odd arrangement they have, the four of them. And yet, somehow, it works.
I’ve seen people speculating that Alec’s not sweating in that new gif - you know which one - but that he’s wet, that it could be a part of the book plot - you know which one - so, I took that plot, reshaped it a bit and applied to the show. (Unbeta'd)

ETA: For those who don't know what gif I'm talking about: http://magnusandalec.tumblr.com/post/152971411977/excuse-me-while-i-spend-however-long-it-takes-to

Jace doesn’t want Alec there, on the ship - “Go away before he finds you, go, Alec, please, just go!” - but Alec refuses to leave without him, he will not leave his parabatai in Valentine’s hands! And then…

They’re discovered.

On the upper deck, under the bright, twinkling stars, they surround them, his father’s men with their weapons drawn and pointed at them; Jace and Alec are helpless against these odds. They can only stand there and wait for Valentine to come, summoned by his lackeys.

And when Valentine finally arrives, he’s so disappointed in Jace, he’s shaking his head and Jace can’t help but feel a pang of shame in his heart - what the hell is wrong with him?!

Valentine steps forward and his men part and move aside obediently. He lays one arm around Jace’s shoulders in an almost loving, fatherly gesture, and with a whispered, “But I forgive you, my son…”

… he lashes out abruptly and kicks Alec in the chest!

Jace’s eyes widen when Alec flies back and hits the railing hard; with a loud crack, it breaks under his weight. Their eyes meet for the split of a second - and then Alec falls.

“No!” Jace screams and throws himself forward.

But Valentine’s holding him tight now, in a chokehold and with one arm twisted painfully behind his back. He does allow Jace to move to the edge of the deck, but only to look, only to see Alec hit the water hard and disappear in its dark depths.

He doesn’t resurface again.

Jace’s struggling, screaming, fighting his father, but Valentine doesn’t let go, he only hisses into Jace’s ear, “I’m doing it because I love you.”

And then he’s dragging Jace back, yelling at his men that their hideout was compromised, and that they need to leave, now!

Jace doesn’t get to save Alec. And before he’s taken away through the brightly glowing portal, he tastes salt water in his mouth…
Bad Blood

Chapter Summary

A “what if” story. The longest one-shot I’ve written in years O.O! What if it went all differently starting with 108. Parabatai & Malec story. (Unbeta'd; and there will probably be a LOT of mistakes since I'm simply not seeing them in my own works).

“Go!” Alec says, and Jace turns and reluctantly follows Clary and Isabelle down the maintenance corridor.

The next time Jace sees Alec, it’s when Alec returns to the Institute with Clary and Izzy, but Jace doesn’t pay much attention to him, because Clary’s back and they’re kissing and he feels so relieved.

And then, they’re arguing about the Cup - should they give it back to the Clave or not? - and Jace’s firmly on Clary’s side. Together they convince Alec to keep the damn thing a secret, at least for now. Jace and Izzy stay at the computers to go through the schematics, while Alec takes Clary to the safe and…

It takes Jace a moment to realize that instead of up the stairs, Alec takes Clary down the hall, the one that that leads up to the side entrance. Where neither of the two Institute safes is located.

“What the…?” he mutters, frowning.

Izzy lifts her head. “What?” she asks, then follows him when he heads in the same direction as Alec and Clary a moment ago.

They find Clary two bends down, lying on the floor. She’s groaning and holding her bleeding head.

“Clary!” Jace shouts and rushes to her. “What happened?” he asks urgently when he kneels down next to her and gently helps her sit up.

“Alec,” she mumbles, squinting at him and Izzy who crouched down behind him. “He attacked me. He hit me and took the Cup!”

Izzy’s eyes widen. “Impossible! Alec would never—”

“I don’t think it was actually him!” Clary interrupts her, dabbing at the bloody cut on her forehead. “Who- whatever that… thing is, it’s not Alec. When it took the Cup, it… rippled, like… like hot air!”

Jace clenches his jaw. “Where did he go?” he snaps.

Clary points down the hall.

Jace gets up. “Stay with her,” he tells Izzy, then he takes off.

Two more bends and the corridor’s becoming narrower and narrower as it nears what used to be
the service entrance, and then he sees Alec - or the thing that’s Alec, if Clary’s right - ahead of him, almost at the door.

“Hey!” Jace snaps.

Looking over his shoulder, Alec grabs the doorknob and opens the door quickly to run outside - only to hit a barrier, so hard so that he’s thrown back. The wards flare up and the alarm starts blaring.

Alec lands on the tiled floor and while he’s rolling, his whole body ripples, just as Clary said, greenish gray scales and claws pushing through the illusion. And when Alec - no, the monster! - finally comes to a halt, it’s just a few feet away from Jace who’s seized with a fury so deep that he sees red.

He whips out his Seraph Blade and when the thing twists and pushes off the floor to attack him, Jace stabs it through the chest and slams it against the wall, immobilizing it but making sure he doesn’t kill it. He needs answers, the first being…

“Where’s my parabatai? Where’s Alec?” he snarls into the monster’s face.

Letting the illusion slide altogether, it screeches and opens up its mandibles, but instead of answering Jace’s questions, it grips the Seraph Blade stuck in its chest and slides itself down its length, killing itself in the process.

Jace just stares, eyes wide, at the glowing embers - they’re all that’s left of the shapeshifter - falling to the ground. The Tarot card hiding the Cup flutters down with them.

“Oh my God,” a voice whispers to the left of him and when Jace turns, he sees Clary standing there, supported by Izzy.

“It wasn’t Alec…” Isabelle whispers in shock.

“No, it wasn’t.” Jace lets his hand holding the Seraph Blade drop to his side. He bends down to retrieve the Tarot card even though right now, he would like nothing more than to tear it to pieces.

“How did that creature get in? How did it get through the wards?” he demands.

Izzy swallows. “It’s… I think it’s my fault. When we came back to the church, Alec - it - stopped outside and I thought, I thought he just didn’t want to…” She swallows. “It doesn’t matter. I told it to get in and not to dawdle. I thought it was Alec,” she finishes in a whisper.

“But why couldn’t it get out now, if you invited it in?” Clary asks, confused.

Jace grits his teeth. “Because I ordered the wards reset and reinforced once you got in, just to be sure.”

“But if this wasn’t Alec,” Clary whispers, “then where is he?”

Jace and Izzy stare at each other for a moment, a world of worry between them. “I don’t know,” Jace replies finally, one hand pressed against his parabatai rune. “But I intend to find out.”

Jace tries tracking his parabatai using Alec’s bow, but to no avail. They even contact Magnus and ask him for help - Jace’s quite surprised by how worried Magnus actually seems, considering he has met Alec only a handful of times - but not even Magnus can find him.
“There’s something blocking me, something’s deflecting my magic,” Magnus explains in a frustrated voice. “I can feel Alec somewhere out there,” he waves a hand, “but I can’t reach him.”

They even go back to the maintenance corridor where they left Alec, and they find some signs of struggle there, smears of blood, but that’s it. There’s no hint of where Alec might’ve disappeared to. But the answer seems rather obvious. And nobody likes it one bit.

And so, Jace comes to a decision. “I’ll try tracking him through our parabatai bond,” he says grimly when they return to the Institute.

Izzy’s eyes widen. “Jace, you can’t! It’s too risky.”

Clary glances between them. “What does it mean?”

Izzy doesn’t look away from Jace when she answers, “Jace will reach through their bond and try to contact Alec, see through his eyes and find out where he is.”

“But that’s good… or not?” Clary asks uncertainly.

Now Izzy does turn to her. “No, it’s not. Their bond, it’s like a rope binding them together. And tracking your parabatai through that bond means yanking at the rope to the point of tearing it. It’s dangerous. Jace could hurt both himself and Alec in the process.” She looks at Jace pointedly. “Or even break the bond.”

Jace throws up his hands. “If you have a better idea, Izzy, I’m all ears, believe me. But the longer Alec’s is in Valentine’s hands, the bigger the chance that Valentine will actually kill him!”

They decide to do it, then - but with Hodge’s help, Izzy insists on that. If Jace has to do it, someone who actually knows what he’s doing should be present. She refuses to take risks with her brothers’ lives!

Sitting down in a chair next to the infirmary bed where Jace’s lying, stripped to the waist, Hodge sighs. “Alright, let’s do it, then.” He eyes Jace with concern. “Just… be careful. I know how much you want to find Alec, but you can’t help him if you hurt yourself - or him! - or break your bond, do you understand?”

Jace nods and takes a deep breath, trying to brace himself for the pain that’s coming. “I get it. Come on, we’re losing time!”

And so Izzy draws the linking knot over his parabatai rune, while Hodge grips Jace’s hand to anchor him in the here and now - and Jace’s whole body seizes while his spirit goes searching for his soulmate.

But there’s only darkness. “I can’t see anything,” Jace hisses through gritted teeth. “It’s all dark, there’s nothing. He’s alive, I can feel that, but I can’t reach him!”

“He might be unconscious,” reasons Hodge. “Try nudging him awake - but, by Raziel, be careful! Nudge, don’t punch!”

Jace clenches his eyes shut because the pain spreading from his side, from his parabatai rune, is quickly turning into agony. He knows that if he says the word, they’ll stop it, his friends will pull him out, but he can’t do it. This is his only chance to find Alec!

And so he tries to push through the darkness and poke Alec awake - nudge, don’t punch! - but there’s still something… off. Everything feels fuzzy and numb. It’s as if he’s trying to tear through
There’s something wrong with him,” Jace mumbles. “It’s as if--”

And then he sees it. Light and shapes, everything’s unfocused, though.

Jace…?

Jace’s eyes fly open but he doesn’t see the infirmary room, all he sees is what Alec’s seeing. “He’s awake!” he exclaims.

“Good!” Hodge says, gripping Jace’s hand harder. “What do you see?”

He feels Alec turn his head slightly and look around. He’s lying on a cot, wrists and ankles in restraints, and there’s… there’s an IV there, stuck in his arm, a bluish liquid slowly dripping in. And around him…

“He’s restrained,” Jace describes, “and they’re pumping something into him… drugs, maybe. And he’s in a cage, there are bars around him!”

“Does he know where he is?” Hodge asks urgently.

Jace can feel the agony climbing up his chest, making it hard to breath. He has to let go soon or he will break their bond, he will break them.

“Alec…” he screams, his back arching off the bed. Where are you…?

The answer comes to him in images and feelings, instead of words, because their connection is fracturing. Jace can feel Alec’s helplessness and anger and dread. We are coming! he shoots back and then lets go.

“Renwick’s,” Jace croaks out. “He’s at Renwick’s!”

And then he loses consciousness.

They rope Luke and his pack into helping them with the rescue mission and all the Shadowhunters present at the Institute - actually, they volunteer when they hear that it’s about saving Alec. And Magnus Bane offers his help, too - “Free of charge,” he assures Jace, which boggles Jace’s mind, but he’s not about to say no; to have someone as powerful as Magnus with them will be a major advantage.

The ruins of Renwick’s are crawling with Valentine’s men and demons, and Jace, Izzy, Clary, Magnus and Luke leave them to the Shadowhunters and the werewolves while they sneak in, led by Magnus who can now sense the wards that blocked his tracking vibrate in the air and he follows their pull, using them as a beacon.

They find them in a large room that must’ve served as a storage of some kind. Yes, them - Alec and Jocelyn. Alec’s lying restrained on a cot inside a cage, just as Jace saw it, while Jocelyn’s floating inside her protective bubble on the other side of the room.

Clary lets out a cry of relief and together with Luke they run towards Jocelyn. But Jace, even though he’s happy for Clary, has eyes only for his parabatai. He uses his Seraph Blade to cut through the bars, and while Izzy stands guard at the door - she wants to go to her brother and make sure that he’s okay, but someone has to cover their backs! - he and Magnus go in.
Alec’s deeply asleep or unconscious, not even the sounds of the battle woke him up. Jace immediately yanks the IV out of his arm - whatever that stuff in the drip is, it’s *not* good for his *parabatai* - and leans over Alec. He pats Alec’s face and calls his name, but all Alec does is moan softly and furrow his brows. Jace’s relief at finding him is once again replaced with anxiety.

“Magnus?” he asks, turning to the warlock, who’s quickly going through the vials and syringes and bottles on the little metal cart next to the cot.

Magnus reads the label on one of the vials. “It seems that Valentine went back to his old ways - to *experimenting*. This,” he shows the vial to Jace, “is Seelie blood.”

Jace looks at the vial, then at the bag still half-full hanging from the IV stand. “And what’s in that?” he asks nervously and points at it.

Magnus glances at Alec with a worried expression. “I don’t know.”

Then Raj bursts in through the door - and Izzy almost chops his head off for scaring her like that! - and announces that Valentine’s men are dead just like the demons, Valentine himself, though, is nowhere to be found.

Magnus looks at Raj, then at the cart. He sets the vial back down carefully and adds the IV bag to it. Then he snaps his fingers and the cart with all its content disappears.

“Magnus…?” Jace asks uncertainly.

“I’ll find out what was in the bag,” Magnus murmurs very softly. “Maybe it’s just some drug and nothing more. But if not…” He throws a look over his shoulder at the Shadowhunters who are now flooding the room.

Jace catches his meaning. “Better that they don’t know,” he whispers and looks down at Alec who’s still sleeping with his brows furrowed. If Valentine really did something to Alec and the Clave found out about it… Jace swallows and rests his hand on Alec’s chest, feeling Alec’s heart beat strongly.

Magnus grips Jace’s shoulder. “It’ll be okay,” he promises. “Alexander will be okay. We found him, we got him away from Valentine, and that’s the most important thing. Everything else we can fix.”

And Jace nods. His *parabatai* is safe. For now. As long as the Clave doesn’t suspect anything. He looks down at Alec’s arm, at the tiny puncture mark and at the droplet of blue liquid on his skin. Quickly, Jace wipes it away and pulls Alec’s sleeve down. Nobody must find out. It’ll be their secret.

It’s been three days now and Alec still hasn’t woken up yet. Not really. From time to time, he comes around for a brief moment before falling asleep again. And nobody knows why. Not even the Silent Brothers whom Maryse brought in.

Jace still hasn’t told them about Valentine’s little lab, at Magnus’ urging, but soon, he might not have a choice because Maryse and Robert started talking about letting the Silent Brothers take Alec to the Silent City. But if their parents knew about what Valentine did to Alec, they would… what? *What* would they do? Would they still allow the Silent Brothers to take Alec? Would they report it to the Clave? Jace doesn’t know; he *hopes* not, but he’s not sure and it’s killing him that he thinks he can’t trust the people who raised him, but they are talking about Alec here, his *parabatai*.
Magnus is searching for a way to help Alec tirelessly, and his dedication surprised Jace so much that he asked Magnus about it…

“I thought you didn't like Shadowhunters…?”

“I don't, but I do like Alec.”

…and Jace doesn’t know what to think of that, to be honest, but it doesn’t matter. As long as Alec receives the help he needs, Jace would bargain with the devil himself. Or with Valentine.

As Jace sits there, next to Alec’s bed, holding Alec’s hand to make sure his parabatai knows that he’s not alone, dark thoughts are brewing in his head. If Magnus can’t figure out what was in that IV… Jace would be willing to bargain with Valentine to save Alec. He will do anything to help his parabatai.

Magnus slips inside the infirmary almost unnoticed. “I know what was in the bag,” he whispers to Jace as he stops by the bed. And when Jace straightens eagerly, Magnus continues, “It was Forsaken blood. I found evidence that Valentine was trying to create a Forsaken with angel properties.”

Jace clenches his teeth. “To turn our own people against us. And he used Alec as a guinea pig.”

Magnus looks around quickly. “Yes. I think he decided to kill two birds with one stone - send someone for the Cup in Alec’s place and use his Shadowhunter prisoner for his experiment.”

Jace breathes out sharply and runs his hand through his hair. “Can you help him?”

Magnus rubs his forehead. “Now that I know what’s wrong with him? Yes, but it won’t be a fast process. Basically, he has been poisoned. This isn’t a wound I can fix with the snap of my fingers. I can prepare a potion that will help dilute the Forsaken blood–”

“Like an antidote?” Jace guesses.

Magnus nods. “Yes. His body’s fighting it,” he points at Alec who’s still frowning in his sleep and his pale face is glistening with sweat, “but he needs help - or he will die.”

Jace’s eyes widen and he opens his mouth, but before he can say anything, a voice asks behind them, “Then what do you need, Bane?”

Both Jace and Magnus turn around quickly. There’s Robert standing there, not far away from them. He’s looking worn out, haggard even. He’s not staring at them, but at his son. “Whatever you need, you’ll get it.”

Magnus shifts his weight from foot to foot. He glances at Jace and then replies, “Well, considering the nature of what I’m about to do, I’ll need privacy. And blood.”

Robert stares at Magnus for a long moment, then he nods gravely. “Done.”

In the end, they kidnap Alec. They can’t let the Clave know that he was infected with Forsaken blood - Raziel knows what they would do to him! - so when Alec’s sent to the City of Bones, Jace, Izzy and Clary - she still wants to wake her mom up desperately, but she understands that Alec’s life is in danger whereas Jocelyn’s not, at least not at the moment - together with Magnus and Robert simply steal Alec away right from under the nose of his escort. It’s quite a clever and spectacular deed and Jace can’t wait to tell Alec all about it - hopefully, he’ll get the chance.
They take Alec to Magnus’ flat where they set him down on Magnus’ large bed - Alec doesn’t wake up; his brief moments of almost-consciousness are getting rarer and rarer, growing further and further apart - and Magnus gets down to work with his healing potions and Izzy’s - and later Robert’s - blood to cleanse the poison from Alec’s bloodstream, and also with magic to heal any damage already done to Alec’s body.

It’s a slow process and a painful one, it takes days and Jace doesn’t remember when was the last time he slept. But he just can’t leave his parabatai alone, not when Magnus told them grimly that it might not work, after all, that it’s all up to Alec in the end. If… if Alec should die, Jace wants to be there, with him.

He keeps ignoring Maryse’s phone calls and texts. Of course she figured out that it was them, him and Izzy and Clary, who took Alec, but she doesn’t know why. Robert insisted that they didn’t tell her. Plausible deniability, he said, but Jace suspects there’s more behind it. Right now, though, he doesn’t care.

It’s on the third day that Alec finally wakes up, at a moment when everybody but Jace is asleep, exhausted because of magic or blood drained. And when Jace looks up and sees Alec staring at him with brows furrowed in confusion, he immediately scoots forward with a bright grin on his face.

“Hey,” he whispers, gripping Alec’s hand. “You’re awake!”

Alec swallows painfully and when Jace notices it, he carefully helps him take a sip of water which Alec accepts gratefully. “Wha-happn’?” Alec croaks out.

Jace strokes Alec’s tousled dark hair, still grinning giddily. “Many, many things. And you slept through all of them. But don’t worry, I’ll tell you all about it.”

And Alec smiles, blinking sluggishly. “A-right. But… nap first, ‘kay?”

Nodding, Jace squeezes his parabatai’s hand. “Okay,” he whispers back in a voice thick with emotions. “I’ll be here when you wake up.”

And this time when Alec falls asleep, Jace allows himself to rest too. He doesn’t let go of Alec’s hand, though…
Aaaaaand another Malec h/c. I mean, why not, right? Basically, my brain went, well, what canonical thing I could use to hurt Alec some more? (Unbeta'd)

It starts with a light tingling sensation in the fingers of his left hand.

He just helped Magnus do some magical… thing for which he needed Alec’s strength, and since it worked the last time and it wasn’t all that unpleasant or draining, Alec agreed. But now he stops in the doorway of Magnus’ cluttered workroom and looks down at his hand in confusion.

“Huh…” he mumbles and rubs his fingers together to chase away the feeling, but it’s only getting stronger. The tingling’s turning into numbness that’s now climbing up his arm. And it’s starting to hurt.

Magnus lifts his head. “What is it?” he asks worriedly when he sees Alec staring down at his hand.

Alec turns around, showing Magnus his hand, and opens his mouth to ask about the strange sensation, but in that moment, pure agony shoots up his arm, through his shoulder and deeper, reaching for his heart. Alec cries out and drops to his knees.

“Alec!” Magnus exclaims and rushes towards him.

Alec moans, eyes squeezed shut, his left hand twisted and fingers curled into a claw. With his right hand, he tries to push his leather jacket off his left shoulder, the jacket and the shirt both, actually.

Magnus kneels down in front of him. “Alec? What…? What?!” he’s saying, voice thick with anxiety, while his hands hover helplessly over Alec’s shoulders. He’s not sure where to touch, what to do, what’s going on!

“Arm!” Alec grits out through clenched teeth. “Left… arm!”

Magnus’ eyes widen. “Heart attack? Are you…?” he asks anxiously, and when Alec groans, biting his lip, and fists his right hand into Magnus’ shirt as agony seizes him again, Magnus takes over and gently but quickly starts pulling Alec’s clothes off, still unsure of what’s happening, though.

And then Magnus stiffens, just for a second, when he finally manages to push both Alec’s jacket and his shirt down to his elbow, and sees…

The skin on Alec’s arm is mottled, ugly gray and black and blue, and the stain’s spreading fast, down his arm and up to his shoulder, black tendrils reaching into Alec’s chest and towards his heart. And the cause… the Forsaken wound, the wound that should’ve healed, but apparently did not.

Alec moans and swallows a scream. He’s trembling now, nauseated from the pain, and his head’s swimming, so he presses his forehead against Magnus’ shoulder.

“Shh, okay, okay, I’ll take care of it, shh,” Magnus promises in a whisper once he overcomes his
shock. He buries his left hand in the sweat-soaked hair on Alec’s nape, while in the palm of the other blue magic sparks into life and he quickly pours it into the open and widening wound that’s oozing blackness now.

It takes long minutes - *a small eternity* - for Magnus’ magic to take effect, and by that point, Alec’s wheezing with pain and his heart’s skipping beats, and it just *hurts*, it hurts so much. So when the pain finally eases, Alec almost whimpers in relief and tucks his head even deeper into Magnus’ shoulder.

“Allright, okay,” Magnus keeps murmuring, and he’s kissing Alec’s head, gently rocking them both. “Only a moment now, shh, it’ll be over soon, I promise, there, all better, all better now, shh…”

And when Alec can finally take a deep breath again, his whole body relaxes and melts into Magnus’, while Magnus is cleansing the last remnants of the Forsaken poison from Alec’s blood, healing the damage and then the wound and then the scar, leaving nothing behind but unblemished skin.

Then it’s all over and they’re leaning against each other wearily because one without the other would fall, so drained they both are.

“What happened?” Alec croaks out after a while.

Magnus mulls it over. “Hm, I think… I *think* that when we shared strength, it activated something that had entered your system through the wound the Forsaken had given you.” Then he adds in a voice laced with sarcasm, “You know, the wound I *offered* to *heal*? Because those things are tricky and sometimes, they need a magic touch? Like in *this case*?”

Alec cringes and hides his face in Magnus’ shoulder. “Sorry,” he mumbles.

Magnus sighs. “It’s okay.” But then he raps Alec’s head lightly with his knuckles and adds sternly. “But the next time I tell you something needs healing, you will *not* argue, got it?”

Alec smiles and peeks at him sheepishly. “Got it.”

Magnus kisses Alec’s hair and rests his cheek on top of Alec’s head. “Alright, then.”
The Slight Issue of (Lacking) Self-Esteem

Chapter Summary

Based on the S2 Malec promo. (Unbeta'd)

“I need you to tell me what you actually want from me,” Alec says softly.

They’re standing on the balcony of Magnus’ flat, their previous fight nothing but a distant, unpleasant memory now, but Alec still feels jittery, anxiety’s crawling under his skin like ants.

“And?” Magnus replies kindly, “I told you–”

“No,” Alec interrupts him, “don’t say that you don’t want anything from me.”

Magnus looks at him curiously, head tilted slightly to the side.

Alec sighs and rubs his forehead; all the tension’s making his head hurt. “When you say you don’t want anything, I don’t… I don’t know what to do with that. It’s confusing.”

Magnus’ eyes soften as if he gets it, as if he gets Alec. As if he knows that Alec needs at least something in his life to be ordered and working right now.

“Okay,” Magnus says. “What I want from you right now? I want you not to be reckless, not to do anything that could cause you harm. I promise I’ll help you, but within reason. I understand that you need to find Jace, but you can’t help him if you get hurt yourself.”

Alec frowns, because that makes even less sense to him; so far, all Magnus talked about was Alec. But what about Magnus? What does Magnus expect from Alec, for himself? “But what do you want?”

And now Magnus is looking at him almost sadly and Alec doesn’t understand. What did he say?

“What…?” Alec asks, puzzled.

Magnus shakes his head. “Nothing. What I want can wait until we find Jace. Once he’s back, we’ll talk again, alright?”

And that Alec can understand, priorities he gets, demands neatly stacked. Something in his chest eases. He nods. “Okay, that sounds… fine.”

Magnus smiles at him, but Alec still can’t shake the feeling that Magnus is sad for some reason. He hopes it has nothing to do with him.
“Didn’t you hear what I said?” Jace demands belligerently.

He’s sitting on the bed in his room with his elbows propped on his knees and he’s glaring at Alec who’s leaning against the closed door with hands behind his back.

“I heard you,” Alec replies calmly. “It doesn’t change anything.”

Jace laughs and it’s a bitter, hateful sound. “It doesn’t…! I tell you that my own father poisoned me with demon blood before I was even born, and you think it doesn’t matter?”

Alec remains infuriatingly calm. “Yes.”

Jace has to grit his teeth hard to push back the overwhelming need to blurt out something cruel - like, are you so desperate for someone to love you that you would take me demon blood and all?! - because if he did that, if he went there… he would never forgive himself. Never.

Instead, he turns the anger and hatred that are bubbling inside him impotently against himself. “You’ve seen a Forsaken first hand. This could be my future. Or something even worse. I’m evil, it’s literally in my blood!”

With a sigh, Alec pushes away from the door and walks over to the bed. When he sits down, he pretends he didn’t see Jace flinch away. Jace tries to convince himself that this is Alec, that Alec would never hurt him. But they did punch the living daylights out of each other and that was before the truth came out.

Alec just turns his head, though, and stares at him until Jace can’t take it any longer and looks at him. Only then Alec says, “You’re not evil, Jace. You’re a reckless dumbass and sometimes I want to throttle you, but you are not evil.”

Jace swallows and blinks hard. Because he needed to hear that. He needs someone to convince him that it’s the truth. “How can you be so sure?” he croaks out.

Alec doesn’t turn away from him. “Because you’re my parabatai. Because I carry a piece of your soul in me and it’s definitely not evil. It’s warm and it’s pure and I would never give it back, even if I was offered the chance.”

And now Jace can feel his throat close up, so much so that he couldn’t speak even if he knew what to say. Because this didn’t even occur to him, that since Alec and he are connected, this could affect his parabatai, too, the… demon blood. He really is a dumbass because he didn’t even think of it. But Alec… Alec apparently did and yet, he’s still here, not giving up on Jace.

He twists his lips and tosses his head to somewhat discreetly rub his nose with the back of his hand. It’s been so long since the last time he was this overcome with feelings of the good, positive kind that makes one’s chest ache warmly.
Alec bumps their shoulders together to make Jace look at him again. “Bonded for life, Jace, and I wouldn’t have it any other way. Whatever comes, we’ll face it together, you and me. Alright?”

Jace nods slowly, almost hesitantly, and replies in a thick voice. “Alright.”

They’re in this together. Together. Jace is not alone.
Based on the Malec promo and that old pic Todd Slavkin posted. What caused Magnus’ change of heart? He didn’t want to help Alec because it was too risky - and then he did. (Unbeta’d)

“Did you come to shout at me some more?” Magnus asks, voice dripping with sarcasm, when he notices Alec loitering in his living room.

With his head bent and hands clasped behind his back, Alec shuffles towards the balcony like a chastised schoolboy. Magnus, who’s just about finished with his workout, is reluctantly charmed. Not that he lets Alec know.

Alec stops at the stone railing and sighs. “No, I came to apologize,” he admits softly. Then he adds, “And explain.”

Magnus drops his arms and straightens. This should be good. He doesn’t let just anybody shout at him like that, not anymore. He pulls on his gray hoodie, zips it up and says, “I’m all ears.”

Alec’s not looking at him, rather he’s scratching the railing with his thumbnail now. “I was completely out of line. It was as if I could see myself shouting at you but I couldn’t stop. Ever since Valentine took Jace, I’ve been…” He waves his hand.

“A prick?” Magnus suggests helpfully.

Alec winces. “Yeah. Sorry about that.”

It’s Magnus’ turn to sigh. He’s not really angry at Alec. “Look, we can always talk about things, alright? And I’ll do my best to listen, I promise.”

Alec turns to him fully now and lets his shoulders sag a little. “Well, then I hope you won’t mind listening right now.” He pushes his jacket aside and pulls his t-shirt out of his pants. “Because I think I really need your help…”

Magnus looks down - and his eyes widen slightly. Because when Alec touches his *parabatai* rune, his fingers come away bloody.
Loneliness

Chapter Summary

A parabatai story. TW: abuse. Set in S2, based on the trailers. (Unbeta'd)

They throw him in a cell - his own father locks him up! They dump him on the floor and walk out, locking the door tight, and he has just enough strength left to crawl to the cot set up in the corner.

Jace lies there panting and with his eyes squeezed shut, trying to ride out the pain. He knows his wrist is broken and his ribs, too, and he can’t move his jaw properly either. And his father could cure all his injuries with one stroke of his stele. But he won’t do that, not when his men were the ones who did this to Jace in the first place, and on his orders, too.

He punches the thin mattress in frustration, then stifles a cry when agony flares up in bones. He’s alone here - he’s alone, period! - that’s why he allows himself this moment of weakness. He cries quietly, without making a sound because nobody must know.

He’s so tired! Tired of hurting, tired of being afraid all the time. Tired of this loneliness. Jace wants to go home! He wants to go back to Alec and Izzy, to Maryse and Robert and Max, even to Clary. He just doesn’t want to be alone anymore. Being alone is worse than anything; there’s no greater agony.

And then he feels it. It’s so subtle that it takes him a while to notice. The pain’s ebbing away as his bones knit themselves back together, as the swelling in his jaw eases. And his shivering - the aching cold he stopped noticing a while ago, which is not good, he knows - goes away, too, replaced by a pulsating warmth.

What…?

His side’s throbbing, and when Jace lifts his head and looks down, he sees that his parabatai rune’s glowing. It’s glowing even though he didn’t activate it on his end. And that means…

Alec.

His parabatai, the person on the other end of the rope binding them together for life, is knocking gently and reminding Jace that he’s still there for him, that Jace’s not as alone as he thought. Alec’s trying to help Jace the only way he can now, by lending Jace his strength and allowing him to heal. Jace wonders, how much energy this is costing Alec… and how much Alec knows of what’s happening to Jace. Just the thought makes him nauseated.

Jace drops his head down again, and covers his parabatai rune with his hand, hiding it, just in case someone’s spying on him after all. Because this, this is a private thing, not meant for prying eyes or intrusive curiosity, this sweet ache that’s spreading from his side and chasing away Jace’s loneliness. At least for a little while.

For the first time in days, Jace sleeps deeply and his dreams are not haunted by nightmares.
“You called Jace your brother,” Izzy says softly as she sits down on the edge of her brother’s bed and crosses her legs.

Alec, who’s lying fully dressed on the covers with his right arm thrown over his eyes, doesn’t look at her. “So?”

“You have never done that before,” she observes. “You’ve always called him your best friend or your parabatai but never your brother.”

Alec just lies there, motionless, and doesn’t respond. Izzy reaches out and gently takes his left hand in hers. “What changed?” she asks. Her voice still quiet.

He still keeps quiet, but she waits him out. In the end, he drops his right arm and stares at the ceiling. “He knows,” Alec says. He doesn’t need to elaborate.

“Oh,” Izzy replies, stroking the knuckles on his hand with her thumb. “How did he react?”

Alec closes his eyes. “We didn’t really talk about it. He brought it up when he jumped me, when you freed Meliorn, and when he said that,” he shakes his head, “I punched him.”

“Smart move,” she comments dryly.

Alec glares at her, then looks away again. “I already knew that he didn’t see me that way, he made that abundantly clear after the mess with the greater demon. So, whatever would’ve come out of his mouth, it wouldn’t be what I wanted to hear. And I couldn’t listen to that, not on top of everything…”

Izzy nods, looking down. “But you seemed okay at your wedding. Like you made up…?”

Alec sighs. “Well, if by okay you mean we never talked about it again, then yes. I dreaded it, that he would bring it up, but at the same time, I wanted him to?” He huffs. “It doesn’t make any sense.”

Izzy shakes her head. “Actually, it makes perfect sense. You,” she tugs on his hand, “are just not used to dealing with feelings. They’re often confusing.”

He snorts. “Now you sound like Magnus.”

She laughs gently. “I’ll take it as a compliment.”

A smiles passes over his lips. But he sobers up quickly and trains his eyes on the ceiling again. “And then Valentine took him. You could say that that set my priorities straight.”

Izzy could make a joke about puns, but she doesn’t. She keeps quiet, letting her brother talk.
“I realized that it didn’t matter, how I loved him, only that I did. And I’m willing to accept anything, anything he can give me - as long as he comes back. Nothing else matters right now. Just that he comes back, safely. And if all he can be is my parabatai - my brother - so be it!”

She looks at him. “And if you repeat it often enough and loud enough, you might even believe it, huh?”

He huffs out a bitter laugh. “That obvious?”

A small smile tugs at her lips. “Kinda, yeah.”

Alec turns onto his side, towards her, but he leaves his hand in hers. “His feelings for me won’t change, I get that now. He can’t become something he simply isn’t. And if I don’t move on, I might destroy what we could be.”

Izzy smiles. “For someone as emotionally stunted as you are, my dear brother, you can be surprisingly perceptive.”

He glares at her, but mockingly this time.

She looks down at their joined hands. “Do you think Magnus Bane is the one to help you move on?”

Alec shrugs one shoulder. “I don’t know. Maybe. Hopefully. I would really like that because he makes me feel…” He’s searching for the right word.

“Good?” she suggests simply.

“Yeah,” Alec answers. “And I haven’t felt good in a very long time.” Then he sighs again. “But right now, all I can think of is Jace and getting him back. I just can’t think past that. When I try, I hit a wall.”

She looks at him. “Magnus will understand; he’ll wait for you. And if not,” she shrugs, “if he can’t get how important your parabatai is to you, then you’re better off without him anyway.”

Alec furrows his brows. “I thought you liked Magnus…?”

“I do,” she replies, then she tugs on his hand again, “but I like you better. I’ll be always on your side.”

Alec smiles. “Thanks.”

“You’re welcome. That’s what sisters are for.”
Poisonous

Chapter Summary

Based on the latest S2 trailer. TW: violence! Overcome with rage, we may act in ways we then regret… (Unbeta'd)

It happens from one second to the next.

Clary’s asking a simple, innocent question, her mere presence’s rubbing him wrong, though, as if ants are crawling under his skin. And suddenly he… just snaps. He’s snarling at her, accusing her of all the worst things, and he can’t seem to stop, he tries but he just can’t.

And then, then a red-hot wave of violence wells up in him and he’s overcome with the need to hit something, someone… Clary! But he won’t, he won’t, he will not do that!

With a scream Alec twists lightning fast and hits the wall with his fist, smashing the wood paneling, and he keeps hitting it, again and again and again, even after he feels the bones in his hand break, because if he stops… if he stops he’ll do something unforgivable!

And then, just like that, it’s over, the rage’s gone and his mind is clear, and he sinks to his knees, exhausted and in agony. He leans against the wall, gulping for air, and cradles his broken hand in his lap. There are tears in his eyes and he thumps his forehead against the wood, frustrated and scared, because, what’s wrong with me, what’s happening to me, what…?

Clary, who surprisingly did not run, drops into a crouch next to him. She reaches out but then leaves her hand hovering hesitantly over his shoulder.

“Alec?” she asks softly. “Are you alright? What’s going on?”

Shaking his head, he turns to look at her with red-rimmed eyes. “I don’t know, I just don’t know…I don’t know…”

On the other side of the city, the vampire lair is now empty of its occupants; the last of them, a dark-haired girl in a white dress, is still turning into ash, impaled on Jace’s stake.

Valentine, looking very proud indeed, claps Jace on the shoulder. “That’s my boy.”

But Jace just stands there, wide-eyed and trembling, while the unnatural rage that gripped him just seconds ago fades away, and he’s left hollow and empty and exhausted to the bone. He doesn’t understand what’s happening to him… and his heart’s clenched with fear.
“It seems you’ve made a lot of friends around here,” Jocelyn says.

They’re sitting in the Institute’s greenhouse, talking, catching up on stuff that happened while Jocelyn was gone. She doesn’t look all that happy about her daughter’s actions and Clary’s trying to make up for it with forced cheer. They don’t talk about Jace - Jonathan Christopher - period. When they tried, they ended up just shouting at each other. Better let it rest for now.

Clary’s smile is maybe a little too bright. “Yes, most people here were nice to me, especially Izzy - Isabelle Lightwood?” she clarifies. When Jocelyn nods, she continues, “but her brother, Alec, we had our issues, big time!”

Jocelyn raises her eyebrows. “Oh really?”

Clary waves her hand, still grinning. “Well, I think he was jealous because he was in love with Jace–” She falls silent, eying her mother nervously.

But for once, Jocelyn doesn’t react to Jace’s name, but to something else. She frowns. “Isn’t Jace Alec’s parabatai? That’s what I gathered, at least, from what is going on around here.”

Inwardly, Clary sighs in relief. “Yes, he is. I think Alec’s been in love with Jace for years and it was making him really miserable. I told him to just come out with it, but–”

Jocelyn reacts so fast that Clary’s eyes widen. Her mother puts a hand over Clary’s mouth to silence her, then she looks around anxiously to make sure that they’re really alone.

“What?” Clary demands when she pulls away.

Leaning closer, Jocelyn grips Clary’s hand and whispers urgently, “Don’t talk about it, ever! Don’t tell anyone what you just told me!”

Clary furrows her brows. “Why? Everybody knows by now that Alec’s gay, I mean,” she laughs, “he did kiss Magnus Bane at his own wedding, so, I doubt very much there’s anyone left here who does not know yet!”

But Jocelyn doesn’t ease up. “I’m not talking about that. Yes, Shadowhunters have always shunned people who weren’t perfectly straight - I feel really sorry for the boy because he has a rocky road ahead of him - but that’s not it.”

Slowly, Clary’s smile fades. “So what?”

Jocelyn looks around again. “Nobody must ever find out that he was in love with his parabatai. Ever! Do you understand me? It’s really important.”

“Why?” Clary asks in a hushed voice, some of her mother’s anxiety infected her too.
“It’s a capital offense, Clary. Love between parabatai is forbidden by the law, regardless of their gender,” Jocelyn explains. “Alec could be put on trial, and if found guilty, stripped of his runes and exiled, or at the very least, his bond with Jace would be broken.”

Breath catches in Clary’s throat. “But why?”

Jocelyn shakes her head. “There’s some... ancient prophecy or something which says that dire things will happen if parabatai fall in love.”

Now Clary’s staring at her mother in disbelief. “An ancient prophecy? You’re kidding, right?”

Jocelyn’s eyes harden and her voice turns sharper. “No, I’m not, Clary. This is the world you want to enter. It’s built on prophecies and bigoted traditions that are enforced with violence. And those who dare to break the rules, pay dearly for it.” Her face softens. “Do you now get why I don’t want you to be a part of it?”

Clary stares at her for a long moment. “I do, I get it, mom,” she says then. “But I already am a part of it. I’ve always been a part of it. And my brother is, too!”

Jocelyn tsks in annoyance and turns away, but Clary grips her hand. “Mom, I know that you don’t want to hear it, but Jace is a good man, and I refuse to let him suffer in Valentine’s hands! I won’t let Valentine hurt him! I can’t! Don’t you understand that?” she says, trying to appeal to her mother.

But Jocelyn is unmoved. She just sits there, tense and with her lips pressed together in a tight line. She doesn’t respond.

“Well,” Clary says in a shaking voice and lets go of her mother’s hand, “I guess now I know where you stand on this matter.” She gets up abruptly and squares her shoulders. “Thank you for telling me about the parabatai. I didn’t know that and I would never forgive myself if Alec or Jace were hurt because I said something I shouldn’t have.”

Now Jocelyn reaches out but Clary steps away. “Clary…”

But Clary makes a sharp motion with her hand. “No. Maybe you’ve given up on Jace, but I won’t. Ever. Now, if you excuse me, me and my friends need to find a way how to save my brother!”

And with that Clary turns and leaves, and though her heart’s breaking, she holds her head high and her steps are firm. Because she knows she’s doing the right thing. Jace’s worth saving, no matter what their mother says!
A Malec story set in the Ep!110 alternate dimension. I couldn’t help but notice how different Jace and Alec’s relationship was there, how… distant they were. Not once did they talk or even shared space… So, why? (Unbeta’d)

“… because you’re so confident and open about who you are,” Magnus says, carding his fingers through Alec’s hair.

Alec, whose head is pillowed on Magnus’ naked chest, laughs. “Oh God, you should’ve seen me during my teenage years!”

Magnus smiles. “Were you a cute nerd?”

“Something like that. I had my nose stuck in books all the time and I had no idea how to talk to people. Even Izzy despaired!”

“So, what happened?” Magnus asks and tugs on Alec’s tousled hair a little.

Alec falls silent for a moment, drawing small circles around Magnus’ belly button. “I came out to my best friend,” he replies quietly.

Magnus’ hand stops mid-motion. “And he didn’t take it well, I gather.”

Alec shrugs one shoulder. “He didn’t take it badly. He didn’t make a scene or call me names, nothing like that. He just told me that he didn’t feel the same about me. But,” he shrugs again, “something fundamental changed.”

Magnus starts petting him again. “How so?”

Alec blows out a deep breath. “He stopped having time to hang out with me. And then he found himself a new friend and a girlfriend, and they started all hanging out with my sister rather than with me…”

Once again, Magnus stops. “Jace? Your one-time best friend is Jace?”

Alec nods, rubbing his cheek against Magnus’ smooth chest. “Yeah.” He falls silent and doesn’t speak again until Magnus goes back to running his fingers through his hair.

“It happened gradually, you know?” Alec says softly, as if lost in memories. “I didn’t even really notice at first. But then one day…” He slides his thumb back and forth across Magnus’ abs; it almost tickles.

“One day, I was running late; we agreed to meet at Java Jones - that’s what the food truck was called before Jace bought it - we wanted to study together, all of us as a group, because graduation was around the corner. I was running late, and I got out of the car with all my books and then I dropped them—”
“You? I don’t believe it!” Magnus jokes quietly, trying to lighten up the mood.

It’s a success because Alec smiles. “That’s because you didn’t know me back then.” But then he becomes serious again. “So, I crouched down to pick them up, and in that moment, I looked over at them and I actually saw them: Jace and his girlfriend, Clary, and his new best friend, Simon, and my sister, and I realized I was literally the fifth wheel. And how pathetic I was, always begging for scraps. It was a really uncomfortable wake-up call.”

Magnus keeps silent, gently rubbing Alec’s scalp. He just listens. He doubts Alec has ever told this to anyone.

“So I gathered my things and I left, just like that,” Alec continues. “And I finally stopped hiding - I didn’t advertise that I was gay, but I also stopped pretending that I wasn’t - and I chose a different university - I got into several but I planned on going to the same one as Jace - and I chose to study business rather than law, and then I became an event planner. And I made damn sure that everybody learned to respect who I was.”

When Alec falls silent, Magnus just lies there with one hand buried in Alec’s thick mane. After a while, he lifts his head and kisses Alec’s hair. “I’m very proud of you, Alexander,” he says affectionately.

Alec twists around and captures Magnus’ mouth with his. Then he whispers against his lover’s kiss swollen lips, “I hope that one day, you’ll tell me about yourself, too, Magnus Bane.”

Magnus runs his fingertips gently across Alec’s cheekbone, and gazing deeply into his hazel eyes, he replies, “One day, you’ll know everything about me.”
Of Fish Eggs, Snails and Winking Food

Chapter Summary

Just a completely silly thing based on something Todd Slavkin said on Twitter.
(Unbeta'd)

So, their first date…

Magnus is determined to make it special, an event his Shadowhunter boyfriend - my boyfriend! he thinks giddily - will never forget. And when you can portal to places all over the world, you can make your date very special indeed…

But apparently, there’s someone out there - up above or maybe down under - who really hates him…

“Fish eggs, Magnus. *Fish. Eggs!*”

“Are those… snails?!”

“Raziel! My food’s still moving!”

Magnus is really starting to despair. Three dates - well, attempted dates - and they all ended in disaster. He sighs dejectedly and props his chin on his hand. He can’t believe he sucks at dating!

Alec looks at him across the table - they returned to Magnus’ loft after Alec’s stomach rebelled when he saw something wink at him from his plate - and his eyes soften. “Why don’t we just grab a burger and, I don’t know, go for a walk?” he suggests gently. “You don’t need to impress me.”

“But I wanted our date to be special,” Magnus grumbles unhappily.

“Alec,” Alec says, “it’ll be plenty special - you’ll be there with me, after all.”

Slowly, Magnus’ lips spread in a smile and a warm, fuzzy glow settles in his chest. He reaches across the table and takes Alec’s hand in his.

“Alright, then,” he agrees, “burgers! I know this little place in Miami–”

“Magnus!”
High Time

Chapter Summary

I don’t even know what this is. A silly piece. Set during 112, after the bachelor party… (Unbeta’d)

She locks them in, Alec and Jace, just to be sure. She doesn’t trust them to actually talk if there’s a way out. Emotionally open these two are not.

But when two hours pass and they still haven’t called her to let them out, Izzy becomes concerned and goes back to investigate.

The bar’s quiet when she enters; nobody’s shouting or fighting, so that’s good. All Izzy hears are soft, murmuring voices - and a strange clinking.

Frowning, she follows the noise up to the bar and raising herself on tippy toes, she leans over it to find them sitting there, on the floor, Alec and Jace. They’re leaning against the cupboards, surrounded by empty bottles, drinking merrily.

“This one’s strong!” Jace comments, his words slurred, as he hands over his bottle to Alec.

Alec takes a big gulp. He almost hiccups and scrunches his nose. “Yikes!”

“Guys?” Izzy asks hesitantly.

They look up at her and grin. “Our pacemaker!” Jace exclaims.

“Peace maker…” Alec corrects him.

“Whatever!” Jace waves his hand and smacks Alec in the face.

“Hey!” Alec protests loudly, but when he tries to push Jace’s hand away, he misses it by a foot. That startles him and he blinks owlishly. “I’m drunk!” he states, scandalized. “I’ve never been drunk. You got me drunk! On the awning… hm, evening before my wedding!”

Jace nods, grinning with satisfaction. “High time!” he says and punches Alec in the shoulder.

Alec flails and flops to the ground - and stays there. A few seconds later, gentle snoring can be heard.

Jace blinks at his parabatai. “Huh,” he mumbles, and with a wise nod, he adds, “We’re so lucky that iratzes cure hangovers!”

Then he sighs and kind of deflates, slowly leaning to the side and sinking until he’s propped up against Alec’s hip. Soon enough the snoring turns into a duet.

Izzy props her head on her hand and grins brightly. Yeah, they’re okay. At least something’s going right…
The Sanctity of Touch

Chapter Summary

Pointless mush. Just because. I’m full of feels today! Based on the S2 promo.
(Unbeta'd)

Magnus has never allowed himself to touch Alexander before. Harsh words were enough to bruise him, if Alec actually physically flinched away from him… his heart would’ve gone into hiding for another hundred years.

That’s why it costs him so much to reach out and cover Alec’s hand with his, there on the balcony - his insides are all knotted up, as painfully as when he stormed inside the chapel with his heart on his sleeve, taking the greatest gamble of his life.

His touch is gentle and feather light, barely there, he doesn’t restrain or grip, he doesn’t even hold Alec’s hand, it’s just a touch, full of tenderness and hope and invitation…

… and when it’s accepted, when Alec turns his hand and entwines their fingers, Magnus looks down in wonder and his heart flutters in his chest, whispering, yes, yes, yes…
Ignoring Rules and Disobeying Orders

Chapter Summary

IMO, the scenes in the trailers, where Magnus is threatening someone and then leaning over unconscious Alec, belong together and in that order. So… (Unbeta'd)

When Izzy calls to tell him that there was an attack on the Institute and that Alec’s hurt - “Raziel, Magnus, there’s so much blood!” Izzy sobs and Isabelle Lightwood never cries! - it just doesn’t register. Magnus stands there, staring blankly at his cup of coffee, and… that’s it.

He stands there and stares. Because Alec can’t be hurt. Magnus spoke to him only two hours before and Alec was fine. And if Alec was fine then, he can’t be hurt now. That’s nonsense.

“What…?” he mumbles when Isabelle screams his name on the other end of the line. And then he pulls himself together somewhat. “Yeah, yes, I’m coming. I’ll be right there.”

He hangs up, sets his cup down - very, very carefully because his hands are starting to shake - and he opens a portal directly into the Institute because Izzy assured him that the wards were down; the demon broke them. It doesn’t even occur to him to check first - if Izzy was mistaken, he’ll be hurt badly! - he just goes, because… because Alexander’s hurt. He’s hurt!

There’s chaos all around. The Shadowhunters are running around and some are bleeding, some just in shock. And there are bodies. Dead Shadowhunters in a sanctuary that should’ve been untouchable.

As if in a daze, Magnus heads towards the infirmary, the logical place where they would take Alec if he were truly hurt, but the rooms are full, the beds are full, there are injured people lying on bedrolls on the floor. But no Alec.

“What!”

It’s Lydia, there, in the doorway, with a head wound but otherwise okay. She’s pointing down the hall. “Alec’s in his room. There just weren’t any beds left…” She looks around on the verge of tears.

And Magnus goes - he runs! - and there’s sulfur in the air and the carpet is sticky with blood, and luckily, Magnus knows exactly where to find Alec’s room - he’s nosy like that - and there it is, at the end of the hall, the door’s open.

He barges in and… stop. Because Alec’s really there, lying on the bed, and his stomach and chest are slashed wide open. Both Maryse and Izzy are trying to stem the bleeding and heal his wounds, but it’s not working, it’s just not working, and Izzy’s sobbing and Maryse is pale and wide-eyed, and the blood - Alec’s blood - it’s dripping and it shouldn’t be so loud, the tiny droplets hitting the hardwood floor!

“Magnus!” Izzy exclaims when she sees him. “Help!”

And Maryse moves aside to make room for him, there’s nothing of her high-and-mighty attitude left in her expression now, all she wants and needs, all she can think of is saving her son by
Magnus sits down on the edge of the bed and suddenly, there’s white noise in his ears because
when looks down, he sees that Alec’s unconscious and barely breathing and so pale - Alec’s
always been pale but not like this, this is wrong, wrong, wrong, Alec shouldn’t be this pale! - and
then he takes Alec’s hand in his, but when he tries to use his healing magic…

“Something’s blocking me!” he whispers, not understanding. He turns to Izzy. “What actually
happened here?”

She rubs her nose with the back of her hand; Magnus notices that her palm is bloody. “Valentine
sent a greater demon after us. It broke through the wards… attacked us…”

“It was Abaddon,” Maryse adds with certainty. “I recognized it.”

Abaddon. Magnus knows what that means. “He’s been poisoned,” he says. “I can’t heal his
wounds without drawing out the poison first. I need my potions, my magic isn’t any good against
poisoning!” He looks at Maryse urgently. “I need to take him with me, I can’t help him here.”

Maryse doesn’t need to think twice about it, for once. “Do what you have to do, warlock. Just save
him,” she whispers.

And Magnus squeezes Alec’s hand one last time, his own heart’s jumping with nerves, then he gets
up to use the doorway in Alec’s room to anchor a portal, but before he can do that, one of the
Shadowhunters, the brown-skinned one - what’s his name? Raj? - walks in and pulls out his Seraph
Blade.

“You won’t be taking him anywhere!” the man - Raj, yes, it’s Raj - states.

Maryse steps forward angrily. “What is this? My son needs help and–”

Raj looks at her. “Victor Aldertree ordered a lock-down of the Institute until the wards are repaired
and we’ve figured out what happened here. Nobody comes or goes. No exceptions!” he finishes
firmly.

Izzy rushes forward. “Raj, if we don’t get Alec the help he needs, he’ll die!” she pleads.

“No exceptions,” he repeats. “I think it’s high time we all started following rules and obeying
orders instead of ignoring them!”

Magnus has heard enough. He has always tried to deal with Shadowhunters peacefully, but he
won’t let Alec die. He won’t. “I don’t have time for this,” he mutters and raises his hand.

And Raj freezes, eyes going wide. Then he flies across the room and hits the wall so hard that,
when he crumples to the floor, he stays down.

Izzy looks at Magnus in shock, but he doesn’t pay her any attention. He steps to the door and with
a quick hand-wave - no elaborate gestures, no dance-like moves, not when Alec’s breath is starting
to hitch while the poison’s spreading into his lungs - he opens a portal to his loft.

When he turns back to the bed, he sees Maryse walk over to Raj and pick up his Seraph Blade.
Magnus freezes for a second. If she tries to stop him, he’ll deal with her in the same way - and he
makes it known: his eyes flare up dangerously, cat-like and yellow.

But Maryse does not try to stop him. Just the opposite. She looks down at her fellow
Shadowhunter, still lying unconscious on the floor. “Go,” she says. “You too, Isabelle,” she adds and glances at her daughter, “he’ll need your help. I’ll take care of this.”

Izzy’s staring, wide-eyed, and there’s something happening between mother and daughter, but Magnus simply doesn’t care. He raises his hands palms up and using his magic, lifts Alec as gently as possible from the bed.

Alec’s arms and legs are dangling lightly and his head’s thrown back, exposing his long pale neck, but his body’s gliding gently through the air and his terrible wounds, now bleeding black ichor, are unaffected by the motion.

Magnus gives Izzy a quick glance. “If you’re going, then go, now!” he orders.

Izzy walks through the portal without another look back. But before Magnus can move Alec through, Maryse stops him.

“Save him, warlock,” she begs. Yes, Maryse Lightwood’s begging him!

Magnus looks at her and for the first time ever, he feels for her; she stands there tall and proud, but her eyes are devastated. “I’ll do everything I can, you have my word. Everything!” he swears and he means it, he means every word. He’ll move heaven and earth, even hell, to save Alexander. He will not let him die, he just won’t!

And when Maryse nods, Magnus takes a deep breath and carefully, he pushes Alec through the portal with one hand on his shoulder, so as not to lose him in the Limbo.

Then, the portal winks out.
Stupid

Chapter Summary

Just a short Lily Chen story with Malec background. Lily and Alec are friends. Stupid, stupid Lily. (Unbeta'd)

Lily can’t believe she allowed herself to get caught outside by the dawn. What is she? Forty? Luckily, Magnus’ loft is just around the corner. She can go there and bother him and Alec for a while. Maybe even flash her fangs at the little one and make him giggle!

What a disappointment it is, then, when it turns out that Alec’s out on Nephilim business and the blue bit is with his grandparents. Only Magnus is in and he can’t even portal her home because he’s working on something magical and “complicated - don’t touch anything!” Hmpf!

Well, she at least asks Magnus for a glass of B-negative because she feels edgy and annoyed and if she doesn’t get a drink, she’ll go full-on diva on the wizard!

So, while Magnus is doing… whatever he’s doing in the kitchen - it involves a lot of smoke and a lot of swearing, neither seems to be helping, though - Lily peruses the loft: Magnus’ wardrobe - nice! - and Alec’s wardrobe - boring! - and the kid’s room… She knows the boy’s name, of course, she just likes to pretend she can’t be bothered to remember, if only to watch Alec frown in disapproval.

Speaking of which…

“When do you plan on making Alec immortal?” Lily asks when she returns to the kitchen, sipping blood from her crystal glass.

Magnus freezes and almost drops the glass vial he’s holding. Disaster avoided, he still doesn’t respond. Actually, he doesn’t even look at Lily. That makes her frown.

“You do plan on making him immortal, right?” she says slowly and narrows her eyes.

Magnus takes a deep breath. “No.”

Lily slams her glass down on the table; Magnus who wasn’t looking at her, jumps. “Why not?” she demands belligerently.

Now Magnus finally looks up. His face’s unreadable when he answers evenly, “Because he doesn’t want to. Besides,” his voice turns quiet, “I wouldn’t wish this curse on anybody.”

“But…” She doesn’t get it. The stupid warlock found the love of his life and he’s going to do what? Just let the guy slip through his fingers?

“So, what is actually your plan, oh mighty wizard?” she asks bitterly. “Do you intend to watch him grow old and frail and sick and then nurse him to death - and all that only if you’re lucky? Is that your plan?”

Magnus looks away. She sees him clench his hands into fists, but she doesn’t back down.
“And then what?” she continues, her voice still demanding and harsh. “Will you find yourself a new, shinier model?”

Magnus’ head whips around and his eyes flash dangerously, cat-like and gold, glowing like beacons.

Lily snorts dismissively. “Oh, please, I’m quaking in my stilettos!” she snaps, baring her fangs at him. But then she makes a disgusted, “Pah!” noise, throws her hands up and marches towards the door.

“Where are you going?” Magnus calls after her. And though there’s still anger in his voice, there’s also worry.

“Home!” Lily barks, not looking back. “There’s not enough B-negative in the world for me to deal with this amount of stupidity!”

“But it’s still light outside!” he reminds her.

“I’ll take the sewers!” she yells back and throws the main door open so hard she almost tears it from its hinges, then she slams it closed again behind her with a satisfying *boom*!

But then she… just… *stops*.

She stops and she leans against the wall by the door because there’s a pang in her chest and her eyes are stinging even though she can’t really cry anymore. Yet right now, she feels like it, she feels like bawling. Because that stupid warlock doesn’t plan on making his stupid lover immortal!

And that means that Alec will die. Not maybe. Not possibly. But certainly. Her friend will die. There and then gone again. Because he’s mortal.

They finally manage to go on that date. The food is delicious, the weather just perfect for a walk and the company… it’s all Alec could wish for. For their first date, it’s perfect.

That is, until a deafening screech splits the air and Alec’s pushed aside roughly - it’s Magnus who shove him out of the way - and he hits the sidewalk hard.

His body reacts on instinct, though, and before his mind can even catch up, he’s already rolling, jumping to his feet and drawing his Seraph Blade, and all that in one smooth movement.

But when he takes in the scene before him, his eyes widen, because Magnus Bane is fighting a demon - a slimy, ugly, scaly thing that’s scuttling around on more legs than Alec can count, resembling a giant centipede - and he’s doing it like the High Warlock of Brooklyn he is, with magic so powerful that Alec’s ears pop.

Magnus’ hands are glowing and his eyes are glowing, and the demon doesn’t stand a chance against the curtain of lightning that Magnus sends against it, burning it to a crisp. A few seconds later, it’s all over. The smell makes Alec want to gag.

Then they stand there, he and Magnus, and stare at the twitching thing that’s slowly dissolving, disappearing, leaving only an oily stain on the pavement. In the end, they both look up and their eyes meet.

“Magnus?” Alec asks, uncertainly. “What was that?”

And suddenly, the High Warlock of Brooklyn is gone, replaced with a slightly nervous looking boyfriend. “Well…” Magnus falters. Then he clears his throat and tries again. “I might have… forgotten to mention… a few things.”

Alec’s eyes narrow. “Such as?”

Magnus straightens his jacket and fiddles with his rings. “Such as, that my… acquaintance with you hasn’t been met with unanimous approval of my peers.”

Alec’s eyes narrow even further. “Smaller words.”

Magnus sighs. “Some of the warlocks are pissed that I’m dating you. And also helping your friends. But mostly that I’m dating you.”

Alec points at the black stain with his blade. “And this was?”

“A friendly warning?” Magnus offers with a nervous smile.

“And how many of these ‘friendly warnings’ have you received already?”
Magnus shrugs, looking away.

“Magnus,” Alec says quietly and steps over the stinking stain gingerly to get closer. “Why didn’t you tell me? You help me constantly, you know *everything* about me. If you have enemies, if there are people who want to harm you, allow *me* to help *you* for once?”

His earnest tone makes Magnus smile warmly. “My knight in shining armor,” he whispers. And when Alec blushes a little, he adds mischievously, “Would you slay a dragon for me, too?”

Alec’s blush deepens, even the tips of his ears turn pink, and his voice is soft, when he replies, “I would, you know?”

Magnus’ eyes widen. He’s startled, and maybe a little bit overwhelmed.

And because Alec feels the same - emotions are making his throat feel thick - he rushes to add, “I have a sword!” And he lifts his Seraph Blade, as if saying, *see?*

Magnus blinks and then laughs, and it’s a bright and happy sound, despite the terrible smell lingering in the air and the remnants of a dead demon centipede at their feet; despite the proof that there are dangerous people out there, thirsting for his blood.

And then, Magnus cups Alec’s cheek gently, and with his eyes still dancing merrily, he whispers, “I like you too, Alexander. A lot.”

Together, they will be okay.
“Come on, sit with me,” Magnus coaxes.

“I don’t want to sit down!” Alec snaps.

He’s restless, pacing back and forth between the door to Magnus’ bedroom and the living room window, there and back again - Magnus is starting to feel slightly dizzy just watching him - and he’s growling like a bear with a sore paw.

But Magnus also sees how pale Alec is, he sees the dark circles under Alec’s hazel eyes that have gone disturbingly dull over the last few days. And that’s why he doesn’t take his angry outburst personally. He just stares at Alec for a moment, then he pats the couch next to him lightly in invitation. He’s patient enough to wait Alec out.

It only takes a few heartbeats, then Alec’s glare lessens. He lets out a deep breath and visibly deflate. He shuffles over to the couch and folds down bonelessly; exhaustion radiates from him.

“Now,” Magnus prompts gently, “tell me what’s wrong.”

Alec rubs his eyes so roughly that when he looks at Magnus, his eyes aren’t just dull but bloodshot, too. “I can’t sleep,” Alec admits in a defeated tone. “Ever since Jace was taken. I’m getting more and more tired, but I just can’t sleep. My mind can’t shut off. And it’s making me…” He pauses.

“Prickly?” Magnus suggests.

Alec glares at him again. Magnus only smiles innocently.

After a moment, Alec drops his eyes, and mumbles miserably, “Sorry about that.” He sighs. “I just want to sleep. I’m not good to anyone like this. I might even cause more harm than good…”

“Oh,” Magnus says, raising a forefinger as if he just had a thought. “I know the perfect remedy for that, Alexander. There’s a very secret potion that, combined with a very special incantation, will put you to sleep in no time.”

When Alec just stares at him blearily, Magnus pats his hand comfortingly. “I promise it will work. And if not,” he adds airily and shrugs, “I’ll just conk you over the head!”

Alec glares again. Magnus grins.

A cup of hot cocoa and an hour of daytime TV later, Alec’s slumbering peacefully, head pillowed on Magnus’ shoulder. The quiet snoring sounds that pass through his slightly parted lips make Magnus smile. Featherlight, he runs his fingertips down Alec’s lightly stubbled cheek and kisses the top of Alec’s tousled head.

_Sleep well, my love._
“Alec loves me, doesn’t he?”

Jace’s entrance, without knocking, of course, doesn’t make Izzy pause, even though she’s in the middle of dressing - they have seen each other in various states of undress plenty of times over the years, considering - his question, though, asked in a soft, uncertain voice, makes her freeze.

She tries to cover her reaction with a forced laugh. “Of course! We both love you, we’ve grown up together, after all. Besides, you’re his parabatai.”

Jace steps closer. “That’s not what I’m talking about.”

Izzy smooths her dress down over her breasts and hips, turning this way and that, inspecting herself in the mirror to win some time. In the end, she flips her hair over her shoulder and turns around, determined to play dumb. “Then I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

Jace clenches his jaw and looks away for a moment, annoyed. When he turns back to her, he says very carefully and very deliberately, “He’s in love with me, isn’t he?”

Her heart jumps but she smiles brightly. “I don’t–”

“Izzy!” Jace snaps, his irritation finally getting the better of him. But when he continues, his voice is quiet again, maybe dangerously so, “Don’t. Just… don’t! I felt it, okay? When I pushed Alec out of the way, when Valak caught me and tried to devour me… Alec’s memory was the last one on Valak’s mind, his memory and all the feelings that went with it,” he adds and Izzy’s eyes widen.

Jace takes another step closer. “I know, alright? I know. He doesn’t see me as his friend, brother or even his parabatai. He is in love with me. Isn’t he? Isn’t he, Izzy?” he demands almost pleadingly now.

Izzy crosses her arms over her chest. She wants to lie and keep protecting Alec’s secret but that ship has obviously sailed. And if she keeps lying, Jace might do something stupid, like go and talk to Alec about this - her heart skips a beat at that thought. Who knows what Alec might do when confronted with something he refuses to acknowledge, maybe even to himself?

“Yes,” she confirms in the end; her voice is very quiet. “Yes, he’s in love with you.”

Jace lets out a long breath that she didn’t even realize he was holding. “How long?” he asks in a small voice.

“How long has he been in love with you?” Izzy smiles sadly. “For years, you just haven’t ever noticed. He has never been in love with anyone else but you.”

Jace’s shoulders slump as if a great weight settled on them. “I don’t… I don’t love him the same way. I don’t–”
“He knows,” Izzy interrupts him gently. “It doesn’t really change anything. Love doesn’t work like that.”

Jace looks at her. His eyes are a little desperate. “What should I do about it?”

“Nothing!” she replies immediately and firmly. “You won’t do anything at all.”

Jace frowns. “But–”

Izzy steps forward urgently. “No, Jace. Trust me on this. Alec will learn how to deal with it, with you and Clary. And he will move on, he’s smart enough to understand when something’s impossible, and wise enough not to allow his love for you turn bad. He will move on - in his own time. Don’t try to force the issue. Please.”

Jace rubs his face roughly, looking a little lost.

Izzy reaches out and squeezes his shoulder. “Just act normally, be yourself.”

He laughs harshly. “How can I, knowing–”

Izzy drops her hand and narrows her eyes dangerously. “Does it really change the way you look at him? That he likes men? That he likes you? Is it that much of a problem for you?” And she knows that if he says yes, she will punch him.


And she sighs in relief inwardly. Because she loves Jace like a brother, but she would always be on Alec’s side in this. “Then what? What is the problem? Is it the parabatai thing? Are you afraid that someone could find out?”

If the Clave learned the truth, their bond could be severed and Alec could be sent into exile. Or at the very least, they would be forever separated, forbidden from ever meeting again. But Alec’s been so careful, so discreet, Izzy doesn’t think he would ever allow for this to happen.

Jace shakes his head. “No, it’s not that. It’s…” He runs his hand through his hair. “It’s the fact that he desires something that I can’t possibly give him. What I feel for him goes much deeper than what I feel for Max or for you - no offense!” She waves a hand. “But… I can’t give him this. And it’s killing me!”

Izzy’s face softens. “Jace, just love him the way you can. Don’t turn away from him, be there for him - and everything will sort itself out in the end, you’ll see.”

When Jace still doesn’t look convinced, Izzy smiles and pats him on the arm. “Trust me on this. Alec can deal with anything but losing you. Don’t make a big deal out of it and it’ll be fine.”

Unfortunately, only a few days later - “It’s about me. It’s about your feelings. It’s because you’re–” - everything already cracked between them breaks.
Some time ago, I was challenged to write a Magnus fic based on this gif *points* I knew that it would be a very sad story indeed, that’s why I was dragging my feet so…

TW: death fic! Magnus’ world…

For a little while, Magnus’ world overflows with happiness, it’s populated with people and their laughter, and Magnus’ heart is so full he feels it might burst.

But then, as weeks turn into months turn into years, the one who caused this miracle, his Alexander, starts to grow old, as mortals are wont to do, and with each silver strand that blooms in his hair, with each wrinkle that’s etched into his face, Magnus’ world fades a little, just a little, but more and more so every day.

And then, when his Alexander leaves him once and for all, when he dies in Magnus’ arms one winter morning, right before the dawn, with a whispered, “Love you…” on his lips, Magnus’ world turns white… white, white, white - as white as the noise inside his head…
In a desperate situation, you do desperate things. Or, Jace after the Hunter’s Moon, based on the trailers. (Unbeta’d)

Jace’s stumbling down the narrow alley, tripping over his own feet, bouncing off the brick walls… and he hurts, he hurts so much, there’s something stuck in his side something… something sharp and dangerously close to his parabatai rune -: careful-careful-careful! - glass, it’s a glass shard… but he can’t stop, he can’t stop to pull it out because–

–they’re nipping at his heels, the werewolves, some in their human form, some full-on wolves, snarling and growling, their eyes aglow, and he could take them if he wanted to, but Jace doesn’t, he doesn’t want to hurt anybody, he came to the Hunter’s Moon, he came here to… to…

… he’s out of the alley but he falls down, the pain in his side makes him cry out and he rolls quickly because the shard shifts - his parabatai rune, careful! - and then he lays there gasping for breath and with his eyes clenched shut, he can’t can’t move, he’s simply too tired-exhausted-drained, and then they’re there, the werewolves, and they attack as a pack, snarling–

–when suddenly, there’s a roar, deafening, and Jace covers his ears and hides his face, curling up, this is not good, not good at all, but the werewolves… they stop, they don’t attack, no, there’s whining and groveling and a familiar voice, yes, he came here to talk to–

“Jace?” Gentle hands on his shoulder, pulling at him. “Jace, come on, son, it’s me, it’s Luke. Look at me. Come on. They’re gone, they’re gone now…”

And Jace obeys and slowly, very, very slowly he uncurls and looks up through sweat-soaked bangs now sticky with blood from a myriad of little wounds all over his face and hands.

“Luke,” he croaks out in relief, because it’s his friend, the pack’s alpha, staring down at Jace with a worried frown, crouching in a puddle of rain water, getting his jeans wet and not caring.

Luke inspects Jace’s face, then his eyes widen when he looks down and sees the shard sticking out of Jace’s side - it moved again! - it’s slicing Jace’s flesh, inching towards his parabatai rune - no-no-no-no-no, be careful with that!

“What happened?” Luke asks and his hands now hover over Jace hesitantly as if he isn’t sure where to touch without causing pain.

And then Jace remembers, he remembers why he came here, to the werewolf bar, such a dangerous place, he came looking for Luke, because–

Jace grips Luke’s hand, squeezing his fingers painfully tight. “You have to warn them, Luke, you have to… you have to warn them,” he whispers urgently but his mind is getting muddy and his thoughts are running in circles.

“Who? And from what?” Luke leans in closer, understanding that it’s important.
What? Oh... “My fam–” He hits a block and starts again, “The Lightwoods, you have to warn them, Valentine, my father, he’s not going to keep his word, he’s planning an attack, an attack on the Institute, he’s going to... he wants to kill them all. You have to warn–”

It’s too much. His brain shuts down, his body goes limp, everything turns dark.

Jace falls unconscious.
One Day Soon

Chapter Summary

A parabatai story. Future fic, as in 40+ years in the future. When Jace died, he took it all and left Alec with nothing but a gaping hole in his soul. So selfish… (Unbeta'd)

Jonathan Shadowhunter and David, his parabatai…

Alec runs his fingers gently over the picture, painted in vibrant colors inside the pages of the ancient Codex. Opposite, the words of the parabatai oath glitter, written in gold.

... Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried…

Alec’s chest throbs painfully, making it hard to breath. He presses a hand to his erratically beating heart, trying to force it to calm down. He clenches his eyes shut tightly and waits for it to pass. It always does…

“Jonathan and David, huh?” a soft voice says behind.

Alec, who’s sitting an armchair in the Great Library in Alicante, right below one of the tall stained glass windows that glow warmly in the afternoon sun, startles and turns his head. Jem, it’s Jem Carstairs.

The other man passes Alec’s armchair slowly, leaning heavily on his cane. His hair is snow white and his frame frail with age. And yet, there’s a kind smile on his lips, as if he’s in peace with the world around him.

Jem sinks down into the armchair opposite Alec, sighing a little. “Magnus sent me,” he admits before Alec can say anything. “He’s worried about you and he thought that I could help.”

Oh. Alec drops his eyes to the picture of the first parabatai pair. His heart skips another beat and Alec rubs his chest again. It’s been doing that for weeks now, ever since…

Jem taps the floor gently with his cane. “I guess he’s right, your Magnus. We seem to be in the same boat, you and me, old friend,” he continues softly. “Our lovers are immortal - and our parabatai are gone.”

Alec blinks quickly to push back tears. I’m always gonna be here for you, Jace promised him once. Except he wasn’t - isn’t. He just up and died and left Alec alone here. Unfair.

“Magnus means well…” Alec croaks out finally.

“But he can’t help, not with this,” Jem finishes gently.

Alec nods, still not looking up from the picture of Jonathan and David. The ancient page rustles beneath his fingertips as he runs them over the word parabatai, inscribed in gold.

Alec loves Magnus, he loves him with every breath he takes, but ever since Jace died, it’s as if… it’s as if a part of Alec simply fled. It’s not there anymore. There’s a hole inside him where Jace
used to live.

When Jace died, he didn’t just take back the piece of soul he had given to Alec all those years ago - has it really been fifty seven years now? - but he didn’t give back Alec’s piece either, he took it all and left Alec with nothing but a gaping hole in his soul. So selfish…

“Tessa is the same,” Jem says, staring out of the window into the library’s lush garden. “If she could, if there was a way, she would give Will back to me.” He smiles mischievously and taps the floor with his cane again. “Which would be so awkward, considering he was her husband, too, not just my parabatai. But who knows, maybe we could start a new trend, the world’s changed so much.”

Alec closes the Codex and hugs the books to his chest, eyes still fixed on his lap. If he looks up, he’ll cry. “I miss him so much. Jace.”


Finally, Alec looks up. “How can you stand it? It’s been just a few weeks since Jace died, but Will, he’s been dead for…” Alec shakes his head. “How can you live with the pain? It feels like a half of me is gone.”

Jem drops his eyes to the silver handle of his cane. He twirls it between his fingers. “I bear it because I know I will meet him again, one day,” he whispers.


“Is it?” Jem replies quietly and looks up. His eyes are deep and wise and Alec finds himself unable to look away. “If death truly breaks the bond, then why are we left incomplete? Why didn’t the part of our soul that we’d given away return to us? Their piece is gone and ours is, too. Where did go?”

Alec stares at him.

“I think they took it with them when they left,” Jem continues, “so that we can find each other again in afterlife.” He turns to the window again and closes his eyes, basking in the sunlight with a soft smile on his lips. “He’s out there, my Will, waiting for me, waiting till I’ve done everything I needed to do in this life, so that I can join him again. I’m sure of it.”

Alec swallows hard. His eyes are full of tears. “How can you be sure of it? How?” He almost begs.

Jem doesn’t open his eyes but his smile widens. “Because sometimes, I can sense him… hear him around, feel his touch.” He turns to Alec and looks at him. “Can’t you hear your Jace?”

Alec shakes his head and this time, the tears spill from his eyes.

“Shh, just close your eyes and listen,” Jem urges kindly. “Don’t try to fight the yearning. Let your soul go, follow it and listen…”

Lulled by Jem’s soft voice, Alec closes his eyes - and stops fighting the pain…

There. A laugh. A hug. A throbbing in his parabatai rune…

“I’m glad you’re here with me.”
“Wouldn’t be anywhere else.”

A ghost’s touch on Alec’s shoulder. A whispers in his ear. *My parabatai.*

And when Alec opens his eyes and turns around quickly, he almost catches it, a glimpse of golden hair and laughing eyes, of a strong hand reaching out…

“Jace…” he whispers. And though it’s all gone now - he, *Jace,* is gone again - Alec can’t *unsee,* nor does he want to.

“You’ll meet him again, Alec,” Jem says, drawing Alec’s attention back, “one day. And until then…” He taps the floor with his cane again. “Magnus has probably worn the carpet thin out in the hall with his worried pacing. Go to him. We both have so little time left with them. Fill it with as much happiness as you can.”

Alec looks down at the Codex in his hands. Gently, he sets it aside and gets up. “Thank you, Jem,” he says, smiling for the first time in weeks. And when Jem nods, Alec turns around and goes.

Magnus is waiting.
Dichotomy

Chapter Summary

Two companion fics of the Malec mush kind! (Unbeta'd)

The Dichotomy of Magnus Bane

Alec has seen Magnus fight. He has seen him use his magic with a deadly precision against terrifying demonic creatures, other Downworlders and rogue Shadowhunters alike, his skills honed to perfection by centuries of practice, of fighting for his life in a world where all the sides were out to get him. And he has also seen him use his power to heal, to mend, to protect…

Because that’s who Magnus is, the High Warlock of Brooklyn, the wise mentor, the guardian of his people…

And then there’s the… other Magnus. The one who really, really, really wants a cat but can’t have one because he’s allergic to them, the one who falls asleep at the table and drools on ancient tomes full of powerful spells, the one who can murder a cactus yet holds a child with heartbreaking gentleness.

The one who has seen so much pain and darkness in his long life, yet his heart remains soft and squishy, too vulnerable for his own good.

There’s so much that Alec Lightwood will probably never know about his lover, but the things that he will learn, he’ll certainly hold dear for the rest of his life.

The Dichotomy of Alexander Lightwood

Magnus has seen Alec fight. He has seen him swing his blade and shoot his arrows with a precision gained from years of practice. He has seen Alec kill without hesitation and face darkness without fear. He has seen him bleed for others…

Because that’s who Alec is, his Alexander, a warrior, a soldier in the never-ending battle between good and evil, a protector…

And then there’s the… other Alec. The one who charges after spiders, armed with one of Magnus’ silky slippers - “I can’t sleep, knowing it’s there, watching me!” - the one who still stutters when accosted by feelings, the one who, when it comes to matters of love, more than makes up for his inexperience with unbridled enthusiasm.

The one who has seen so much pain and darkness in his short life already and who still looks at Magnus with innocent wonder.

Every day Magnus Bane learns something new about his lover, yet he’s sure that he’ll never know enough.
Blind!Alec AU #9

Chapter Summary

Magnus takes Alec out on a date. Set in my Blind!Alec AU

Magnus can’t believe that Alec actually accepted and agreed to go out on a date with him. And not just through the portal, there and back again, no. Out out, as in really out. Out among the mundanes. Magnus feels humbled by Alec’s trust.

They walk slowly through the park, bundled up in winter coats and scarves and gloves, and their breath billows in misty white clouds in front of them. Alec has his arm linked with Magnus’ and he’s tap-tap-tapping the sidewalk with his cane. Magnus is feeding them both roasted chestnuts. It’s cold, it’s snowing and it’s perfect.

And that’s when it happens.

The jogger comes out of nowhere and barrels straight into Alec before Magnus has the time to react. Alec takes a sharp breath and stumbles. His cane slips from his fingers, clatters to the ground and rolls away.

“Alec!” Magnus yelps and catches Alec before he can fall, but drops the little bag with chestnuts in the process, spilling them everywhere.

“I’m okay,” Alec assures him, though he seems rather shaken.

“Hey!” the jogger snaps angrily and turns on them, “watch out where you’re going!”

And then… he shoves Alec again.

Neither Magnus, nor the stranger expect what happens next.

Alec turns with the shove instead of resisting it and pushes Magnus aside at the same time. It makes the stranger, who put a lot of strength into his attack, trip. And then Alec goes on the offensive: he grabs the man by the arm, jerks sharply forward and pulls him off balance, then he twists the man’s arm fast and flips him over. The man hits the ground hard. Alec drops down. With one knee pressed hard against the man’s midriff and still holding his arm tight, now twisted painfully, he grabs the man by the throat and squeezes, choking him.

“Help…!” the jogger wheezes out.

But instead of helping, Magnus just stands there, eyes wide, mouth gaping in awe. There’s knowing and then there’s really knowing that your boyfriend is a trained Shadowhunter, despite his blindness. Magnus is… Magnus is a little bit in love, he thinks.

Squeezing harder and cutting the stranger’s air supply altogether, Alec leans in and hisses into his ear, “Try something like that again and I will break your neck. Is that understood?”

Turning an ugly shade of purple, the man nods frantically, staring at his own reflection in Alec’s wraparound sunglasses. Alec holds on for a second longer, just to hammer his point home, then he
lets go, and raising smoothly, he backs away fast.

The man coughs violently, scrambles to his feet and runs. He doesn’t jog, he literally rabbits it out of there, shooting scared looks over his shoulder.

But the moment he’s gone…

“Magnus?” Alec asks in a small voice and reaches out anxiously.

“He’s here!” Magnus replies immediately. “To your left. I’ll just get your cane. Stay where you are, there’s no one else around. I’ll be right there.”

He runs to retrieve the cane that rolled into the bushes by the sidewalk. Then he hastens back.

“I’m here,” Magnus informs Alec. “I’ll take your left hand now, alright? And I’ll put your cane in your right.”

He waits till Alec nods, then he does it. His heart breaks a little when he sees how Alec clutches his cane hard to his chest - and when he feels Alec’s tight grip on his own hand. Magnus can’t even begin to understand how frightening an experience it must’ve been for Alec, to be attacked in a place he doesn’t know and to lose his only weapon - an extension of himself, really - too.

Magnus feels really guilty now.

“I’m sorry,” Magnus says softly when he links their arms again and feels Alec grip the sleeve of his jacket tight.

Alec furrows his brows. “For what?”

“For what happened? I should’ve paid much more attention to what’s going on around us. I didn’t even see the jerk. I’m sorry,” he repeats, his voice contrite.


Magnus stares. “You kidding me? He deserved it! Besides, it was awesome!”

Blushing a little, Alec ducks his head. “Really?”

“Yeah,” Magnus whispers. “You were awesome.”

Alec smiles and buries his face up to his nose in his scarf. For some reason, he reminds Magnus of a turtle in that moment. Magnus smiles.

“You probably want to go home now, huh?” Magnus says, trying to fight down disappointment.

It would be a perfectly reasonable reaction, to want to return home after such an unpleasant experience. Magnus promised Alec that he would look out for him, that he wouldn’t let anything happen to him. And he did a really great job with that, he thinks bitterly.

Alec hesitates, then he shakes his head slowly. “Maybe… maybe we could go a bit farther?” he asks.

And Magnus beams, almost bouncing on his tiptoes. “Really? I mean, yes! Anything you want.”

Alec replies to the smile he can hear in Magnus’ voice with another one of his own. “Alright, then. And can we have some more roasted chestnuts?”
“Yes!” Magnus assures him with a grin, then he pauses. “Well, I dropped mine but there’s a kiosk selling them just around the corner.”

Alec nods, tapping the pavement with his cane. “Then let’s go.”
So, I listened to Beethoven’s Für Elise, and this scene popped up in my head: Jace playing that part of Alec. And then I had to make it angsty, of course. (Unbeta’d)

Jace lets his fingers fly over the black and white keys, gently stroking them, as the first tones of Beethoven’s For Elise - Alec’s favorite - echo through the room, the melody as soft as a feather. Jace closes his eyes and loses himself in it, just for a little while… just until it’s over.

“That was beautiful, thank you.”

Alec.

Jace’s chest clenches painfully when he hears his parabatai’s voice that’s so heartbreakingly weak these days. He opens his eyes and turns around on the padded bench to look at him.

Alec’s lying curled up on the couch in Magnus’ living room, covered with a thick blanket but he’s still shivering noticeably. He’s pale, almost gray, his cheeks are hollow and his eyes fever bright. And yet, he’s trying to smile at Jace.

“I’m glad I could hear you play one last time,” Alec whispers.

Eyes burning, Jace blinks hard. He gets up brusquely and walks over to the couch. “Don’t be stupid,” he snaps fiercely as he sits down on the coffee table in front of Alec. “When Magnus called and asked me to come over and play the piano for you, I thought it was to make you feel better, not this—” He waves his hand and glares. “—this good-bye, so long bullshit. If I knew that was what you had in mind, I wouldn’t have come. Just to spite you!”

But Alec keeps smiling at him. “Yeah, you would’ve come anyway.”

“No, I would’ve not!” Jace spits out harshly - but his hands belie his anger, because they’re gentle, oh so very gentle when they pull the blanket up to Alec’s shoulders to keep him warm.

Alec laughs a little, but his chuckle turns into a cough almost immediately, and when it subsides, his lips are stained red. Jace clenches his teeth, but wipes the blood off tenderly with a paper tissue.

“He will fix it,” Jace swears quietly, staring down at the terrible stains on the white paper. “Magnus will fix it, you’ll see.”

Because he has to. Magnus has to. Nobody else can. Because nobody knows what’s actually wrong with Alec. He just… fell sick. Just like that. There was no attack, there was no demon, and apparently no detectable magic involved either, and yet, one morning, Alec was just… sick. Shadowhunters don’t get sick, not like that!

Jace startles when Alec’s hand settles over both of his; his parabatai’s skin is dry and burning hot. Somehow, it really hammers home the point that there’s something very wrong with Alec; Alec’s skin has always been rather cool to the touch, Jace knows.
“He might not,” Alec whispers back.

Jace looks up sharply. “He will! Magnus will—”

“—do whatever he can,” Alec interrupts him, “I know that, I see how exhausted he’s all the time, how he’s wearing himself out - and I love him for it even more. But he might not find a way to solve this, Jace.” His eyes are so very sad.

Jace grips Alec’s hand in his and with the other he smooths the hair off Alec’s forehead gently. Then he leans forward and looks Alec firmly in the eyes. “You listen to me now. Everybody’s looking into this. Everybody. Maryse and Robert, Izzy in her lab, the Silent Brothers… Magnus and his friends. We will find out what happened to you and how to fix it - how to fix you! - before it’s too late. I’m your parabatai and you will trust me on this, alright?”

Alec stares at him for a while longer, then he blinks and smiles again. “Alright,” he replies, nodding.

He doesn’t believe Jace, though, and Jace knows that. But they both pretend that he does.

Then Jace catches a glimpse of a movement in the doorway and notices Magnus standing there with an unreadable expression on his face.

“Now,” Jace says with forced cheer as he tucks Alec’s hand back under the blanket carefully, “I’ll go and take a leak, then I’ll play something else for you, alright? You rest for now.”

Still smiling a little, Alec closes his eyes, sighing tiredly.

Jace gets up and heads towards where Magnus is still standing, eyes fixed on his lover. His arms are crossed over his chest and his shoulders are slumped.

“Tell me I didn’t just lie to him, Magnus?” Jace asks quietly so that Alec can’t overhear them. His voice is more than a little desperate. “Tell me we will fix it, somehow. That you - that someone - will save him. Please, tell me!”

But when Magnus turns to him, there’s devastation in his eyes and his voice is a soft whisper. “I can’t.”

Magnus closes the door of his workroom and leans against it. The gentle tones of Beethoven’s Moonlight Sonata are wafting through the apartment; Jace is playing again, and Magnus can hear his own grief reflected in Jace’s music.

He closes his eyes and bangs his head against the door. What is his magic good for if it can’t save the man he loves? If he can’t even figure out what’s actually wrong with him? All that his magical powers are telling him is, that Alec’s dying. He’s dying. His Alexander… And he can’t even figure out why.

And that can mean only one thing…

He crosses his workroom and opens the double door leading to the adjoining room, empty and dark except for the glowing pentagram drawn on the floor. Taking a deep breath, Magnus steps in.

Malec mush, based on CC’s short story “What to Buy a Shadowhunter Who Has Everything” - my favorite short story of hers! (Unbeta'd)

Actually, it was Elyaas' idea, the demon’s, that is. Not that Magnus would tell *that* to Alec. His boyfriend does not need to know *everything*...

You see, from time to time, they suffer from nightmares, which is not that bad - when they’re together. Then, the solution is quite easy: they *cuddle*! But when they sleep alone, well...

Magnus turns to alcohol: fine brandy or wine so rich he can still taste the sun-warmed vineyards in it, good old, *old* whiskey or maybe something pink with a cute little umbrella in it. He savors it and lets it warm his stomach and turn his fears fuzzy - just a little bit, hangovers are *not* fun!

But Alec, Alec’s coping mechanism is much more violent: he tries to pummel the punching bag into submission. He never succeeds, of course, and it ends with bruised knuckles and a *very* tired and *very* grumpy Alec.

So, *candles*! The scented kind.

To say that Alec was rather… *unsure* about this idea at first would be an epic understatement, but Magnus persevered - read, he bugged Alec about it until Alec finally agreed to “try out the damn thing!” - and the next time Alec came by, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed and not at all tired or grumpy, Magnus knew he was right. Ha!

These scented candles, they’re namely Magnus’ own creation, it’s *real magic*! If he can’t be there for Alec in person, his love and kisses and sweet memories of evenings spent in each other’s arms can. Because that’s what he weaves into their scents, all of *himself*. For Alexander. For him, *anything*.

And Alec… Alec *loves* them. But not as much as he loves Magnus and falling asleep in his lover’s arms.
A Christmas Story (One Year Later)

Chapter Summary

A companion fic to A Christmas Story (Chapter 319). A Xmas Malec mush with a dash of h/c.

It’s the slight tug on Alec’s hand what wakes him up. He blinks his eyes open and turns his head to the left groggily. And smiles. Magnus.

Magnus is sitting crossed-legged on the bed next to him, Alec’s hand in his lap, and he’s tying something around Alec’s wrist with a very focused almost-frown on his face.

“Hey,” Alec whispers.

Magnus’ head shoots up and his eyes widen. “You’re awake!”

Alec chuckles softly at this rather obvious observation, then he lifts his left hand to look at the thing that’s dangling from his wrist now. It’s a thin piece of black leather, a string really. “What’s that?”

Magnus bites his lower lip, as if he’s unsure about something. “It’s a… charm,” he admits.

Alec makes a humming noise and keeps staring at the thing. It looks rather ordinary. “What does it do?”

“Nothing, really.”

Alec raises his eyebrows and drops his hand back into Magnus’ lap. “And the point of it is, then?”

Magnus takes Alec’s hand in his again and runs his thumb over his knuckles, once, twice… “I mean, you don’t have to worry about it setting off the alarms at the Institute, it’s inert - until you break it, that is,” he adds.

“And?” Alec prompts when Magnus falls silent.

Magnus lowers his eyes to the leather piece. “And then it’ll let me know you need me. And I’ll come.” He looks up again, urgently. “I will. I promise.”

Alec blinks and wonders about Magnus’ anxious expression. “I know you will, Magnus. It’s really neat - and clever, thank you!” He smiles. “What brought it up?”

Magnus shrugs. “It’s Christmas.”

Alec’s eyes widen. He completely forgot. “I’m sorry, I don’t have anything for you this year,” he apologizes unhappily.

Last year, he gave Magnus a pendant made from an ancient arrowhead and decorated with runes for protection. And apparently, it actually worked, go figure. But this year…

Magnus shakes his head, though. “You gave me the best gift I could’ve asked for,” he whispers so
quietly that Alec almost doesn’t hear him.

“Oh?” He has no idea what Magnus is talking about.

Magnus nods, then he rests his hand gently over the white bandages wound around Alec’s midriff - the fact that they’re still there, almost a week after the attack, is a testament to how badly Alec was injured, that not even his runes and Magnus’ magic managed to heal him properly yet.

“Yes, you survived,” Magnus replies very softly, eyes trained on the bandage.

“Oh,” Alec mumbles.

Now he gets the gift. His wound only got so bad, the demon poison only managed to spread so much, because nobody knew something happened to him in the first place, nobody knew that he was attacked. It took a while for the poison to eat its way through his system to the point where Jace finally noticed that something was wrong through their parabatai bond. And by then, by then Alec was already on the verge of dying.

Alec smiles a little at Magnus. He frees his hand from Magnus’ grip and raises it to touch his lover’s face gently. “I’m sorry I scared you.”

Magnus presses his cheek into Alec’s palm and sighs, closing his eyes. “Just… don’t do it again, alright?”

“Alright,” Alec promises. “I’m sure that, thanks to your gift, there won’t be any repeat solo performances on my part.”

Magnus’ laugh is a little watery and when he opens his eyes, they glow. “That’s all I wish for. You, safe.”

And then Magnus wraps himself around Alec gently and rests his head on Alec’s shoulder. “Happy holidays, Alexander.”

Smiling, Alec pulls Magnus closer and kisses his lover’s forehead. “Happy holidays to you, too, Magnus.”
Little Choice

Chapter Summary

I felt like writing a Maryse and Alec story again. Based on the trailer. (Unbeta'd)

She understands. Maryse understands why Alec’s doing this, why he’s trying to sneak out of the Institute, even though it’s on lockdown, she *gets it* - still, she can’t let him do it. She’s sacrificed too much to let him destroy all her carefully laid-out plans.

And that’s why she does it, though her heart’s breaking.

When Alec turns away from her, when he turns to go after his *parabatai*, Maryse gives the signal and three Shadowhunters step out - two low-ranked men led by Raj - and bar Alec’s way. They won’t let him pass, not without a fight. She hopes it won’t come to that.

Alec freezes for a moment and then, slowly, he turns to her. His eyes are full of disbelief, and what’s worse, full of betrayal. “Mother…?” he whispers in shock.

Maryse clenches her hands into fists to stop them from shaking. “You don’t leave me much choice.”

Alec’s eyes narrow and she realizes that he won’t go with them peacefully. No, he’ll fight. And what’s left of their relationship will be over. But she can’t let him go, she just can’t. He doesn’t know what’s at stake!

And then Alec attacks, lightning fast, and even though Maryse wants her men to stop Alec, she can’t help but be proud of her son’s fighting prowess. And of his determination and loyalty. If things were different…

She stands there, keeping out of the fight, until it’s clear that Raj and the others will lose. Only then does she step in. Her heart’s heavy, but she would rather have her son hating her than see him suffering. Or dead.

Alec’s fighting with Raj, focused on knocking him out - neither side wants to actually hurt the other, they’re all friends here! - so he doesn’t see her. He doesn’t pay attention to what’s happening *behind* him because… well, because it’s just her there, *his mother*. And she wouldn’t hurt him.

But she does.

Maryse sneaks up behind her son and before Alec can react, she winds one arm around his neck and kicks him in the legs from behind to force him down. He chokes and his hands fly up to grip her arm - but by then, she has her stele out and she’s drawing the sleeping rune on the unmarked side of his throat.

It takes effect immediately. Alec’s sagging and his hands drop down into his lap as sleep washes over him in a great, inescapable wave. Still, he manages to mumble, “Why…?”

Maryse whispers into his ear, “I’m doing it because I love you, my son,” and when he finally goes limp, she gently lowers him to the ground, her heart tight with pain because this isn’t what she
wanted!

For a moment, she just kneels there, watching at him. Gently, she smooths his ruffled bangs off his forehead. Alec’s eyes are closed and lips slightly parted in sleep. She still sees her little boy in him.

Then Maryse gathers herself and gets up, straightening her dress. Chin up, she squares her shoulders - and looks at the three young Shadowhunters who picked themselves off the ground in the meantime.

“Bring him back to his room,” she orders.

Raj, who’s a little out of breath, nods. “Yes, ma’am.”

Maryse turns to go, then pauses and looks back over her shoulder. “And, Raj - Victor doesn’t need to know about this. Is that understood?” Her voice is tight.

Raj stares at her for a long moment, then slowly, he replies. “Yes, ma’am.”

Maryse nods almost imperceptibly and leaves.
Even When You Give Your Best

Chapter Summary

I’ve been dealing with some issues today and I poured all my feels into this fic to get rid of them. It’s a terribly sad fic, a death story. I mean it, it’ll make you bawl.

Sometimes, there’s no way out. Book spoilers. (Unbeta'd)

Alec’s fighting a demon in one of the narrow corridors, when suddenly, the ship lurches and tilts sharply. He stumbles and falls, rolling. He hits his hand against a broken pipe hard and loses his Seraph Blade in the process; he tries to catch it but it tumbles out of sight.

He’s still falling, sliding down the slanted floor, and the demon’s still after him, bounding along the ceiling now, slashing with its claws, reaching out, grasping - and then it hooks its talons into Alec’s jacket and Alec has no choice, he lifts his arms and slips out of it, his own weight pulling him down.

And then he hits the wall at the end of the corridor with a bone jarring force and his own momentum trips him and throws him through an open door into a small room where he lands heavily against the outer shell of the ship that’s now almost the floor - and finally stops, wheezing in pain.

But the demon’s still out there in the corridor, coming closer - when suddenly, the ship lurches again and tilts further, and the hull must’ve burst somewhere, because there’s a huge torrent of salt water gushing in, and it snatches the demon away and…

… slams the door shut.

And the ship’s still tilting and the door’s now the ceiling and through every little crevasse, through every little crack there’s water pouring in, and then the lights flicker out and the dim emergency lighting switches on, coating everything in dark hues of red.

Alec shakes his head because his ears are ringing and he looks around - and his breath catches in his throat. He’s stuck, there’s no way out, no window, no door other than the one above him - the one slammed shut and held down by gallons and gallons of water.

He starts shivering quickly because the water is freezing cold and the ship’s metal is freezing cold, too. Still, he tries to think and not panic, but the water is rising fast around his knees, streaming in through holes too small for him to crawl through, and he has no Seraph Blade and he even lost his stele when he slipped out of his jacket to escape the demon. He has nothing…

And yet, he tries, Alec tries everything he can think of, every bolt, every hole, he tries to climb up the wall to the door and push it open, but it’s stuck. And now, he has to float, kicking his legs, because the water level is rising and it’s now up to his chin.

The emergency light flickers and bursts, leaving him in a complete darkness, and Alec remembers his witchlight, the one thing that’s useless for anything but light, and the one thing he’s left with. He pulls it out and its beautiful white glow shows him that he’s now barely a foot away from the
ceiling/door, and the water’s rising fast.

Maybe, maybe he could wait, he could wait till the room’s filled with water and then push the door open, when the pressure inside and outside equalizes, he could try and push the door open then, it’s his only chance…

And then he has just one mouth-full of air left and he takes a deep breath, as deep as he can, and then all the air’s gone and the room is full of water and Alec’s floating and he waits for a moment longer and then he tries to push against the door, he tries and tries, he gives his everything…

…and it’s not enough, the door doesn’t budge.

And Alec realizes… Alec realizes that he’s going to die. That this time, there won’t be any miracle, that nobody will come and save him, because nobody knows that he’s down here, not a living soul. And he’s going to die.

He’s barely twenty-three and he’s going to die. And it’s not fair, it’s just not fair. He hits the door with his fist again and again, and he wants to cry but he can’t, there’s no air and his lungs are starting to burn.

Alec presses his forehead to the door and his tears are mixing with the salt water all around him. He thinks of his parents, of Max and Izzy, of… of Jace and Magnus. Will they ever find out what happened to him?

Does it matter?

His lungs are burning so badly and he needs to take a breath - even if it’s a lung-full of sea water. There’s no use in waiting. What for?

_Come on, Alec, let go…_

He never wanted to die alone.

He’s so scared.

He breathes in.

The witchlight turns dark.

And a moment later, when the ship’s torn apart at its seams by Clary’s rune, Alec doesn’t feel it anymore.
Chapter Summary

Based on the trailers and that one parabatai gif (http://matdaddyoreo.tumblr.com/post/154169258725/im-not-ready-for-this). Also, Victor Aldertree is a bad guy here. If you don’t like it, don’t read it. (Unbeta'd)

A simple trap. So simple. So effective.

“Another bust, sir,” Raj reports. “Jace wasn’t there. We must’ve missed him by minutes, both him and Valentine.”

Victor turns towards him. “I don’t care about Morgenstern right now. Right now, I want that traitor Wayland.”

Raj shifts uneasily. “Sir, we’ve tried everything to find him.”

Victor smiles. “And that’s where you went wrong.”

Frowning, Raj asks uncertainly, “Sir?”

“We won’t go after him,” Victor says and takes a step forward. “We’ll make him come to us.”

They allow him to attend the funeral. In chains, of course, but it doesn’t matter. Nothing matters now. Nothing has… ever since Alec died in his arms.

Someone brought him funeral clothes, but Jace doesn’t remember who. Clary, maybe? Or was it Izzy? His mind is blank. He got dressed, down there, in the Silent City, in one of the cells where they locked him up.

They drag him forward, his guards - men he has never seen before - and he goes, unresisting. His eyes are drawn to the funeral pyre at the end of the hall. It hits him just how small it is. Funeral pyres used to be big and set up outside, under the night sky, but that was back then, when they still used real fire and the ceremonies lasted hours. Now, it’s all magic: flames burning so hot there’s no smell, no smoke, just terrible heat and then… a small pile of ashes.

Alec’s ashes…

Alec’s all laid out on the pyre, dressed in white just like the mourners, just like the whole hall, and he really looks like he’s only sleeping. Jace has always thought that those were just pretty words in books written to comfort people in their grief. But Alec, he really looks like that, as if he could wake up any minute.

But he’s dead. Jace felt their bond go, though his parabatai rune didn’t bleed as it was described to him once - Jace wonders what it says about him that his rune refused to weep for his parabatai - still, he’s empty now, so empty…

Jace watches as the Silent Brothers cover Alec’s body with a white shroud and his numbness
grows stronger. His eyes burn but he can’t cry, not anymore. His soul still aches, though, his soul, his heart…

His arms. He wants to hold Alec one more time, like he held him when Alec died. He held on so tight and it was no use. He felt it, he felt that something was wrong with his parabatai, he just knew, and so he ran, he ran away from his father because… because he had to, go to Alec, he had to. And he came and he found him dying and he held on and still… Alec died.

Maybe if he came sooner. Maybe if he never left. Maybe…

And it was a trap, so simple, so effective, it was enough for his people to wait there, to surround Magnus’ flat and wait for him there, because they knew he would come, no parabatai worth his salt would stay away when his soulmate needed him…

And Alec did need him, he needed Jace so badly, because he was sick and dying and not even Magnus knew why - and Magnus tried, he did try, so very, very hard to save Alec, but he didn’t know what was wrong with him, and if he didn’t know that, how could he help? And yet, he still tried. And Alec still died.

And then they came, the Shadowhunters, and tore Jace away from Alec and beat him up - why? He didn’t resist, he didn’t fight back, he didn’t do anything but stare at Alec’s slack face in shock. And he remembers that Magnus tried to help him but… it’s all white noise after that. Because his parabatai was dead.

Jace knows that the others, his second family, his friends, must be here, too, somewhere. Maryse and Robert, Izzy and Max, Clary, he knows that they’re mourning, too, but he just… he just doesn’t care. Maybe he will again, if they allow him to live that long - he doesn’t know what they plan on doing with him and he doesn’t care about that either - but right now, all he can see, all he can think of is Alec.

Who died on him and left him alone here…

A hush settles over the hall, then one of the Silent Brothers starts to drone on and on about what a great Shadowhunter Alexander Lightwood was, and Jace lets his words wash over him because he knows all that, he knows how great Alec was, he doesn’t need anyone else to tell him that.

And then comes the fire, one touch of the Silent Brother’s staff and there’s a loud whoosh of flames and Jace staggers as all his strength is sapped from him because Alec’s burning–

There’s a loud hiss and a boom that’s felt rather than heard and a portal opens right there, in the hall, in the open doorway - and Magnus Bane steps through, no, rushes through, yelling, “Stop!” and he flings his hands out. The flames of Alec’s funeral pyre are snuffed out.

Jace blinks dazedly because he doesn’t know what’s going on. The guards try to step in as Magnus strides forward, all focused and determined, and this time, Magnus doesn’t even pretend that he can’t take them, he just flattens them.

And before anyone can stop him, he’s there, at the pyre, and he pulls off the slightly charred shroud and runs his hands over Alec’s body to check for burns - there are some, Jace can see them and they turn his stomach - and then Maryse steps forward and yells at Magnus to stop, to get out, that he has no place here and Magnus–

“He’s not dead!” Magnus snaps back - and the entire hall falls silent.

And that, that finally penetrates the fog that settled over Jace’s mind. What? What…?
Gently, oh so gently Magnus takes Alec by the shoulders and sits him up, then he holds a little vial with some glowing liquid in it to Alec’s lips and pours it into his mouth, almost drop by drop, whispering almost inaudibly, “Please, love, please…”

And then, then Jace feels it - a flutter in his chest, an almost imperceptible pulse in his parabatai rune. He gasps sharply at the unexpected feeling and they all turn to him - even Magnus glances at him briefly before returning his attention back to Alec - and they all just stare at him, because Jace’s looking down at his parabatai rune and… it’s glowing, they can all see it even through the thin material of his white shirt, his parabatai rune’s alive.

And when the guards try to go after Magnus again, they find their way barred by Maryse and Robert and Izzy and even Clary and Lydia, they all make their stand there, for their son and brother and friend.

Jace looks up. The vial is empty and Magnus is trying to get Alec’s heart going - “Come one, love, please, Alexander, please!” - he’s using the same magic he just used to attack to heal and he’s pushing his blue energy into Alec’s chest, again and again, and every time Alec’s body jerks in his arms, and then…

Alec gasps loudly, his back arching painfully, and he’s wheezing and coughing, and Magnus holds him tight, rocking him gently - and Jace cries out as feeling rushes back into their bond, a limb coming back alive with agonizing intensity, but he doesn’t mind it, the pain, what’s important is that it’s back, the bond’s back, Alec’s back, his parabatai’s back… and Jace’s now on his knees, eyes blurry with tears locked on Alec.

Then Izzy’s by Jace’s side and Clary, too, and Maryse demands to know what just happened, and Magnus whose face was so tender and loving and soft a moment ago, is now dark and terrible - terrifying! - and he’s looking over his shoulder, back towards the door through which he came, and he’s glaring at someone, who…?

Jace turns. It’s Victor, Victor Aldertree, who stands there, tall and proud and stone-faced, backed by his elite guard. What…?

“Alexander was not sick,” Magnus grits out, Alec cradled protectively in his arms, “he wasn’t hurt, he wasn’t under any spell. He was poisoned. Someone poisoned him - and…” His voice falters and he pulls Alec closer. “And if I stopped looking into it, if I had let it go…” He doesn’t finish.

Jace blinks back tears and glances between Magnus and Victor. He doesn’t understand - nobody seems to - what Magnus is saying. Why would Victor Aldertree…?

Oh.

A simple trap. So simple. So effective. No parabatai worth his salt would stay away when his soulmate needed him…

Jace drops his head, his bangs obscuring his view. Shock and fury swirl inside him, turning his vision red. They almost killed his parabatai just to get him!

“I promise I’ll look into it, Warlock Bane,” Victor assures him and his deep voice echoes clearly through the hall. “And if you’re right, I’ll personally see to it that the person or persons responsible are punished severely. Maryse, I’m glad your son is alright. Guards, take the prisoner back to his cell!”

And this time, this time Jace fights, he won’t let them take him away from Alec again, never again,
and people are shouting, everybody’s shouting, but there are so many of Victor’s people there and they’re dragging Jace back…

“Alec!”

There, a glimpse of Alec’s half open eyes, his lips are moving. Jace…

Magnus turns, still holding Alec, and he looks Jace straight in the eyes as he swears, “I’ll take care of him, I promise. I won’t let anyone hurt him again.”

And something loosens in Jace’s chest, something thaws, and maybe he can’t escape his captors, not right now, but his parabatai’s alive and everything else can be fixed, now that Alec’s back. Everything.

One last glimpse of Alec, and he’s outside. The double doors slam shut, cutting him off from his friends and family - and his parabatai.

And as the guards drag him back to the Silent City, Jace starts plotting revenge.
Alec and Jace are sparing and they’re truly happy, laughing and joking around, for the first time in… well, forever.

And that’s when it all goes downhill, of course…

When Izzy ducks inside the training room, looking around furtively, they stop and stare at her quizzically.

“Isy, what…?” Jace starts.

But she interrupts him. “I only have a second,” she whispers, still making sure that they’re alone, that they can’t be overheard. “Alec, they’re about to arrest Magnus.”

Alec’s eyes widen “What…?”

Izzy shakes her head. “I don’t have time to explain everything. Just know that the Clave thinks that the warlocks are helping Valentine. And they’re blaming Magnus for not keeping his people in check. They plan on making an example of him.”

“When?” Jace asks grimly.

There’s the sound of marching feet outside. “Now!” Izzy whispers and ducks out again.

They both stand there and stare after her until the sound of heavy footsteps in the corridor fades. Isabelle changed a lot ever she joined Aldertree’s clique - but apparently not entirely.

“I… I have to go,” Alec mumbles, still in shock, and turns to Jace.

Jace looks at him. He looks Alec straight in the eyes and he studies his face… and then he nods slowly. “Yes, you do,” he agrees, and standing on tiptoes, he hugs Alec hard.

Alec’s startled but he hugs Jace back, just as fiercely, and they hang on to each other for a long moment.

Then, Jace pushes Alec back and nods again firmly. “Go, Alec, do what you have to do!”

And Alec goes.

Magnus is… well, he’s not surprised when Alec storms into his flat to warn him, all breathless because he ran full-speed all the way from the Institute, afraid he wouldn’t make it in time - he did, though he’s exhausted and sweaty and his heart’s hammering against his ribs.
Face grim, Magnus nods. “Every time I think the Clave can’t sink any lower, there they go…”

Alec steps closer, feeling anxious. “You have to go, Magnus. Now! They’re on their way here. Please, go!” he begs.

Magnus smiles at him softly. “Don’t worry, love, they won’t get me.” He waves his hand casually and a shimmering portal opens in the doorway leading out onto the balcony. “See? One step and I’m gone.”

“Then go!” Alec urges him. “They can be here any minute!”

But Magnus takes a step forward instead, towards Alec, and looking up at him, he asks, “Will you come with me?”

Alec blinks. “I… I…” he stutters. “If I go with you, I’ll be labeled a traitor, you know that. I’ll be exiled.” He shakes his head anxiously. “I can’t.”

Magnus touches Alec’s face. “Alexander, even if you go back now, they’ll know. When they don’t find me here, when I disappear and take my people with me - because I have to tell them, love, this is not just about me - they will know that someone warned me. And they will go after you, you’re the logical choice.”

Alec knows it’s the truth but… but if he really does this, there won’t be a way back from it. This decision, it’s irreversible.

“I can’t leave my family,” he protests weakly.

“It was Izzy who warned you,” Magnus reminds him.

“Jace…”

Magnus runs his thumb over Alec’s cheekbone and his voice is tender and sad. “Oh, love, he knows. He knew you wouldn’t be coming back. He knew when he sent you to me.”

And Alec remembers the way Jace looked at him, the way Jace hugged him… It was a good-bye, at least for the time being.

There’s the sound of stomping feet on the stairs, of shouted orders, of bursts of magic when the Clave’s soldiers hit Magnus’ wards. They’re here.

Magnus takes a step back, towards the portal, and then another. His hand is still hovering in mid-air, now palm up and inviting. “Come with me, Alexander.”

And Alec… Alec goes.
“What… what is this?” Jace asks tonelessly, standing frozen and wide-eyed in the open doorway of Alec’s room, staring at the thing in Alec’s hand.

Alec, who’s sitting on his bed, tries to hide it, the little tinfoil wrapped package of poison. “Nothing,” he replies quickly.

But Jace won’t let it be. Not this! He’s too scared, downright terrified by what he just saw, to drop it. Looking over his shoulder quickly, he closes the door and -actually locks it; they never lock doors in this house, never! Then he walks up to the bed and snatches the offending piece out of Alec’s hand. And his heart tries to climb out of his chest because he was right.

“Alec, this is crack!” Jace says, staring numbly at the drugs in his hand. This can’t be happening.

“It’s nothing!” Alec protests and reaches out to take it back, but Jace recoils.

“Did you take it?” Jace demands urgently, and when Alec doesn’t respond fast enough, Jace reaches out and grabs Alec by the chin to look him in the eyes, to check. “Alec, hey, did you take any of it?!”

Alec twists out of his grasp, glaring. “No! I’m not dumb!”

Jace laughs harshly. “Apparently, you are if you actually have this shit in your possession!”

“Believe me, this was not my idea,” Alec mutters darkly, still glaring, but there’s something in his face. “I could either take it - or let the teacher see.”

“Who…?” Jace starts asking. And then his face turns furious and he hisses, “Sebastian!”

“Jace–”

“What did he do?” Jace snaps. “Alec!”

Alec sighs and his shoulders slump. “He came to my classroom today and told my teacher that he found something that I lost - and then he pressed this,” he waves his hand at the tinfoil wrapped package, “into my hand right in front of her. I couldn’t very well call him out on it then and there, could I? He doesn’t give a crap if he gets caught, but I do.”

Jace clenches his hand into a fist around the drugs. He sees red. “I’ll kill the fucker, I swear to God! I’ll kill him!”
Alec tries to calm him down. “Jace…”

But Jace won’t let him. “He’s trying to get you into trouble to get to me, you know that, right? Valentine told him to keep away from me, so now he’s after you! He–”

“I know that!” Alec snaps and gets up from the bed. His face is angry now. “I know very well that nobody, nobody would bother to pay attention to me if it weren’t for you, the Great Jace Herondale, you really don’t have to hammer that point home, Jace!”

Jace stares at him, stunned. “What? That’s not what I’m saying, that’s not what I’m saying, Jesus, Alec!” He steps forward and pulls Alec into a tight hug. “It’s not what I meant…”

And Alec sighs, his shoulders slumping again. He hugs Jace back. “I know,” he mumbles into Jace’s shoulder. “Sebastian’s just really getting to me. He seems to be everywhere I go lately.”

Jace didn’t know that! How did he not know? How did it not occur to Jace that just because he made it clear to Valentine, the man he once loved like a father, that he did not want to have anything to do with either him or his crazy brat, not anymore, that Sebastian wouldn’t find a new way to hurt Jace - through the people who took him in and treated him like a real family?

“Why didn’t you say something?” Jace whispers as he pushes Alec away and looks at him searchingly.

Alec huffs, frustrated. “Right, like you haven’t gotten into enough trouble because of him already. You got a lot of leeway because of your, uh, family issues, but you know what the principal said,” he reminds Jace gently, “one more thing and you’re out!”

Jace stares at Alec in disbelief. “So what? You want me to just stand back and let the bastard–”

“I’ll be okay,” Alec interrupts firmly, “I can handle him.”

“How?” Jace exclaims angrily. “By hiding his drugs? Who knows what will come next!”

“Jace…”

“No, I’ll talk to him. Just talk, I promise,” Jace assures Alec when Alec opens his mouth to protest. “And if it doesn’t help…” Jace swallows hard, feeling skin prickle and his heart jump, “… I’ll go to Valentine. I’ll go to him and tell him to put his brat on a leash.”

Alec’s eyes widen. He knows exactly how hard it was for Jace to get away from the man who took care of him for ten years like a father, whom Jace loved with a blind devotion - only to find out that it was he who killed Jace’s real parents, the Herondales, in the first place.

“Alec, no,” Alec whispers.

“Yes!” Jace snaps and his eyes burn. “Maybe he played at being my dad, but he’s not my family!” Then his face softens and he taps Alec on the chest. “You are my family now! And I protect what’s mine!”

Yes, he does, no matter what. That’s the one thing that Jace Herondale has learned from his stepfather, the infamous Valentine Morgenstern, New York’s most dangerous mobster.
This is a death story. But! It’s pure mush. It gave me warm fuzzies while I was writing it. Go figure. A happy death story. A sight unseen ;) (Unbeta’d)

Jace dies the way he lived: on a battlefield, fighting. He’s 32 years old.

“Hey, Jace! Jace, wake up!”

The whisper is full of mischief and laughter. But Jace doesn’t want to wake up, thank you very much. He grumbles, annoyed, and turns onto his left side, away from the mean, mean intruder.

There’s a soft chuckle. And then a poke! And Jace yelps and uncoils lightning fast because those dexterous fingers found the one spot where he’s actually ticklish, the one on his ribs!

Growling, Jace sits up and turns, intent on doing much harm… only to freeze and stare wide-eyed. Because it’s Alec, ducking away quickly so as not to have his nose smashed by Jace’s forehead, and he’s laughing, his hazel eyes full of mirth.

Alec… Alec who died on him four years ago, who died in his arms, who bled to death, his throat torn out by a demon, before Jace could use an iratze, before Magnus could use his magic, before anyone could do anything. Jace hasn’t felt whole ever since.

And Jace throws himself on him, he tackles Alec, hugs him, and together they roll down the slope, laughing.

When they finally come to a halt at the foot of the little hill, they lie there, side by side on their backs, just staring at each other with a smile on their lips.

“You’re here,” Jace whispers and touches Alec’s shoulder lightly, just to make sure.

“Actually,” Alec corrects him, “you are here.”

Jace furrows his brows. “Huh?”

Alec rolls onto his side and props his head on his fist. “You died. And then you came here. You know, I really hoped it would take you longer.”

Jace’s eyes grow wide and a memory flashes through his mind, a memory of pain and of his mouth full of blood and of Clary, sobbing harshly… of the dark, rainy night when he died.

He looks around. They’re lying in a sunny meadow that he vaguely remembers as one of the places where they played as kids in Idris. It makes him feel warm and welcome and… happy.

“I’m dead,” Jace states slowly.

Alec nods. “Yes.”
Jace swallows hard. “Clary… the kids…”

Alec’s face softens and his eyes turn sad. He reaches out and squeezes Jace’s hand. “They’re mourning you, yes. And everybody else, too. Izzy, Simon, mom and dad… even Magnus was at your funeral.”

Jace looks at him. “How long…”

Alec shrugs. “A few days, I guess. It took you a while to get here. I was starting to worry you managed to land your ass somewhere else. With you, it wouldn’t surprise me,” he adds dryly, “always causing trouble.”

Jace snorts. Then he turns serious again. “How do you know who was at my funeral?” he asks curiously. He would rather not think about his wife and his children whom he left behind.

Alec waves his hand. “You can go and visit them, from to time,” he explains, then he falls silent for a moment and drops his eyes. “I did, visit you, I mean.” He looks up. “You and Magnus, mostly. I needed to make sure that you were okay without me.”

Jace stares at him for a long time before responding quietly, “We weren’t.”

“I know,” Alec whispers.

“Magnus still isn’t. He never got over your death. I don’t think he ever will,” Jace adds quietly.

“I know,” Alec whispers again. “I wish we could go back, but we can’t. That world is closed to us now. And to hang around as ghosts…” He shakes his head. “It hurts them more than it helps, really. They need closure and they can’t get it with us haunting them.”

Jace feels another pang that he tries to cover with humor. “When did you get so wise?”

Alec lifts one corner of his mouth. “Four years of being dead will do that to you. They, this,” he waves a hand around again, “it gives you a perspective.”

Jace looks around. It’s a nice place, but he can’t imagine being stuck here indefinitely. “So, what? You’ve been vacationing here for four years now?”

Alec snorts. “Only you would call death a vacation!”

Jace smirks and shrugs. Then he says, “What I meant was, is this it? Are we stuck here? Forever? Because, nice or not, that’s a terrible notion.”

Alec chuckles. “No, don’t worry. You can move on from here easily. See?” He points into the distance.

Jace looks in that direction. Bright beams of light shoot up from the ground and into the sky here and there, intermittently, and disappear. They remind Jace of shooting stars, just going up instead of down. He sits up and stares at them in awe.

“What are they?” he asks in a hushed voice.

Alec sits up, too. He’s staring in the same direction. “Souls, leaving this place.”

“And going where?”

Alec shrugs. “Who knows. It’s the next great adventure, I guess.”
Jace turns his head to Alec. “So, why didn’t you leave already? Don’t you want to know where they’re all headed? Aren’t you the least bit curious?” Because Jace is. The memory of everything he left behind is sitting like a burning cold stone in his chest, but he’s still curious. He can’t help it.

“Oh, of course I’m curious,” Alec responds, then he looks at Jace and bumps their shoulders together. “I was waiting for you. I couldn’t leave missing a part of me now, could I?”

Jace wants to scoff at such a silly concept, but instead, he presses a hand to his chest because he feels a flutter in there, deep down, like butterflies beating their wings and everything turning the right side up again, for the first time in four years. Pieces of Alec’s soul completing his own mosaic.

Still.

“What about Clary? And Magnus, for that matter?” he reminds Alec. “He’s half-demon and ageless to that!”

Alec leans back on his hands and stares up at the sky. “Clary will find us, wherever we’ll go. Once both she and Simon are ready. And Magnus…”

Alec closes his eyes and smiles softly, turning his face towards the sun. “His soul is so beautiful, Jace. Magnus never believed he had one, he thought he would follow his father straight to, I don’t know, hell, I guess? But his soul… it shines so brightly. When he dies one day - and all things die in the end - he’ll come, too, and he’ll be glorious.” He opens his eyes, a little melancholy now.

And Jace knows what Alec’s thinking of without him needing to say it; Raziel, how he missed this, their bond. He bumps their shoulders together. “Don’t worry, tomorrow or in a hundred years, Magnus Bane will forever love Alec Lightwood.”

Alec turns his head towards him and smiles. “Thanks.”

Jace looks into the distance again. Another shooting star, another soul heading into the unknown. “So, we can leave here whenever we want?”

“Yes. See?” Alec lifts one hand and as he concentrates, it starts glowing and tiny sparks circle around his flesh like miniatures planets around the sun. It’s beautiful.

Suddenly, though, Jace feels anxious, he doesn’t want to go yet.

Quickly, he reaches out and grabs onto Alec and his own hand holding his starts glowing, too, their respective colors mixing and making up a new one, indescribable.

“Wait!” Jace blurts out urgently and the glow dims. “Can we… can we stay here a little longer? I would like to see Clary one more time,” he explains hoarsely.

Alec smiles. “Of course. Anything. We can stay as long as you want.”

Jace swallows and nods, squeezing Alec’s hand tight. “Okay,” he whispers. “Okay…”

And as he looks towards the horizon, Jace sees two shooting stars swirl and wind around each other, inextricable, their beams a rainbow of colors. And he knows he’s watching a parabatai pair head for the unknown, together.

This will be him and Alec, one day. Just not right now. Not for a little while yet. Not until he says good-bye to those he left behind… And Alec understands.
Birds of a Feather

Chapter Summary

Just a little Malec h/c to soothe the soul… (Unbeta'd)

Magnus wakes up to the tickle of magic - someone else’s magic! - on his face. His eyes fly open and… then he relaxes and smiles lazily.

“Catarina…”

“Yes, me,” she answers brusquely but very quietly. “And you are an idiot!” And she taps him on the forehead!

He glares. “Hey!” But when he tries to move to slap her hand away, he hisses in pain. He hurts!

His whole body hurts! His forehead might be the only place that doesn’t hurt! He squeezes his eyes shut. “Ow!”

And now it’s Catarina who’s glaring. “As I said, an idiot!”

“What happened?” Magnus utters through gritted teeth, riding out the pain.

“What happened? You risked your stupid life, that happened! And for a stupid Shadowhunter, too!” Catarina accuses him. “What happened to you? The last time I saw you, you refused to lift a finger for them without getting paid, and handsomely, too?”

The pain ceases and Magnus sighs and opens his eyes to look at her. “I fell in love with one of those stupid Shadowhunters,” he admits a little bashfully.

Her face softens a little. “Yeah, I gathered that,” she says and nods to his left.

Confused, Magnus turns his head and his eyes widen. He’s in his bed, nicely tucked in, and… there’s Alec lying next to him, on the covers. Curled up on his side, asleep, and holding Magnus’ hand. And he looks like hell warmed over, pale and drawn, with dark smudges under his eyes.

“What…?” Magnus starts asking.

Catarina replies, “He brought you in, all burned - and really, Magnus, we have magic for a reason, we don’t just jump in front of people to protect them! - and called me in. But you were hurt too badly, I didn’t have enough strength to heal you, so… he offered me his, told me to take whatever I needed to keep you alive, everything if need be.” She tsks. “Birds of a feather, the two of you.”

Magnus turns to her quickly. “You didn’t–”

She glares again - and taps him on the forehead, again! “What do you take me for? I know what I’m doing. Unlike some people,” she mutters darkly.

Magnus looks back at Alec, his Alexander. He squeezes Alec’s hand and then entwines their fingers. Alec sighs in his sleep but doesn’t wake up, a testimony to how exhausted he must be. What he does, though, is snuggle closer. And Magnus smiles at that. He knows he must look sappy
but he doesn’t care.

Catarina mutters something about lovesick fools and turns to go. She promises to come back in the evening - and she adds a threat of bodily harm if she finds him out of bed, of course; Catarina’s bedside manner has always been impeccable.

Magnus just *hmms* in response, not taking his eyes away from Alec, drinking in the sight of his lover hale and whole, uninjured - and completely *drained* from helping to heal Magnus.

And Magnus chuckles softly, leaning in to kiss the top of Alec’s head. Catarina was right, birds of a feather they are.
The Saddest of Stories

Chapter Summary

S2 spoilers! (Unbeta'd) [GIF maker: magnusandalexander on Tumblr] TW: death.

“Jace will come!”

...

“He… he will come, Magnus, he will, you’ll… you’ll see!”

...

“Tell him… tell him, I knew, I knew he… he would’ve come, that he would have… if he could~”

(If gif not visible go here)
“He’ll be okay, you know?” Alec says gently.

The tall, elegantly dressed warlock with gray streaked hair and short, thick horns - Ragnor, his name’s Ragnar Fell - whips around. “You can see me?” he asks in a shocked - and heavily accented - voice.

Alec joins the other man in the open doorway of his and Magnus’ bedroom. “Yes, I can see you.”

“But I’m a ghost,” Ragnar points out.

“I know.”

“And you’re not freaked out?”

Alec smiles. Ever since he met Magnus, smiling has become much easier for him. It’s one of many gifts his lover has given him. “No.”

Ragnor narrows his eyes. “Why?”

Alec shrugs. “You were - are - his friend. I just thought you must have a good reason for sticking around.”

“Oh,” Ragnar says.

Both of them turn to look at Magnus, then. The other warlock is lying asleep in bed, disheveled and without any makeup whatsoever. His chest, stomach and arms are still shiny with healing burns from when he saved Alec’s life a few days back.

While they watch, Magnus reaches out for his lover who’s not there, of course, and finding only empty, cold bedsheets, he snuffles unhappily in his sleep. Alec finds it cute. Not that he would ever tell that to Magnus. You don’t tell the High Warlock of Brooklyn that he’s cute.

“He will be okay?” Ragnar asks quietly.

Alec looks at him and nods. “Catarina said so.”

Ragnar nods, but there’s something in his face… “I’m glad, I truly am. If there’s someone who deserves a long and happy life, it’s him.”

“But…” Ragnar prompts gently.

“But,” Ragnar says, “it would’ve been nice not to be alone. It gets so very, very lonely on the other side.” He looks at Alec. “Does it make me a bad person?”
Alec shakes his head. “No, it makes you human.”

Ragnor stares at him for a long while, startled. Then his whole posture relaxes; Alec hasn’t realized just how tense the other man was before.

With a slow smile, Ragnor whispers, “Magnus chose wisely,” and before Alec can respond, he fades away.

Alec stands there a moment longer, feeling a little melancholy and regretting that he never got to meet Ragnor Fell. He thinks he would’ve liked him.

Then he crawls into bed with Magnus and allows his lover to snuggle against him. In the morning, Alec will tell him about his encounter and he’ll ask Magnus to tell him about the man who used to be his best friend for centuries. Maybe then the other warlock won’t feel so alone, there, on the other side…
Another take on the balcony, with added info, so spoilers ahoy! I wanted to see how the story would turn out different if I changed the form from a dialogue into a monologue. It was an interesting exercise. (Unbeta'd)

Yes, Magnus is *salty*, so sue him! He’s long past allowing *anyone* to yell at him, no matter how much he likes said yelling… *person*. And yes, he likes Alec a lot, he just doesn’t *like* him much right now.

So he puts on an air of indifference and pretends not to give a damn while Alec stands there with his hands clasped behind his back, stuttering and stumbling over his apology, unable to get the words out.

But deep down - or actually not so deep down - Magnus is a softie, he can admit it to himself, so as he watches Alec become more and more frustrated with himself and with the whole situation and with the world in general, he… softens. Because despite everything, he likes - he *really* likes - this foolish Shadowhunter!

And then…

“I just… it’s just… it’s so quiet in my head, without the bond. Quiet and empty. I haven’t felt this alone since I was a kid, Magnus, and I don’t know what to do. If… if we don’t get Jace back, if I can’t restore our *parabatai* bond… I’m afraid it’ll drive me crazy.”

Alec’s voice is so quiet, desperate and distressed, and Magnus can see him falling apart right there, in front of his eyes.

And Magnus’ heart goes out to him because maybe Magnus has never trusted anyone so much to share his soul with them - even if it were possible and even if he actually *had* a soul, which remains to be seen until he actually dies, what with him being a demon spawn - but what Magnus does know, and intimately so, is *loneliness*. He knows all its shades and shapes and forms, all its ugliness and despair and brokenness and pain… *agony*.

Magnus knows what it means to be alone and he doesn’t want Alexander to ever have to feel like that. His very heart hurts at the thought.

And so, very gently, he picks up the pieces that Alec’s crumbling into and puts them back together again, determined to support the unraveling structure of Alexander’s existence with his own hands if need be, till they can fix what’s broken inside him. *Together*.

Because if there’s one thing that age has taught him, it’s patience. He can wait for things that are worth it. And Alec, Alexander, his foolish Shadowhunter, is more than worth a little waiting for.
Valentine’s plan is quite ingenious, really: he’ll assume the identity of Michael Wayland once more, gain the trust of his children, get the Mortal Cup… and then rule the world with his family at his side.

What Valentine doesn’t count with is Jonathan’s injury, the demon poison too insidious to be cured with an iratze. If his son dies…

While Clarissa and her vampire friend - and really, his daughter and a blood sucker, how disgusting! - go fetch human blood for a transfusion, Valentine helps Lucian move Jonathan into the back of the restaurant and lay the boy down on an old ratty couch so that he can rest.

Valentine’s barely listening to Lucian’s platitudes. Really, the man was useless as a Shadowhunter and as a parabatai, too, and he’s even more useless now, as a werewolf - Raziel, did they really make him an alpha? - since he doesn’t recognize his one-time parabatai by his scent! But then, what does Valentine expect from such a fool?

In the end, Lucian leaves and Valentine just sits there, by his son’s side, wiping the sweat off his forehead. He remembers what Jonathan looked like as a little boy, with his brows always furrowed in concentration, determined to please his father no matter what…

Jonathan mustn’t die. Out of all his children, he’s the only one truly worth to be Valentine’s heir. Clarissa is too soft hearted, too much like her mother, a sweet child but not a leader. And the other one… Valentine grimaces. Loyal, yes, but also… Well, his loyalty is only matched by his madness. Sometimes, Valentine wishes the other one were dead. But Jonathan…

Jonathan’s a masterpiece, though he’s the one not of Valentine’s blood. True, he still needs grooming, he needs to be rid of his obnoxious morality and especially of his parabatai bond! Because parabatai do nothing but hold you back - and they can be easily used against you, they’re a weakness. And people like them - real leaders - can’t allow themselves to have a weakness that their enemies could explore!

Jonathan must survive. He must - and he will. Valentine will make sure of it. And then, when the Mortal Cup is in his hands and his family is at his side, only then will his work truly begin - just like Jonathan’s training.

Valentine wipes off his son’s sweaty brow and smiles - yes, he’ll mold Jonathan into a man worthy of the name Morgenstern.
A Good Heart

Chapter Summary

Based on the trailers. Book spoilers! Alec and Jocelyn don’t see eye to eye. (Unbeta'd)

Alec tried everything, everything he could think of to find Jace, but there’s still nothing, no intel at all. And now he’s even locked out of the Ops Center, till he “calms down” as Lydia said. How can he calm down when his parabatai’s missing, damn it?! Why does nobody understand that?

So, the only option left to him is his parabatai rune. Maybe… maybe he could track Jace through their bond, even though it doesn’t seem to be working now. But their bond couldn’t have just… disappeared. Right? Right?

But even in his despair he isn’t dumb enough to try it alone - he wants to find Jace, not destroy whatever is left of their bond! - and he doubts very much that either Izzy or Lydia would help him, not right now, and he doesn’t trust anybody else here, not with Jace, not with their bond. And that means…

Magnus. Alec winces. Okay, he was… he was a dick to him, he can admit that, at least to himself. But right now, he’s willing to beg, for forgiveness, for help, he’s willing to do anything! He just hopes that Magnus will be willing to listen.

Putting on a jacket, Alec takes a deep breath and opens the door of his room. He looks around carefully, then he sneaks out of his room and down the long, quiet hallway towards the side entrance.

The Institute’s on lockdown and if one of Aldertree’s people catches him…

“He’s not worth it,” a quiet voice says behind him.

Alec spins around fast, his heart hammering against his ribs. Jocelyn. She’s standing in the doorway of one of the guest rooms. Not even she was allowed to leave, only Magnus and Luke as the High Warlock of Brooklyn and the Alpha of the Brooklyn Pack, respectively, were let go since Aldertree had no authority to keep them here.

Jocelyn steps out into the hallway. “Jonathan’s not worth whatever you plan on doing, Alexander,” she warns him, still speaking very quietly so as not to be overheard.

Alec’s eyes narrow. What does she know about Jace? She abandoned him, her own son, left him in the hands of a madman for ten years. How dare she judge anyone? he rages silently, firmly shutting down the tiny voice in the back of his head that tries to remind him that he doesn’t know what happened, that he’s not being fair. This is not about fairness, though. It’s about loyalty! And he’ll always take Jace’s side, against anyone!

“It’s Alec,” he corrects her through gritted teeth. “And Jace is worth more than you’ll ever know.”

Jocelyn walks up to him. “Is he worth your life, Alec?” she asks urgently.

“Yes!” he barks out, first clenched.
She shakes her head sadly. “I looked into his eyes when he was born and all I saw was evil. Evil and darkness. He’ll destroy us all if he’s not stopped.”

Alec wants to yell at her. He wants to shake her. He wants to… But he doesn’t do any of it. He just stares down at her coldly and slowly, deliberately he tells her, “You’re wrong. Jace’s good. I’ve been his parabatai for almost ten years now and I know him better than anyone in the world - definitely better than you - and he’s good. And if I don’t help him, Valentine will destroy him. You might not care, but I do!”

And with that he slips out of the door. He knows what he has to do and he has no time to waste. And he won’t allow anyone to stop him.
In Pursuit of Happiness

Chapter Summary

Jace and Izzy talk about Alec and his sour outlook on life. (Unbeta'd)

“What are you looking so gloomy about?” Izzy asks and coming up to Jace from behind, she stands on tiptoes and hooks her chin over his shoulder to see.

They’re at Magnus’. The High Warlock of Brooklyn agreed to hold a party for their little brother, Max, who just received his first rune. Considering the thick atmosphere at the Institute, it really wasn’t the right place for a celebration.

And yet, Jace looks, well, gloomy. Izzy digs her pointy chin into his shoulder like when they were kids. “Come on, what’s going on?”

Jace winces and squirms away. Then he crosses his arms over his chest and leans against the door frame. He sighs and nods into the living room. “It’s Alec.”

Izzy joins him in the doorway. “What about him?”

As far as she can see, her big brother’s actually having fun - fun! He’s standing with Magnus at the bar, warily sampling various sparkling, colorful concoctions that Magnus is preparing; the warlock’s determined to find something alcoholic that Alec will actually like. She suspects that Alec’s more than a little tipsy by now.

Jace watches his parabatai a moment longer, then he says softly, “I thought he didn’t like anyone - I even said that to Clary once - but I guess, looking at him now…” He falters. “I guess he just wasn’t happy before.”

Izzy opens her mouth to deny it, but… really, how can she? Jace’s right. She can’t remember the last time her big brother was truly happy, content with the world in general… relaxed. Seeing him now, the contrast is rather staggering.

“How could I have missed it, Iz?” Jace asks her, eyes still on Alec. “He’s my parabatai, I should know him better than I know myself - and I still thought that his negative outlook on life was just who he was.”

She bumps their shoulders together. “But you liked him anyway?”

Jace frowns down at her. “Of course. He’s my parabatai. I love him.”

Now it’s her who stares at Alec. “Alec is… reserved. Mom and dad had their hand in molding him into this stoic person. ‘The Clave’s everything. The Law’s everything. Happiness means nothing,’” she imitates her mother. “I remember him as a kid - actually, my earliest memory is of him smiling. I’m not really sure when he stopped.”

She glances up at him. “Only after you came to live with us did he start smiling again; as rarely as it’s been happening since, it wasn’t happening at all before. If you hadn’t asked him to become your parabatai… I was honestly afraid of what would happen to Alec.”
Jace looks at her, startled.

“You were the first chink in the armor our parents stuffed him into. I think you’ll never really grasp how much you liking him meant to him,” Izzy says softly.

She nods towards the bar where Alec’s peering doubtfully into a glass that has something alive swimming in it while Magnus grins at him daringly. “If it weren’t for you, this wouldn’t be even possible. Alec would’ve turned out to be little more than an obedient puppet. So, don’t beat yourself up.”

Jace ponders it for a moment, then he nods.

And Izzy grins, bumping their shoulders together again. “But I think we should go and rescue him now, he’s starting to look a little green around the edges.”

And Jace chuckles and agrees.
Equilibrium

Chapter Summary

Set before the show. A little parabatai story. I tagged it as “jalec” because it deals with Alec’s canonical feelings for Jace.

Jace decides to become a trendsetter. Alec helps. (Unbeta’d)

“What are you doing?” Alec asks, wide-eyed, when he walks into Jace’s room and finds him standing in front of the bathroom mirror, contorted into a pretzel and with his glowing stele pointed at the back of his neck.

Jace huffs, frustrated. “I’m trying to put a rune on the back of my neck!”

Alec stops in the open doorway. “Why?”

Jace drops the hand with the stele and turns to Alec with a roguish grin on his face. “Because it’ll look cool!”

Sighing, Alec shakes his head. “Seriously?”

“Hey,” Jace says and points his stele at Alec, “you’re one to talk. Look at that thing on your neck!”

Alec touches his deflect rune self-consciously. “It’s a family thing!” he replies defensively.

“And this,” Jace taps the back of his neck with his stele, “will be a Jace Wayland thing. It’ll become the new rage in Idris!”

Alec snorts. “Not if it’s an unrecognizable squiggle, it won’t.”

Huffing again, Jace inspects his neck in the mirror, turning this way and that.

Alec rolls his eyes. “I’ll do it,” he offers, exasperated.

Jace grins. “You will?”

Rolling his eyes, Alec beckons Jace out of the bathroom. “Yes, I don’t want my parabatai to run around with a dumb squiggle on his neck. Think of the embarrassment! Besides, knowing you? You would sever your spinal chord!”

Still grinning, Jace straddles a chair and crosses his arms over the back. When Alec stands behind him and touches the back of his head lightly, Jace bends his head forward.

Alec pulls his own stele out of his pocket and asks, “What rune?”

“I thought equilibrium,” Jace mumbles into his chest.

Another eye-roll. Alec fears his eyes will get stuck like that one of these days. “Let me guess - because it’ll look cool.”
“You got it!” Jace answers with a grin in his voice, like it was given.

Shaking his head, Alec quickly but carefully burns the rune into his *parabatai* skin. When Jace hisses, he asks worriedly, “You okay?”

Jace chuckles. “Why? You want to kiss it better?” he jokes, his voice a little strained.

Alec’s eyes widen and he swallows hard, grateful that Jace can’t see him. Because yeah, he… he would, if he could. But he can’t. Not now, not ever.

Adding the last dot, Alec steps back quickly and looks away. “There, all done,” he says and hides his stele - and his shaking hand - in his pocket.

Jace jumps up and runs into the bathroom to check. “Nice!” he calls out, and in his peripheral vision, Alec can see him twisting this way and that in front of the mirror. “You, my friend, have a future as a rune artist!”

Relaxing a little - *stay calm, he didn’t notice, he doesn’t know, it was just a stupid joke!* - Alec replies, “I doubt that very much. You just think so because yours barely pass for runes.”

Jace pokes his head out of the bathroom and gives Alec a fake glare. “Hey! You shouldn’t insult your *parabatai*, you know? I’m sure it’s somewhere in there, as a part of the sacred oath, or something.”

Alec rolls his eyes. *Again.* “Whatever. Just… the next time you decide to become a trendsetter, tell me? You know you can ask me for help any time,” he adds more softly and honestly.

Jace smiles at him, and it’s the lovely smile that makes the butterflies in Alec’s stomach flap their wings. “Yeah, I know. You’re the best, Alec!” And with that he slips back inside the bathroom to admire his new rune.

And Alec… Alec hunches his shoulders and whispers, “Yeah, I’m the best.”
Based on the latest sneak peek! (Unbeta'd)

He was the picture of innocence and a masterpiece of temptation. Wendy Beck

Alec’s about to score and drop the ball down the hole when the thing just rolls an inch to the side - and he misses!

Alec straightens up and glares at Magnus who opens his eyes wide, the picture of innocence, and asks, “What?”

His glare unrelenting, Alec replies, “You know what.”

Magnus waves a hand airily. “Must be a wrinkle in the cloth. Or something.”

“Or something,” Alec mutters darkly.

Magnus grins and taps his cue against the floor excitedly. “My turn! And don’t forget,” he points a finger at Alec, “whoever wins, chooses our next date!”

Alec steps back to make room. “I thought you liked the Hunter’s Moon.”

“I do, nice place, very cozy,” Magnus says, slinking around the table towards him, “but for a date I prefer something more…” he brushes against Alec and whispers in his ear, “private.”

Alec swallows hard - and then he jumps when his cue slips from his fingers and clatters to the floor, drawing looks. Blushing hard, he bends down to retrieve it.

Magnus laughs. “Right. Where was I? Ah, yes, the balls!”

Alec hits his head on the underside of the table.
“Magnus? Your furniture is stuck to the ceiling!” Alec observes with only a mild “huh” in his voice as he stops in the doorway to the living room.

Magnus rushes in, clad in his work-out clothes; excitement literally radiates off him. “Alexander, there you are!”

Eyes still trained on the furniture, hanging upside down overhead, Alec points. “What?”

Magnus waves his hand. “Oh, that? I thought maybe we could train a little together, so I needed to make room.”

Alec slowly lowers his gaze - and raises one eyebrow. Because, seriously?

But Magnus misunderstands his expression - probably intentionally. “Well, you did tell me you needed to work on your reflexes after that spider demon almost took your head off. And since my aim’s been little off lately, too,” he snaps his fingers and lets a blue ball of energy bounce on his palm, “I thought we could help each other out.”

“You want to play magical dodgeball?” Alec asks in disbelief.

Magnus shrugs with fake indifference. “Well, if you think you can’t manage…”

Alec narrows his eyes. He knows he’s being baited, but he can’t help it. “Fine!” he snaps and takes his jacket off brusquely.

Magnus grins and bounces on his tiptoes. “Excellent!”

Facing each other like two gunslingers in the Wild West, they get ready - Alec crouches down a little and loosens his shoulders while Magnus juggles three of his magic balls playfully - and then they go at it!

And it’s actually fun. Magnus is flinging the balls left and right, straightforward and curved, some even bounce off the floor, and Alec keeps dodging them with such speed that he becomes almost a blur. It’s fun and it’s easy - that’s why he grins at Magnus in a cocky “That’s all you’ve got?” way.

In response, Magnus’ eyes sparkle with mischief. He throws a ball, an easy one - but then he clenches his outstretched hand into a fist and pulls it back. And the ball hits Alec squarely in the back.

Alec yelps, and as the waves of blue energy cascade over him, he squirms and starts laughing, because it tickles, it tickles so bad! “Not-not fa-air!” he protests.

Magnus shakes his head in mock disappointment. “Alexander, Alexander. Nothing’s fair in love
and war. You need to be ready for a sneak attack.”

Slowly, the magic dissipates, and Alec’s left standing there, panting and narrowed-eyed, again. “A sneak attack, huh?” he asks dangerously.

And Magnus nods sagely. “Yes, a sneak attack that can—”

But his sentence ends in a loud *yip* because Alec blurs forward, and before Magnus can do more than widen his eyes, Alec barrels into him and throws him over his shoulder like a sack of potatoes.

“Sneaky enough for you?” Alec asks and slaps Magnus’ rump.

Magnus just hangs there limply. “You do realize that I’m the High Warlock of Brooklyn and this is very undignified, right?”

Alec grins. “Is that all you can say?”

“No,” Magnus’ voice sounds pensive. “From this angle, your bum looks flabby.” And he pinches Alec in the right cheek.

Alec yelps again and flips Magnus over his shoulder fully. But Magnus, who was ready for this retaliation, drops to all fours like a cat, rolls and jumps to his feet, grinning wide.

Glaring, Alec turns to him. He’s rubbing his butt with a reproachful expression. “I’ll let you know, my butt’s not flabby, thank you very much.”

And there’s the mischievous spark in Magnus’ eyes again. “Should we check?” he asks, and before Alec can react, Magnus *pounces*—

—and they both land softly on a bed - *their* bed, from their bedroom down the hall! - that suddenly popped up into existence behind Alec. Alec ends up on his back with Magnus straddling him and with his hands pinned to the covers next to his head.

Magnus bends down. “*That,* my dear Alexander,” he breathes against Alec’s lips, “is what I call a sneak attack.”

Alec smiles up at him, the tickling and bum pinching forgotten, and whispers, “I thought you wanted to play dodgeball…?”

Magnus licks Alec’s lips open. “Oh, we *will* play, my love,” he replies and kisses Alec deeply.

The furniture remains stuck to the ceiling for the duration, it does not drop and crush them. A miracle on its own, considering…
“Hey! What are you doing there?” Henryk yells, running up the stairs at the back of the club. Nobody should be up there, at the offices, and if the boss finds out that he allowed someone to sneak in…

There’s a chuckle. “Relax, Henryk, it’s just me.”

Henryk stops at top of the stairs. “Oh. Mr Lightwood, sir.”

Another chuckle. “Really, Henryk? How many times do I have to tell you to call me Alec? You are old enough to be my great-grandfather!”

“Oh, sorry, sir,” Henryk mumbles.

It’s true. Alec Lightwood, the boss’ husband, could be his great-grandson. Still, there’s always been something about him that made Henryk want to stand at attention and salute, a presence that has little to do with age.

Henryk heads towards the man. “What are you doing here, sir?”

Alec, who’s standing in the middle of the glass walled balcony between the back stairs and the boss’ office, nods at the dance floor below them. “I’m watching my husband dance, Henryk,” he says softly and there’s a fond, yet somehow sad expression on his face.

Henryk almost stumbles because, yeah, the boss is downstairs, dancing like in old times. He suddenly has the feeling he landed right in the middle of a lovers’ tiff.

Alec turns his head towards him and grins at his expression. “Oh, don’t look so worried. I sent him here, to have fun.”

Henryk stops next to Alec and looks up at him. Even with shoulders rounded with age and leaning heavily on a cane - a necessity ever since Alec’s stroke five years ago - Alec Lightwood is almost a head taller than him. And still as large as life.

“Sir?” Henryk asks uncertainly.

They both look down at the dance floor. The blaring tune is thumping through the floor of the balcony and the darkness below is pierced with colorful lights - and Magnus Bane is at the center of everyone’s attention, up here and down there, too.

Alec sighs. “I can’t remember the last time I saw him this… relaxed. He’s been spending most of his time with me, at home, making sure I sleep enough and eat enough and that I drink all the terrible concoctions he keeps preparing for me…” He shakes his head fondly. “He was wearing
himself thin. So I kicked him out of the apartment tonight and told him to go and have fun.”

“And now you’re spying on him?” Henryk asks. Then his eyes widen and he rushes to add, “No offense, sir!”

Alec laughs and thumps his cane against the floor. “Oh, Henryk! None taken, don’t worry. I am spying on him.” He winks at Henryk. “I needed to know that he actually heeded my advice and came here, that he’s not just… brooding somewhere. And if I called you lot, I know you would’ve lied for him, and don’t tell me it isn’t so.”

Well, Henryk can’t. Because they would’ve lied. Magnus Bane is a living legend among the warlock staff at the club. They all worship the ground he walks on.

His mind latches onto something Alec said, though. “Brooding, sir?”

Alec’s smile slowly fades as he stares down at his husband. “I’m old, Henryk, and getting older with each day. I have lived longer than any of my family and friends, I survived even the death of my parabatai.” He rubs his chest unconsciously. “But I am old. And soon, I will die.”

Henryk’s eyes widen. “Sir?” He can’t imagine the world without Alec Lightwood. It’s an unthinkable prospect.

Alec turns to him again. “Oh, don’t worry. I’m not going to die tonight. Or even tomorrow. Maybe not even next week or next month. But my death is inevitable - because all living things die, even ageless beings like you. Some simply die sooner than others.”

Henryk just stares at him, unable to say a word. Because Alec’s right. And it’s one of the reasons why Henryk has refused to fall in love with a mortal in all his almost two hundred years. The agony of loss just isn’t worth it.

“That’s why tonight, after I’ve watched him work himself to the bone, trying to fix this,” Alec lifts his right hand to show Henryk his thin fingers bent inwards almost like a claw, “I said enough and ordered him to go out and have fun. I needed to know that he still knew how to do it. I needed to know he could be happy again, with time, once I’m gone. That he didn’t forget how.”

Henryk doesn’t respond, he keeps his thoughts to himself. He doesn’t tell Alec that his husband won’t be happy again for a very, very long time once he dies, maybe never again. Because Henryk has never seen anyone love the way Magnus Bane loves Alec Lightwood, with every fiber of his being. It’s beautiful and it’s terrible because the ending was written before their story even began.

Gripping his cane with both hands, Alec chuckles again. “Look at me, talking your ear off.”

“I don’t mind, sir,” Henryk replies quietly.

Alec turns to him curiously. “You really mean that, don’t you?” He reaches out and pats Henryk on the shoulder. “You’re a good man, Henryk, and Magnus is lucky to have you for a friend.”

Henryk has to drop his gaze because his eyes are prickling. For some reason, this sounds like a good-bye to him. He’s seized with a profound sense of loss, even though the man’s still right there, standing in front of him.

“Now,” Alec says brusquely, “help me down the stairs, would you? If I break my neck here, Magnus will never forgive me. My cab is waiting in the back.”

“And the boss, sir?” Henryk asks, nodding down at Magnus who’s still dancing to the deafening
thump-thump-thump of the song.

Alec looks down, too, and for a moment, he watches his husband with aching fondness. “Let him have fun - and don’t tell him I was here, alright? It’ll be our secret,” Alec whispers and winks at Henryk again.

Henryk nods earnestly and helps the man down the stairs and out to the taxi carefully.

Before Alec gets in - the taxi driver was paid to be patient - he looks up at the sky - for once, the stars are visible, winking down at them. “It’s a beautiful night, isn’t it, Henryk?” Alec asks.

But Henryk isn’t watching the sky. He’s looking at the man in front of him, at Alec’s face, lined but full of peace and joy; he wants to etch it into his memory. “Yes, sir, it is, the best in a long time,” he replies softly and his heart’s heavy with knowledge.

Because Henryk is a seer. And he knows. He knows he will never see Alec Lightwood again.
When Izzy hears Alec scream, she pounds on the locked door of her bedroom, bruising her fists on the unrelenting hardwood, and she’s yelling at Aldertree’s people to let her out, to leave her brother alone...

It feels like hours before the door finally opens, long after Alec falls silent, and Izzy’s shaking by then, barely holding back tears of anger and frustration. And it’s Maryse standing there, in the doorway. She looks pained and anxious, and her hands are raised in a placating gesture.

“Isabelle, listen to me~” Maryse starts saying.

But Izzy’s having none of it. She doesn’t even let her mother finish. She pushes past her out into the hallway - but then she stops abruptly because Aldertree’s people are leaving Alec’s room, grim-faced and in their ugly utilitarian uniforms. On their way out, they march past Jocelyn who must’ve heard the screaming, too - her appointed bedroom’s just down the hallway, after all.

Boiling with fury now, Izzy shoves them out of the way, everybody, the Clave people, her own mother, every grasping hand that’s trying to prevent her from getting to her brother. No way in hell will they keep her away from Alec, not again!

She barges into his room - and freezes again. Because Alec’s lying curled up on his right side on the rumpled sheets, dressed only in his pants, his upper body bare and glistening with sweat. He’s pale, his eyes are squeezed shut - and he has both his hands pressed to his parabatai rune, a freshly applied tracking knot peaking through his fingers.

Slowly, Izzy approaches the bed and whispers, “Alec...?”

He doesn’t react at first so she has ample time to spot the bruises forming on his arms and bare ankles from being held down. She wants to punch someone so badly, anyone, but Aldertree’s people would be her first choice. How could they? Is nothing sacred for them anymore?

“Alec,” she whispers again. She senses her mother and Jocelyn behind her but she doesn’t pay them any mind. Her attention is on Alec.

He takes a deep, shuddering breath and whispers. “I told them it wouldn’t work - Magnus had to use his magic to push through whatever’s blocking the bond - I told them but they wouldn’t listen.”

Izzy’s eyes burn. She has no idea what to say. What could she say?

Alec opens his eyes and uncurls slowly. For a long while he just stares at his fingers - there’s blood on them. From the tracking rune or from his parabatai rune, broken? Izzy doesn’t know and Alec...

“I can’t tell if the bond’s still there,” he says hoarsely, still staring at his fingers. “The bond, I can’t
tell if it’s gone or just… or just still blocked. I can’t feel him.”

“It’ll be alright,” Izzy whispers and it sounds lame even to her own ears. But she doesn’t know how to comfort her brother.

Alec sits up and drops his hands in his laps. “Really? Jace, he needs me, Iz. And I can’t–” His voice fails him and he looks away for a moment. “I can’t live without him! If our bond’s broken or if… if Jace dies…” He drops his head into his hands, not caring that they’re sticky with blood. “What will I do?”

Isabelle’s eyes widen. Her ears are full of white noise - her mother’s saying something and Jocelyn’s saying something and now they’re arguing - but Izzy can’t hear them. All she hears is loud buzzing and all she sees is her brother, falling apart right in front of her eyes.

*I can’t live without him,* Alec confessed, and this, *this* has never occurred to Izzy, not even once. It’s never crossed her mind that, if they don’t get Jace back, she might not lose just one brother, but *two.*
Tell Him You're Sorry

Chapter Summary

A missing scene from the beginning of episode 112. Clary and Jace talk about Jace’s broken relationship with Alec… (Unbeta'd)

Her room’s down the hall from his so it’s not surprising that they stumble upon each other first thing in the morning, though she knows he would rather avoid her.

“Jace!” Clary calls out when he freezes, seeing her, and quickly heads in the opposite direction. “Jace, stop!”

He does, grudgingly. “What?” he asks belligerently, when he turns to her.

Yes, what? Clary wanted him to stop, to talk to her, but… about what? What should she say now? What could she tell him, ask him that would be… safe.

“Did you talk to Alec again?” she blurs out the first thing that comes to her mind when he starts turning away again, impatient.

Jace freezes again, the tension in his shoulders rising a notch. He visibly grits his teeth. “No,” he answers flatly.

Clary steps closer. “Jace–”

But he doesn’t want to listen. “No!” he snaps, and when she stops, startled, he takes a deep breath to calm down. “No, look,” he closes his eyes and rubs the bridge of her nose, “I don’t want to talk about this. I don’t want to even have to think about this, about Alec. Everything in my life’s going wrong right now and if our parabatai bond is–” He falls silent. Dropping his hand, he shakes his head. “Forget it.”

When he turns to go again, she quickly steps forward. “Just talk to him, Jace,” she implores, and when he stops with his back to her, she continues, “I know what he means to you - and what you mean to him.”

Jace doesn’t respond, he doesn’t turn around - but he also doesn’t leave, so Clary continues, “Was it true? What you said about why you stopped him from delivering Meliorn to the Silent Brothers? That you did it for his sake?”

He sighs and lowers his head; it hurts her to see his shoulders rounded with resignation. “Yeah. I mean, I wanted to help you and Izzy and even Meliorn, even though I don’t really know the guy, but…” He sighs again. “Yeah. I know Alec, and if he followed his orders… he would’ve never forgiven himself once he came to his senses. It would’ve destroyed him,” he adds in a whisper.

Clary steps even closer and raises one hand to touch his back. But in the end, she doesn’t; it would hurt them both. “Then tell him that. Tell him that you love him and that you’re sorry. Everything will sort itself out.”

She’s not sure if she’s still talking about Jace and Alec - or about them. And from the way Jace’s
shoulders stiffen again, he doesn’t know either. Awkward, painful silence settles over them. Neither knows how to break it.

“We should go,” Jace states in the end and his voice is distant once more. “Magnus promised to come by and help us find the Book of the White.”

And then, without looking back, he marches off stiffly.

Clary remains standing there for a long time, staring after him with one hand raised in a touch that never happened.
For Once in a Life, Selfish

Chapter Summary

A Malec ficlet based on the trailers. (Unbeta'd)

Magnus once asked Dot if she was really going to risk her life for a Shadowhunter. What a silly idea, he thought back then. And then, only a few weeks later…

When he urges Alec not to push him away when things get crazy, Magnus means it. He holds Alec’s hand in his and swears that he’ll always be there for him…

So, when Alec stumbles into Magnus’ loft a couple of days later, disoriented, hurt and frightened, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I didn’t know where else to go, sorry, Magnus offers him shelter. He has never seen Alec truly scared before - and he never wants to see it again!

They found the place where Valentine used to hold Jace, he and Izzy, Alec tells him while Magnus helps him to a sofa in the living room - and help Alec needs because he’s tripping over his own feet, reeling so much it’s scaring Magnus!

They found the place, Alec says, and though Jace was gone, Valentine’s men were still there and they fought hard and Alec was separated from Izzy and they stabbed him with a needle, injected him with something that Valentine experimented with and… and Alec killed them, he did, but then he got sick and he knew that he couldn’t go back home, not now, not when the Clave took over, not with… whatever it was in his veins, the Clave can’t know, they can’t know, Magnus, and so Alec came here because there’s no one else I trust.

Magnus helps Alec take off his jacket, helps him lay down and he has to lift Alec’s legs up onto the sofa because Alec’s too weak to do even that by then, and the puncture wound on Alec’s neck is turning black and oozing ichor, and Magnus is starting to feel really afraid because Alec can’t seem to be able to breathe properly…

And then the Shadowhunters come, without knocking, without so much as a by-your-leave, they just barge in, there to take Alec away, they say, and step aside, warlock, this is Clave business! And Magnus, Magnus has to make a decision.

For decades, Magnus Bane, the High Warlock of Brooklyn, put the good of his people first. Before making a move, any move, he’s always considered how it would reflect on the Downworld in general and on the warlocks in particular first. Always.

But not this time.

Standing up slowly with his back to the intruders, Magnus looks down at Alec, who’s barely conscious, barely breathing now but who’s still looking up at him with trusting eyes - and he makes a decision to be selfish for once.

And when the Shadowhunters take a step forward, still barking orders and waving their blades, Magnus’ eyes flare up, slit-pupiled and demonic, as his magic bubbles up to the forefront, ready to be used.
No one’s going to take Alexander away!
Chapter Summary

This is a terribly sad Malec Christmas story. It was written for a friend who despaired that there were only happy Christmas fics when all she wanted was a good cry. So, this happened. (Unbeta'd)

Hand in hand, they walk through the snow. They smile and they rub their noses together, they kiss and they hug, they look each other deeply in the eyes and they whisper secrets never told before in each other’s ears.

It’s Christmas Eve and it’s dark and the park is quiet and empty except for them and their laughter, and it’s beautiful and it’s perfect…

… and it’s heartbreaking.

A bell starts tolling in the distance, telling the city that never sleeps that it’s midnight and a new day’s about to begin, Christmas Day.

And they stop, Magnus and Alec. They stop and their smiles slowly fade and they stare at each other like this is their last chance to etch every detail of the other’s face into their memory…

… and it is.

The bell’s still tolling…

“I love you, you know that, right?” Alec whispers, running his cold fingers over Magnus’ cold cheek, and yet the touch feels searing.

Magnus nods. “I love you, too. And I always will,” he replies just as softly, his voice thick.

Alec smiles and leans in, his breath wafting over Magnus’ lips. “See ya…”

And there’s a kiss and Magnus closes his eyes to hold back scalding hot, prickling tears.

… the tolling stops, the bell falls silent.

And when Magnus opens his eyes again, Alec’s gone, his footprints in the freshly fallen snow the only proof that he was even there before.

Magnus touches his kiss-swollen lips and cries.

His Christmas wish came true - he got to see his husband one last time.
The Right Thing to Do

Chapter Summary

Magnus Bane, a character study. Based on what Harry said about Magnus in S2, how Magnus’ attitude will change. (Unbeta'd)

They call Alec in the middle of the night to tell him that they found Valentine’s hideout and that the Clave’s organizing a full-on attack, that all Shadowhunters need to report in.

After hanging up, Alec quickly explains the situation to Magnus, kisses him on the forehead, then scrambles out of the bed to dress which he does lightning fast.

Sitting up, Magnus crosses his legs and watches his lover. Just as Alec’s putting his jacket on, Magnus speaks up, needing to… explain or maybe to justify himself?

“I can’t go with you,” Magnus says, pulling at a loose thread in the covers. “I have to think of my people, how it would affect them if I got involved and–”

“Alec,” Alec interrupts him. He paused, startled, when Magnus first spoke, then he finished pulling on his jacket. Now he’s strapping his thigh holster on. When he continues, his voice is a little gentler and full of understanding.

“Alec, I didn’t expect you to come,” Alec assures him, his smile even softer in the golden light of the lamp on Magnus’ bedside table. “I know that you have others to think of.” He walks around the bed and sits down on the edge of it on Magnus’ side. He takes Magnus’ hand in his. “Contrary to what it might look like, I actually do get that this is not your fight, that it’s not your war.”

Alec wants to say more but his cellphone beeps again, demanding that he hurry up. He curses and jumps to his feet. “Sweet dreams,” he whispers and gives Magnus a quick peck on the lips, before turning to go.

“Be safe!” Magnus calls after him.

“Always!” floats back from the living room, then the front door closes with a soft click and Magnus is left alone.

Alone while his lover’s about to go into battle with a genocidal maniac and his army of artificial Shadowhunters. Safe here, in their bed, while Alexander might be fighting for his life, hurting… dying.

But that’s how Magnus wants it, isn’t it so? He has never wanted to march into war, especially not against a rogue Shadowhunter. That’s Clave business, not his. Valentine’s the Clave’s business, as simple as that, just like the Circle was their damn business 20 years ago. Magnus’ business are his own people.

And Alexander. And Alexander’s loved ones. When have all these people, all these Shadowhunters, become a permanent fixture in his, Magnus’, life? Now, when he says “Shadowhunters,” it’s not just them, it’s his lover and his friends, people he wants to protect. Exactly when did that happen and how?
Still, he needs to think of the warlocks under his care first. If he joined Alec in this battle, what
could Valentine do to them once he found out? Magnus has responsibility to protect the warlocks
first, he’s the High Warlock of Brooklyn, after all…

But is he protecting them by staying away? Is he really? Or is he just playing it safe, waiting to see
where the chips fall first? Just the idea turns his stomach. He could never join Valentine, he could
never work for him. *Never.*

So, what is he waiting for? Why is he staying out of the fight? If Valentine wins, if the
Shadowhunters fall - and they might this time, faced with the new enemy army - does Magnus
really think he will be able to protect his people all alone against a threat like Valentine? No, he
isn’t naive. So why?

Because that’s how it’s been always done. Downworlders simply stayed out of Shadowhunters’
business and if Shadowhunters were killed, then, well, good riddance in most cases. There simply
weren’t many one could trust, let alone want to protect or fight and possibly die with.

But that has changed for him now, hasn’t it? Now, if the Shadowhunters fall… *Alexander* might
fall with them. Or Clary. Or Isabelle. Or even that obnoxious Jace Whathisname. And just thinking
of it hurts. The idea that Alec could be dying on some godforsaken battlefield while Magnus slept
his worries away, makes his heart clench painfully.

The truth is, that Magnus *wants* to help, because there are people fighting in this war who are
worth saving. They make him want to take the risk and go to battle, fight side by side with them
and make a stand. They make him want to do all that and not for *money* or *treasures* - but because
it’s the *right thing to do*.

Slowly, Magnus crawls out of the bed and starts dressing. He doesn’t know what he’s planing to do
only that he’s planning to do *something*. Like going after his lover, maybe. Like committing to the
cause. Does he *really* want it, though? Magnus doesn’t know.

Hopefully, he’ll figure it out before the fighting starts.
Eggnog

Chapter Summary

And a happy Malec Christmas story, to balance it out! (Unbeta’d)

“You should give it a try, it’s really good,” Magnus coaxes, pushing the glass across the bar towards Alec.

Alec peers at it doubtfully. “It’s eggnog,” he states.

Magnus nods. “Yes.”

“Raw eggs.”

“Yes.”

“So, salmonella.”

“Not if you pickle your stomach with alcohol.”

Alec crinkles his nose. “I’ll stick with beer, thank you very much.”


“But a heathen without salmonella!” Alec salutes Magnus with his glass.

“I solemnly swear that if you get salmonella from my drink, I’ll cure you.”

Alec grins. “Even if I puke on your Italian shoes?”

Magnus props his elbows on the bar and leans close. “Even then.”

Alec blinks. “Really?”

Magnus tweaks his nose. “Of course, love. ‘In sickness and in health,’ as the saying goes.”

The tips of Alec’s ears turn pink. “I would too, you know? Take care of you.”

Smiling affectionately, Magnus captures Alec’s lips with his in a gentle kiss.

When it ends, he whispers, staring earnestly into Alec’s eyes, “So, will you try my eggnog, then?”

Alec laughs.
They get Jace back but he’s… broken on the inside, the shattered pieces of his mind too jagged to fit back together easily. This time, recovery won’t be fast or simple. This time, healing will demand patience and time.

“We’re leaving for Idris, Jace and I,” Alec says. His voice is quiet but firm, he doesn’t stumble over his own words nor does he hesitate because he’s sure he’s doing the right thing.

Magnus’ face registers surprise, then hurt. But in a heartbeat, all the emotions are gone as he closes himself off, as he puts his armor back on to protect his surprisingly fragile heart.

Squaring his shoulders and taking a deep breath, Magnus opens his mouth to say something and Alec knows that whatever it’ll be, it’ll hurt them both. So he lifts his hand and in a daring move he presses his finger to Magnus’ lips. His gesture startles Magnus so much that his eyes widen and he swallows his words.

“What you think it’s going on here,” Alec says gently when he drops his hand, “I can promise you it’s not. I’m not running away from us - because this isn’t about us, it’s about Jace, about what he needs. And right now, he needs me. He can’t even begin to heal here, in the middle of a war with the man he considered a father and who abused and torture him. He needs peace and quiet and he can’t find them here. Lydia offered us the Branwell mansion outside Alicante for the duration. Jace can recuperate there, away from the fighting in New York and from the politics in Alicante. He needs it. We both need it.”

“But,” Alec continues quickly when Magnus opens his mouth to say something again, “I would like to ask you to wait for me,” he says softly and Magnus’ eyes widen again; Alec guesses he’s full of surprises tonight. “I really care about you and about… us. I know you told me it took you a century to open up to anyone and maybe I’m being selfish here, but I’m asking you to be patient for a little while longer. Can you do that, please?”

At some point during the latter part of Alec’s unusually long speech, Magnus’ face, his eyes softened. Now, a little smile settles on his lips. “If this is what you really want, Alexander…?” he says.

Alec nods. “It is,” he confirms and there’s no hesitation in his voice.

Magnus’ smile widens and his whole posture relaxes. “Then of course I’ll wait for you. Time’s the one thing I have in abundance.”

Alec’s cheeks turn pink with happiness. “Good, that’s good,” he whispers, voice thick. Then his eyes slide down to Magnus’ mouth and he licks his lips. “I would really like to kiss you now,” he adds quietly.
Magnus grins. “I would really like that, too,” he replies - and then he grabs Alec by the front of his jacket and pulls him down into a deep, passionate kiss that leaves them both breathless and wanting more.

Yes, this is worth waiting for.
Christmas Miracle

Chapter Summary

Present time, no powers AU. A Malec story about a Christmas miracle. Take it as a fairy tale and hand-wave details. (Unbeta'd)

“According to our latest reports…”

Magnus is sitting on the couch with his knees pulled up to his chest and Alec’s favorite blanket - the fuzzy one - bundled up to his chin. He’s staring blindly at the TV screen, his cellphone pressed to his ear.

“… Love you.” Beep.

Replay.

“Hey, Magnus. I guess you’re already asleep, huh? Just wanted to let you know that they did have a seat free on the 2:45am flight, after all, so I’ll see you in the morning. Can’t wait.” A soft laugh. “Look at me, all sappy… Love you.” Beep.

Replay–

The phone rings. Magnus quickly checks the display, his heart in his throat - but no, that unknown number again. Magnus angrily rejects the call. Unknown number, unknown number, unknown number when the one he actually wants to hear from…

He calls Alec.

“The number you’re calling is currently not available.”

Magnus wipes his nose on his sleeve.

The phone rings. The unknown number. Again.

Pick up, Magnus. Pick it up. You need to know. Maybe it’s the cops. Maybe it’s the airport…

“… the number of casualties… terrible tragedy on this year’s Christmas Day…”

I can’t. Not yet. If I don’t know then it didn’t happen.

Magnus rejects the call.

Replay.


Replay.

“Hey, Magnus…”
There’s the scrape of a key in the lock - and Magnus freezes. His heart starts hammering so hard he feels faint. *No way...*


Alec. Alec’s voice. Alec’s home. Alec’s *alive!*

Magnus jumps to his feet and trips over his blanket and his cellphone clutters to the floor and he hits his shoulder against the doorjamb and he stubs his toe and his chest’s hurting - but he doesn’t really feel any of that.

Because there is he, *Alec*, there’s Alec in the hallway, setting his keys down on the table and turning, pulling his hat off and smiling wide. “Hey, sorry for being *so* late. I missed my flight and--”

Magnus barrels into him so hard that they both fall against the entrance door and slam it shut. And Magnus is hugging Alec hard and he’s sobbing hard, he’s almost whimpering and clinging to Alec for dear life - and it’s honestly scaring Alec to death.

“Hey, *hey,*” Alec tries to soothe his husband, gently rubbing his back. “Hey, it’s okay, I’m here. What happened? What’s going on?”

But Magnus just shakes his head and cries harder, soaking Alec’s shirt. And Alec shushes him gently and holds him and kisses his hair...

After what feels like eternity, Magnus looks up at him with eyes so swollen from crying he can barely see. “How...?” That’s all he manages to croak out.

Alec blinks. “How did I get here?” And when Magnus nods, he sets to explain, “Someone stole my phone and my wallet and because I didn’t have money for a taxi, I missed my flight! So, I was stuck there, penniless and without a phone, and I had to hitchhike! *On Christmas Eve!* The lone driver who took pity on me - great guy, awful taste in music - allowed me to use his phone, but you weren’t picking up. And, by the way, your voicemail is full.” He looks down into Magnus’ face tear stained face and brushes the bangs off his forehead. “Why didn’t you pick up?”

But Magnus doesn’t respond, he just keeps staring at Alec as if he thought he would never see him again, keeps holding onto him as if Alec might disappear into thin air at any moment.

Alec’s face softens. With his thumb he wipes away Magnus’ tears. “What happened?” he asks with almost painful gentleness.

Magnus leans his cheek into Alec’s palm and whispers, “Christmas miracle.”
Out of Her Hands

Chapter Summary

A little Lydia and Alec friendship ficlet. Based on the sneak peek. (Unbeta'd)

She throws Alec out of the Ops Center. She understands why he’s behaving the way he is, she really gets it, but it doesn’t mean she’ll let him, or anyone else for that matter, treat her with less respect than she deserves.

Besides, she can’t. He did leave her standing at the altar in front of the whole Institute and the Clave representatives, too, and if she made allowances for him now, she would be seen as weak. And Lydia Branwell mustn’t be seen as weak. Ever.

She expects him to calm down, at least enough so to be reasoned with. What she doesn’t expect when she leaves the Ops Center a few minutes after him is to find him in one of the side corridors, sitting crumpled on the floor by the wall, vainly trying to catch his breath.

“Alec!” Lydia exclaims as she drops to her knees by his side. “What…?”

He looks at her with wide, panicked eyes. His hands are pressed to his chest. “Can’t… breathe…” he wheezes out, trying to explain but the lacking the air to do so.

But Lydia understands. “You’re having a panic attack,” she tells him and she’s trying to sound calm but it’s hard when he’s turning almost gray in front of her eyes. “Slow breaths, Alec, slow… breaths…”

He shakes his head in a jerky motion. “Can’t…”

She puts as much authority in her voice as she can. She’s Lydia Branwell, the Head of this damn Institute! “Yes, you can! Look at me. Hey, look at me!” And when he does, she continues, “Slow… breaths… in… and out. With me. Come on!” She breathes in through her nose and breathes out through her mouth. “In… and out. In… and out.”

Alec stares at her, still wide-eyed, but doing his best to match his breathing to hers. His breath is hitching and shuddering, his whole body’s twitching with the need to gasp, but slowly, so slowly that it feels like an eternity, he gets himself under control.

“Sorry,” he mumbles as the tension leaves his body and his shoulders slump. He closes his eyes and thumps his head against the wood paneling.

For his panic attack, he doesn’t need to apologize - but for his behavior earlier he really should, so Lydia just shrugs. She wants to ask what triggered such a reaction but before she can do that, he speaks up. His words are explanation enough.

“What if we don’t find him, Lydia?” he whispers with his eyes still closed. “What if… what if Valentine…?”

“Hey,” she says and reaches out to touch his face.
Alec looks at her. She feels a hard pang in her chest when she see the despair reflected in his eyes.

“We will find him,” she promises. “Valentine wanted Jace to come with him, so he won’t just kill him. And everything else can be fixed. Valentine won’t kill him. And I’ll do my best to help you bring him back, okay?”

Alec stares at her a moment longer, feeding off the certainty in her look, then he nods. “Okay.”

Little does Lydia know in this moment, that very soon, she won’t be able to help anyone with anything. That the hunt for Jace will be out of her hands.

That not Valentine but the Clave will order Jace Wayland’s death.
The Portrait

Chapter Summary

A Magnus Bane fic set 100+ years in the future. Sad stuff. (Unbeta'd)

Magnus doesn’t know how the argument began, probably like the rest of their arguments in the last few weeks - he doesn’t know nor does he care, but he’s already tired of it. He’s tired of this whole relationship, if he’s being honest with himself.

He’s sitting in his armchair, watching Tanya pace back and forth in front of the fireplace. She’s a mundane with the Sight, a pretty young thing as fiery as her red hair would suggest - and six months ago, Magnus thought that she could be the one, the first person to fill the emptiness yawning inside him. How foolish of him.

“Will I ever be good enough for you?” Tanya yells, her eyes blazing with unrestrained fury. “Will I ever be able to compete with him?”

Magnus turns to where she’s pointing - and as always, his heart skips a beat, even after so many years. Because Tanya is pointing at the life-sized portrait hanging on the wall opposite the fireplace - the portrait of Alexander Gideon Lightwood.

Clary Fairchild painted it shortly after Alec’s death as a gift for Magnus. She painted it from memory and as far as he knows, it’s the very last painting she finished before her own death only a few weeks later.

It’s a painting of Alec in his youth, around the time he and Magnus met and fell in love. Alec’s dressed in his customary black, caught turning around in a ¾ profile, staring out of the painting with a serious expression that was so typical for him - and his beauty still manages to steal Magnus’ breath away.

“Magnus!” Tanya snaps angrily, dragging him out of his reverie. “Will I? Will I ever be as good as he was?” She stabs her finger at the portrait again.

And Magnus has had enough. He looks her straight in the eyes and answers with a cold, brutal honesty, “No.”

Tanya actually staggers at that. Obviously she did not expect him to just come out and say it, to be truthful. With a sigh Magnus realizes he should’ve done it a long time ago.

“To hell with you, Magnus Bane,” Tanya grits out through clenched teeth. “With you and your precious Alexander, too!” Then she turns around to grab one of the vases on the mantel - a Ming Dynasty piece - and she throws it at the portrait.

In a flash, Magnus is out of his armchair with one arm outstretched - but not towards the vase, towards the painting. The vase hits a magical shield and shatters into a thousand of pieces.

For several seconds nothing and nobody moves. Then Tanya turns towards Magnus and her eyes widen. Paling, she starts backing away from him. And no wonder, Magnus is glaring at her with his slit-pupiled eyes aglow with magic - and fury.
“Get. Out!” he orders. The “and don’t ever come back” part is left unsaid but it’s understood anyway.

Tanya runs.

Slowly, Magnus drops his arm and the blue shield around the painting dissipates. He looks down at the shards of the priceless vase and with a wave of his hand he makes them disappear.

Sighing, he steps closer to the portrait and stares up at Alec’s face. “Looks like it’s just you and me again, Alexander,” he whispers. “I guess I wasn’t ready yet to move on. Maybe I never will. You’ve been gone for almost a hundred years now and you’re still the first thing that I think about when I wake up and the last thing on my mind when I fall asleep. And it seems that might never change, my love.”

There’s no answer, of course. The loft remains silent. Magnus Bane is the only one there, after all.

Sometimes, Magnus wonders if falling in love with Alexander was worth it. If the few decades of pure, unadulterated happiness were worth a century or more of pain. And the answer is always the same: *Yes. It was worth it.*
Regrets

Chapter Summary

Based on the trailers. Maryse has regrets. Alec doesn’t. (Unbeta’d)

This is not what Maryse wanted! Not this. Not this! When she approached the Clave, when she invited Victor Aldertree into her home, all she wanted was to protect her family, her children!

Aldertree’s leading the charge after the retreating enemy, ahead of the Institute forces and his elite soldiers follow him with guns - with ugly pieces of metal, mundane weapons! - in their hands.

Valentine’s pulling back, his remaining men swallowed one by one by the portal shimmering behind him - and he’s dragging Jace back with him, too. Jace who’s struggling hard, an unwilling prisoner of his power mad father - and Valentine’s living shield.

Then. “Shoot to kill!” Aldertree orders and the four people closest to him raise their guns as one, as a perfectly oiled killing machine.

And Maryse, who’s leading the Institute forces, sees Jace’s eyes widen in fear - and in realization that he’s going to die, killed not by Valentine but by his own people.

Maryse screams her denial but her voice is drown out by her son’s - and then Alec acts. In a desperate move, to save his parabatai, Alec throws himself at Aldertree’s people, and before any one of them can pull the trigger, they’re cut down by Alec’s Seraph Blade, wielded with deadly precision.

Jace’s fear turns into horror and he reaches out towards his parabatai, yelling Alec’s name. And the last thing he sees before Valentine drags him through the portal, is Alec’s defeat at the hands of Aldertree’s overwhelming numbers.

Desperate, Maryse tries to get to her son because they’re going to kill him, she must stop them or they’re going to kill Alec! And when she finally manages to push through, she sees him driven down to his knees and handcuffed, beaten bloody but as defiant as ever.

Her heart skips a beat when Aldertree grabs Alec roughly by the hair and jerks his head back, exposing his throat. “I should kill you, here and now,” Aldertree growls as he presses his Seraph Blade against Alec’s vulnerable skin, drawing fresh blood.

But Alec doesn’t flinch, he doesn’t seem to react at all. He just stares Aldertree in the eyes while in the distance, the portal winks out.

It seems like eternity before Aldertree lets Alec go. Maryse breathes out a sigh of relief.

But then she registers Aldertree’s people on the ground. Some are moaning, some lying silent and unmoving - and with a renewed dread, Maryse realizes that it’s nowhere near over yet. This incident won’t be simply swept under the rug. Alec attacked - possibly killed - fellow Shadowhunters. Nobody will care that he did it to protect his parabatai. All they’ll see is, that he protected - and allowed to escape - Valentine Morgenstern’s son!
Aldertree straightens up. “Arrest him for high treason.” He looks around. “And attempted murder. Let him be judged for what he did by the Law!”

Maryse can only watch with her heart in her throat, as Aldertree’s soldiers drag Alec away. He doesn’t resist their treatment, he doesn’t fight them. And Maryse knows Alec, she knows this look: it’s the same look he had on his face when he was ten and broke Preston’s nose, accepting the consequences of his actions.

To save his parabatai, Alec attacked his own people, knowing the punishment for his actions would be harsh. And looking at him now, Maryse realizes that he would do it again, if need be, that he has no regrets. But she does. So many.

Walking past her, Aldertree comments with derision, “The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree, does it?”

Maryse stiffens. Never before has it been made so clear to her that she’ll be forever defined by the mistakes of her youth. That no matter her current or future deeds, she’ll always be seen as Maryse Lightwood, the Circle member. That all she has done in the last twenty years, all she has sacrificed, was for nothing.

Her only wish was to protect her family, her children. Instead, two of her boys are now doomed, their lives ruined. This isn’t what she wanted. Not this. Not this!

Maryse stares after her son. Alec doesn’t look back.
Leverage

Chapter Summary

A parabatai ficlet, based on the trailer. TW: abuse. (Unbeta'd)

It’s the purest love he has ever experienced and he won’t give it up. He won’t!

He’s hanging there like a piece of meat on a hook and his shoulders and arms are in agony and his back is all knotted up and all the joints and muscles in his body are screaming at him to give up, to give in.

But Jace won’t. He won’t!

And then the beating starts, again and again they pummel him, bruise his flesh and break his bones and rip his skin open, and it goes on and on and on, and his throat is raw from screaming…

And then Valentine comes and presents him with a simple choice: Follow my orders, pledge your loyalty to me - and this will stop.

But Jace won’t. He won’t!

So the beating continues, and whenever he starts losing consciousness, they douse him with ice cold water to rouse him again, and it goes on and on and on…

And then Valentine’s back again, offering him the same choice, and though Jace’s sobbing from the pain and he has long since screamed himself hoarse, he won’t do it, he won’t!

He mustn’t… for the people he loves so dearly, he must not! There’s nothing Valentine can do to him to force him to give in. Nothing.

Or, so he thinks. Because the next time Valentine comes, there’s a Seraph Blade in his hand and the choice offered is one that Jace cannot refuse.

Because when Valentine steps close - he touches the Seraph Blade to Jace’s parabatai rune, only hard enough to let Jace feel the sting of its sharpness.

“You don’t care about your life - but you do care about this,” Valentine states coldly as he puts more pressure on the blade, almost, almost cutting through the rune on Jace’s side. “Follow my orders, pledge your loyalty to me - or I will destroy your parabatai bond. And who knows, son, the shock of it might even kill the Lightwood boy…”

And Jace’s eyes widen in sheer terror because, no-no-no, not this, he won’t give up this, he won’t let his father take this, it’s the purest thing he has ever known, the purest love he has ever experienced, and he won’t let Valentine Morgenstern corrupt-damage-destroy it, he won’t.

He won’t!

Jace gives in.
Malec, Balcony Scene Take #3! I just can’t get enough of it. And since in 3 days, we’ll get the actual scene, I needed to get this bunny out before it’s debunked. (Unbeta’d)

“You just don’t get it,” Alec sighs and he sounds so… unhappy and frustrated and so very, very distressed.

Magnus sighs, too. “No, I don’t,” he agrees.

And he wants to leave it at that, he actually wants to hurt Alec the way Alec hurt him, which might be petty, yes, but Magnus has never pretended to be perfect - something stops him, though.

Maybe it’s the fact that, despite his callous words, Alec seems on the verge of tears. Or maybe it’s the way Alec keeps rubbing his chest, as if his heart hurt - and when Magnus probes a little with his magic, he can sense Alec’s heart actually stuttering a little, beating irregularly…

Whatever the reason, Magnus pushes down his own anger and continues, “I really don’t understand, I can’t. I have never had a parabatai, I have never shared my soul with another person. So, how about you explain it to me?”

Alec blinks at him in surprise, completely thrown by his request. “What…?” he croaks out.

Magnus steps closer. “You keep telling me that I don’t get it. So, explain it to me. Make me understand what it’s like to be apart from your parabatai. I’m willing to listen.” And he is, he means it.

And Alec must sense it because he pauses for a moment, trying to find the right words. Then he says, “Have you ever almost drowned?”

The question startles Magnus so much that his eyes widen. His mind is flooded with images from a past long gone: his father - the man Magnus thought of as his father for a long time - holding him under and screaming about purification, calling him a demon spawn, while Magnus struggled, slowly dying…

Magnus swallows. “Yes,” he whispers hoarsely.

Alec nods. “Then you know. That’s what it’s like. I can’t breathe and I can’t stop shaking. There’s a roar in my head, demanding that I find Jace - find-him-find-him-find-him-find-him - and my heart’s going a mile a minute. And I can’t make it stop,” Alec despairs. “It’s driving me crazy and I have to find him to make it stop!”

Magnus’ eyes soften. Slowly, he reaches out to touch Alec, giving him ample time to move away - but Alec allows the contact. He looks down at Magnus’ hand, pressed gently against his chest, over his heart - and then Alec exhales in relief when Magnus uses a pulse of magic to stabilize his erratically beating heart. It’s a relief to Magnus, too, because Alec’s stuttering heartbeat was making his own kick up painfully.
“There,” Magnus murmurs softly as he strokes Alec’s chest through his thin black t-shirt. “All better, that.”

Alec covers Magnus’ hand with his. “Thank you,” he whispers.

But Magnus shakes his head. “It’s okay,” he replies but he doesn’t try to free himself, staring at their locked hands. “I’m trying to understand but I think it’s one of those things that need to be experienced firsthand, that outsiders will never truly grasp.”

He pauses. “I’ve always admired Shadowhunters for their bravery to share their very souls with other people. I don’t even know if I have one…”

Magnus looks up at Alec. “Look, I might not fully understand but I believe you and I trust you and I will help you, just…” He steps closer and there’s frustration and appeal in his voice when he continues. “Talk to me, okay? About anything you want. We can solve any problem - together. When things go crazy, don’t push me away. That’s all I ask, alright?”

Alec nods slowly - and Magnus is so overcome with affection for this foolish, reckless man, that he reaches out to fiddle with Alec’s collar, drawing the back of his fingers along Alec’s neck and jawline in a gentle caress. And when Alec blushes at this simple touch, Magnus feels his heart might just burst.

Maybe… maybe they can make it work after all.
Being a light sleeper is great for a Shadowhunter but not so much for a new father. When every snuffle your child makes has you wide awake and at high alert, you soon end up dead on your feet.

When Magnus finds Alec sitting on the hard wooden floor by Max’s crib yet again, dozing fitfully with one finger imprisoned in a tiny blue fist, he decides that enough is enough.

“Where are we going?” Alec asks, bewildered and barely awake, when he’s pulled to his feet unceremoniously.

Magnus steers Alec towards their bedroom. “Do you need to pee?” he asks.

Alec blinks at him over his shoulder. “Wha…?”

“Pee. Do you need to pee?” Magnus asks again, slowly and deliberately.

“Yeah. I mean, no. I mean… What?”

Magnus stops in front of the bathroom, turns Alec around and slaps him on the butt. “Off you go.”

Alec pauses, frowning, then complies. “Okay.” And goes.

A couple of minutes later he’s back but not any more awake than before - as Magnus suspected; five mornings in a row now, that’s how many times he found Alec dozing by their son’s crib, more and more tired with each passing day. And for no reason at all, the boy’s fine, it’s just Alec’s instincts kicking in and turning him hypervigilant.

Magnus takes Alec gently but firmly by the shoulders, turns him around once more and frog-marches him into their bedroom.

“Magnus?” Alec asks when he’s sat down on the bed and his slippers are pulled off.

“You need to sleep, love,” Magnus insists tenderly.

But when he tries to make his lover lie down, Alec resist and raises his hands in protest. “I’m fine, really. Max–”

“Max is fine,” Magnus interrupts him. “You are not, really.”

He looks down at Alec’s hands - they’re trembling. Alec follows his gaze and makes a startled “Huh?” sound.

Magnus sighs. “Do you trust me, Alexander?”

“With my life,” Alec answers without hesitation. It warms Magnus’ heart.
“And with our son’s?”

Alec blinks at him owlishly, as if certain that it’s a trick question. “Of course,” he answers in the end.

“Then trust me to take care of him for one night - and sleep,” Magnus says as he lifts Alec’s legs up on the bed and pushes him down flat onto his back.

Alec allows it; exhaustion turned him into a puppet with its strings dangerously loose. When his head hits the pillow, he sighs tiredly and snuggles down under the covers that Magnus threw over him.

But just as he’s about to close his eyes, Max makes a sound - in the adjoining room! - and Alec sits up, eyes wide, though glazed. “Max–”

“Is fine,” Magnus assures his lover again firmly and pushes him down.

Alec lets himself be flattened with a quiet, “Oompf!”

Then Magnus snaps his fingers and their ears pop.

Alec frowns. He sticks one finger in his right ear and shakes it. “I feel… muffled.”

Magnus twirls a finger around to encompass the room. “Soundproof,” he says and when Alec opens his mouth to protest, he adds, “I promise you, should the world come to an abrupt and very surprising end in the next twelve hours, I’ll wake you up.”

“But–”

“You need rest,” Magnus orders firmly and strokes Alec’s forehead tenderly. “Or you’ll become so tired you’ll make some terrible mistake, either in the field or taking care of our son. And you wouldn’t want that, would you? Hurt the boy or turn him into an orphan again, would you?”

Magnus knows he’s not playing fair, that he’s guilt-tripping his boyfriend hard, but since he has exhausted all his other options - from reasoning to begging - this it has to be.

He’s prepared for an argument but when he peers down at his lover, he smiles - Alec’s already deeply asleep, the breath puffing through his parted lips almost a snore. Magnus leans closer and kisses Alec’s brow.

“Sleep well, love,” Magnus whispers and leaves the room, closing the door behind him.
“Hey, what’s going on?” Jace asks, worried, when he follows Alec out onto the balcony of the restored Herondale mansion in Idris.

Alec, who’s standing by the stone railing, looks over his shoulder. The bright lights inside make his eyes glitter. “Nothing.”

Jace walks up to him and stares searchingly into his face. “Come on. I can feel you, in here.” He touches his chest. “You’re… sad.”

Alec laughs. “Why would I be sad? We’re celebrating. You and Clary, twenty years of marriage, Jace. Who would’ve thought?”

But Jace refuses to let himself be distracted. “Alec…”

Alec sighs and looks out into the darkness. “I love Magnus, you know that. I love him so much it hurts. And I wouldn’t have wanted to spend the last thirty years with anyone else.”

“But?” Jace prompts when Alec falls silent.

Sighing again, Alec shakes his head and glances at Jace. “But watching you and Clary, or Izzy and Simon… mom and dad… I wish we had this. I wish we could’ve grown old together,” he admits softly.

Jace’s throat tightens at the wistfulness in Alec’s voice. Still, he replies jokingly, trying to lighten up the mood, “You know, growing old together is overrated. It’s all the aches and pains doubled!”

Alec smiles, but it’s a little pained. “Yeah, I guess.” He shrugs. “It’s just… I’m already starting to look like his father. And I know that he doesn’t care, and I shouldn’t either, but…” He sighs. “Maybe I’m just vain.”

Jace goggles at him. Alec’s a lot of things but definitely not vain. But Jace gets it - and he doesn’t know what to say to make it better. In the end, he falls back on what’s always been their safety net: their parabatai bond.

“Hey,” Jace whispers and bumps their shoulders together. “You still have me. We’re growing old together plenty enough. Look at us, silver hair.” He reaches up to touch the gray streaks on Alec’s temples. “I’m here, matching you step for step.”

This time, Alec’s smile is genuine. “And I wouldn’t have it any other way.”

The lump in Jace’s throat thickens again and his eyes prickle. So he hugs Alec tight. “I love you,” he whispers into Alec’s shoulder. “And I’ll always be there. In this life and beyond. Together, we’ll kick even Death in his hairy balls!”
Alec laughs, rocking Jace lightly. And Jace feels the sadness in his chest ease. Their heartbeats match. Yes, this, this is perfect.
Anchor

Chapter Summary

My muses thought it would be very funny to start the new year with a death story. I was less amused. TW: death, suicide thoughts. (Unbeta'd)

Magnus dies. Alec does not handle it well. At all. Jace desperately tries to pick up the pieces.

Jace wakes up in the middle of the night short of breath and with his heart hammering painfully. There’s a strange sense of urgency squeezing his chest and the voice in the back of his mind’s growing louder and louder, demanding, go to him, go now, nownownow…!

He kisses Clary’s head and slides out of his bed, careful so as not to wake her up. He leaves the room and pads down the hallway, towards Alec’s room, and his steps are getting quicker and quicker so that he’s almost running when he reaches the room that’s been Alec’s ever since Jace restored the Herondale mansion to its previous beauty - Alec’s and Magnus’…

Without knocking, Jace opens the door quietly and steps inside. He expects to find Alec asleep - but the bed’s empty, meticulously made up and his sense of urgency kicks up a notch, turning into dread.

“People have always seen Magnus only as a flamboyant peacock,” a voice sounds out of the darkness, Alec’s voice, “but he was so much more.”

Jace’s breath calms down a little - Alec’s still here, he didn’t leave, he hasn’t done anything stupid…yet! - and he closes the door. Slowly, he walks through the room towards the window, in the direction of Alec’s voice.

“So much more,” Alec says softly. Then in a stronger voice he adds, “He knew how to heal and how to fight. When to negotiate - and when to kill. One drop of this and a man dies, he just falls asleep and never wakes up…”

Jace freezes when a shadow moves in the armchair by the window. Something glints in the moonlight - a small bottle with the remnants of a clear liquid sloshing inside, held in Alec’s long, slim fingers. No…

“I’m tired, Jace,” Alec whispers. “I want to fall asleep and never wake up.”

Dread’s making it difficult to breathe for Jace as he starts moving again, even slower now, as if afraid to spook a wild animal. “Did you drink it?” His voice is hoarse, almost unrecognizable.

“Shadowhunters fall in love only once in their life, it’s in our blood, in the angel blood,” Alec continues thoughtfully as if Jace hasn’t spoken. “I’ve already loved twice, first you, then Magnus; maybe there’s something wrong with me, maybe I am wrong….”

Jace walks around the armchair and stops in front of it. Alec’s sitting in the shadows with his legs crossed, seemingly relaxed - and he’s twirling the little bottle, made of cut glass and only a quarter full, in his hand. Jace can barely breathe now.
He drops to his knees in front of the armchair and reaches out to still Alec’s hand. They look at each other in the dark lit only by the silver moonlight, and Jace’s heart skips a beat at the emptiness in Alec’s eyes.

“Did you drink it, Alec?” he asks again, dreading the answer. Please, say no, please, don’t do this to me!

Alec stares at him for a very long time before he answers. “No.”

Jace lets out a shuddery sigh of relief, then he gently pries the bottle out of Alec’s hand. He wants to fling it away, crush it, make it disappear - both its content and what it represents. What it means that he found it in Alec’s hand.

“It’s so easy to die, Jace,” Alec whispers almost tenderly. “Not once did it even cross my mind that Magnus would die first. He was ageless… but as it turned out, not immortal. And if he could die… all I would have to do is simply stop in the middle of a fight, just… stop and let the enemy do the job for me. I don’t need poison to end it.”

Jace grits his teeth and fights down a rising wave of panic. This can’t be happening. He won’t let it happen. He won’t allow it!

“But you will not do that!” he states firmly and there’s no room for discussion. That’s how it will be.

Alec tilts his head to the side curiously. “And why not?”

“Because of me. You will not leave me here alone. You won’t do that to me!” Jace orders, staring Alec in the eyes, unmoving.

“You wouldn’t be alone. You have Clary,” Alec reminds him.

But Jace shakes his head firmly. “That’s not the same. I love her - but you’re a part of me. And you won’t just pack it all up and rip away a piece of me. You will not do that. I forbid it. You will not hurt me like that!”

Alec breathes in sharply as if Jace hit him. “You’re trying to guilt me into not dying?” he asks incredulously after a moment.

Jace leans closer and his voice is harsh when he says, “I’ll guilt-trip you, I’ll blackmail you, I’ll force you if I have to - but I will not allow you to simply give up and die. I won’t.” Then a little despair creeps into his voice. “I can’t.”

“Jace…”

Jace swallows. He knows he has to say the right thing right now or he’ll lose Alec - maybe not tonight or tomorrow, but he will. But he’s afraid he doesn’t know what the right thing is! So he just grips Alec’s hand tight, he entwines their fingers and just holds on to Alec.

And something inside Alec’s seemingly cracks because he whispers into the silence hoarsely, “He died, Jace.”

Jace blinks back tears. “I know.”

“He died on me! He left me here!”
“I know.”

“I want him back!”

“I know.”

“Please, Jace, please, I want him back!”

Jace can’t stand it anymore, the naked agony in Alec’s voice, so he pulls Alec down into his arms and hugs him tight, rocking him gently while Alec fists his hands into Jace’s shirt and sobs harshly, for the first time since Magnus died.

And Jace’s heart hurts so badly that he’s crying too, whispering that if he could, he would give Magnus back to Alec, that he would bring him back, but he can’t and he’s so sorry, so very, very sorry.

And Alec still feels insubstantial to Jace, as if he’s slipping through his fingers, as if Jace’s losing him no matter how tightly he holds on to him, and he wishes he had an answer, a solution how to make it right, how to fix it for Alec, all the hurts, because he wants to do it so badly.

But he can’t. The only thing he can do is hold on and not let go, become Alec’s anchor and keep him here. Because wherever Alec goes, Jace will follow - and he’s not ready to leave yet.
Lending Comfort

Chapter Summary

Izzy and Alec, coda to 201, spoilers for 201! (Unbeta'd)

“Move!” Izzy orders when one of Aldertree’s people, the blond woman with the bun, tries to stop her from leaving her bedroom. “Move, or I’ll move you!”

“You can’t leave,” the woman replies flatly. Like an automaton, Izzy thinks.

Izzy steps closer and looks up at her. “I’m not leaving, I’m simply going to my brother’s room which is right next door. Is it overly difficult for you to guard one room instead of two?” she asks snidely.

The woman stares down at her a moment longer, then she moves aside. Izzy walks past her, then she pushes through the two tall men standing in front of Alec’s door, not asking for permission, daring them to try and stop her. She’s itching for a fight! But they don’t oblige and let her pass.

Isabelle enters Alec’s room and when she turns to close the door, the woman with the bun stops her. “Don’t lock the door,” she warns.

Izzy grits her teeth - and slams the door shut so hard the glass in the windows rattles. Turning around, she finds Alec sitting on the bed, watching her. He has his legs pulled up to his chest, crossed arms resting on his knees. He looks so desolate her heart aches.

“Any news?” he asks quietly so as not to be overheard by their nannies outside.

Izzy shakes her head, then she crosses the room, kicks off her shoes and climbs on the bed. She sits down next to her brother, hooks her arm through his and leans her head against his shoulder. She just needs a little comfort.

They sit there like that for some time, then Alec whispers, “Mom said that it was a mistake that she and dad took Jace in. She feels embarrassed by having brought up Valentine’s son.”

Of course, she did that! Izzy seethes quietly. But she doesn’t say anything, she just squeezes Alec’s arm, offering comfort.

Alec swallows hard. “She compared him to cancer, Iz! She said that I should just cut him out as if he were some malignant tumor! But he’s not a thing, he’s a person! He’s my other half…”

She lifts her head from his shoulder and stares up at him. “You and I, we know who Jace is. And if they don’t want him, we will be his family. We’ll take care of him and love him like he deserves.”

He looks down at her. “What will we do if they kill him, Izzy? I can’t lose him, I can’t lose my parabatai…”

“They won’t get him,” Isabelle says firmly. “He’s too smart, too strong for them, you’ll see!”

Alec sighs and hunches his shoulders. “I thought we would have to save him from Valentine.
Instead, we have to find a way to protect him from our own people!” He shakes his head. “When did it all go so wrong, Izzy? What’s happening to us?”

She sighs, too, and leans her head back against his shoulder. “I don’t know, big brother. But I think there’s been something very wrong with the Clave for a long time now, we’ve just never really noticed.”

“And now Jace might pay for it,” Alec says. Then, in a colder, harsher voice he adds, “If they kill him, Iz, I will make them pay. Every one of them. I swear.”

Izzy doesn’t respond but she shivers. Because she believes him. If Aldertree’s people hurt Jace, Alec will destroy them all, no matter the cost. And suddenly, she feels very afraid.
They’re marching past him, Aldertree’s people. At the head of them, Aldertree is shouting orders. But all Alec can hear is the desolate silence in his mind.

Jace’s gone again.

Someone grabs him by the arm. He turns around. Lydia. There’s an urgent look on her face, and he allows himself to be pulled into one of the side corridors, a dimly lit passage just off the Ops Center.

“What happened?” Alec asks anxiously.

Quickly, Lydia looks around, then whispers, “Jocelyn just tried to kill Jace!”

Alec’s eyes widen. “What?”

“She tried to shoot him and, get this, Valentine saved his life!” she says, her voice full of disbelief. “He stepped in front of him and took an arrow for him! Jace then grabbed him and left with him through the portal.”

Oh. “So, they’re back on the ship. That’s why I can’t feel him again.”

“Alec, Jace could’ve run, instead he left with Valentine. He chose to leave with Valentine. It looks bad,” Lydia says.

What? “You can’t think that—”

“I don’t!” she interrupts him. “I think that Jace doesn’t know what to think. His own mother just tried to murder him and his evil father saved his life. But my opinion doesn’t matter. Victor is calling the shots now. And this pretty much confirmed his opinion that Jace betrayed us. It would not surprise me if he gave his people the order to shoot to kill.”

Alec’s heart starts hammering so hard it hurts. “He… he can’t do that.”

Lydia’s mouth twists. “Unfortu—”

“Unfortunately? He can. I promise I’ll do my best to help Jace, but I have no power here anymore. I might even be recalled back to Idris any moment now.”


“You know, Jace said something similar to me after the wedding, that I’ll always a place here.” She shakes her head sadly. “But that’s not up to me. I’m just an envoy, I go where the Clave sends me. And right now, they consider me… incompetent.”

“That’s utter bull!” Alec protests.

She smiles at him. “Well, thanks.”
Alec leans down a little to look her directly in the eyes. “What can I do?”

She sighs. “Honestly? Nothing. Not about Jace or me or anything else. Your mother… what she
did cut you off. You and me both, actually.”

He takes her hand in his. “I’m sorry. About everything. About the wedding, about how I shouted at
you before. I didn’t mean–”

She shakes her head. “I didn’t take it personally, don’t worry.” She squeezes his hand. “I don’t
know what it’s like to have you parabatai missing, but after John died… I was lucky I didn’t get
de-runed. I was a mess. I antagonized everyone around me - but I was mostly furious at myself.”

Alec smiles at her fleetingly in understanding.

Lydia takes a deep breath, lets go of his hand and tugs at the hem of her jacket sharply to compose
herself. “I better go. I might not have any power here anymore, but I’m still expected to be
available to our new leader.”

“Be careful,” Alec tells her. “I don’t trust Aldertree.”

She nods. “That makes two of us,” she mutters and leaves.

Alec watches her go with his hands clenched into fists in frustration. The anxiety in his chest is
slowly turning into dread. This won’t end well.
Acceptance

Chapter Summary

Jace and Alec. And Jace’s demon blood. (Unbeta’d)

“I have demon blood in me,” Jace whispers.

“Yeah,” Alec whispers back.

They’re sitting on the floor in Jace’s room, leaning back against Jace’s bed, their shoulders rubbing companionably. It’s quiet and it’s peaceful.

But before, before it wasn’t so.

“I have demon blood in me, Alec!” Jace screamed.

He yelled the ugly truth into his parabatai’s face, because his father tortured him and his mother tried to murder him and the woman who brought him up condemned him… so why not Alec, too? His parabatai should know the truth and throw him away, too, just like everybody else, then Jace could… Jace could…

When Alec moved, Jace flinched. He couldn’t help it, all the beatings were still at the forefront of his mind and he simply couldn’t help his instinctual reaction. But Alec didn’t let it deter him. He moved unthreateningly but also firmly - and slowly, he pulled Jace into his arms. And hugged him. And held him. And then he whispered in Jace’s ear, “I know.”

And Jace… broke. What all the beatings and torture and betrayals didn’t manage, acceptance did. And he clung to Alec and he cried at the unfairness of it all and then his knees failed him and they both sank to the floor. And Alec just held him.

“I have demon blood in me,” Jace whispers again.

“Yeah,” Alec whispers back again. But then he bumps their shoulders together, and when Jace looks at him, Alec adds, “But you’re alive and you’re here and we’ll deal with it. Like we always do.”

“Together?” Jace asks.

“I’m sorry about the sneaking around,” Izzy whispers, leading Magnus down dimly lit, dusty and usually unused hallways, “but Aldertree refused to allow me to call you in.”

Magnus gives her a quick smile. “That’s quite alright. Believe it or not, I’m used to it. The Clave’s never been particularly welcoming to Downworlders.”

“Still, I’m sorry,” Izzy says. “If it wasn’t so urgent–”

Magnus touches her arm. “I get it, Isabelle. Don’t worry about it. Just lead me to Alec.”

Yes, Alexander. When Izzy called to tell him that they, Alec and she, tried to track Jace through Alec’s *parabatai* rune and something went wrong, Magnus’ first reaction was anger, because he told so to Alec, *he told him so*! But it was quickly followed by absolute dread. He didn’t hesitate a second.

“Yes, Alexander. When Izzy called to tell him that they, Alec and she, tried to track Jace through Alec’s *parabatai* rune and something went wrong, Magnus’ first reaction was anger, because he told so to Alec, *he told him so*! But it was quickly followed by absolute dread. He didn’t hesitate a second.

“Here we are,” Izzy whispers as she lets them both into Alec’s bedroom.

And Magnus’ breath catches in his throat. Alec’s lying on his bed, unmoving, barely breathing and pale. He looks… dead.

They quickly walk up to the bed. Magnus sits down on the edge and reaches out to touch Alec’s throat - his heartbeat is barely there, faint and thready, and his skin is cold to the touch.

Magnus lifts Alec’s shirt to look at his *parabatai* rune - it’s surrounded by the tracking knot and crusted with dried blood. That’s not good. Not good at all.

He glances at Isabelle. “What happened?”

She’s hugging herself and her eyes and nose are reddened from crying. She shakes her head. “I don’t know. He was trying to reach Jace, to push through the barrier of water, and then he just… stopped. He stopped moving, stopped breathing!” She rubs her nose. “He stopped *breathing*, Magnus!”

“Oh, foolish, foolish Shadowhunter!” Magnus mutters, running his hands over Alec’s body, desperately trying to find out what’s wrong with him.

Izzy immediately jumps to her brother’s defense. “We didn’t have a choice. Aldertree ordered his people to kill Jace on sight!”

“Then why didn’t he come to me?” Magnus asks, almost angry again. “He knew I would’ve helped him!”
Izzy shakes her head again. “He couldn’t. We are under house arrest until further notice. We are forbidden to leave the Institute.”

Magnus looks at her sharply. “Let me guess, Aldertree again?”

Isabelle nods. “He’s in charge now.”

“I’m really starting to hate that guy!”

Magnus lifts his hand to touch Alec’s face, blue magic dancing around his fingers - and suddenly, he freezes. Impossible. “What the hell…?” he whispers.

Izzy steps closer. “What?” she asks anxiously.

But Magnus, wide-eyed and truly frightened now, doesn’t respond. “Alexander, what did you do? What the hell did you do?” He gathers more of his magic and lets it flow over Alec, his head, his chest, probing his mind, his heart.

“Magnus!” Izzy snaps.

He looks at her. “His soul - it’s gone,” he breathes out.

She stares at him. “What?”

Magnus takes Alec by the hand and touches his face again. Nothing. “His soul, his soul is gone. It’s not there. His body’s… empty.”

“How can that be?” Izzy asks.

Magnus shakes his head. “I don’t know. I don’t know what he did. I didn’t even know it was possible!” His mind’s working feverishly. “He must’ve overreached through their parabatai bond. He must’ve literally torn his soul out of his body.”

“What can we do?” Isabelle sounds frightened.

Magnus sits back, but he doesn’t let go of Alec’s hand, gently rubbing Alec’s knuckles with his thumb. “There’s only one thing we can do.” He glances at Izzy. “We have to find Jace. He carries the last remnants of Alec’s soul inside him, it’s the only thing that might - just might! - return Alec’s soul to his body, the only thing still tethering Alec’s soul here.”

He looks down at Alec and strokes his hair gently. “And we have to do it now. Right now. Because a body cannot survive without a soul. Without a soul it’s just an empty vessel without purpose.”

Isabelle breathes in sharply. “You mean… Alec’s going to die if we don’t get Jace back?”

In response, Magnus whispers without taking his eyes off Alec, “Yes, if we don’t get Jace back, Alexander’s going to die.”
Chapter Summary

I wanted to try something different. A dialogue only fic. Malec and that shirt from the 204 promo pics! (Unbeta'd)

“That’s the shirt you had on when we first met!”

“No, actually, that one got ruined in a fight. This is a different one.”

“It’s the same color, same material, same… cut.”

“I know, I have a wardrobe full of them!”

“Just to be sure you don’t run out?”

“Yes.”

“Ah.”

“What?”

“Alexander, I guess this will be a novel concept for you but your today’s outfit does not necessarily have to match your yesterday’s.”

“But it’s comfortable. Feel it?”

“Ah.”

“Now you get it?”

“I’m… starting to. But I might have to sample it again. May I?”
Trust

Chapter Summary

I don’t even know. Malec and the parabatai and a big battle and the issue of trust.
(Unbeta’d)

It happens in the middle of a battle - all of them fighting demons, all of them, even Luke and his pack and Magnus are involved - when Alec hacks the thing in front of him to pieces and turns to… see Magnus gather his magic, his eyes glowing with demonic power, and throw it in Alec’s direction.

Alec doesn’t duck or jump aside. He simply freezes in place and closes his eyes to let the pulsing energy pass harmlessly by and… vaporize the monster behind him, a Greater Demon, apparently, that came out of nowhere and was about to jump Alec when he turned his back to it.

Once it’s over, the Greater Demon turned to dust, Alec opens his eyes and smiles at Magnus - then he throws himself back into the fight.

“You didn’t even flinch,” Magnus comments softly much later, after the battle’s over, when he comes to find Alec. “When I killed that Greater Demon. I didn’t have the time to warn you, I just reacted - and you didn’t even flinch.”

Alec turns to him. Magnus looks strangely vulnerable, hopeful, his heart bared and reflected in his eyes. Alec reaches out to take Magnus’ hand in his, gently rubbing Magnus’ bruised knuckles - Magnus didn’t fight with only magic today! - with his thumb.

“No, I didn’t,” Alec replies just as softly, “because I trust you.”

And Magnus smiles, happy and pleased, looking down at their joined hands.

“I saw what you did for Alec today, that you saved his life,” Jace tells Magnus even later on, when he enters the tent that Magnus appropriated, one of many the Shadowhunters erected on the battlefield at the borders of Idris. “I wanted to thank you.”

Magnus looks up from the potions he has been mixing. “No need, but you’re welcome.”

Jace crosses his arms. “Still, when your magic missed him by a hair…” He shakes his head.

He looks over at Alec, who’s lying deeply asleep in a cot tucked in the corner of Magnus’ tent. He stares at his parabatai for a long while before he continues in a quiet, serious voice, “I trust you, Magnus. I would trust you with my life - and even with his. And I don’t trust easily. But if you break my trust - his trust - if you hurt him…” He looks Magnus directly in the eyes. “I’ll end you.”

Magnus stares back, unflinchingly, he stares and sees what few people get to see: the cold, hard brutality hidden beneath the angelic golden looks, not just the protector, but the killer.

And Magnus’ eyes flare up dangerously in response, one beast baring its teeth at another in challenge, and neither backing down.
Careful…

Likewise…

But in the end, they part with a nod. Message received and returned tenfold.

While Alec sleeps on.
Family Dinner

Chapter Summary

A Morgenstern family dinner. TW: abuse, homophobia, violence. (Unbeta'd)

They’re sitting at a table, Valentine and he, eating spaghetti. Well, Valentine’s eating, Jace is simply staring down at his plate. He knows that the food will be good - his father’s always been an excellent cook - but, though he’s hungry, he’s sure he’ll throw up if he takes a single bite.

“Go on, eat, Jonathan,” Valentine encourages him. “I’ve made you strong, true, but that doesn’t mean you don’t need food to survive.”

And now Jace feels truly sick at the reminder, at the pride he once felt at being stronger than others - and at what made him that way. How arrogant he’s been. How… conceited!

“And speaking of strength,” Valentine continues, chewing slowly, “I created you to be better - the best! - so imagine my disappointment when I heard that you went and bonded yourself to another. Parabatai, Jonathan, really?”

There’s so much derision in Valentine’s voice! Jace clenches his jaw so hard it hurts. He wants his father to stop talking, right now!

“A parabatai only makes you weak, I thought I taught you that! That Lightwood boy will always be your weakness, a vulnerability you can’t afford if you want to lead your people into a new age. Or,” Valentine adds, mouth twisting, “couldn’t you have at least chosen someone better? Someone more up to your standards? Someone less… perverse?”

Jace reacts without thinking. He grabs the knife lying beside his plate and throws himself across the table, dishes crashing to the floor and food flying everywhere.

But Valentine moves lightning fast, too. He jumps to his feet and slaps Jace’s outstretched arm aside, and twisting around, he grips Jace by the back of his neck and slams him down onto the table hard.

“Temper, Jonathan, temper!” Valentine chides almost gently. Then he tightens his hold for a second threateningly, like an animal punishing its young, before letting go.

“Now,” Valentine says while he wipes his hands off with a cloth napkin, “look at what you did. The food’s ruined. Hm, no matter. There’s more in the kitchen.” He throws the napkin down on the table and heads for the door. “I’ll send someone up to clean the mess while we eat there. It’ll be rather spartan but we’ll make do.”

Slowly, Jace picks himself up from the table. He’s sticky with pasta and sauce and he’s breathing hard. He’s staring after his father but his mind is utterly blank, nothing but white noise.

Valentine turns in the doorway and with a smile he beckons. “Come on, son. You must be hungry.”

And Jace goes.
Demon Eyes

Chapter Summary

Just a little Malec-y something. (Unbeta'd)

Magnus Bane is not self-conscious.

He’s not. He’s 400 years old. He’s the High Warlock of Brooklyn. He can vanquish demons with the snap of his fingers. So, there!

He’s not self-conscious.

Really.

Magnus leans closer to the bathroom mirror and lets his eyes glow with inner light. They are… not that bad? Sure, they look… well, not creepy, definitely not creepy, dangerous, yes, but not creepy, really.

He turns his head this way and that, examining his demonic golden eyes, slit pupils and all. Hm… Yeah, not that bad.

Really.

“Magnus?” a voice echoes through his apartment.

Alexander.

“Hello? You wanted to see me?”

Magnus blinks and lets the demonic glow in his eyes fade. He straightens up, smooths down his silk shirt and squares his shoulder. Then he takes a deep breath and nods to himself in the mirror.

Go. Do it.

He opens the door and walks out. “Alexander! Yes, I have something to show you…”
Notes on Regret

Chapter Summary


Jace only went to the Hunter’s Moon bar because he knew there was a phone there he could use, nothing more. He needed to call… someone, to tell people that he ran, that Clary was hurt, that… He needed to talk to his family!

He tried to dial Alec’s number but it was Izzy who picked up and after that - “We can’t wake him up… the adamas stone… Jace… Alec’s dying!” - after that, it was all white noise.

And then there was a fight and Jace didn’t want to hurt anyone, not after that poor werewolf girl and Clary and… and Alec, there was enough hurt around, it was enough!

And that was how he ended up tied to a chair in the middle of the bar, bloody and beaten, surrounded by a pack of furious werewolves.


Jace doesn’t look up. “I know.”

“You killed her,” spits out that black girl with curly hair. He didn’t catch her name before she attacked him.

“No, I did not,” Jace responds quietly.

“But you led the raid when Valentine’s people grabbed her,” Luke points out while he lifts a hand to keep the girl quiet.

“Valentine told me that she killed an innocent,” Jace replies.

Luke looks at him in disbelief. “And you believed him?”

“He threatened Clary. I had no choice.”

Luke pauses, and the black girl yells, “You always have a choice.”

And now… now Jace’s getting angry. The white noise in his head is abating, the numbness inside him is turning to anxiety. “Like you had a choice?” he asks as he finally lifts his head and looks directly at Luke.


Jace grits his teeth. “You gave Alec pure adamas to track me down, just to find Clary. And now Alec’s dying. My parabatai is… dying.” His voice cracks.

Luke’s expression is pained, full of regret. “I didn’t mean for that to happen,” he whispers.
Jace’s eyes blaze. “And I didn’t mean to kill your wolf. Do you want to compare notes on regret?”

The black girl rages again. “What did you think would happen if you brought Gretel to Valentine? That he would just set her loose if she turned out to be innocent?”

Jace is still staring straight at Luke, unflinching. “I knew only one thing: it was either me or Clary, one of us would’ve been sent after the wolf, Valentine was determined to get her. And Clary would’ve died. I couldn’t let my sister die.

“What about you, Luke?” Jace addresses the pack leader. “What did you think would happen when you gave the adamas stone to Alec, knowing that so few people have survived using it with their minds intact? Did you care at all what would happen to him? I thought Alec was your friend.”

The whole pack’s now staring at them, at Luke in particular. And Luke can’t seem to tear his eyes away from Jace. Everything has come to a standstill. Heavy silence settles over the room. Nobody breaks it for a long time.

In the end, Jace whispers, “It doesn’t matter. Because I’m going to fix it and save him and I won’t let you stop me!”

And with that he tears his hands free of the bonds that seemed so tight to the wolves before - but before, Jace didn’t want to hurt them. Now he doesn’t care because the anxiety inside him has turned to dread and his heart is beating to the rhythm of go-go-go-go-go-he’s-dying-go-to-him-go! And that gives him strength and speed like never before.

Jace frees himself and swings the chair around to keep the pack away, he hits a couple of them and then he pummels the rest with the ruins of the chair, using the wooden legs like batons.

In the end, only he and Luke are left standing, squared off.

“Move,” Jace growls, “or I swear I will go through you. I must get to Alec or he’ll die.”

A Case of Priorities

Chapter Summary

Alec and Magnus and a little bit of self-reflection. Set after episode 203 - yes, 203! Or, what could happen… Spoilers for 202 and promos for 203! (Unbeta'd)

“I need to go,” Alec mutters as he tries to climb out of Magnus’ bed.

Magnus, who’s reading a book, leaning back against a mountain of pillows next to him - fully clothed! - pushes him back down with little effort and without lifting his eyes from the book. “No, you need to stay put.”

Alec huffs, frustrated. Frustrated with Magnus and with the whole situation, but mostly with himself because, iratze or not, Magnus’ magic or not, he still feels as weak as a kitten. That was really a dumb stunt, the thing with the rock.

“Everybody left over an hour ago!” Alec protests, looking at Magnus sideways.

“Yes, so that you could rest,” Magnus reminds him.

“Jace is in jail!”

“Yes, in the Silent City and they will not let you to him. Besides,” Magnus adds when Alec opens his mouth to protest again, “your parabatai has enough on his plate as it is, the last thing he needs, is to hear that you folded like a deck of cards again!”

Okay, that’s not fair, Alec thinks. Not fair - but effective. He huffs and slides back under the covers again. He hates to admit it - and he would never say it out loud - but he really does need the rest. His parabatai bond with Jace is back, blazing like a star inside him once more, and as a result, his anxiety is mostly gone. But now, exhaustion’s catching up with him because he’s been running on little to no sleep ever since Jace disappeared. Still, he does not have to like it!


Alec glances at him suspiciously. “What compromise?”

“You stay the night and rest, and I’ll portal you back to the Institute first thing in the morning?” Magnus offers. “If you go back now, they’ll only send you to bed like an errant child anyway.”

Okay, that’s not fair, Alec thinks. Not fair - but effective. He huffs and slides back under the covers again. He hates to admit it - and he would never say it out loud - but he really does need the rest. His parabatai bond with Jace is back, blazing like a star inside him once more, and as a result, his anxiety is mostly gone. But now, exhaustion’s catching up with him because he’s been running on little to no sleep ever since Jace disappeared. Still, he does not have to like it!


Alec glances at him suspiciously. “What compromise?”

“You stay the night and rest, and I’ll portal you back to the Institute first thing in the morning?” Magnus offers. “If you go back now, they’ll only send you to bed like an errant child anyway.”

Alec knows it’s true. He hates it but it’s the truth. “Alright,” he agrees softly. “I’ll stay. But you don’t have to portal me back. I can walk. I don’t want you to think that - I don’t know - that I’m only staying here, with you, because of what you can do for me. Or something.”

Magnus looks down at him, brows furrowed. “Wait a minute. Is that why you didn’t call me and ask for help instead of using dangerous magic you knew nothing about? FYI, we will talk about that!” he adds and Alec cringes a little. “But is that the reason why?”

Alec sighs, closes his eyes and thumps his head against his pillow once. “We just made up! And the last time I asked for your help, I was not exactly… uh.”
“Pleasant?” Magnus suggests.

“Reasonable,” Alec finishes. “I knew that using the stone wasn’t the brightest idea but I was getting really desperate. And since Luke suggested it…”

“Alexander,” Magnus says and rests his hand on Alec’s forearm. “Luke’s a good friend and I do trust him. But this was a case of priorities. Luke’s main priority is Clary. Mine are you. And I’m very fond of biscuit, but I would never let you use unknown, untried magic unsupervised just to find her - or Jace for that matter, as much as you don’t like hearing it.”

Alec wants to snap at Magnus that it’s not up to him what he does or does not do but considering that his last two attempts at using rune-based magic ended with him almost crippling both himself and Jace, he keeps his mouth shut. Self-reflection is not entirely foreign for him, after all.

“Alec,” Magnus says gently, “if you need help, you can call me, really. I might not always agree to help you the way you would want me to - and in that case, I would like you to actually listen to my reasons, because I will not refuse just because - but I promise you I’ll do my best to help you the best way I can.”

And Alec understands what Magnus is saying because he’s always thought he would turn prematurely gray because of all the stunts Jace and Izzy pulled in the past. Who would’ve thought that he, the responsible one, would be accused of reckless behavior? The world really has turned upside down.

“Alright,” Alec agrees, covering Magnus’ hand on his forearm with his own free one. “I promise I’ll talk to you first before doing anything… uh, magical again, okay? You’re the expert, after all.”

Magnus grins. “That I am, right?”

“You don’t have to look so smug,” Alec chides.

“Yes, I do,” Magnus replies with a lot of self-satisfaction in his voice.

Alec just chuckles and closes his eyes. He really is tired. Maybe a nap will do him good. Everything else will have to wait till tomorrow.
Locked In

Chapter Summary

Set after episode 203. I’m playing with a headcanon of mine here. Based on the trailers and the promo pics for 204.

Jace and his parabatai bond and a Silent Brother… (Unbeta’d)

Jace goes with them, with the Clave soldiers. He allows himself to be led away from his family and friends, from his parabatai, and he doesn’t say a word - it’s better this way, he knows it - he doesn’t protest until…

“Please, don’t!” he asks urgently as he lifts one hand to stop the Silent Brother from locking him inside the dark cell in the Silent City with magic - with rune magic that would cut him off from the outside world. That would cut Alec off from him. Again.

The Silent Brother tilts his head to the side questioningly, reminding Jace of a large bird.

Jace touches his parabatai rune. “It’s my parabatai. He’s…” How to explain it? “He’s sick… injured, he needs my strength to heal. If you lock me out of our bond, it’ll hurt him.” Then he adds more softly, “Please, don’t.”

And it’s true, he isn’t lying. Where there was nothing before when their bond splintered, Jace now feels a steady drainage. It’s barely noticeable and if he didn’t experience the utter silence before, he might not even notice, but it’s there, a small trickle of power flowing across the bond from him to Alec. He’s sure that Alec’s not even aware that he’s doing it, that he’s using Jace’s strength to heal his battered soul. And Jace doesn’t mind, he’s glad of it. He never wants to live through that again!

The Silent Brother - Jace doesn’t know his name and if he’s perfectly honest, the brothers look all the same to him - is still regarding him with his head cocked to the side, so Jace takes a step closer to the bars with his hands raised unthreateningly.

“I won’t run. I’ll swear on the Sword, if you want. I will not run, just… please.”

The Silent Brother stands there, unmoving, a moment longer, then slowly, he locks the door of the cell with a big iron key - but leaves the magical barrier down. And then he leaves, silently, the way the brothers do everything.

And Jace sighs in relief, his shoulders slumping, and touches his parabatai rune again, feeding the bond more of his strength. Alec will heal. Jace won’t hurt anyone anymore, locked in here. Everything will be alright.
“Magnus–”

“No, it was actually quite…” Magnus laughs self-consciously. He’s staring at Alec’s chest and smoothing down Alec’s denim shirt with gentle pats. He’s clearly embarrassed. “I was so desperate to get you back, that I actually attempted… a *True Love’s Kiss*!”

Alec covers Magnus’ hand with his, and whispers, “I know.”

Magnus’ head jerks up. “You do?” he asks, surprised.

“I felt it,” Alec says and touches Magnus’ lips with the fingers of his free hand. “I felt you. And I tried to come back, I tried. I *swear* I did. But I couldn’t find the way…”

Magnus sighs, his warm breath wafting over Alec’s fingertips. “I know. Just…” He squares his shoulders, looks Alec directly in the eyes and asks imploringly, “Don’t do it again, alright? Just… *don’t*. Please.”

Alec strokes Magnus’ cheek and smiles when Magnus leans into his palm. “I won’t, I promise!”

A day later, though…

But that’s another story.
Jace’s holding Alec in his arms, firmly, gently, as if he never means to let go. One of his hands is resting on Alec’s neck, the other on his back and he’s pulling Alec close and closer still…

And yet. Though Alec’s right there, pressed against Jace’s body, skin to skin, and he’s warm and alive, cradled in Jace’s arms, he’s not… really there. Their parabatai bond is silent. Not gone, there’s not a hole in its place, it’s not frayed and torn or cut off cleanly, the connection still exists - it just… doesn’t seem to lead anywhere, Alec’s not on the other end, it’s all just fog and darkness.

Alec’s lost and he can’t find his way back. Not on his own.

Jace keeps hugging Alec tight a moment longer, his eyes squeezed shut to hold back tears, then he lets go reluctantly, but he doesn’t lay Alec back down, he only turns him around a little to free their hands, and he shivers when Alec’s head slides across his shoulder to rest in the crook of his neck; his parabatai’s stillness is breaking Jace’s heart.

Then he takes the adamas stone that Magnus gave him and he closes Alec’s limp hands around it, holding them in his own, both of their fingers touching the stone, Alec’s too warm, his own too cold. And…

… something shudders in his mind. Alec sighs deeply, his warm breath wafting over Jace’s skin, making him shiver again. And then Alec’s hands move! Jace looks down and his breath catches in his throat because their fingers are now entwined, locked together around the stone. His eyes burn at the sight.

“That’s it, Alec, that’s it,” Jace whispers in his parabatai’s ear, “I’m here. Just don’t let go of me.”

And then he opens himself up to the stone, giving himself over to its powerful magic. He tears down all the walls that he has erected over the last few days, walls that were meant to protect him but now serve only as a barrier between him and his parabatai and that won’t do. Jace bares his soul to the adamas…

… and with a deep breath, he throws himself into the unknown. Either he’ll bring Alec back, or… they’ll remain lost together. To survive as half a person simply isn’t an option.
Nightmares, I'll Guard You From Them

Chapter Summary

A future fic dealing with the fallout of 204. Yes, 204! (Unbeta'd)

Magnus, Ragnor and Alec’s nightmares.

“You’re brooding, my friend.”

Magnus turns his head. There, in the doorway… Ragnor Fell.

“I’m not,” Magnus feels obliged to protest. Because, yes, he is brooding, but he would never actually admit it. High warlocks simply do not brood.

Slowly - and noiselessly - Ragnor walks up to the bed. Magnus is sitting on the rumpled bed covers, cross-legged and in just his purple silk pajama bottoms, watching his boyfriend sleep… dream… have yet another nightmare.

With an unhappy sigh, Magnus reaches out and very gently taps Alexander on the forehead. At once, Alec stops frowning and shifting fitfully as he falls deeply asleep again, the nightmare chased away… But what’s most important, the tiny pained noises cease - the ones that make Magnus’ chest hurt. Nobody should make sounds like that. Especially not Alexander.

“Bad dreams?” Ragnor asks as he sits down on the edge of the bed. It doesn’t even dip under him, what with him being insubstantial, a ghost…

Magnus hmms.

“Well, no wonder, he does kill demons for a living,” Ragnor reminds him not unkindly.

But Magnus shakes his head, eyes still on Alec. “It’s not that,” he says, stroking Alec’s ruffled hair. “Not so long ago, he was possessed. The demon made him kill, murder his own people, his friends.”

“And he’s blaming himself,” Ragnor guesses.

Magnus sighs again. “Alexander would blame himself for every wrong in the world, given half a chance. It’s in his nature. I’m trying to help him unlearn this nasty habit but it’s a slow going.”

“Ah,” Ragnor says, watching Magnus fondly. “You, my friend, are smitten.”

Magnus shoots him a pointed glare then he returns to stroking Alec’s hair. It seems to soothe his lover.

Ragnor chuckles. But then he turns serious. “Have you checked his soul? For demonic stains, I mean. They can be dangerous.”

“Yes,” Magnus whispers, running his fingertips over Alec’s thick eyebrows. “I checked. And then I checked again, just to be sure.” And tomorrow, he’ll look again. He won’t take any risks with
“So, it’s only nightmares, huh?”

Magnus shoots Ragnor another glare. There’s nothing “only” about Alec’s nightmares. They hurt Alec and they make him exhausted. And sad. Magnus hates seeing Alec sad. It’s just not right. A man with such a beautiful smile should laugh more often.

“Ah, don’t give me that look,” Ragnor chides. “You have nightmares, too. You know how it goes. They’re terrible, but they won’t kill you.”

Yes, but Magnus is a centuries old demon spawn. Alec’s 23. No 23-year-old should suffer from nightmares about murdering friends. And yes, nightmares might not kill you - unless you’re a soldier in a never-ending war against evil and they cause you to lose focus, make mistakes…

Magnus worries. And he wants Alec to have at least one night of uninterrupted sleep. That’s why he’s up and acquiring eye-bags, watching over Alec’s dreams, to make sure they don’t turn… ugly.

“You like him a lot, don’t you?” Ragnor asks very softly, and when Magnus just nods, he continues, “Then I apologize. I shouldn’t have trivialized his struggle. Or yours. It made me sound like Camille.”

Magnus just shrugs. He won’t argue with that. He doesn’t want to argue at all.

Ragnor stares at Alec’s sleeping face for a while. Then he inquires quietly, “Is he good to you?”

“We’ve had our share of bumps in the road. But… yes. He makes me smile,” Magnus says and he’s overcome with heart-aching tenderness when Alec sighs and curls up around Magnus in his sleep.

“Then I’m glad…”

When Magnus looks up, Ragnor is gone. A wave of sadness washes over Magnus. “Thank you for visiting, my friend,” he whispers to the dark room.

You’re welcome…
In Shreds

Chapter Summary

A parabatai ficlet for all the wonderful people who participated in our parabatai discussion! An explanation for Jace’s attitude on the show! TW: suicide thoughts.
(Unbeta'd)

It’s really strange to sit here, on a rock in the middle of a dusty desert, and watch the storm come closer and closer, watch it eat away the ground and shred dead trees to pieces, watch the darkness creep in, laced with purple lightning - to sit here and watch all that and not feel fear.

Soon, Alec thinks as the howling wind pulls another piece of shrubbery out of the bone dry ground, roots and all. Soon.

“Alec!”


Alec sighs. Of course. “Hello, Jace,” he greets his parabatai without turning around.

Jace circles the rock to stand in front of him. He looks stressed, haggard… scared. How interesting, Alec thinks casually.

“We need to go,” Jace says imploringly.

“Why?” Alec asks, perfectly serious.

Jace stares at him, uncomprehending. “Why? Don’t you see that?” He points in the direction of the upcoming storm.

Alec glances over Jace’s shoulder. The storm is much closer now. Oh, another stunted tree gone. “Yes, I do.”

“Then you understand! It’ll tear your soul to shreds if you stay here, on this plane!”

Alec looks Jace in the eyes. “I know. So?”

Jace’s eyes widen and he opens and closes his mouth several times. “What… what are you saying?” he whispers, shocked.

Alec sighs. “You should go. This will be all over soon, you’ll barely notice, don’t worry.” His voice sounds bitter but he can’t help it.

“I won’t notice? Alec, you’re my parabatai!” Jace exclaims. “Of course I would notice!”

Alec chuckles. He actually chuckles. “Funny that.”

Jace stares at him, stunned.

Alec shakes his head, his mirth leaving him. Once again, he turns his eyes to the boiling storm.
Soon. “Since Valentine took you, I’ve been beside myself. Frantic. I’ve antagonized pretty much everybody in my life. I was so afraid for you, that Valentine would hurt you, that you would do something stupid to get away from him… that our separation was hurting you as much as me. Foolish thought, that one, huh?”

Jace takes half a step closer. “Alec–”

But Alec continues, “When Jocelyn offered me the adamas stone, I took it. I was determined to use it to find you, despite all the risks it entailed. Because I couldn’t stand the idea of you being in Valentine’s hands, suffering his abuse on top of the pain you must’ve been feeling because of our bond.”

Now he does look at Jace. “Imagine my surprise when I tracked you down, when I got through to you and found… nothing.” He twists his lips and shakes his head. “Nothing at all. Oh, there was a whole storm of emotions there, inside your mind, don’t get me wrong, so much fear and anger and despair, so many, many thoughts at war with each other. But not a single one spared for me or for our bond.”

Jace reaches out and tries again, “Alec–”

“Pathetic, huh?” Alec shakes his head. “I couldn’t sleep, I couldn’t breathe, I couldn’t exist without you by my side. I was falling apart - over nothing. I’ve built the most essential part of my life on a lie. By the Angel, I actually ate it up every time you gushed about our bond and its significance. You must’ve had a good laugh at my expense many times over the years.”

Jace’s face is wounded, full of pain and dread and disbelief. “You can’t really think that! You can’t believe that! Our parabatai bond means more to me than my own life.”

Alec just hums, once more watching the storm eat away the dusty ground. Only minutes now at the most.

Jace steps into his view, forcing Alec to look at him. “It’s the truth! Yes, I didn’t think about us while I was with Valentine, but I did it intentionally. On purpose! I locked every thought of you out of my mind, where Valentine couldn’t get to it. He knows how to twist everything. I know, I’ve lived with him. If I have given him half a chance, if he even guessed how much our bond means to me, he would’ve found a way to taint it, I know he would’ve! I know him.

“Not thinking of us, was the only way how I could protect you and our bond…” Jace falls silent, then pleadingly, he adds, “I didn’t want you to end up like my falcon did - dead because I loved it too much.”

And there it is again, the pang in Alec’s chest because he wants to believe Jace, he truly wants to, he would give anything for it to be true, because if their bond’s a lie, then his whole life’s a lie and that would be the most horrible thing he can imagine, to have given so much of himself to another only to have it thrown back into his face like that.

But how can he trust Jace’s words when he saw his mind, his soul - and there was no place in there for Alec Lightwood. No Alec-shaped nook, hidden from the enemy’s eyes. There was simply nothing.

The winds are howling so close now that small pebbles and shards of stone are starting to pelt them. Alec… Alec just wants Jace to go away. He doesn’t want Jace to die, he wants Jace to be safe, because he still cares deeply, he still keeps their bond in high regard, honors it. He just wants it to be over.
Jace steps up to him, standing between Alec’s lightly spread knees now. He cups Alec’s face in his hands. “Alec, please, trust me, trust me one more time, allow me to prove it to you. I’ll do anything, anything you want. Maybe Magnus knows some magic that will allow you to… to look into my mind again, to see the truth, the full truth, not just the safe part that never makes it behind the walls I’ve learned to build in Valentine’s presence.”

Jace looks Alec deeply in the eyes. “And what I guard most closely is, that if I ever lost you, it would break me like nothing else could. I’ll swear it on the Sword, if you want. If you refuse to go back with me, then I’ll stay here, with you. Because I can’t live without you!”

Alec swallows hard, hearing the words he said to Izzy not so long ago said back to him now. If it’s the truth… But if it isn’t…

“Then why didn’t our separation affect you at all?” Alec croaks out, the one doubt that’s still standing tall at the forefront of his mind. Because if Jace didn’t suffer any physical side-effects at all, nothing, while Alec was falling to pieces, then how can Alec trust anything else that’s coming out of his mouth?

Jace takes a deep breath, as if steeling himself for a death blow, then he confesses, “I have demon blood in me. Valentine experimented on me while I was a child, even before my birth. That’s why I’m stronger and faster, at least according to daddy dearest - and apparently, it also made me physically more resilient. That’s all.”

Then he cringes at his choice of words. “That sounded rather… dismissive of the whole demon blood issue, didn’t? But… What I meant to say was,” still holding Alec’s face in his hands, he leans closer, imploring, begging, “it had nothing to do with how much I appreciate our bond, how much I care. I swear, Alec, I swear. It’s a physical thing, not a spiritual one.”

Alec stares at Jace, stares into his eyes, desperately wanting to believe him, to trust him, to have this huge thing in his life to be proven to be true. Please...

“Please, Alec. Come back with me, please,” Jace begs as the storm closes in around them.

And Alec replies, “Alright.”
High Time for a Career Change

Chapter Summary

Based on the synopsis of ep 203. Magnus realizes it might be high time for a career change. (Unbeta'd)

Magnus is kneeling by Alec’s bed, using his magic to try and steady Alec’s stuttering heart, when the door opens and Lydia slips inside Alec’s room.

Izzy, who’s sitting on the bed next to Alec, holding his hand, turns around. “Lydia?” she asks uncertainly.

Lydia doesn’t step away from the door, she’s looking anxious, frazzled even. “You need to go!” she urges quietly, as if afraid she could be overheard.

Magnus glances up for a second but continues pouring his magic into Alec.

Izzy lets go of her brother’s hand and gets up, demanding anxiously, “What’s going on?”

“It’s Victor,” Lydia says. “He plans on using Alec as a bait for Jace!”

“What?” Izzy breathes out in disbelief.

Magnus keeps quiet, but he’s now staring at Lydia with his jaw clenched.

Lydia explains, “He wants to move Alec to the Silent City where Jace can’t get to him unless he gives himself up to the Clave. It’s the one place where Jace’ll never be able to reach Alec, he will have to surrender to save Alec’s life.”

Izzy’s eyes are wide with shock. “He can’t do that! He can’t risk killing my brother just to get Jace!”

But Lydia shakes her head. She’s frustrated and angry - and helpless, that much is clear. “Unfortunately, he can. And he will. He’s the head of the Institute now. He represents the Law. Nobody will stand up against him, not in this.”

“But you did,” Magnus comments quietly, letting his magic go.

Lydia looks down at Alec and her eyes soften a little. “Alec’s my friend. I can’t let him die over politics!”

“How much time do we have?” Izzy asks.

Lydia shakes her head. “Not much. I slipped out while Victor was calling on his people - he doesn’t trust the staff here much, he’s wary of their loyalty to the Lightwoods.”

Izzy furrows her brows anxiously. “If he finds out you told us…”

Lydia shrugs. “Then I guess I’ll be sent back to Idris. Honestly, it might not be such a bad thing. I
don’t think I can work with him. I don’t like his methods.” She grimaces. Then she adds, “But I must go now.”

Nodding, Izzy smiles at her gratefully. “Thank you for warning us.”

Lydia smiles back, then she slips out of the room again, closing the door noiselessly.

Izzy turns to Magnus. “What will we do?” she asks him. “We can’t let them take Alec to the Silent City, it would be certain a death sentence for my brother!”

Magnus just kneels there for a few heartbeats, staring down at Alec, contemplating their - his! - options. Is he really thinking of doing it? Yes. Yes, he is.

“No, we can’t allow that,” he agrees finally. Slowly, he gets up. “We need to get Alec out of here.”

“But how?” Izzy asks, frustrated.

And then, when Magnus looks at her pointedly, lifts his hand and lets his magic dance around his fingertips, her eyes widen. “Magnus, if you use your magic to open a portal here, it’ll set off the alarms. Victor will know it was you. You’ll get in a lot of trouble. He might even accuse you of kidnapping a Shadowhunter, you don’t know him!”

Magnus smiles bitterly. “Maybe I don’t know Mr. Aldertree specifically, but I assure you, Isabelle, that I’ve known many Shadowhunters like him - and I survived them all.”

She shakes her head. “You might lose your your High Warlock position over this,” she objects.

Magnus shrugs. “Maybe it’s time for a career change anyway.” Then he looks at her with raised eyebrows and a small, amused smile on his lips. “Are you trying to talk me out of helping you?”

Izzy raises her hands in surrender. “No, no. I’ll be very grateful.” She looks down at her brother and adds in a whisper, “Alec will be very grateful. When he wakes up.”

Magnus looks down at Alec, too, and the pointed irony in his face softens to affection. *When Alexander wakes up. When!*

Then the door is thrown open and they’re out of time.

And for the first time in 20 years, Magnus Bane uses his magic against Shadowhunters, the consequences be damned.
Kept in the Dark

Chapter Summary

Where are Maryse and Robert? Told from Max’s POV. (Unbeta’d)

Max is sitting on the top step of the grand staircase of the Lightwood mansion in Idris, listening to the adults arguing in the sitting room downstairs.

When his parents first returned from New York - they didn’t tell him why because they never tell him anything! - he knew that something Bad happened and that the Bad Thing had something to do with Jace, but nobody would talk to Max about him either!

And then his mother left again and then she was back again and then there was a Clave messenger that morning, and still no one would tell Max what was going on, and then his mother… cried. Max’s mother never cries!

And then Imogen Herondale, or the Scary Lady as Max likes to call her, appeared at their door. The Inquisitor never visits anyone at their home! And Max became scared because he realized that something Very Bad must’ve happened.

Max scoots down another step to hear better.

“Imogen, you have to let us go back!” his dad’s saying. “It’s not about politics anymore, it’s–”

“Our son is dying!” Maryse shouts - Max’s mom’s shouting at the Inquisitor! “Alec… is dying. We need to be there with him, for him…”

It takes a moment for Max to register what his mother’s saying. And then his heart jumps with fear. Alec? Alec’s dying? His big brother’s… dying? Max’s eyes start to burn.

“No!” Imogen refuses firmly. “Your son will be taken care of. He’s a soldier of the Clave first, your son second, don’t forget that, Maryse! We can use this situation to draw Jonathan out. If that devil spawn has a sliver of decency left in his body, he’ll come and save his parabatai. It’s our best chance at catching him.”

Max doesn’t understand. He doesn’t understand anything they’re saying. Who’s Jonathan? Max thought that Jace was Alec’s parabatai. Is Jonathan Jace? Is Jace a… a devil spawn? What does it mean? He’s so confused and so terrified now!

“You plan on using our son as a bait?” Robert asks quietly and his voice sounds incredulous.

“It’s only just that your family helps end what you two had a hand in starting!” Imogen retorts sharply.

“That’s what this is about?” Maryse demands in disbelief. “You want to finally get your revenge on us? We didn’t force your son to join the Circle. Nobody forced him to stay loyal to Valentine to his last breath! It was solely his decision. And he paid for it! Our son is innocent!”

“How innocent can he be if he became that boy’s parabatai, Maryse?” Imogen throws back. “He’s
tainted by the mere association with him. Even you acknowledged that Jonathan was rotten to the core when you severed all ties with him without a second thought, so don’t blame me for wanting to cut off all the branches before the rot spreads!”

There’s no answer. The silence is so profound that Max has to cover his mouth to stifle his harsh breeding. What are they saying? What does it all mean?

“You’ll stay here, both of you. It’s now a Clave matter, Victor Aldertree will handle it, and that’s my last word!” Imogen says coldly. “And if you go against my orders, you’ll be placed under arrest. Is that understood?”


There’re steps headed in the direction of the hall and the main door and Max ducks down in fear of being spotted. He doesn’t lift his head again until the main door clicks shut. The Scary Lady is gone.

“That bitch!” Maryse spits and Max’s eyes widen because his mother never swears, ever. But then, his mother’s been doing many things lately that she has never done before.

“Maryse—” Robert tries to soothe his wife, but she’s having none of it.

“No, Robert, no!” she cuts him off. “I thought that if our family kept out of the hunt for Jace, if we were cleared of any suspicions, if we couldn’t be accused of favoritism, we could help him somehow, in some way! Appeal to the right people with actual evidence! But this woman…”

There’s a pause, and when she continues, her voice breaks and that scares Max even more, “Imogen’s willing to let Alec die to get her revenge on Valentine - on us. She doesn’t care, the Clave doesn’t care about evidence. For them, Jace’s guilty by association - and now Alec’s too!”

And Max can’t stand it anymore, all the talk about his brother dying and his other brother being a devil spawn - whatever that is! He gets up and runs down the stairs, and before Maryse can say anything more, before Robert can reply, Max barges into the sitting room with wide eyes full of tears, cheeks pale and his heart hammering so hard it hurts.

“Is Alec dying?” Max blurts out his greatest fear, because he can deal with Jace being a devil spawn, as long as Jace’s alive. But Alec’s dying!

Maryse quickly wipes her cheeks to hide her tears from her son, but Max sees them and his fear becomes terror. Robert squeezes his wife’s hand, then he turns towards his son.

“Were you listening?” he asks, not unkindly.

“Is Alec dying?” Max asks again, undeterred. “What’s going on? Nobody ever tells me anything, but Alec’s dying and Jace’s a devil… thing and we’re here and not there, with them, and I don’t know what’s happening! Someone tell me what’s happening!” he screams almost hysterically.

Robert looks at Maryse who shakes his head. “No, Robert. He’s a child!”

But Robert sighs. “Yes, he is. But keeping him in the dark isn’t helping him. Just look at him - does he look safe and protected to you?”

Maryse complies, she looks at Max, who’s standing there, two steps inside the room, sobbing and wiping his nose with his sleeve because he forgot his handkerchief again. And her whole face softens. “Oh, Max…” she whispers.
And then Robert sits down on the couch and says very gently, opening his arms to Max, “Come here, son. I think it’s time we talked.”
I know that New Year’s Eve was over 14 days ago, but what the heck. Alec broods, Jace is cheeky and a smiley face is drawn in frost. (Unbeta'd)

“Are you hiding in here?” Jace asks, his voice soft and amused, as he enters Alec and Magnus’ bedroom. The moment he closes the door, the sounds of the joyous celebration going on in the other room grow muffled again.

Alec, who’s leaning against the brick wall by the window with his arms crossed over his chest, just hnnns without turning around. The frost covered glass is giving the street lamps outside a golden hue. Alec likes it, it’s pretty.

Slowly, Jace picks his way through the dark room. “What’s wrong?” he inquires quietly as he stops behind Alec.

Alec lift his right hand and presses his finger against the thin layer of ice on the window pane. He draws a circle, two dots and a straight line - a smiley face without a smile.

“Another year gone,” he comments with a sigh, his voice heavily laced with melancholy.

Jace steps closer, raises himself to his tiptoes and hooks his chin over Alec’s shoulder, his front pressed against Alec’s back, to see what Alec’s drawn; he smells of cologne, Alec of sandalwood.

Now it’s Jace’s turn to hnnm. He sneaks his right arm around Alec - the fingers of his left hand he hooks firmly through the loop of Alec’s jeans to keep steady - and turns the thin line of Alec’s unsmiling smiley’s mouth into a wide open grin, giving the drawing a cheeky expression.

“And another one begins,” Jace whispers and pats Alec’s stomach. “Nothing ever ends without something new beginning. It’s only up to you if you look forward or back.”

Alec smiles and turns his head slightly to the side to look at his parabatai. The the glow of street lamps outside glitters in Jace’s mismatched eyes. “When did you get so wise?”

Jace digs his chin into Alec’s shoulder to make Alec squirm. “I’ve always been wise. You just never saw past my gorgeous looks. What a shallow, shallow man you are.”

Alec laughs quietly. But when he speaks, his voice sounds serious again, “Who would’ve thought we would make it to forty, huh?”

“Yeah,” Jace agrees. “A little frayed around the edges, but alive and kicking. Look at us champs.”

Alec grins. “You are not going to let me wallow in self-pity, are you?”

Jace grins, too. “Nope.” He pats Alec’s stomach again, then he steps back, pulling at the loop at the back of Alec’s jeans. “Come on, midnight’s almost upon us, and I bet Magnus would turn me into a toad if I dared to steal your New Year’s kiss from him.”
Alec laughs and goes. “I think that Clary might object, too!”

Jace ponders it with his head tilted to the side while still dragging Alec in the direction of the living room. “Yeah, you’re right,” he admits finally. “She’s a feisty one. It’s the red hair, you know?”

They open the door and a wave of music and laughter and loud hollering washes over them, and they stop in the doorway to take it all in.

“Hey, Alec,” Jace says, bumping their shoulders together, and when Alec turns to him, he says with a soft smile, “We made it.”

Alec smiles back. “Yeah, we did.”
Chapter Summary

In 203, we only saw a part of the parabatai ceremony. So, what happened after Alec paused? (Unbeta'd)

“And where thou lodgest, I will lodge..”

Those are the last words that pass Alec’s lips.

Jace can see, he can feel that something’s wrong, terribly wrong. Alec’s brows furrow and all of a sudden, he seems out of breath. His grip on Jace’s forearm tightens for a moment, then it grows slack and...

Alec’s falling. His eyes become unfocused and then flutter shut, his knees give away, his hand starts sliding down Jace’s arm...

Jace’s eyes widen and his heart starts hammering in fear. He reacts lightning fast, his reflexes kicking in, and he catches Alec’s hand in his before it can slip away. He lowers Alec to the floor as carefully as possible - Alec’s knees still hit the tiles so hard it makes Jace wince! - and he sits down hard, too, pulling Alec close, holding him up with his left arm around Alec’s shoulders.

Jace stares down at his friend with dread. Breath rattles in Alec’s throat and he’s wheezing as if he can’t get enough air into his lungs. His face’s turning sickly pale and dark circles now mar the skin under Alec’s closed eyes...

Jace opens his mouth to call Alec’s name, but Izzy yells it first.

“Alec!” she screams as she throws herself closer, so close to the circle of flames that her toes almost get singed. She whirls on the Shadowhunters called in to bear witness to the ceremony. “Put out the fire! My brother, he needs help!”

One of the men moves to snuff out the flames, but the oldest woman among them, a stern looking Shadowhunter with her steel gray hair twisted in a bun, stops him with a raised hand. “No! Jace Wayland must finish the ceremony!”

Jace turns to her in disbelief. Is she serious? His best friend, his… brother, is dying in his arms!

As if reading his mind, Izzy yells at her, “Alec’s dying!”

The woman turns to her and snaps, “And if we put out the fire, we might save his body, but his mind will be gone! It’s his soul. Look at their parabatai runes!” She points with a gnarled finger.

They look. Jace’s rune, placed on his left side, is glowing steadily, whereas Alec’s flickering and dangerously so - the established connection’s fraying, growing weaker.

Jace’s heart skips a beat. If it breaks, if the soul bond’s not established… what will happen, then? What will happen to Alec if his soul shatters and a part of it gets lost?
“The ceremony must be finished!” the old woman declares. “Jace Wayland, you have to say the oath and finish it for both of you. Quickly!”

And he does. Jace squeezes Alec’s right hand tight as he cradles Alec closer to his chest, and staring down at Alec’s face - it’s growing paler and paler, his lips are now turning blue - he whispers the words of the oath with an almost feverish devotion, because he means them, by the Angel, he means them with every fiber of his being. He’s not going to lose Alec, not now, not ever!

“Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried. The Angel do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me….”

The last words he breathes out with his forehead pressed to Alec’s, eyes shut tight, rocking them both gently from side to side, because it has to be enough, it must!

And Alec, who seemed to have stopped breathing altogether for a moment there, suddenly gasps for breath so hard that his back arches, as if he just broke through the surface after a long dive, and Jace straightens and looks down at him with wide-eyed wonder and…

It’s… there, the connection between them, it flutters inside his chest, and it’s different than Jace ever imagined it would be - it’s so much better, deeper, it feels like Alec’s right there, inside him, and Jace can feel it as their heartbeats match, Alec’s wildly galloping heart following Jace’s much calmer now thrum.

The flames are snuffed out and Izzy tries to rush to them, but the old woman grabs her and shakes her head - this is their moment.

Alec’s eyes flutter open and he looks up at Jace in dazed wonder.

“Hey,” Jace croaks out, still holding Alec tight. He might not let go for some time yet. His… his parabatai! - his parabatai! - scared the hell out of him, after all.

“Hey,” Alec whispers back, his voice just as hoarse.

“What happened?” Jace demands.

Alec shakes his head against Jace’s shoulder. “I don’t know. I was here, with you, and then I… wasn’t. I think, I think it had something to do with the future… us. I saw you, the older you, reciting the oath again, to me.” He lifts his free hand and touches Jace’s chest. “You were so… sad, calling out to me.”

Jace frowns. It doesn’t make any sense to him. “Why?”

Alec smiles a little and the profound peace that settles in his eyes as he whispers his answer sends a cold shiver down Jace’s spine. “Because one day, my parabatai, I’ll die for you.”
“Feeling strong enough to return home?” Magnus asks, giving Alec a careful once over. 

Alec smiles diffidently as he runs his hands down his t-shirt. “Yes, yes… And thank you for washing my clothes for me while I showered.”

Magnus grins and wiggles his fingers at him. “Ah, but that’s what magic’s for. Much faster and environment friendly than a washing machine.”

Alec blushes to the tips of his ears. “Yes, right. Yes.”

Magnus is charmed. Again. He can’t remember the last time he felt this happy just because he saw someone… alive, there, breathing.

“Ready?” he asks, lifting his hands to open a portal.

“I can walk, really. Or take a cab,” Alec assures him.

“Nonsense!”

“You’ve already done so much for me…” Alec mumbles.

“Yes, and you will not waste all my efforts by getting mugged on your way home,” Magnus replies, “so hush and let me send you back home safely.”

Alec smiles again, ducking his head. “Alright.”

“One ride right up to the doorsteps it is, then!” Magnus says cheerfully and concentrates. The Institute’s courtyard will have to do, though, because he really doesn’t want to get into another fight with that… man… Aldertree. With the snap of his fingers, he opens the portal.

Alec watches the golden vortex swirl open in the middle of Magnus’ loft. “So… I guess it’s a good-bye for now?” He turns his statement into a question.

Magnus looks up at him and his expression softens. “I guess it is…” But then he remembers. “Ah, I almost forgot.” He fumbles inside the pocket of his jacket for a few seconds, then he pulls out the adamas stone and offers it to Alec on his open palm. “You almost left this.”

Alec stares at the stone as if it were an ugly bug. A scary, ugly bug. Maybe even poisonous. Then slowly, he lifts his hand and curls Magnus’ fingers around it without touching it himself. Magnus frowns, confused.

Shaking his head, Alec says. “That stone is dangerous. In the wrong hands…” He falls silent. Then he looks Magnus in the eye. “You should keep it.”

Magnus’ eyes widen. “It’s dangerous. And you want me to keep it,” he repeats, as if not sure he
heard right.


Magnus blinks rapidly. He can feel butterflies fluttering their wings in his chest. What this man’s doing to him… “Alright,” he whispers. “I’ll keep it safe.”

Nodding again and smiling crookedly, Alec utters a silent, “Bye, then,” then he walks through the portal and out of Magnus’ loft.

When the vortex swirls shut again, Magnus sighs and looks down at the stone. Adamas. So much power. Other warlocks would kill for an artifact as powerful - but all Magnus can see when he looks at the stone, is Alec’s death.

He vows to himself he would never, ever use it.
**Never a Matter of Choice**

Chapter Summary

Set after 204 - yes, 204. I’ve written many fics where Jace was protective of Alec. It was time the tables turned. Or, Jace and Alec and the Hunter’s Moon. (Unbeta’d)

When they finally let Jace out of the City of Bones - not even Aldertree could still keep him there, in prison, after having witnessed with his own eyes that Jace turned Valentine’s offer down - they go to the werewolves to talk, to explain, he and Alec.

But the moment they enter the bar, The Hunter’s Moon, all the wolves inside jump to their feet and one even throws himself at Jace, his still human teeth bared, arms outstretched and fingers hooked into claws…

Alec moves, too, lightning fast. He steps in front of Jace, whips out his Seraph Blade and points it in the direction of the attacking wolf, stopping its sharp point barely an inch away from the man’s throat.

“Back. Off!” Alec orders, his growl rivaling that of the wolves around them. “Back off, or I swear I’ll cut your throat!”

All the wolves freeze because Alec might be younger than most of them, but he’s tall and imposing and his blade is glowing dangerously. He looks positively livid - and he is a Shadowhunter. Everybody knows that for a Downworlder, it’s not good for the health to piss off a Shadowhunter.

Slowly, Luke heads towards them from the back of the bar. “Alec, Jace…” he says, his voice calm, placating.

Without turning away from the wolf who still keeps baring his teeth at him, Alec warns, “Luke, call them off, or I swear by Raziel that this will turn ugly.”

Jace, standing behind Alec, touches his back. “It’s alright,” he murmurs.

But Alec doesn’t lower his blade, he doesn’t relax, he doesn’t take his eyes off the people he now sees as potential enemies. “No, it is not!” he replies sharply. “This is a courtesy call. We came here to explain what happened, what Valentine did to Gretel, because her people and her family deserve to know. But I have had it with everyone making everything your fault!”

Luke stops a step or two away from them. “Alec, lower your blade. If all you’ve come to do is talk and explain, no harm will come to you here.” He looks past Alec’s shoulder, at Jace. “Or to your parabatai. You have my word.”

Finally, Alec looks away from the wolf. For a long moment, he stares at Luke, then he lowers his
blade and allows it to fold itself back together.

The moment he does it, though, the wolf he stopped from attacking throws himself forward again, but Luke roars his name - "Taito!" - the power in his voice almost deafening. The wolf stops dead in his tracks, unable to move, and just growls impotently.


Jace steps around Alec - squeezing Alec’s shoulder reassuringly when Alec moves to cover his parabatai again - and facing the werewolves, he takes a deep breath and squares his shoulders...

… and starts talking.
“Wait for it… “ Magnus says as he runs the brush gently over Alec’s face one last time. Then he steps aside. “Now, you can look!”

Alec opens his eyes and stares at his reflection in the full-length mirror standing propped up in one corner of Magnus’ bedroom. When he reluctantly agreed to let Magnus “play” - Magnus’ words, not Alec’s - he didn’t know what to expect. Definitely not this.

The boots and cargo pants are his own - black, of course - but the shimmering shirt is a deep emerald green color. It’s real silk and when he moves his arms, it flows like water. But that’s not what draws his attention.

It’s his face. The makeup on it. His eyes seem even bigger, their color deeper, and his lips look redder, as if made for kissing. It’s a stunning image, almost… breathtaking - it’s as if he’s looking at a stranger.

“Well?” Magnus asks, standing on tiptoes and staring over his shoulder.

“It’s beautiful,” Alec admits softly and tilting his head slightly to the side, he reaches out with his right hand to let his fingers hover a hair’s breadth away from the mirror’s surface.

“But…” Magnus prompts gently.

Alec shakes his head a little. “It’s… it’s not me,” he whispers. “I look…” He can’t find the right word.

“Gorgeous?” Magnus whispers in his ear.

Alec laughs a little, blushing. “I-I guess. But…” He turns his head to look at Magnus. “I look like someone else, not… not me. This,” he touches his lips, “this is not me. I’m sorry if I disappointed you–”

Magnus’ eyes widen. He drops down from this tiptoes and walks around Alec to stand in front of him. “What? No! No, Alexander, never!”

He snaps his fingers, and when Alec looks at himself in the mirror again, over Magnus’ shoulder, it’s his plain old self once more: a blue denim shirt, unruly hair and a pale face. Seeing the familiar image staring back at him, Alec runs his fingers down his cheek and rests them on his deflect rune for a moment. He smiles.

“Better?” Magnus asks, and turning around, he steps back. Standing side by side, they study at each other’s reflection.

“Yes, it is,” Alec confesses. “That person before, he was… gorgeous, as you said, but I didn’t feel well in his skin. This,” he reaches out again slowly, and this time, he touches the mirror, “this is
me, Alec Lightwood.” Then he adds more quietly, “I hope you don’t mind that–”

“Alexander,” Magnus interrupts him kindly, “I was just playing. I knew you’ve never tried it before - makeup, I mean - so…” He shrugs. “I thought maybe you would like it. It was harmless fun, I assure you. Don’t ever hesitate to tell me if something’s making you uncomfortable - I’m a warlock, not a mind reader.”

Then Magnus hooks their arms together and adds in an earnest whisper, looking up at Alec, “In my eyes, you’ll never not be beautiful.”

Alec blishes again. In moments like this - very often so - he wonders how he got so lucky. He looks down at Magnus and leans in for a kiss.
He was so offended, so humiliated, so… *hurt* when Alec didn’t come and he had to call off the *parabatai* ceremony. How could Alec? How *could* he? How could he have done that to Jace?

But now…

“They say you’re soul sick,” Jace whispers. Holding Alec’s limp hand in his, he runs his thumb back and forth across Alec’s knuckles. Alec’s skin is paper dry and almost too hot to the touch, his fever much too high for Jace not to feel downright frightened. “That’s what the Silent Brothers called it, *soul sick*. They say your soul’s rejecting the *parabatai* rune, that it’s a defense mechanism, to prevent the bond from being forced on the unwilling…”

*Unwilling.* Alec did not - does not! - want the bond.

Jace feels sick. He hasn’t stopped feeling sick ever since he barged into Alec’s room with Izzy on his heels, furiously yelling Alec’s name and demanding answers - *why, why did Alec stand him up? why didn’t he come? why?* - only to freeze in his tracks barely two steps in, because there Alec was, lying on the floor, *convulsing*, his lower stomach, the place that he chose for his *parabatai* rune, drenched with blood. Jace will never forget that moment…

Jace pushes the blanket down Alec’s naked torso - yes, the dressing covering Alec’s *parabatai* rune’s soaked through again. It seems as if the rune will never stop bleeding.

With his heart in his throat, Jace lets go of Alec’s hand and very carefully, he peels off the gauze. At the sight of the rune, he swallows hard. It’s red and swollen, it doesn’t even look like it was drawn with a stele, rather as if it was cut out with a knife. It looks like a wound, oozing dark red blood. It’s wrong, it’s all wrong.

Jace drops the ruined dressing into the bin, then he grabs a new one - he doesn’t remember how many times he changed it already - and gently, he covers the rune again. Bloody spots appear on the stark whiteness almost immediately. Jace smooths it down lightly.

He feels like crying. And when Alec makes a low sound and furrows his brow as if in pain, Jace wants to… he wants to… he wants to rage and punch something, someone - *himself!* - he wants to fix Alec, heal him! But the Silent Brothers said no more rune power, not even for an iratze, until Alec wakes up, or they might kill him, overtax his body, while trying to help him.

Jace falls back in his chair and buries his face in his hands.

“Yes, it’s my fault, isn’t it?” he whispers. “I knew that something was wrong, that you were hesitating, but I kept pushing and pushing and pushing, I wanted us to become *parabatai* as soon as possible because…”

Because he was afraid that if he didn’t tie Alec to him, Alec would leave - *leave him!* - just like...
everybody else. Selfish, so selfish!

“It’s all my fault,” Jace mumbles.

“No… it’s not…”

The whisper is so quiet, so soft that Jace almost misses it. But then his eyes widen behind his hands and his head shoots up. And, yes, Alec’s looking at him, staring at him with fever bright eyes, licking his dry lips.

“Alec!” Jace exclaims. “Don’t-don’t talk. Here!”

From the nightstand, he grabs a glass of water, and sitting down on the edge of the bed, he gently lifts Alec’s head and supports it to allow Alec to sip a little. When Alec’s done, Jace sets the glass aside and helps Alec lie down again. And then, he just stares at his friend, he just stares, because Alec’s awake! It’s been almost two days now, but Alec’s finally back!

Alec sighs and reaches out weakly. “It’s not your fault,” he whispers when Jace takes his hand and squeezes it firmly. “It’s all on me, all on me, just me.”

Jace shakes his head. “No, if I just waited–”

“I was - am - afraid,” Alec interrupts him.


As if reading his mind, Alec shakes his head. “Not of you,” he assures Jace quietly. “I’m afraid that… There are things that…” He falls silent, breathing hard. “There are things that you don’t know about me and I was afraid that… if… when you found out, you wouldn’t want… that you would regret becoming my parabatai. I know I should’ve told them to you sooner but… I couldn’t, I just couldn’t… I couldn’t…”

Jace shakes his head again, vigorously, firmly, decisively, and he holds Alec’s hand in both of his.

“No, Alec, no. You don’t have to tell me anything. Nothing, nothing could ever change my mind about this. Nothing could make me not want to be your parabatai, I swear!”

And now there’s pain in Alec’s eyes and Jace doesn’t understand. He wanted to reassure Alec, not hurt him even more. And it’s the truth, there’s nothing in the world he wants more than to become Alec’s parabatai, to share that unbreakable, deep bond with him. Nothing’s more important.

Leaning closer, he tries to make Alec understand. “You’re my best friend, Alec. My brother. And nothing will ever change that. Whatever you’re so afraid of telling me - you can, you can tell me anything, and I’ll understand and it won’t change our relationship, I promise. Or you don’t have to tell me anything at all, I’ll understand that, too.”

Still more pain and now tears, running down Alec’s cheeks as he closes his eyes as if to hide from Jace, and Jace’s becoming frantic, because obviously, he’s saying the wrong things but he doesn’t know what the right things are. Somehow, he has to make Alec listen - listen and understand. Even if…

Jace makes a decision. He lets go of Alec’s hand and cups his face. “If you don’t want to be my parabatai, I’ll accept it. We’ll just call the whole thing off, forever. If all you want is to be my friend and brother, I’ll accept it. I just want you to be well. And if this is causing you so much pain…”
Alec leans his face into Jace’s right hand for a moment, he just rests his cheek against Jace’s palm as if he’s soaking up Jace’s warmth - but it can’t be, Alec’s skin is still way too hot to the touch - then he takes a deep breath and moves his head away, taking the pressure off Jace’s hand. When he opens his eyes, the pain’s gone, replaced with… acceptance? Resignation? Jace doesn’t know.

“No,” Alec whispers. “No, I do want this. If you’re sure that it’s what you want, even now, knowing that there are things…” He pauses. “If you still want to be my parabatai, despite all of that, then I want it, too.”

Jace straightens up, sliding his hands down to Alec’s shoulders that he grips tight, and his whole face, his whole being lights up. He grins. “Yes! Yes, I do. I want this. I want to be your parabatai, till death do us part!”

And Alec smile maybe looks a little sad, but it’s also peaceful, as if he came to a decision that he can live with. Jace can feel Alec’s body relaxing, as if all his muscles, clenched tightly until now, loosened all at once. He watches Alec sink deeper into his pillows with a relieved sigh.

“The pain’s gone,” Alec observes curiously.

Jace lets go of Alec’s shoulders and looks down at the dressing on Alec’s stomach. Slowly, carefully, he peels it away - and his breath catches in his throat. “Your rune, it stopped bleeding,” he whispers in awe.

And it’s true. The bleeding stopped and the swelling’s going down so fast he can actually see it with his naked eye. The redness is fading and the wound’s starting to look like a regular rune now. A parabatai rune, waiting to connect to its twin on Jace’s body.

“Yeah?” Alec replies softly.

Jace nods, relieved. Once the rune’s fully healed, he’ll be able to use an iratze to bring down Alec’s fever and then everything will be alright. Like it should be.

His eyes burn and his nose pricksces as he stares down, the blood spattered dressing clenched tightly in his hand. “You scared me,” Jace whispers.

“I’m sorry,” Alec whispers back.

“Don’t do that ever again, please.”

“I won’t,” Alec promises. “I finally understood what was most important.”

Jace looks up at him. “Yeah?”

Alec nods. “Yeah. We’re meant to be parabatai, that’s it.”

Jace nods, too, grinning again. “Yes, that’s it. We’re meant to be.”
In the Dead of the Night

Chapter Summary

What I wish would happen after 204, but I know it won’t. A little parabatai ficlet! (Unbeta'd)

So, Jace’s back, released from his cell in the City of Bones, exonerated and *graciously* healed. He’s back and yet, the Institute doesn’t feel like home. Not anymore. Both he and his family - yes, the Lightwoods, *they* are his family, not the Morgensterns, never them - are now treated like unwanted guests there, always under surveillance, watched with suspicion. This is not what he thought he would come back to.

It’s the middle of the night, almost early morning but not really, not yet, and he’s padding through the silent hallways of the Institute in nothing but his gray undershirt and gray pajama pants, bare feet slapping against the cold tiles. He woke up - or maybe he never really fell asleep in the first place? - and then he just couldn’t keep his eyes shut anymore. So he got up and started wandering.

He came back to find the Institute in a state of utter chaos, following a demon attack. As of yet, they still don’t know how it got in, but it did. And it possessed people and it killed people. Blood and bodies and utter despair, that’s what awaited them when Aldertree brought him back.

*Possession.* Shadowhunters should be protected from it. Should be. Unless that protection is broken. Like when a Shadowhunter dies and comes back with his soul reborn and bare - and defenseless. Like Alec’s was. And it didn’t occur to them, to any of them, that something like this could happen.

They wouldn’t let him see Alec. Tomorrow, they said - *ordered!* - and sent him away when he asked, then demanded to be allowed to go to his *parabatai.* His *parabatai,* by the Angel! All they told him was, that Alec was in the infirmary, being tended to by the Silent Brothers - and that his help wasn’t needed, even though he sensed it, that something was wrong, still there, in the City of Bones, when Alec’s side of their bond suddenly turned… cold and dark and *ugly!* And yet, they said they didn’t need his help. *Arrogant fools!*

Izzy, Clary… Alec, all shaken, devastated, maybe even - but hopefully not - broken… He should’ve been here, with them, standing by their side, defending them. Instead, he was stuck in prison because of his father’s schemes and the Clave’s politicking. Damn them all. This should’ve never happened. Didn’t they already suffer enough?

He doesn’t even realize it but his mindless wandering brings him to the infirmary’s doorsteps - maybe that’s where he was headed this whole time? The guards are gone and the Silent Brothers, too, and that means that Alec doesn’t pose a threat to anyone anymore; his soul’s been cleansed and his protections against possession restored. Yes, he’s been feeling the clean, warm thrum of the bond for some time now…

He walks up the stairs and stops in the doorway. The infirmary’s dark, but he can still see that several of the beds are occupied. Alec’s, though, is set apart, separated from the rest of the room by a white curtain. He walks up to it, then ducks behind it - and his heart seizes a little.
Because Alec’s lying in the bed curled up on his side, facing the wall. A man as tall as Alec, a man with a presence as large as Alec’s, should never looks this small. This is wrong, so very, very wrong.

Without giving it an actual thought, he climbs in the bed with Alec, his front tucked neatly against Alec’s back, and he pulls his parabatai close, as close as possible. Alec doesn’t flinch, he doesn’t jerk awake - he knew that Jace was there, that Jace had come the whole time.

Alec takes a shuddery breath. “I killed them,” he whispers, his voice barely strong enough to be heard.

But Jace shakes his head decisively, his hair rustling against the stark white pillow. “No, the demon killed them. It wasn’t your fault. Nothing that happened was your fault!”

Alec lifts his right hand for Jace to see. “Then why are my hands so bloody? There was so much blood, Jace, so much blood, so much of it…”

Jace covers Alec’s hand with his own and entwines their fingers tightly. Then he presses their joined hands against Alec’s chest, over Alec’s heavily beating heart. “And it’s still not your fault.”

“That can’t be your answer to everything!” Alec protests softly.

“It can. It is. And it will be. And I’ll keep repeating it, until you believe it,” Jace whispers back.

Alec is silent for a long time, and when he finally responds, his voice sounds watery. “It might take a while,” he warns, relaxing a little in his parabatai’s arms.

And Jace replies, “I have nowhere else to be.”
A death story. Jace doesn’t call Izzy, he doesn’t find out about Alec. (Show of hands: who’s surprised that I turned it into a death story?) (Unbeta’d)

Jace doesn’t get to call his family before the wolves in the Hunter’s Moon recognize him…

Then he’s fighting, defending himself - *I don’t want to hurt anybody!* - through the glass, down the narrow alley, people everywhere… so much blood, and… then the hospital. And when he wakes up with a jerk, the wolves are there, again - so he runs, again…

Down the hallways and up the stairs, and the she-wolf’s still on his heels, so he jumps, over the railing, down, down, down through the stairwell, and he hits the railing, once, twice, and something gives in his side, his stitches ruined, his ribs broken… ground floor, and then he rolls, wheezing - and then he’s up and running, again. He has to.

He doesn’t know where he’s going, it doesn’t matter, he just has to get away, find a place to hide, to wait it all out, and he’s exhausted, barely moving now, but he’s… he’s… yes, close to Magnus’, Magnus might hide him, he might, maybe… So he goes, he can’t run anymore, but he won’t give up, it’s not in his nature…

And then there’re the wolves again, he’s surrounded, and he understands their anger, he really does, but he’ll be damned if he just lets them–

–Gone. His *parabatai* bond’s… gone. Alec’s simply *gone* from his soul, there’s nothing there, no bond, just a hole where Alec used to be, and it’s more than the emptiness he felt on the ship, the bond’s not just blocked, it’s… it’s… torn, cut off… *gone*. He heard tales of what it’s like, but he never imagined… One half of him is simply… *gone*. And the pain’s terrible, the knowledge of what it means - *Alec’s dead, Alec died, Alec was in danger and Jace didn’t even realize!* - is devastating.

He staggers, stumbles and falls to his knees, agony stealing his breath. He stares blindly down at his side, at his *parabatai* rune glowing now through the thin layer of his torn sweater, it’s glowing, pulsating, *hurting*… and then its light is snuffed out, it turns dark, lifeless, the last remnants of his *parabatai* bond, the one reassuring constant in his life for the last seven years, *gone*…

It’s not in his nature to give up, but this… this is too much, he’s fought so hard to survive, to get back, and this… this is just *too much*, the last remaining truly good and pure thing in his life… *gone*.

The werewolves growl and snarl but he doesn’t pay them any mind, all he can think of is Alec… Alec who died and Jace wasn’t there, though he promised, he *promised*…!

*I’ll always be there for you*…

The wolves tear him apart.
Chapter Summary

Jace and Alec talk about what happened in 204. At least about some things…
(Unbeta’d)

When Jace leaves the bathroom, in nothing but a towel tied around his waist, he finds Alec sitting on his bed. He frowns. “Hey, everything alright?”

“I heard that Valentine attacked the City of Bones,” Alec says.

Jace snorts. “Yeah, daddy dearest came looking for the Soul Sword - and for me.”

Alec looks down. “I thought… I thought that he couldn’t get to you there. You okay?”

Jace shrugs. “A few more bumps and bruises, but who counts?”

“Oh.” Perking up, Alec reaches into his pocket. “I brought you a new stele. I thought, you know, you probably didn’t have one.” He waves the silvery tool.

Smiling, Jace steps closer and reaches out for it. “Thanks. I really wasn’t looking forward to explaining where I lost mine.”

Instead of giving it to him, Alec waits till Jace comes close, then he aims it at Jace’s iratze to activate it. Jace raises his eyebrows, but allows Alec to take care of him. Alec runs the stele over the rune and while it takes effect, he stares fixedly at the stitched up wound on Jace’s stomach.

“Alec?” Jace asks gently, his tone puzzled.

Alec lowers his gaze. “I really thought that you were safe there, from Valentine, from everybody. I thought that once you touched the sword, the truth would come out and you would be released…”

Jace laughs bitterly, and when Alec looks up, he explains. “Oh, yeah, the truth did come out. So much of it that Aldertree decided to recommend to the Clave that they leave me in prison for life.” He shakes his head. “I can’t believe I’m saying this, but if Valentine hadn’t attacked the City…”

Alec’s staring at him wide-eyed. “What…?” he breathes out.

“When the Clave wants you in prison, they find a way to keep you in prison, Alec,” Jace retorts, then sarcastically, he adds, “Or did you really believe I would get a fair trial?”

But when Alec drops his eyes again without responding, Jace realizes that Alec actually did believe that, that Alec still has faith in the Clave, in the system and in the Law. One part of Jace wants to shake Alec - the other, bigger part, wants to protect him. Alec might be the oldest among them but he doesn’t have a sliver of falsehood in him. In that way he reminds Jace of Clary…

The iratze’s working, so Jace doesn’t even hiss when he sits down next to Alec on the bed, keeping his towel closed. “And how are you?” he asks to change the subject.
All Jace knows is that there was a demon attack - and that Jocelyn died. Clary’s mom. His mom. He knew he should feel something - grief, anger, regret, something - and he does, but mostly on Clary’s behalf. He didn’t really know the woman. He met her twice and they talked once - the other time she tried to murder him.

Alec is silent for so long that Jace frowns again. “Alec?” he prompts gently.

At some point Alec set Jace’s stele aside and now he’s staring down at his hands. “It was me,” he whispers. “I killed Jocelyn.”

Jace’s eyes widen. He didn’t know. He didn’t know that Alec was possessed. He thought that only Izzy…

Alec glances at him quickly, then he looks away again. “I don’t know what happened. I don’t even remember how or when I got possessed. And then I was sitting on the floor in the hallway and my hand, my hand was all bloody.” He shows his right hand to Jace as if the blood were still visible. “I rip—” His voice breaks. He tries again. “I ripped her heart out! With my bare hand.”

“It wasn’t you,” Jace whispers.

“And Clary saw! We both saw it, it was on camera!” Alec’s still holding his hand up. “I tore her heart out, Jace. I killed your mother.”

Jace grips Alec’s hand in his. “It wasn’t you, Alec!” he says urgently.

But Alec turns to him, wide-eyed and devastated. “You were almost sentenced to life, you were almost killed - and I didn’t know! I murdered your mother - and I don’t even remember!”

“Alec! It wasn’t your fault!” Jace says forcefully. “You couldn’t have known. And Valentine staged the demon attack to break into the City of Bones and steal the Soul Sword - and break me out, given a chance. Jocelyn’s death is all on him.”

Alec shakes his head. “Then why doesn’t it feel like that?” he whispers. “All I can think of are the if’s.”

And that Jace can understand. Because he feels guilty for Gretel and for all the Silent Brothers who died in the City of Bones. For every person Valentine hurt or killed. Because Jace could’ve prevented it, all of it, if he had just had the guts to cut his father’s throat. Or ended it, destroyed Valentine’s greatest weapon, if he had just cut his own…

But then, who would be sitting here with his parabatai now? What would’ve Alec done, if Jace had killed himself, if Jace had left him? The thought chills him to the bone.

“I suggest we cram all the if’s down Valentine’s throat once we get him,” he growls, suddenly very angry. He almost broke his promise, his oath to his parabatai, that’s how far Valentine has driven him. But no further. Jace won’t give another inch!

“Seems rather impossible right now,” Alec sighs, still sounding miserable.

“Facilis descensus aveno,” Jace reminds him. The descent into hell is easy. You just have to give up, let them break you. And they won’t be broken. Ever. That was a promise they gave to each other a long time ago.

One corner of Alec’s mouth quirks up. Jace considers it a victory. Besides, Alec always hated the word “impossible,” Jace just had to remind him of it.
And if they won’t be broken - and they refuse to bend - then what’s the only remaining option? Deep breath and straight through. And never to look back.
Chapter Summary

Yet another parabatai scene where Jace and Alec talk about 204, this one based on the 205 Malec sneak peek, though (yes, I can do 20 variations on the same theme XD). TW for self-harm and suicidal thoughts (canonical).

Alec doesn’t come back till 4am. Jace stays up and waits for him anyway.

“Where have you been?” he asks silently.

Jace’s sitting on the stone steps in front of the main entrance, watching as Alec crosses the courtyard slowly. His parabatai has only his long-sleeved t-shirt on which makes the lack of any kind of a weapon on his person very obvious. Still, Jace clamps down on his fury, knowing that a fight won’t help.

Alec comes to a halt at the foot of the steps. “At Magnus’,” he admits.

“And you couldn’t answer your phone, because…?” Jace grits out.

Alec sticks his hands in the pockets of his jeans. “I forgot it at home.”

“Just like your weapons?” Jace demands unable to stop himself.

When Alec simply stares at him mutely, Jace takes a deep breath to compose himself. He’s so angry! But only because Alec scared the living daylights out of him. Valentine’s still out there and Alec just up and disappears. Jace doesn’t know if he wants to hug his parabatai - or punch him.

“Did something happen?” Alec asks.

“No, but that’s not the point!” Jace retorts. “I thought that you of all people would…” He cuts himself off and looks away. “I need to know where you are and that you’re alright. At least till this whole thing blows over.”

“I’m sorry,” Alec responds quietly.

And that’s all he says. Sorry, which is appreciated. The lack of explanation, is not. Something’s wrong with Alec, Jace knows that. He feels that. Ever since the demon attack, it’s as if Alec’s simply not there, as if he’s…

Jace looks at him. “You’re avoiding us,” he realizes. “Clary - and me, too.” And when Alec turns his head away, Jace knows that he’s on the right track. Still, he doesn’t get it. “Why?”

Alec glances at Jace, then he lets his eyes roam again. His usual avoidance technique. “I thought the reason was obvious…”

Jace frowns. What… And then his eyes widen when all the puzzle pieces fall into place. He saw the video of Jocelyn’s murder, he had to see it, she was his mother after all. But what happened wasn’t Alec’s fault. He tells him so.
Alec doesn’t respond. He just pulls his hands out of his pockets and balls them into fists.

“Nobody’s blaming you, you do know that, right?” Jace asks gently.

Alec still doesn’t say anything, but his whole body tenses. His fists are now clenched so hard that his knuckles are completely white. And there’s…

Jace stands up abruptly, and before Alec can do more than turn his head, Jace jumps down the steps, landing lightly only a foot or so away from Alec. Then he grabs Alec’s right hand and forces him to open it, palm up. The skin’s broken, torn, and the cuts are filling with fresh blood.

“Alec…” Jace asks, looking up at his parabatai.

Alec avoids his gaze and tries to pull away. Jace doesn’t let him. “I’m fine.”

But he’s not. Not physically and not emotionally either. Was Alec hurt when the demon murdered Jocelyn, using his body? Or did he hurt himself afterwards, intentionally? And why didn’t he use an iratze to heal himself?

In the end, Jace settles on, “Did you ‘forget’ your stele at home, too?”

And when Alec just clenches his teeth, Jace’s overcome with anger again. He did. Alec left the Institute without his weapons and he left his stele behind, too! That’s not just reckless, that’s… suicidal!

Jace’s hands on Alec’s are gentle, but his voice trembles with anger when he orders, “This stops now, Alec. I won’t allow it. And if you force my hand, I will make them send you back to Idris!” Where you’ll be safe.

Alec glares at him and jerks his injured hand away. “I can take care of myself, Jace, don’t worry. I can fight.”

“No, you can’t!” Jace barks out. “Not when you go in counting on not coming back out!”

“Look who’s talking!” Alec snaps back, finally looking his parabatai in the eye.

Jace blinks. That one hit way too close to home.

They stand there for a long while just staring at each other, breathing hard. Two guilt-ridden idiots hurting so much they can’t see their way out.

In the end, it’s Jace who breaks the impasse. “We can’t go on like this, Alec,” he whispers and all the anger drains from him, leaving him tired to the bone. “Sooner or later, one of us will run out of luck - and what will the other do, then?”

They both know the answer: Follow.

“So, what now?” Alec asks, just as softly.

And isn’t that the question? But Jace’s the wrong person to ask. Only two days ago, he was a fugitive. Yesterday, he was in prison. Today… he’s a half-orphan - again. He has no idea what to do.

Jace shakes his head, then shrugs. “Now? Now we’ll go inside and I’ll fix your hand.”

“And then?”
Jace smiles painfully. “Honestly? I don’t know.”

Alec’s little smile is rather wan, too. “One problem at a time, then?”

Jace shrugs again. “Seems like a sound strategy.”

“Yeah, it does,” Alec agrees.

“Come,” Jace waves a hand, “let’s get you healed. But!” he adds and glares at Alec again. “If you ever, ever leave home without your weapons or your stele, again, I swear by the Angel, Alec, I’ll hand you your ass in pieces!”

Alec stares at him for a moment, then he nods. “Duly noted.”

“Good!”
I See You

Chapter Summary

This is a dark tale, OOC, you could say. It’s set before the show but after the parabatai ceremony we saw in 203. FYI, I like Raj, but I also like to explore… stuff. (Unbeta'd)

There’re cameras everywhere inside the Institute - and when Jace says everywhere, he means everywhere. Private bedrooms included.

Jace doesn’t like it when the new kid, Raj, spends time with Alec. And no, it’s not because he doesn’t want Alec to have other friends besides him, over the years Jace… adapted, he learned that normal people have friends, plural, as in more than one. It took him a while, sure, but he accepted it. Grudgingly.

So, no, that’s not the reason. He just feels that there’s something… off about Raj’s interest in Alec. He just can’t put his finger on it. When he mentioned it to Izzy, she laughed and called him jealous. But he’s not. Not really. As he said, he accepted that Alec, though he’s his parabatai, would have other people in his life.

It’s not that Raj is a bad Shadowhunter either, not at all, he’s among the best, loyal to the Clave and to the Law, always following orders - maybe too rigidly for Jace’s liking but that’s not a fault in itself. There’s just something about him. When he’s with Alec. Then and only then. And Jace’s determined to find out what.

And so he follows the guy.

For almost a week, nothing happens and Jace starts to think that maybe he is… paranoid, not jealous, just paranoid, seeing things.

But then, one night, shortly after they return from a hunt, he sees Raj leave the Ops Center where he should be on duty. Not really a suspicious thing, they all come and go, running errands, but he’s headed towards the computer room. Where no one’s allowed without Maryse’s or Robert’s explicit permission.

Because there’re cameras everywhere inside the Institute - and when Jace says everywhere, he means everywhere. Private bedrooms included. He found at least two hidden in his own room. When he asked about them, Maryse told him that it was a standard procedure: We are all soldiers and our lives belong to the Clave, we have no privacy. Creepy, that’s what he thought about it, but after a while he got used to it.

These cameras, they follow what’s happening 24-7, but according to Maryse, nobody’s actually watching the feed - unless something happens and it needs to be reviewed. Everything’s being simply recorded on the powerful servers in the locked computer room just outside the Ops Center and if the footage’s not needed, it’s automatically deleted.

And that’s exactly where Raj’s headed, down the short hallway with only one room at the very end: the computer room. And since he’s looking around furtively, sneaking like a thief, Jace’s positive that, whatever Raj’s up to, it’s not official business.
It happens that night, then the next. Then nothing for three whole days, and then three nights in a row. Nothing for a week, and then again, twice. Jace can’t grasp the pattern but he’s determined to figure it out. Maybe he should tell someone, but he decides not to. He’ll get to the bottom of it on his own, damn it.

And then, one night, Jace becomes fed up with this mystery and decides to follow Raj in. He waits for the other teen to open the door using the correct code - Jace wonders where he got it from - and when Raj slips inside, Jace rushes forward lightning fast on silent feet and before the door can click shut, he slides his blade between the door and the frame, stopping it from closing. Then carefully, he slips inside, too.

The room’s larger than he expected, with rows and rows of servers humming softly, and almost completely dark. Only at the very end, a computer monitor’s glowing. Making sure he’s not spotted, Jace peeks around the nearest row of servers. And yes, there, in the leather office chair in front of the computer monitor, Raj is sitting, typing something, doing… something.

Frowning, Jace starts creeping forward noiselessly - he excels at not being seen - until he gets close enough to see what’s happening on the computer screen. And that’s when he freezes and his eyes widen with shock.

Because there, on the computer monitor, a live feed’s running. And it’s from one of the private bedrooms - from a bedroom Jace recognizes immediately because he’s spent many, many nights there over the last six years. It’s…

In the bedroom, a door opens - it’s a bathroom door, Jace knows - and Alec walks out, naked and still dripping from the shower, rubbing his hair dry with a dark blue towel… It’s Alec’s bedroom and Raj’s watching him with a rapt expression on his face.

And Jace… Jace’s flooded with a fury so terrible he almost growls. This guy, he’s spying on Jace’s parabatai, has been for weeks now, watching Alec! And the pattern, it suddenly makes sense - on those days Alec left the Ops Center early, for one reason or another, he returned to his bedroom and…

The blade’s still in Jace’s hand and before he even realizes what he’s doing, he’s at the chair and he grabs Raj by the hair, pulls his head back and presses the sharp edge of his knife against Raj’s exposed throat.

Raj manages only to gasp before Jace hisses in his ear, “Give me one good reason why I shouldn’t cut your throat right now.”

“Jace…” Raj wheezes, terrified.

Jace puts more pressure on the blade, drawing blood. “You’re spying on my parabatai!”

“It’s not like that–” Raj protests.

But before he can continue, Jace pulls him out of the chair, turns him around and slams him against the wall by the desk. “Then tell me what it’s like, please, do me the favor!” he demands harshly, his left hand pressed tight against Raj’s throat, the sharp point of the blade pushed hard against Raj’s chest.

Raj stutters for a moment. On the computer screen, Alec’s running the towel over his naked skin now, wiping away the moisture from the shower. Neither of the teens in the computer room’s paying attention to it.
“I like him, okay?” Raj blurts out when Jace starts digging the blade harder into Raj’s chest. “I like him… like that, I just…”

“So what? You’re watching him to get your rocks off, is that it?” Jace spits out and moves the blade lower, towards Raj’s crotch.

Raj shakes his head, his eyes impossibly wide. “No, that’s not… I would never…”

Jace leans closer. “I found you spying on my parabatai while he’s alone and naked in his bedroom - you would and you did.” And now Jace’s growling, he’s so angry. “I don’t care if you worship the ground he walks on, this is wrong!”

Raj shakes his head again, looking terrified.

And Jace wants to call Maryse and Robert, everybody in the Institute, he wants to tell them, show them what Raj did, punish him for it.

But… what about Alec? Izzy likes to tease Alec that he behaves more like a blushing Victorian virgin than a 21st century teenager. Alec would never live it down, the humiliation, the breech of trust. Jace knows Alec and he knows that Alec would never again feel safe in his own bedroom if he found out…

And so Jace comes to a decision.

He steps back and lets go of Raj, and with his blade still pointed at the other teen, he warns Raj coldly, “If I ever, ever catch you doing something like this again, as Raziel is my witness, I’ll cut your dick off. Is that understood?”

Raj nods vigorously and starts backing towards the door.

“Go!” Jace snaps, and Raj turns and runs, but before he can open the door, Jace calls after him, “And stay away from Alec from now on!”

Without responding, without even looking back, Raj escapes.

Slowly, returning the blade back to its sheet, Jace turns around, towards the computer screen. In the meantime, Alec dried off and changed into his usual sleeping attire: boxer shorts and an old t-shirt. Though when Jace squints at the screen, his eyebrows shoot up, because he knows that t-shirt - it’s one of his, an old and ratty thing. He wondered where it disappeared to. How did Alec…? Why…?

But then Jace decides to let it go. It’s just a t-shirt and if he weren’t here, he wouldn’t even know that Alec had it. It doesn’t matter. If it brings Alec comfort or if he simply likes it, if such a silly little thing makes Alec happy, then Jace’s fine with that.

On the computer screen, Alec’s climbing into his bed now, reaching for an old tome lying on the nightstand - Shakespeare, the first edition that Jace gave him for his 17th birthday a few weeks ago. There’s a little smile on Alec’s lips.

Jace smiles, too, and then he clicks out of the program, letting the computer reset itself to its previous settings, and shuts the monitor off.

Some things are meant to be private.
The fire escape becomes Alec’s “place” in Magnus’ apartment, his little hidey-hole for when he wants to be alone. Magnus respects that, but sometimes he wishes Alec chose a little warmer cranny to brood.

“I’m fine,” Alec croaks out the moment Magnus steps outside.

Magnus knows that it’s not true, though, and he knows that Alec knows that he knows that Alec is not fine, far from it in fact, so he doesn’t actually point out the obvious lie.

Alec lost two Shadowhunters on a hunt tonight. Two boys, barely seventeen. A parabatai pair - it hit a little too close to home. And that’s why he’s sitting here, in the middle of the night, on the wet metal stairs, huddled in his leather jacket - which isn’t helping much against the cold, Magnus guesses, seeing as Alec’s lips are turning blue.

“It’s pouring, my love,” Magnus says gently.

Alec shrugs, watching the colorful, flickering lights of the city. “It’s just rain.”

“In the middle of December.”

Alec shrugs again. “I’m fine.”

Magnus stares at his lover a moment longer, his heart aching, then he sighs. “Alright,” he whispers, and he goes back inside.

A moment later, he’s back, though - with a giant umbrella, a warm blanket and a hot mug of chamomile tea, with lemon and honey, just the way Alec likes it.

He orders the umbrella to keep Alec dry - it wouldn’t dare to disobey! - then he drapes the blanket over Alec’s shoulders and cups Alec’s hands gently around the plain white mug.

Alec’s watching him quietly.

“I’ll be inside if you need me,” Magnus says and turns to go.

“Magnus?” Alec calls out softly, and when Magnus stops in the doorway and looks back, he whispers, “Thank you.”

Magnus smiles a little. “You’re welcome,” he replies and closes the door with a soft click.
Oblivious

Chapter Summary

A parabatai story set before the show but after the parabatai ceremony in 203. It deals with Alec’s canonical feelings for Jace. (Unbeta'd)

Late night confessions…

“Alec? You awake?” Jace whispers when he sticks his head into Alec’s room.

“No,” Alec mumbles sleepily into his pillow.

Jace grins. “Great!” And then he slips inside, closes the door and runs up to the bed in the dark to bounce on it eagerly.

Alec groans and curls up even tighter on his side, his back to Jace. “What?”

Jace stretches out next to him. “I did it!” he whispers gleefully.

“Did what?” Alec mutters, annoyed.

“I had sex!” Jace confesses, his voice full of delight.

Alec freezes, suddenly wide awake. “You did?” he asks quietly.

“Yup!” Jace confirms happily.

“With whom?”

Jace tells him the girl’s name with a content sigh.

Alec frowns. “Who?”

Jace rolls his eyes. “That nixie waitress at Taki’s.”

Alec turns onto his back to look at him. “There’s a nixie working at Taki’s?”

Jace rolls his eyes again. “You would know if you went out with me and Izzy more often!”

Alec shrugs. “I don’t like the food at Taki’s much.”

Jace smirks. “We don’t go there because of the food but to pick up people!”

Alec’s mouth twists. “Too much information.”

Jace pokes Alec in the ribs with his elbow. “You, my dear parabatai, are a prude.”

Alec elbows him back and doesn’t dignify it with an answer.

They lie like that for a moment, then Alec asks hesitantly, “So… how was it?”
Jace drums his fingers on his stomach. “It was great. Really great.”

“But…?” Because Alec senses a “but” in there somewhere.

Jace stares at the ceiling for a moment. Then he sighs and turns onto his side, head pillowed on his bent arm. He shrugs one shoulder and looks at Alec. “But I didn’t feel like sticking around, afterwards, I mean, like spending the night. Or something.”

“So, you’re not… dating her?” Alec asks, his heart hammering painfully.

Jace snorts. “Angel, no! We both had fun but that’s as far as this thing between us will ever go.”

“Ah,” Alec breathes out. He feels relieved, he can’t help it.

Jace grins. “And what about you? When will you ‘do the deed’?”

Alec rolls his eyes. “Please, don’t call it that!”

Jace chuckles. Then his face softens. “Still determined to wait for The One?” he asks quietly.

Now it’s Alec’s turn to stare at the ceiling. “Yeah, I guess.”

Jace sighs and throws one arm across Alec’s stomach snuggly. “Don’t worry. You’ll find someone. You’re amazing, after all. Who could ever not love you?”

Alec’s silent for a long time. Then he whispers back, “Yeah, who could?”

But when he turns his head to look at Jace, his parabatai’s already asleep.
A tiny story. A fork in the road. Death at its end. TW: death! (Unbeta'd)

She kills him.

She knocks Clary out, and Alec can’t hurt her, she’s his little sister! So she kills him.

And that’s how she comes back to herself, crouched over him with his still warm and dripping heart clenched in her blood-drenched fist.

Her brother, her most beloved person in the world.

*I’m not gonna lose you, too…*

She starts screaming and she never stops again.
Chapter Summary

Look at me, yet another parabatai story. Who’s surprised? *crickets*

It was Jace who asked Alec to become his parabatai. (Yet another take, this time inspired by the parabatai-to-be in 203!) (Unbeta'd)

Alec has to almost die for Jace to realize that he wants to bind his soul to Alec’s for life, maybe even beyond.

They’re still in training, Alec and he, this time, though, the adults agree to take them with on their mission because it’s an easy one: they have orders to arrest a rogue vampire. No big deal.

They go in during the day to limit the vampire’s movements, to get him when he’s at his weakest. He’s hiding in one of the decrepit old warehouses down in the docks, which means few mundanes around, few witnesses to worry about. They’ll be in and out in a matter of minutes, mission accomplished.

But then everything goes to hell.

Instead of one rogue vampire, a whole nest awaits them, blood-crazy beasts that draw them in and then attack en masse. There’s so many of them, three or four to one at the very least, and the Shadowhunters are hacking them to pieces, but they’re going down, one by one, the enemy numbers simply too overwhelming.

Jace’s doing his best to stay with Alec, they fight back to back, covering each other, and it seems to be working - they’re still standing, after all - until one of the vamps drops down on them from above and pushes the apart.

Jace stumbles and twists around in time to see the vamp drive Alec to the ground and punch him in the chest with a clawed hand, drawing blood, and when Jace hears Alec scream, he throws himself at the vamp and drags him away from Alec, then he whips around and cuts the creature’s head off with one powerful slash.

Turning, Jace takes a step towards Alec who’s still down with his back arched off the ground as he vainly tries to draw in breath, blood’s namely bubbling on his lips - he can’t breathe, Alec can’t breathe! - but before Jace can run to him, help him, another three of the rabid creatures cut him off, their fangs bared and faces bloodied. And Jace has to fight, though his thoughts are with Alec.

And then, when it looks like the fight’s lost and they’re all going to die, there’s the sound glass shattering and crashing to the ground - and the warehouse’s flooded with bright afternoon sun. With a deafening screech, the vampires burst into flames, one by one, until there’s only a handful of them left - and they run.

Jace looks around quickly - the windows on the south side, painted black to protect the creatures from the killing rays, they’re smashed now, but how…?

His eyes widen when he sees Alec. His friend’s drenched with his own blood, his face’s pale and
his lips are blue from lack of oxygen - but his bow’s in his hands, though now it’s cluttering to the ground as Alec slumps down, hurtling and weak.

Then Jace’s there with his stele in his hand and he’s activating Alec’s iratze and drawing a painkilling rune and then the one that stops bleeding, and he’s whispering assurances to Alec who’s watching him with wide, frightened eyes, wheezing as he vainly tries to draw air into his collapsed lung.

And when the squad leader crouches down next to Jace - the fight’s apparently over, though Jace didn’t even notice - he takes one look at Alec and orders Jace to grab Alec and go, go now, because they all know that Alec’s injuries won’t be healed with a simple iratze, that more, much more will be needed.

Jace picks Alec up as gently as he can and when Alec still whimpers in pain, losing breath he cannot spare, Jace apologizes, whispering sorry, sorry, sorry all the way back to the Institute. Never in his life has he run so fast.

He doesn’t let go of Alec’s hand after that. Not when the Silent Brothers come, not when he’s first asked and then ordered to leave. He’s holding Alec’s hand to anchor him there, to force him to stay. And Alec’s watching him, almost unblinking, till the blood loss and pain cause him to faint.

It’s the middle of the night and he’s still there, sitting in the chair by Alec’s bed, head pillowed on his crossed arms on the edge of the mattress, Alec’s hand still clasped in his - and that’s when it happens.

“He’s still here,” one of the healers from Idris whispers by the door, and even that small sounds wakes Jace up, he doesn’t move, though.

“Yes, he hasn’t left the boy’s side since he brought him in,” the other responds just as quietly.

“If I didn’t know better I would think they were parabatai,” the first one adds.

Parabatai. The word resonates within Jace’s soul. Alec… his parabatai.

Jace opens his eyes and stares at Alec’s face. He still looks pale and drawn and there are dark smudges under his eyes, but his lips finally lost their bluish tint. He’s breathing easily now, the deep wounds in his chest are closed and broken bones set and healing. He’s still all bruised on the inside but he’ll live. He’ll stay. He won’t leave Jace. And Jace won’t leave him.

Parabatai. Jace’s parabatai. Jace whispers the word, trying it out. It tastes like home, safe and warm. Jace’s father always warned him never to give power over himself to others. And to become someone’s parabatai would mean to give that person ultimate power. But there’s no one, not one person in the world whom Jace trusts more than Alec, not even himself.

He squeezes Alec’s hand and Alec turns his head towards him in his sleep, sighing a little. Jace smiles. Yes, this feels right. Tomorrow, he’ll ask Alec to become his parabatai. And hopefully, Alec will agree.
It’s a coincidence that Magnus is there, at the Institute, when Maryse returns from Idris.

He’s just leaving, having stopped by to finalize some things regarding Camille and Raphael and the safety of the New York vampire clan, when she strides in through the main door, not dignifying Magnus with a glance. It annoys him but the distaste is mutual, after all.

Alec, who was showing Magnus out, freezes at the sight of her. “Mother,” he greets her.

She stops in front of her son, shoulders square, chin up, and looks him up and down appraisingly. “We were told what happened. Are you alright?” she asks.

Alec stands there with his back just as straight and his head held just as high. “I’m fine,” he replies blandly.

Maryse nods firmly, and still without acknowledging Magnus - who’s standing right there! - she starts walking again, her heels click-click-clicking hard on the tiles as she passes her son and heads for the Ops Center.

“Good,” she says without looking back. “Now, to more pressing matters…”

And Magnus sees Alec’s shoulders slump a little, he sees Alec start rubbing his hand hard again without a conscious thought - and suddenly, he understand so much.
Alec slams the door of Jace’s bedroom shut so hard that the stained glass windows rattle.

Jace whips around, eyes widening. “What–?” he starts asking, but Alec cuts him off.

“Is it true?” Alec snaps. He’s so angry, so furious that his hands are trembling. “Is it true that you tried to kill yourself? Back there, in the City of Bones? And not once, but twice?”

“How–?” But Alec won’t let Jace finish again.

“Aldertree told me!” he barks out.

Jace frowns. “Why would he–?”

Alec makes a cutting motion with his hand. “I don’t know. I don’t care about his games or his schemes or politics. I don’t care about Victor Aldertree! What I do care is if it’s true. Is it?”

Jace’s shoulders slump and he bows his head slightly, his bangs hiding his eyes. “Yes,” he whispers.

“Why?” Alec asks, rattled to the core.

Shaking his head, Jace says, “I didn’t see any other way out. Aldertree threatened me with a life sentence. And then Valentine came and…” He shakes his head again. “I couldn’t go with him, not again.”

But instead of calming Alec down, Jace’s words enrage him even more. He’s so angry that he can barely speak. “And did you, for even one second, think about me?” he asks in a voice that’s very quiet, dangerous.

Jace’s head snaps up. “Of course, I did! All I do is think about you! Your parabatai, in prison - or Valentine’s puppet! How would it reflect–”

What the everloving…! “Are you serious?!” Alec roars and his fury takes Jace aback. “Do you think that I care about how I look? That my reputation is more important to me than your damn life?”

“Alec–” Jace tries again, but Alec’s having none of it.

“Do you really think I would’ve just let you rot in prison? That I wouldn’t have gotten you out, at any cost, even if we had to run afterwards? That I wouldn’t have moved heaven and earth to get you away from Valentine? That you dead would be the preferable alternative to me? Do you really think that?”
Jace opens his mouth and closes it again, shocked by Alec’s uncharacteristic display of anger. “I didn’t think—” But yet again, Alec interrupts him.

“No, you did not!” he agrees. “So, I’ll give you a thing to mull over the next time you get this bright idea to check out on me.” He takes a step closer and looking Jace straight in the eyes, he says, deadly serious, “I will follow you.”

Jace’s eyes widen again and this time not just in shock but in fear, too. “What?” he breathes out.

Alec’s voice becomes quieter, cold and sharp, cutting. “If you ever kill yourself, Jace, as Raziel is my witness, I will follow you, and that’s a promise.”

Then his voice softens and some of his despair seeps into his words. “We might die tomorrow, fighting a war, and we both have to live with that, with the possibility that we might lose each other. But I will not live with the fear that you’ll leave me here alone by taking your own life. I won’t.”

Jace’s face is ashen. His lips move but he seems unable to form words.

“It’s up to you what you’ll do with it,” Alec adds in a whisper, and without waiting for an answer, he turns and leaves, closing the door softly behind him.

His hands don’t stop trembling for a very long time.
Jace covers for Alec; nobody at the Institute must know that Alec’s gone, that he has been gone for almost a day now and that he isn’t responding to phone calls or text messages… Raziel knows what Aldertree would make of it.

Jace just wants Alec back safe, he wants, *needs* him to be alright. The demon possession and Jocelyn’s death, these things seem to have broken something fundamental inside Alec. And Jace doesn’t know to fix it for him!

It’s around midnight when he checks Alec’s room one last time before going to bed - maybe tonight he won’t be plagued with nightmares! - that he finds Alec there, lying on the bed fully dressed, with only his shoes kicked off, and deeply asleep.

Something loosen inside Jace. He steps into the room and walks up to the bed without waking Alec up, which is saying something; Alec’s always been a light sleeper. Jace stares down at his *parabatai* who lies curled up on his side; even in his sleep Alec’s frowning slightly and his hands are twitching. *His hands*…

Jace checks Alec’s right hand. He noticed how bloody it was, up there on the roof. Now, it’s all healed up. He wonders if Alec used an iratze or if he stopped at Magnus’. Jace doesn’t care, as long as Alec’s not hurting anymore, at least physically.

Jace watches Alec a moment longer, then he picks up the blanket lying folded at the foot of the bed and throws it over his *parabatai*, covering him; he knows that Alec gets cold easily at night. Alec still doesn’t wake up.

Then, with a heavy heart, Jace turns and leaves, closing the door softly behind him. Alec’s home. Everything else will wait till morning.
“Magnus? Do you know a warlock named Iris Rouse?” Alec asks matter-of-factly as they leave the Hunter’s Moon after their first date.

“Yes. Why?” Magnus replies, eyeing Alec suspiciously.

Alec chuckles. “Don’t worry, I’m not trying to pump you for information on her.”

“That wasn’t really my first concern,” Magnus says slowly. “Iris is not exactly a _pleasant_ person, you might say. I would even go as far as to describe her as downright _unpleasant_. Especially her methods leave a lot to be desired.”

“Oh,” Alec mutters, “that bad, huh?”

“Actually, yes,” Magnus admits. Then he looks at Alec earnestly. “If you need anything, you can always ask me, you know that, right? If it’s in my power to help you, I will.”

Alec ducks his head, blushing a little. “I know,” he whispers, smiling. Then he adds in a stronger voice, “I just need to talk to her about some legal matters.”

Reluctantly, Magnus tells him where to find her.

“Cheekbones!” Iris greets him sarcastically when she opens the door of her temporary hideout. “Here to arrest me, or downright kill me? Because that’s what you Shadowhunters _do_, isn’t it?”

Alec doesn’t let her provoke him. “I’m here because of Clary’s blood oath,” he explains.

Iris lifts her eyebrows. “Are you? Well, then come in,” she says and steps back to let him enter.

The little flat is shabby, nothing like the beautiful mansion the warlock lived in before. And the little girl with gills is nowhere to be seen.

“So, what about the redhead’s blood oath?” Iris asks when they enter the minuscule living room. “It’s legal and binding.”

Alec turns to her. “I know.” Then he takes a deep breath and says, “I want to take over her debt to you.”

Her eyes widen in surprise. “Really? Why would you do that?”

Alec’s presses his lips together, but when she just stares at him, waiting for an explanation, he says simply, “I owe her.”

Iris narrows her eyes speculatively. She watches him a moment longer, then she nods slowly. “Alright. _But_,” she adds, “you have to sweeten the deal.”
He grits his teeth. “What do you want?”

She steps closer. “I want your blood,” she demands, and when his eyes widen a little, she gives him a smile; it doesn’t look all that reassuring. “Oh, not much, don’t worry, a pint or two will do.”

Now it’s his turn to narrow his eyes. “Why?”

Iris waves her hand airily. “There are so many spells a warlock can do with Shadowhunter blood, but unless one hunts you lot down and drains you dry, you don’t part with your blood easily. It’s the ‘dark magic’ part that riles you up pretty badly.”

“You said to Clary that there was no thing as ‘dark’ magic,” Alec reminds her.

She raises her eyebrows. “Oh, there isn’t. It’s what you Shadowhunters call it. And you punish us for using it, for simply trying to survive in a world that you made so unsafe for us.”

Alec stares at her darkly.

Iris smirks at him. “So, what will it be, Cheekbones? Just how badly do you want to save your little friend?”

Alec clenches his jaw. He wants to tell her to go to hell, he wants to turn on his heel and march out of here, he wants to arrest this woman and…

His hand, sticky with blood… Clary’s mother, without her heart…

“What did I do…?”

But he can’t. He owes Clary. A life for a life.

Alec squares his shoulders and looks the warlock straight in the eye. “Done.”
Alec spends the night with Magnus. And it’s wonderful, amazing, it’s… all that he wished it would be. He’s truly happy!

Until the next morning, when he checks his phone and finds out that Jace tried to call or text him at least 10 times during the night.

“Where the hell are you? Call me! It’s about Izzy…”

Dread seizes Alec but when he tries to call Jace back, at 9 in the morning, Jace doesn’t pick up. And neither does Izzy. He’s so frantic that Magnus offers to portal him home and Alec gratefully accepts.

Izzy’s room’s the first place he goes to after his arrival. And there, through the door, he hears raised voices, Izzy and Jace, and they’re arguing, yelling at each other. A great weight drops from Alec’s shoulders - Izzy’s okay…

“… you completely lost your mind, Iz?!” Jace’s shouting at Izzy when he finally opens the door.

Alec stops in the doorway and both Jace and Isabelle startle when they see him. “What’s going on here?” Alec asks when he closes the door again. No need for the whole Institute to hear this - whatever this is.

“Nothing!” Izzy snaps. She’s still in her silk bathrobe and to be honest she looks like hell, pale and drawn.

“Nothing? This,” Jace growls furiously; he shows her a small decorated tin box and shakes it aggressively, “this is nothing?”

“Give it back!” Izzy snaps and grabs for the box, but Jace moves it out of her reach.

“No way!”

When they start grappling for it - Jace absolutely livid, Izzy hissing like a cat - Alec steps in and plucks the tin box out of Jace’s hand, backing away a few steps. They both eye him, then, Jace guardedly, Isabelle angrily - but also nervously.

“What’s in it?” Alec asks and moves to open it.

“Don’t!” Izzy yells, trying to stop him, while Jace answers, “Yin fen.”

Alec freezes, the box halfway open. His heart skips a beat, then starts galloping. Impossible.

“Izzy’s been taking yin fen,” Jace continues gravely, his face grim.
“I need it for my wound, that’s all!” Izzy defends herself.

“You’re addicted to it!” Jace snarls.

“It’s a medicine!” Izzy protests, enraged.

“It’s a drug!” Jace barks out, turning towards her.

“You don’t know what you’re talking about!” Izzy yells at him, crossing her arms over her chest.

Alec opens the box fully and looks inside - it’s almost empty. If it was full when Izzy got it, then how long…? How did he not…? He swallows.

They’re watching him now, Jace expectantly, Izzy anxiously. But all Alec can do is stare at the whitish paste inside the box. Yin fen, one of the most terrible, addictive and destructive drugs in the Shadow World. And his little sister’s using it.

“Alec?” Izzy asks, uncertainly.

What should he do? Izzy needs help, he-they need to help her, but… She’ll never allow it, she’ll never accept it. From what she just said, she’s convinced that the drug’s helping her when in reality, it’s killing her, bit by bit.

And that’s why Alec decides to gamble.

He looks up. “So, it’s harmless? A medicine?” he asks.

Jace stares at him in disbelief. “Alec–!”

But Izzy cuts him off, smiling in relief, “Yes! It makes me feel better, that’s all!”

Alec nods. “Alright. Well, I’ve felt pretty badly myself ever since the thing with the demon, maybe I should try it out, too,” he says, dipping his finger into the paste at the bottom of the box. “You put it on your spine, right?” Reaching behind his head, he looks at his sister.

“Alec!” Jace exclaims, eyes wide with fear.

But Izzy cuts him off, smiling in relief, “Yes! It makes me feel better, that’s all!”

Alec nods. “Alright. Well, I’ve felt pretty badly myself ever since the thing with the demon, maybe I should try it out, too,” he says, dipping his finger into the paste at the bottom of the box. “You put it on your spine, right?” Reaching behind his head, he looks at his sister.

“Alec!” Jace exclaims, eyes wide with fear.

But it’s Izzy who stops him. With a terrified shout, she throws herself at him and jerks his arm down, and with an expression of absolute horror on her face, she quickly checks his nape, she even runs her shaking hand down below his collar to make sure he didn’t get any of the paste on himself.

And then, she breaks. “Don’t,” Izzy whispers, staring up at him, and her eyes fill with tears that quickly spill over. “Don’t. Please, don’t. Don’t use it…”

Jace steps closer and lays one arm around her trembling shoulders in comfort. “Izzy…” he whispers, and when her knees buckle, he helps her sit down on the bed and joins her, hugging her tight while she cries.

“I’m sorry,” she sobs as she hides her face in her hands. “I’m sorry. I tried, Itried to stop using it, but I can’t! I’m sorry, I don’t know… I don’t know how it happened, how it got so badly out of hand, I don’t know, I don’t know…”

And when Jace pulls her even closer and kisses her hair, and when Alec crouches down in front of her and takes her hand in his, gently rubbing her knuckles with his thumb…
Izzy looks up and whispers brokenly, “I think… I think I need help. Please, *help me!*”

The first step.
Madzie

Chapter Summary

Madzie, Magnus and the memory of Alec Lightwood. Based on episode 205. TW: death story (I mean, is anyone surprised?) (Unbeta'd)

Her nana doesn’t listen to Madzie. She kills the nice man.

But Madzie never forgets him. She’s five when she meets him and she never learns his name, but he changes her whole life without ever realizing it.

It’s years later that she meets Magnus Bane, the High Warlock of Brooklyn. He’s larger than life and spectacular, kind and sweet - but so very, very sad.

And Madzie helps him destroy Iris Rouse. She’s grateful to her nana for everything she did for her, but she won’t stand for her atrocities.

Afterwards, Magnus asks her how come she didn’t turn out like her “siblings”, like her nana. They’re standing on the balcony of his New York flat, sipping wine, and the night is balmy and peaceful. And so she tells him.

“Twenty years ago, there was a man, a Shadowhunter,” Madzie says, staring into the distance, remembering. “He had the most beautiful smile. He told me I had ‘cool gills!’” she chuckles. But then she turns serious again. “Nana killed him, right in front of me. He didn’t do anything bad or wrong, just the opposite, he was very kind - and she still snapped his neck, like his life meant nothing. I think I’ve never trusted her again after that, not really.”

She doesn’t expect Magnus’ reaction. When she turns to him, he’s so pale and trembling so hard he almost drops his glass when he tries to set it down.

“Magnus?” she inquires uncertainly.

He grips the stone railing hard with one hand. “Could you… could you show him to me?” he asks quietly and wiggles his fingers by his temple.

She understands. He taught her this magic trick, after all, something simple just for fun. She nods and after a moment of concentration, she swipes her hand across her brow and suddenly, she’s holding a photograph in her hand. When she looks at it, she smiles - he really did have a beautiful smile. She hands the picture to Magnus.

When he sees it, tears well up in his eyes and spill down his cheeks. “Alexander,” he whispers.

Madzie raises her eyebrows. “You knew him?” she asks, surprised.

“I loved him,” he corrects her with a pained little smile as he runs his fingers gently over the picture. “We’ve known each other barely a month when he died and we weren’t really together, our relationship was very… complicated. But I did love him.” He shakes his head. “I’ve never met anyone like him, before or after. Twenty years later, I’m still mourning his death and I don’t think I’ll ever stop.”
Madzie doesn’t know what to say. Sorry somehow doesn’t feel adequate.

Magnus holds up the photograph. “Can I keep this?” he asks softly.

She tells him that he can, *of course* he can, and in return, he tells her about Alec Lightwood. About Alec’s wedding that wasn’t and about their scandalous first kiss… about the time Alec almost died on him… and about their first date that they kept on postponing until it never actually happened…

About the greatest of love stories that could have been.

And Madzie listens and she wishes that Alec Lightwood lived.
I really love the teen versions of Jace and Alec. And thus, I fic’d. Or, what if Valentine came back when Jace was only 16? TW: violence! (Unbeta'd)

Jace is sixteen when it turns out that his father is alive, that Michael Wayland is alive, that Michael Wayland is Valentine Morgenstern. And that the Circle was never broken, that its members simply went into hiding and grew stronger and more powerful.

The following attack on the Institute is brutal, led by Valentine himself. His warlocks break through the wards easily and in a matter of minutes, his men are fighting the Shadowhunter forces in the hallways and chambers of the old church, forcing the Institute’s staff to retreat, step by step.

Jace’s fighting them, his father’s men, back to back with his parabatai in the training hall, determined not to give in, to die resisting if need be, because he feels so angry - and so betrayed.

In the end, though, Alec and he are overwhelmed by the sheer number of enemies thrown against them, they’re pushed apart and dragged down to the floor, disarmed and beaten - and Jace’s only glad that Maryse, Robert, Izzy and Max are not here, that they’re in Idris for the week. Still, the idea of his father’s lackeys’ hands on his parabatai makes him want to scream.

When Valentine finally appears, when he enters the training hall, exuding confidence and superiority, Jace’s pulled to his feet and presented to him like prize.

“Jonathan,” Valentine greets him when he stops in front of his son.

“My name’s Jace!” Jace grits through clenched teeth, trying to free himself but failing.

Valentine smiles. “That will change, don’t worry. You’ll remember who you truly are soon enough.”

“Go to hell!” Jace snaps.

Valentine laughs. “I’m glad to see you haven’t lost your feisty nature, son,” he commends. Then he turns to his men and his face is serious again when he orders, “Line them up.”

Jace watches in horror as his father’s men bring in all the survivors. Most of them are bloody, cut and bruised, but they all look defiant. Scared but defiant.

He looks around because he doesn’t see Alec anywhere, but there, to his left, two men are holding Alec’s arms - apparently, they saw him fight, Jace thinks with satisfaction. Alec meets his eyes and nods. He’s okay.

Valentine notices their little exchange, though, and he walks up to Alec, staring at him curiously. “And who are you?” he asks, and when Alec doesn’t respond, Valentine slaps him, so hard that Alec’s head jerks to the side. Jace’s heart jumps. “I asked you something, boy!”

Alec glares at Valentine. There’s blood on his lower lip. “Alec Lightwood,” he replies coldly.
Valentine laughs. “Maryse and Robert’s eldest? Did you know that I used to rock you to sleep while you were a baby?”

Alec doesn’t react, he just keeps glaring at Valentine furiously.

Smiling, Valentine nods. “You remind me of your mother, a very stubborn woman. I’ve always admired her,” he says. But then his merriment is replaced with cold rage. “Until she and her pathetic excuse for a husband betrayed me. I think it’s time I paid them back.”

Jace realizes what Valentine’s planning a second before his father whips out his Seraph Blade to cut Alec down. Jace moves and this time, he throws all he has into it, every ounce of his strength and determination because he will not allow his father to kill his parabatai.

He tears his arms free, the jerk in his shoulders so painful he almost cries out, and when his captors grab for him, he kicks at them and slips past one to steal his Seraph Blade, and when the man turns after him, Jace slips past again and cuts him down, then he turns against the other and slashes at him, too, first at his legs, then at his stomach and then, when he gains momentum, he simply lopes his head off in one mighty swing.

When Jace turns around again, towards his father, he sees that Valentine’s watching him, the sharp edge of his Seraph Blade pressed tightly against Alec’s throat, so hard that a rivulet of blood’s trickling down Alec’s throat and soaking into his t-shirt. Alec’s still being held down and he’s pale and barely breathing, watching Jace with wide eyes.

“Jonathan?” Valentine asks carefully. “What are you doing?”

Jace hefts his blade. Around the room, Valentine’s soldiers grab for their weapons. Jace doesn’t pay them any mind. He doesn’t plan on fighting them, he could never get them all. And even if he did, his father would have enough time to cut Alec’s throat.

“I won’t allow you to hurt him,” Jace warns and he sees Valentine narrow his eyes.

“Oh? And what will you do about it?” his father asks in all seriousness.

Jace meets Alec’s eyes for a second, then he looks straight at Valentine - and he turns the blade against himself, pressing its edge exactly where his father’s blade is slicing Alec’s skin.

“If you kill Alec, then I will kill myself,” Jace replies, making sure that his father hears the firmness, the determination in his voice. He will do it.

“No!” Alec screams, paling even further.

Valentine frowns. “Now why would you do that?”

Jace doesn’t want to say, he’s sure that his father will find a way to turn his bond with Alec against him, that’s what he does, but that’s a worry for later. Right now he has to save Alec’s life.

“He’s my parabatai,” he explains.

Slowly, Valentine pulls his weapon away from Alec’s throat. “Show me,” he orders, looking at Jace.

Without taking the blade off his throat, Jace uses his left hand to pull up his shirt and show his father his parabatai rune. “His is on his lower left side,” he says.
Valentine turns back to Alec and nods at one of his men who exposes Alec’s stomach. Yes, there it is, stark black on Alec’s skin. Valentine stares at the rune for a long time. So long actually, that Jace becomes nervous - he knows his father. Valentine’s already scheming something.

Nodding, Valentine looks at his son. “Alright, Jonathan, put down your weapon. I won’t kill him, you have my word. And you know you can trust my word.”

Yes, Jace knows that. His father is a bad man, a villain - but he’s also a man of his word. Slowly, Jace lowers his weapon. But he doesn’t drop it. He won’t give up any advantage without being forced to.

Out of the blue, Valentine chuckles softly. “Actually, that makes everything so much easier.”

Jace swallows nervously, gripping the hilt of his blade hard. “What everything?”

Valentine shakes his head and spreads his arms. “Why do you think I’m here?”

“Because of the Mortal Cup?” Jace hazards a guess, then he quickly adds, “It’s not here, you know? It still lost.”

Snorting, Valentine waves a hand dismissively. “I don’t care about the Mortal Cup, I have my own now, a much more powerful one,” he replies matter-of-factly and Jace feels his eyes widen. Alec reacts the same way.

“No, I’m not here because of some old trinket,” Valentine continues. “I’m here because of you, Jonathan. Because I want my son, my heir to join me, to fight by my side and help me restore balance in the world.”

“Never!” Jace growls. “I’ll never willingly join you.”

Valentine nods. “Yes, I figured that.”

And with that, he whips around and hits Alec with the pommel of his Seraph Blade in the temple, knocking him out. Alec doesn’t even have time to cry out. His knees give out and he remains hanging in his captors’ arms, head bent forward.

“No!” Jace screams, but when he tries to throw himself forward, he’s jumped from behind, his legs are kicked out from underneath him and he hits the floor hard. Before he can do anything, Valentine’s there and stamps on his forearm hard, breaking it with a loud snap and forcing him to release the blade.

Jace screams in pain and thrashes on the floor, but his father crouches down in front of him and grabs him by the hair to lift his head and look him in the eye.

“You promised!” Jace spits out.

Valentine nods. “And I intend to keep my word. I will not kill your parabatai. But there’re so many other things I can do to him.” He pauses. “If you don’t comply. So, thank you, my son, for making everything so much easier.”

Dropping Jace’s head, Valentine gets up, already shouting orders, “Open up a portal and take the boy and my son to the ship. Then kill the others!”

Jace thumps his head against the floor, a painful, keening sound building up in his chest. He watches as one of the men picks Alec up like a rag doll - Alec’s face is ashen now, his temple and
cheek spattered with blood, his eyes closed - and throws him over his shoulder, marching off towards the shimmering portal that the warlocks opened. Then he’s dragged to his feet himself, but his arm’s jarred in the process and he screams in pain again, his vision going dark.

The last thing he sees before he loses consciousness are the first of his friends and colleagues falling dead to the ground with their throats slashed. The slaughter has begun.
Robert doesn’t feel Michael die. He doesn’t sense their bond straining, fraying and then breaking apart. There’s nothing, no sense of dread or foreboding, no certainty of things coming to their end.

He has to be officially notified. “Mr Lightwood, this is an official letter of…” And he sits there, on the bed in his and Maryse’s bedroom at the Institute, staring down at the thick piece of paper carrying the official seal of the Consul.

Michael’s dead. There won’t be any second chances anymore. Robert won’t get to fix what he broke with his callous words and cowardice after all. He will never make it right. Not with Michael…

… but he still can do something for his son.

When he suggests it to Maryse, that they take little Jonathan in, she agrees. She’s not exactly enthusiastic about it, she doesn’t do it out of sentiment, for her, it’s a decision based on duty and logic - and pride; it’ll bring them a great deal of respect if they take in the one heir of the Wayland family left. Robert… just nods. He and Maryse don’t see eye to eye on many things these days.

He goes to Idris to pick up the boy, temporarily housed in the Gard’s barracks. When he enters the room assigned to Jonathan, he finds him standing by the window with his back straight and head held high - and with an expression too old for such a young child. Robert’s heart aches for him.

“Hello, Jonathan,” Robert says softly when the boy turns around and looks at him guardedly. “My name’s Robert Lightwood, I was your father’s parabatai.”

Robert doesn’t know what kind of a reaction he actually expected. But there’s none. Absolutely none. It’s quite disturbing.

He steps closer. “I’m sorry about what happened to your father,” he continues. “I haven’t seen him in years, but I know that he was a good man who deserved better.”

The boy watches him blankly a moment longer, then he says, “I thought that parabatai couldn’t be kept apart, that their bond wouldn’t allow it.”

Robert shifts from foot to foot uncomfortably. “Well, your father and I, our relationship was… complicated.” An understatement of the year, he thinks bitterly.

Jonathan narrows his eyes suspiciously, there’s no other reaction from him.

“I know that you have no other living relatives, so…” Robert glances away and clears his throat. Why does the boy make him feel so ashamed? “So, I’m here to offer you… that is, you can come and live with us. If you want to.”
Jonathan blinks. It’s the only outward sign of his surprise. “With you?” he asks uncertainly.

Robert nods. “Yes, at the New York Institute. With my wife and our children, Alec and Isabelle. Alec’s almost the same age as you. I’m certain he would be happy to have a friend around.”

“He would?” Another uncertain question, but this one laced with a well hidden hope.

Smiling, Robert nods again, more firmly this time. “Yes! He has no friends his age in New York, no one except for Izzy, and I know it must get lonely for him sometimes. If you would come live with us, it would be a… mutually beneficial agreement, so to speak,” he adds, hoping he’s not using overly complicated words, he doesn’t want the boy to feel stupid, but he’s just not, well, he’s not used to talking to children, not even to his own.

Jonathan looks down and thinks about it for a moment. “And if I don’t go with you?” he asks in a small voice.

“Oh, well, I’m sure the Clave would find you a home somewhere else,” Robert replies, but then he says earnestly, “But we would be really glad if you came to live with us, we would be happy to have you, I promise.”

Looking up, Jonathan studies him for a disconcertingly long time again and Robert has to push down his urge to fidget. And then the boy nods slowly, almost reluctantly. “Alright,” he whispers. “If you won’t mind having me around…?”

Robert smiles widely and his back straightens; he didn’t even realize that he was slouching, his shoulders drooping. “Great!” he exclaims. “I’m sure you’ll love New York, Jonathan!”

“Jace,” the child corrects him quietly, but firmly. “It’s Jace now.” And when Robert frowns in confusion, he explains, “My father called me Jonathan and I don’t…” He looks away and swallows hard. “I would rather not be called that.”

Robert can understand that very well. After their ugly confrontation, he hasn’t spoken Michael’s name in years. Until it was too late. “Of course, Jace. If that’s what you want?” I’ll do anything to make up for the suffering I put your father through, Robert think.

“It is,” Jona– Jace whispers, ducking his head. “Thank you.”

And Robert reaches out, gently and carefully, and lays one hand on the boy’s slender shoulder. “No, Jace. I thank you.”

And as Robert leaves to inform the Consul, he thinks, I’m sorry, Michael, I’m sorry for everything, but I promise I’ll take good care of your son. I won’t fail you again, you have my word.
Hurting

Chapter Summary

Little Jace and little Alec and a trip to Idris. I don’t know where this one came from, I just sat down and started writing down my feelings. (Unbeta'd)

When the Lightwoods announce that they’re going back to Idris for a week for some gathering, Jace doesn’t know what to do. Is he… is he supposed to go with them? Is he expected to stay here? What?

In the end, he asks Alec, his words halting and slightly embarrassed. And Alec looks at him as if he has grown a second head. “Of course you’re coming with us!” he says - and something tight in Jace’s chest unwinds a little.

But something else clenches even harder because this will be the first time for him, coming back to Idris, that is, since his father died. That night, his dreams are plagued with nightmarish images of his father dying in a pool of blood.

The Lightwood mansion is huge, really huge, much bigger than his old home, and the moment they enter through the front door, Alec grabs his hand and drags him up the stairs, with their baggages - one little bag each - and all.

“This is our room!” Alec states as he opens the door at the end of the second floor hallway. Inside, it’s all airy and sunny and green and yellow and soothing.

“Our room?” Jace asks uncertainly, stopping in the doorway.

Alec nods, dropping his bag on the floor just inside the door. Then, he looks at Jace almost shyly and says, “I told mother we would share my old bedroom. I asked her to put a second bed in.” He waves his hand at the two beds opposite the door. “I hope… I hope you don’t mind.”

Jace shakes his head, and coming in, he closes the door. “But… why?”

Alec looks down. “I know that you haven’t been back since… since your dad died,” he whispers, fidgeting a little. “And I thought that… I thought that you wouldn’t want to be alone. Maybe?”

Jace looks at him, then quickly glances away because his eyes are stinging and his nose’s itching. Alec knew? Alec did that? For him? “Yeah,” he croaks out. “Thanks.”

Smiling a little, Alec responds, “You’re welcome.”

But when the night comes, his nightmares are back anyway: his father’s dying on him, over and over again, and he’s screaming hoarsely, “Jonathan!” - and Jace knows it didn’t happen like that, but his dreams are warping reality and grief and pain all together.

Jace startles awake when his bed shifts and he rolls around swiftly, ready to fight, but there’s a soothing whisper, “It’s okay, it’s just me,” and in the silvery moonlight he sees that it really is Alec who climbed into the bed with him and curled up close, almost touching Jace.
“What?” Jace asks as he also curls on his side, facing his friend.

“You had a nightmare,” Alec replies quietly.

Jace feels embarrassed. “Sorry if I woke you up,” he apologizes.

But Alec shakes his head. “It’s okay.”

“Please, don’t say anything to Maryse or Robert,” Jace asks. “I don’t want them to think that… that I’m… pathetic.”

Alec frowns. “You’re not pathetic. You’re just hurting. In here,” he says and reaches out to touch Jace’s chest. “And that’s okay. Your father died, Jace.”

Jace sniffs and rubs his nose with the back of his hand, blinking hard. “I miss him so much,” he confesses quietly and his voice breaks at the end.

Alec shifts closer, so close that their foreheads are almost touching, and takes Jace’s hand in his. “I’m sorry I can’t give him back to you. But maybe we could share my parents? They like you a lot.” Then he adds softly, “We all… like you a lot.”

Jace laughs a little through his tears and whispers back, “I like you a lot, too.”

And this time, when he falls asleep after whispering with Alec long into the night, there are no more nightmares.
“What can I get you?” asks the girl behind the bar - Maia - with a wide smile.

The party is in full swing and Alec decided to finally get a refill - if he held an empty glass in his hand for a minute longer, it would start looking suspicious.

Peering around furtively, Alec leans over the bar to request quietly, “I’ll have the special from the fridge.”

Maia raises an eyebrow. “O-kay,” she replies, drawing the word out, probably wondering what kind of a “special” he could mean, considering that there are vampires standing over by the door, sipping O-negative.

Bending down, she opens the mini-fridge. And then she pauses. And then she stares. And then she looks up. “There’s just cranberry juice in here,” she points out.

Alec nods, looking slightly embarrassed. “Yeah, I don’t really… like alcohol,” he mutters, “that’s why I… uh.” He waves his empty wine glass. “Cranberries are good for your kidneys,” he informs her helpfully.

Grinning, Maia takes his glass and fills it with the juice out of anyone’s sight. When she straightens up again and hands him back his glass, she winks. “Your secret is safe with me,” she promises quietly.

Alec smiles, startled, then he grins, too. “Thank you,” he whispers back. And then he goes back to mingling. He and his boyfriend are hosting a party, after all!
It Makes No Sense (But There It Is)

Chapter Summary

Alec and the things that make no sense even to him. Set between 205 and 206. (Unbeta'd)

It’s only 7am and he’s already back at work.

He went to bed at 2am, once his vision turned so blurry he couldn’t read the text on his computer screen, but at 6am he was already up again, lying awake in his bed, among the rumpled, sweat-soaked sheets, and staring at the dark ceiling while his heart was trying to hammer its way out of his chest.

Nightmares, he hates them. He hates them so much!

“Alec!” Aldertree greets him, eyebrows raised in surprise. “At work so early?”

Swiping surveillance photos across the screen, Alec doesn’t look at his boss - by the Angel, his boss, it still grates so much! - when he mutters, “Valentine won’t find himself.”

Aldertree smiles at him and claps him on the shoulder. It makes Alec freeze. Aldertree doesn’t notice, it seems. “I admire your attitude. I wish the rest of your family showed your dedication to the cause,” he jibes and moves on.

Alec grits his teeth and wishes once more that Lydia were back. This man makes Alec’s skin crawl, though he can’t really explain why.

There’s a soft ping and then his phone vibrates in his back pocket. And Alec sighs and drops his head, his shoulders slump. It’s Magnus again, for sure.

He knows that if he asked Magnus to stop trying to contact him, he would. But that’s not what Alec wants. But at the same time, he just can’t bring himself to respond. And that feels as if he’s leading Magnus on! And that makes Alec feel even more guilty, this on top of… everything else!

By the Angel, it doesn’t make any sense, not even to him, inside his own head! His thoughts are one jumbled mess of guilt-guilt-guilt, this ugly, shapeless blob obscuring everything, and it’s as if he can’t think through the stain, it’s clouding his mind, pushing to the forefront thoughts like, if you just had been smarter-better-more-something, it wouldn’t have happened, Jocelyn-Clary-Jace would be okay, failure-failure-failure… And he just seems unable to move past that!

And then there’s Magnus, glamorous, perfect, beautiful, understanding, kind…

His computer chirps and Alec lifts his head sharply. Another set of surveillance photos from the harbor, taken only last night. Alec swipes the old stack to the left - he went through it three times already - and starts working on the new pile. There must be something, Valentine’s ship couldn’t have just vanished into thin air, glamoured or not!

And as he focuses on his work again, his mind goes mercifully quiet - at least for a while.
Jace came back home early that night. Earlier than usual. He got bored at the bar, trying to pick up women who meant very little to him - and who would be forgotten in the morning anyway. It all felt so... *empty* to him, all of a sudden. And so he went home. Well, back to Magnus’.

And now he’s lying in his bed with his hands behind his head, watching the play of light and shadow on the ceiling...

... while Alec and Magnus are making love in the room next door.

And they *are* making love, Jace knows, they aren’t just fucking. He can tell from the little ball of pure happiness glowing in his chest, *Alec’s* happiness. He has never felt Alec this happy before, which is a little sad. And he wonders if it’s their first time together - if it’s Alec’s *actual* first time...

He bets it is and it makes him smile. He’s really happy for Alec. But at the same time, he feels a little... *hollow*. Because Alec’s now not just *his* anymore, he’s not just Jace’s *parabatai* - he’s Magnus Bane’s *lover*. And he knows that Alec’s heart is big enough for both of them, him and Magnus, to fit in, but it’ll still be... *different*.

And Jace’s also jealous. Because he doesn’t think he has ever felt what Alec’s feeling right now, sex has always been a very pleasurable physical activity for Jace, not... *this*. Maybe he could’ve had... *this* with Clary, but that’s impossible now. And so he’s a little jealous of Alec having... *this*. He doesn’t begrudge him his happiness - *never* that! - but he still wishes...

The little ball of warmth in Jace’s chest explodes into a tingling sensation that expands to the tips of his fingers and toes and his heart thumps hard several times before returning back to its calm and regular rhythm - and Jace smiles. *Ah*...

Chuckling softly, Jace curls up on his side, one arm bent under his head, and closes his eyes, riding out the wave of borrowed euphoria. For the first time in weeks, his body relaxes, turns boneless, and his mind grows fuzzy with bliss. And all because of Alec. But then, isn’t it always so?

*Shh, better not tell him.*

*Goodnight.*

Jace falls asleep. And for once, the nightmares stay away.
Vampire Rot

Chapter Summary

Okay, my Angst Fic O'Doom. A parabatai story set before the show. Beware, there’ll be mistakes in it because I just can’t catch all the darn miscreants! (Unbeta’d)

Alec's sick. Jace's determined not to let his parabatai die, no matter what!

He’s not allowed to join the raid.

“You said you needed everyone,” Jace protests indignantly.

Maryse, dressed in full battle gear, turns to him; her expression is impatient. “Yes, I need everyone - who can actually follow orders, Jace!” she adds. “You can’t. In your arrogance, you always think you know better. But we’re about to raid a den full of rogue vampires. I need to know that my people will go where I send them and do what I tell them. Innocents might die otherwise!”

“So, you don’t trust me, is that it?” And now he sounds hurt.

“In this? No, I don’t,” she replies with brutal honesty.

Alec’s ordered to go, though - they don’t have enough archers to provide cover and even if they had, Alec’s one of their best, he would be asked to join in any case.

Jace doesn’t like it. If he’s honest with himself, the fact that Alec’s allowed to go and he isn’t plays a big part in his aggravation. But more importantly - no, most importantly - since their parabatai ceremony, they haven’t gone into battle separately. Small skirmishes here and there, sure, but a real battle - and this will be a real battle - never. The fact that he won’t be there to watch Alec’s back is making Jace anxious.

“Be careful!!” he implores while watching Alec gear up.

Alec looks at him and smiles a little. Jace feels that it’s for his benefit, that Alec hates that they won’t be fighting side by side as much as he does - Jace’s still getting used to the fact that he has another person’s emotions tucked away in the corner of his mind, it’s really strange.

“Always,” Alec promises, and Jace’s determined to hold him to that.

Jace spends his unexpected downtime in the training hall, pummeling the bag into submission. Isabelle tried to talk to him - she’s still considered too much of a child to be allowed to go out on a mission like this one, which pisses her off big time - but he just growled at her, so she gave up after a while and left. And since then, he’s been silently punching his fists bruised.

Because he’s angry that he didn’t get to stake a vamp tonight. Not because he worries about Alec. He’s not worried. He’s not.

He’s sweaty and a little out of breath when there’s a sudden commotion in the hallway, people rushing past with their voices raised - and Jace’s anxiety spikes.
Stepping out of the training hall, he grabs the first person running past, one of the computer whizzes who never go out into the field - Natalie? - and asks her, “What’s going?”

She looks at him, wide-eyed. “They’re back. There were casualties… deaths,” she whispers and she sounds scared.

With his heart hammering, Jace barges into the infirmary. If Alec’s hurt - he’s not dead, Jace would know, Alec’s not dead! - that’s where he’ll be. Maryse is there, too; her battle gear is torn, slashed and bloody, her face spattered with blood and her left arm is in a sling. She’s talking to one of the Silent Brothers - Brother Zachariah? Brother Micah? Ah, they all look the same to Jace! - and she’s looking as pale as a ghost. Whatever happened, it must’ve been bad.

“Maryse!!” Jace calls out as he pushes through the milling people.

She thanks the Silent Brother and turns to Jace. “Jace,” she greets him and though she tries to sound composed, Jace can see that she’s… shaken.

“Where’s Alec? What happened?” Jace blurts out, looking around anxiously. Where is he?

“Our intel was… faulty,” Maryse replies quietly. “There were many more vampires than we expected.”

That draws his attention and he looks her straight in the eyes. “How many more?”

She swallows and holds her head high when she replies, “Almost a hundred.”

Jace can feel his eyes widening. They planned for fifty at the most!

“I don’t know how we could’ve missed a clan as big as this one,” Maryse mutters, shaking her head, “how could Camille Belcourt miss a clan this big moving into her territory! If she knew, if she was in on it….” Her cheeks turn splotchy with anger.

“Where’s Alec?” Jace asks softly. His ears are buzzing and his heart’s trying to climb out of his chest. Where is Alec? Where is he?!

Where’s Alec?! Jace asks softly. His ears are buzzing and his heart’s trying to climb out of his chest. Where is Alec? Where is he?!

Maryse sighs and rubs his forehead with her good hand. “When the vamps took to the sewers, we were separated into two groups,” she whispers. “They trapped half of our people in the tunnels underground. It was a massacre. Our soldiers were outnumbered four to one and we lost ten people. The threat was neutralized but… Only four of the group got out of the tunnels alive. Alec was among them.”

Jace’s overcome with relief so profound that his knees buckle. He knew that Alec was alive, their bond told him, but it’s one thing to know and then to know. But, considering that this is good news, why does Maryse look so…?

“Maryse?” Jace asks carefully. “What happened to Alec?”

Jace can’t imagine why Maryse’s looking the way she is. Even if Alec was bitten - Raziel forbid! - they would just have to put him under quarantine and allow him to ride out the vampire venom. Nasty but not life-threatening.

Maryse looks him straight in the eye and chooses her words very deliberately. “They fought over sixty vampires, Jace - in a tight, enclosed space.”

Jace’s heart skips a beat. And then another. He can feel himself turn pale. “Vampire rot?” he asks
in a small voice.

She nods heavily. “There were so many vamps, so many of them, their ashes got into our people’s - Alec’s! - lungs. Rot set in almost immediately. It’s…” Her voice actually breaks. “It’s eating them up from the inside.”

Jace doesn’t even notice that he’s shaking at first. He takes a deep breath and then another to force himself to calm down. It’ll be fine. Everything will be fine. They just have to… They have to… “What can we do about it?” he asks fiercely.

Because there has to be something. Vampire rot’s an ugly, terrifying disease but it’s plagued Shadowhunters ever since they first faced off with vampires. Someone must’ve found a cure by now. Right? Right?

“I called in the Silent Brothers and I contacted the…” Maryse falters, then she takes a deep breath and continues, “the High Warlock of Brooklyn who promised to help us. He said he heard about a remedy but it’s not easy to come by.”

“Does he want more money? Is that it?” Jace snaps harshly. Because if so, then Jace will… Jace… Jace will sell the Wayland mansion if he has to, he’ll swear a blood oath, anything, just… just as long as Alec survives.

Maryse shakes her head and suddenly, she looks exhausted. “No, no, it’s not a matter of money. I mean, I promised him a worthy reward, true, but that’s not it. Some of the ingredients are simply very rare. He promised he would try but he needs time. And that’s something we don’t have.” She closes her eyes. “One of the sick already died on the way back to the Institute. He was fighting in thick of it.”

Jace feels as if the ground’s trying to swallow him. “And Alec?”

“He was providing cover, so he stayed on the outskirts, even trapped underground. A bow’s not exactly a close combat weapon.”

“So, he didn’t catch the full blast, right? He’s sick but it’s… it’s not that bad, right? There’s still time for him to get the cure… right?” Jace demands.

Maryse reaches out to lay her good hand on his shoulder. “Jace,” she says almost gently and Jace’s not used to Maryse being gentle, it’s wrong. “He might not be as bad off, but he’s still very sick.”

Jace shakes her hand off. “I need to see him. Where is he?”

Maryse sighs. “The Silent Brothers put the sick under quarantine, the effects of the disease are still largely unknown. They won’t let you to him.”

Jace’s eyes narrow. The hell they won’t. “They have to. I have to be with him, he’s my parabatai.” And when Maryse opens her mouth again, most likely to protest, Jace states, “I have the right to be with him. The Law says so!”

“You don’t have to quote the Law to me!” Maryse snaps back, but then she sighs again, rubbing her forehead once more as if her head were hurting. “I can ask.”

In the end, they let him in - Jace suspects that Brother Zachariah knows that if they did not, Jace would simply sneak in, he’s not about to let anyone stand between him and his parabatai - but first they make him take a shower and put on some clean clothes and even a surgical mask. Jace follows the instructions without complaints, he would do anything to be allowed to see Alec, he would go
To get to Alec, Jace has to pass the other two sick Shadowhunters, Paul and Leila - he doesn’t know them all that well - and though their beds are hidden behind thin white curtains, he can hear their harsh, straining cough, constant and agonizing, and it makes his fear for Alec turn into dread.

And then there Alec is, at the end of the long, narrow room that was turned into a makeshift infirmary, and Jace has to take a deep breath and steel himself before he pushes through the curtain and steps into the small cubicle. Still, at the sight of his parabatai, his heart clenches painfully in his chest.

Alec’s propped up in the bed, probably to make breathing easier for him, he’s turned away slightly and his naked back’s covered with temporary healing runes. Jace recognizes a few - this one kills pain and that one stops bleeding - the rest of them, though? He doesn’t know.

Slowly, Jace walks around the bed and the more he sees, the more his heart hurts, because Alec has his knees pulled up slightly and both hands, loosely closed into fists, pressed against his chest, as if it still hurts despite all the runes placed on his back. And his face…

Jace stops, blinking hard to push back tears. Alec’s face is ashen and his closed eyes are almost purple, his cheeks sunken - how can he look like that? Jace saw him only a few hours ago and he was alright, healthy! But the worst thing are the fluids staining his lips, bright red blood and black ichor - the vampire rot destroying his lungs.

Looking around, Jace spots a box of tissues on the nightstand. He pulls one out and very gently, he wipes off Alec’s mouth. The heat radiating off Alec’s skin makes him almost jerk back. And then there’s Alec’s rattling, wheezing breath. Jace guesses he should be grateful that Alec’s not trying to cough out his damaged lungs like Paul and Leila, but it’s painful to hear anyway.

“Hhhhey,” Alec rasps, and this time, Jace does jerk away because he didn’t even notice that Alec was awake.

“Shh, don’t talk,” Jace chides as he sinks down on the chair by the bed and reaches out to squeeze Alec’s forearm. “I had to do a lot of chest thumping to be let in, we don’t them to throw me out again now, do we?” He tries to smile but he fails.

Alec blinks slowly. His eyes are bloodshot and fever bright. It takes a while for him to really register that Jace’s there. Then he frowns. “Why… here? Danger… ous,” he wheezes.

Jace rubs Alec’s skin with his thumb. “I’m here because you’re my parabatai. Where else would I be?” he replies, mock offended. “And you’re the one in danger here. I wasn’t the one snorting vampire ashes like they were some mundane drugs!”

Alec smiles wanly. “Sorry.”

Leaning closer, Jace mutters through his mask, “You promised to be careful!”

Alec stares at him for a long moment, the pale smile fading from his lips. “Sorry…” he whispers again in the end.

And Jace’s about to tell Alec where he can stick his sorry, that once Alec’s out of here, Jace’ll kick his ass so hard for scaring him like that, that Alec won’t be able to move for a week - but that’s when Alec’s seized with a coughing fit so harsh that Jace jumps to his feet, and sitting down on the edge of the mattress, he pulls Alec up into a sitting position and lets Alec lean against him while he holds his parabatai up and rubs his back soothingly.
And Alec’s clinging to him, hands fisted in Jace’s t-shirt, and he’s coughing and coughing, and it’s a brutal, wet sound, and Jace can feel the rattle in Alec’s chest through Alec’s ribs, and for a moment it sounds as if Alec will suffocate. And Jace’s scared, so scared.

One of the Silent Brothers comes in and if he’s surprised to find the two boys in this position, he hides it well. Without hesitation, he steps up to the bed and using the fact that Jace’s holding Alec up, he draws another rune on Alec’s shoulder blade.

Alec shudders and chokes, seizing one last time - and then he finally stops coughing. He’s still clinging to Jace hard but he’s breathing again, wheezing loudly but breathing, and it’s the best sound Jace has ever heard in his life.

The Silent Brother nods and whispers in Jace’s head, “I’ll let them bring you clean clothes.”

Jace doesn’t understand till the man leaves and he lays Alec back against the pillows gently - and he sees that his shoulder is spattered with black ichor mixed with blood.

Jace feels sick just looking at the stains, knowing that this, this is inside Alec, suffocating him. If he could, he would switch places with him without hesitation.

“Sor… ry,” Alec forces out, staring at Jace’s ruined t-shirt.

Jace shrugs, going for a nonchalant gesture and probably failing miserably. Because the same fluids are on Alec’s lips, on his chin, making Alec’s sickness all the more real. Jace pulls his t-shirt off and simply drops it in the bin, then he reaches for another tissue and with a gentleness that surprises even him, he cleans Alec’s face.

“It’s okay,” Jace whispers, focusing on his task and not looking Alec in the eyes. Because if he did, he would probably cry.

And that’s when it hits him that what he feels, the sadness, despair, fear and… grief, those are not just his emotions but Alec’s too. He can feel Alec grieving! Alec thinks - knows with absolute certainty! - that he’s going to die. And he’s already grieving for those he’s going to leave behind - for Jace! That will not do!

Jace drops the used tissue in the bin, then he leans closer and cups Alec’s face in his hands. And in contrast with his tender touch, he growls, “You’re not going to die, you hear me? You’re not going to leave me here alone! Got it? Maryse contacted the High Warlock of Brooklyn - Boon? Booze? whatever his name! - and the guy thinks he knows how to cure the vampire rot. You just have to hold on till he can cook up the potion, you understand? You just need to hold on!”

And when Alec just keeps looking at him, not reacting in any way, Jace lightly taps him on the forehead. “You understand? You’re my parabatai. You have to do what I tell you. The Law says so.”

Another wan smile. “It does… not,” Alec whispers. Then he takes a slow, measured breath and nods slightly. “But I’ll… do my… best, promise.”

Jace nods, his breath a little heavy behind his surgical mask, and tries to be satisfied with that. He wants to demand a promise that Alec won’t die on him, that’s what he wants, he wants Alec to swear it to him, right there and then - but he knows that he can’t, a thing like that cannot be promised. And so he picks up another tissue and wipes Alec’s lips off carefully, because even those few words stained his mouth again.

After that, for a while, everything becomes a blur. Jace keeps cleaning away the blood, and wiping
Alec down with a washcloth to try and keep his fever down, and he helps Alec do other things - like help him relieve himself - things that make Alec embarrassed but Jace simply doesn’t care about that right now, it’s so unimportant when he can feel Alec growing weaker and weaker under his hands.

Then, he hears a voice in his head, Brother Zachariah’s voice. “Jace Wayland, Maryse Lightwood wishes to speak to you.” And once Jace makes sure that Alec will be fine without him for a moment - his parabatai fell into a light doze a moment before - he gets up quietly and heads down the makeshift infirmary to the door.

“Maryse?” he asks with a hope in his voice as he pulls down his mask. “Did the warlock–”

“He’s still working on the cure,” she interrupts him, eyes on the new stains on his t-shirt. “He left for South America to get some root or something.”

Jace huffs impatiently. “Doesn’t he understand how important this is?” He gets that he’s probably not being fair, but Alec being sick is not fair, none of this is fair!

“I made it very clear to him,” Maryse assures him. “And he told me that he’s risking a lot by going back to Peru just to help a ‘bunch of ungrateful Shadowhunters.’”

Jace grits his teeth. “Can’t we get someone else’s help?”

Maryse sighs and rubs her forehead; she’s been doing that a lot lately. Jace also notices that her left arm isn’t in a sling anymore. “Unfortunately, Magnus Bane is the best. But he promised that, if he can get this last ingredient, the potion would be ready this evening. Twelve hours at the most.”

Jace’s shoulders slump and his head drops. Twelve hours. Sure, it’s better than having no hope at all, but twelve hours! He doesn’t know if Alec can last so long.

Maryse must read something in his expression because she asks quietly, “How is he?”

Jace looks up at her. Should he tell her a reassuring lie or the ugly truth? Then he realizes that this is Maryse Lightwood, she wouldn’t want to be lied to. “Not good,” he replies. “He’s holding on but…” He shakes his head.

Maryse stares at him a moment longer, then she nods grimly. “The Silent Brothers won’t let me in. Neither me nor Izzy - she’s all but hysterical that they won’t let her see her brother. Would you tell him…” She falls silent. Obviously she can’t find the right words. She’s never been the emotional type.

So Jace just nods. He will. He will tell Alec what Maryse cannot.

Suddenly, there’s a commotion behind Jace and he turns around. In the first cubicle, the Silent Brothers - there are three of them now! - are moving around quickly, their shadows dancing on the white curtain… and then they stop. And Jace realizes that the makeshift infirmary is much quieter now. One of the harsh coughs that he stopped paying attention to ceased.

Paul’s dead. The realization hits Jace like a hammer. It’s just Leila… and Alec now.

Slowly, he turns back to Maryse. She’s pale and wide-eyed. Jace doesn’t think he has ever seen her this shaken before. “I’ll let you know the moment we have the cure,” she promises and then she leaves. No, she runs away.

Pulling his surgical mask back up, Jace returns to Alec’s side. His parabatai is awake, watching
him with half-lidded, exhausted eyes. “Wha…?” Alec croaks out.

Jace decides not to tell Alec about Paul, for that there will be time later. Instead he puts on a bright grin as he sits back down again and squeezes Alec’s hand. “That was Maryse. She told me that in twelve hours top, we’ll have the cure. All you need to do is hold on for another twelve hours, that’s all. You can do that, easy!” he states with fake enthusiasm.

Alec stares at him for a while, his expression unreadable, then he asks softly, “How’s… everyone?”

“The Silent Brothers are refusing to let Maryse and Izzy in - Iz threw a fit!” Jace says, still grinning so hard his cheeks are starting to hurt. “Maryse wanted me to tell you that she loved you.”

Alec keeps staring at Jace, then he hums, and closes his eyes slowly. “You… shouldn’t be… here either,” he croaks out, his hand twitching in Jace’s. “We don’t know… how the sickness–”

“I’m not leaving!” Jace interrupts him sharply. “And you stop talking and save your strength for something more important - like breathing!” Then he leans close and rests one hand on the top of Alec’s head. “Twelve hours, Alec, that’s all. You just need to hold on for twelve more hours. For me!” he pleads, finally dropping his false cheer.

Alec hums again, suppressing a cough. His lips are stained with black again.

Two hours later, Leila dies. It’s the total absence of sound in the room that tells them that she’s gone. No more harsh coughing, no more painful choking… just silence.

Jace’s head shoots up and he turns to the white curtain separating Alec’s tiny cubicle from Leila’s. He can see the silhouettes of the Silent Brothers moving across it slowly - there’s no more haste. Jace’s heart clenches.

He looks at Alec and finds his parabatai watching him silently. And he realizes that Alec knows and he grips his hand even tighter - he hasn’t let go of him in what seems like hours. Truth to be told, Jace’s afraid that if he did let go, Alec would leave him. If Jace has to anchor him here with his own damn grip, then he’ll do it!

When Alec’s seized with the next coughing fit and Jace lets his parabatai rest against his chest, Alec’s so weak that he can’t even hold onto him anymore. And when Brother Zachariah comes in and draws more healing runes on Alec’s back - they barely flicker.

Jace looks at the Silent Brother pleadingly, but Brother Zachariah just shakes his head and whispers in Jace’s mind, “He doesn’t have any strength left to make the runes work. I’m sorry.”

Jace suspects that Brother Zachariah thinks it would be better if the end came quickly for Alec. He feels like crying. This can’t be happening.

The Silent Brother leaves them alone and when Alec finally stops coughing - his breath still wheezes and rattles in his throat, though - Jace lays him back down against the pillows gently and wipes his mouth clean with a tissue - Alec’s lips are almost blue now, his face gray, his eyes red-rimmed and barely open… And Jace comes to a decision.

He tears off his surgical mask and drops it in the bin together with the used tissue. He’s angry at the whole situation, at the unfairness of it all, he’s desperate and frustrated and scared for Alec… and he can’t think past the possibility of Alec dying on him, his mind simply hits a blank wall when he tries to think past that, he can’t imagine his life without Alec in it.
Alec needs eight more hours? Jace will make sure he gets them!

Taking out his stele, Jace pushes Alec’s thin blanket down to uncover his parabatai rune - and he runs his stele over it to activate it. It barely reacts, but that’s okay, all he needs is to establish a connection. He then pulls up his t-shirt and activates his own parabatai rune which glows bright and strong.

Their bond bursts into life as Alec starts siphoning off Jace’s strength unconsciously, drawing on what he needs to sustain himself from Jace. Immediately, his color turns better and his breathing becomes a little easier - while Jace’s overcome with such a weakness as he has never felt before, his vision swims and his fingertips tingle. He leans heavily against the bed and tries to catch his breath.

“Jace…?” Alec whispers and when Jace looks up, he catches Alec staring at him with eyes wide with shock and fear. “No…”

“Yes!” Jace grits out forcefully. “Together or not at all!”

Because if Alec dies now, with their bond wide open, with them linked together and sharing strength - he will drag Jace down with him. And Jace doesn’t care! Because there’s no life without Alec. Either they both survive or… not. But he won’t be left behind.

In the end, it takes Magnus Bane six hours to provide them with the cure, but by that time, they’re both too far gone to be aware of what’s happening around them. They’re holding onto each other tightly, Alec curled up on his side, facing Jace, Jace sitting in his chair, head pillowed on his arms, and their hands are linked, fingers entwined, sharing Alec’s pain and weakness and spreading Jace’s strength between them, unaware.

The next thing Jace knows, he’s lying in a bed in the infirmary, in the regular infirmary, the quarantine having been called off at some point that he doesn’t remember. He’s as weak as a newborn kitten and he’s watching Alec in the bed next to his. Alec’s asleep - it’s a real sleep, deep and healing - and even though he’s still pale, his lips are no longer blue or stained with blood and ichor. The potion worked.

Vaguely, he remembers he got some serious tongue-lashing from Maryse for what he did, that he used their parabatai bond to sustain Alec while completely disregarding all the risks to himself - in Jace’s mind, a battle is a battle, never mind if the enemy is a demon or a sickness, and he would do it again! Maryse must’ve gotten the message because finally, she just huffed and left. But Jace could see tears in her eyes - she was happy, she was simply being… Maryse.

Jace can’t stop staring at Alec. He feels exhaustion pulling at him, but he refuses give in and go to sleep because what if… But no, they told him that Alec would be alright now. That warlock apparently knows what he’s doing, after all. Alec will be okay.

Alec will be okay.

His parabatai will be okay.

Jace’s eyes close. He sleeps.
Scarred

Chapter Summary

During the parabatai ceremony in 203, Alec did not have the scar in his left eyebrow yet. So, what happened between that moment and the beginning of the show? A parabatai story. (Unbeta'd)

They’re meant to be the backup and nothing more.

“You’re still too young for this, boys!” the leader tells them with a cheeky grin while the squad’s gearing up to raid the warlock’s lair.

Unable to help himself, Jace rolls his eyes and reminds the guy, “You’re just three years older than we are, Jack!”

Laughing, Jack claps Jace on the back. “And that means three years wiser, kid!”

Jace grumbles something under his breath, much to Jack’s amusement. But Alec’s just fine with being the backup; his bow, a long-range weapon, is better suited for covering others’ backs anyway.

So, they remain outside the rundown apartment building where the warlock, a drug dealer and a dark magic user to that, lives. They hide in a narrow alley on the other side of the street to keep watch, because that’s all they’re actually expected to do, but…

When the attack comes, they’re swept up in it anyway.

One moment, the squad’s barging in, running up the stairs - the next the street is full of ravener demons!

Alec has never seen so many of them in one place. He didn’t even know that one warlock could summon so many! They’re crawling down the walls and out of the sewers and through the blind, broken windows - and it’s a nightmare come alive.

And Jace wants to rush out and fight them, but Alec grabs him by the back of his leather jacket and jerks him back, uncompromising, because they stand no chance against such a horde in an open area, they have to find a defensible position, now!

Jace obviously wants to snap at him angrily, but when he turns around to do so, he realizes that the beasts are behind them, too, in the dead-end alley, skittering down the walls, and he pulls out his Seraph Blade and throws himself at them, hacking and stabbing, while Alec starts shooting arrows left and right, picking off the monsters one by one.

But there’s just so many of them - too many!

And then one of the raveners drops down on them from above. Jace screams in fury as he takes the brunt of the demon’s fall and Alec whips around - and the tip of the ravener’s tail catches him straight in the face.
Alec’s bow flies out of his hand and disappears before it can hit the pavement, and then Alec’s on the ground, having bounced off the wall, and the left side of his face is numb and his hands and knees are scraped bloody. He can barely see through the splintering agony in his head and all he can hear is a loud buzzing sound.

For a couple of seconds he just lies there, blinking dazedly, not knowing what happened, and then he remembers. Jace!

He turns around quickly, his stomach rebelling against the sudden move, and his sight turns spotty, but he still scrambles to his feet as fast as he can in his state, because the ravener is still crouching over Jace and it’s not moving and… and Jace’s not moving…

“Jace…” Alec cries out hoarsely, though he can barely hear his own shout, everything sounds as if he’s under water, everything’s moving in slow motion.

And then the demon explodes, spattering everything with dark ichor, and Alec drops to his knees by Jace’s side. He can see Jace gasping for breath, Jace’s chest is covered in his own blood, the demon must’ve… stabbed him? Bitten him? Alec doesn’t know and Jace’s staring at him, saying something that Alec can’t hear over the white noise in his ears…

But when Jace turns his gaze up suddenly and his eyes widen in horror, Alec understands, he doesn’t need to hear demons’ screeching call or the skittering sound of their chitinous legs running down the walls. He doesn’t even look back, he grabs Jace - for the moment not paying attention to his parabatai’s wounds - and starts dragging him down the alley, towards the dead end, the only defensible place left…

Heaving, Alec pulls Jace to the back wall of the alley and props him up there - Jace’s pale and biting his lip hard, but he’s conscious enough to fumble for his stele in his pocket - and then Alec whips around, raising his hand to have his bow materialize in his grip again, and he uses it as a club to chase two of the beasts away, then he pulls on the bowstring, an arrow already in place…

And he starts shooting, lightning fast, his hand a blur, and he can barely see out of his left eye, so he closes it and keeps shooting, on and on, faster and faster, and his mind is empty, all his focus is on the monsters, on the need to keep them away, nothing else matters, they can’t get past him, if they get past him, they will get to Jace and Alec can’t allow that. And so he keeps shooting, on and on…

Until something, a voice - Jace’s voice! - finally makes it through the buzzing sound in his ears, “Alec, Alec stop… they’re running, stop! You can stop now!”

And Alec realizes that it’s true, the demons are running, up the walls and down into the sewers and then the alley’s empty, spattered with black ichor up to the second floor windows, but empty…

Alec just stands there, staring.

“Alec?” Jace’s voice, behind him, down by the wall.

But Alec can’t seem to move, his knees are locked and his hands are clenched so tightly he can’t unclench them, one gripping the bow, the fingers of the other hooked around the bowstring slick with his own blood - and that’s what brings him back.

He looks down. His hand is torn. When did…?

Slowly, Alec opens his hands and lets the bow drop - both it and the arrow disappear the moment they leave his grip. And it hurts! Everything suddenly hurts so much! His knees buckle, he
staggers back and sinks to the ground, completely drained and hurting!

“Alec?” Jace again. “Alec, look at me!”

Hurt. Jace was - is! - hurt, too. That thought forces Alec to move. Slowly, he turns around. His head, still in agony, protests, but he swallows hard to keep his stomach in check. And then he’s staring at Jace, whose face’s too pale, almost ashen, and even though his iratze’s all ablaze and working, fresh blood’s still seeping from of the deep gashes on his chest - and Alec can’t tear his eyes away from the wounds. An inch deeper...

Jace lifts one hand and gently touches Alec’s face - the left side of it that Alec still can’t feel. He suspects it’s a good thing, he can’t even imagine what his face must look like.

Smiling wanly, Jace runs his fingers very lightly over Alec’s left brow. “That will… leave a scar,” he croaks out.

Alec doesn’t respond. His mind’s pretty much empty. And if he opened his mouth, he knows he’ll throw up, so he just sits there and stares numbly. He should do… something, but he just can’t move. He has nothing left.

“It’s okay,” Jace says soothingly. “We did it. You did it. We’re alive. Alright?”

Alec nods slowly. Alright.

And then Jack’s people are there.

And Alec lets someone else take over.

And he finally throws up.
To Have... This

Chapter Summary

Ep 207 Malec coda. Spoilers for 208! There was no need to rush, was there?
(Unbeta'd)

“We didn’t have to rush into this, you know?” Magnus whispers fondly as they cuddle in bed together, afterwards. Alec’s lying on his side, resting his head on Magnus’ chest, while Magnus is running his knuckles up and down Alec’s spine tenderly.

Alec rubs his stubbled cheek against Magnus’ warm skin. “Hm... you think?” he asks, then he falls silent for a moment, and when he speaks again, his voice is barely audible, “With how things are going, I was just... I was afraid that if we waited, something would happen and we would actually never have... this.”

Magnus feels a pang of anxiety and he buries his fingers in Alec’s tousled hair to ground himself. Nothing will happen, he tells himself firmly as he holds Alec close. They’re both fine. Alec is - will be! - fine. Magnus won’t lose him...

Two nights later, Alec’s standing on the edge of the roof, reeling and lost in a nightmare that Magnus can’t wake him from - and in retrospect, Alec’s words seem like a prophecy.
What'd You Do?

Chapter Summary

Based on the 208 promo. A tiny story of guilt and regret. TW: suicide, death!  
(Unbeta'd)

“Spike the punch with this and your party will be *wild!*” his friend tells Max and hands him a small vial of purplish liquid with a wink.

Max winks back, conspiratorially, and takes the vial, shaking it lightly to make the potion sparkle. Yes, his party will be so wild that *everybody* will remember it! It’ll be *awesome*!

And now his big brother’s lying dead on the sidewalk; silent, unmoving and… *dead.*

*The warmest of hugs and the biggest of smiles, just for him. “What’d you do?”*

Isabelle’s piercing scream. His mother’s small, stifled gasp. Jace’s pleading, “No, nonono, don’t leave me!” And Magnus’ heartbroken, “Alexander…?” Max will never forget any of that.

*Alec, crouching down and opening his arms, just for him. “What’d you do?”*

They don’t want Max to see, but he has to, he *has to* see what he did! In tears, he pushes his way through the crowd to where Alec’s lying, broken, bloody and *dead*, in his parabatai’s arms and…

“What’d you do?”

Max never tells anyone what he did. And he never forgives himself. Till his dying day, guilt and regret haunt his every thought.

Because Max’s big brother’s dead - and it’s all his fault.
“I thought that maybe we could, I don’t know, grab a bite? Together, I mean,” Alec suggests, having stopped by. “You know, not just drinks and… stuff, but food–”

“–and stuff?” Magnus finishes teasingly when Alec leaves his sentence just hanging there without giving it the closure it deserves.

“Yes, that,” Alec confirms, smiling a little. “Maybe we could order something in?”

Which is when Jace’s laugh echoes through the apartment, followed by a high-pitched giggle. Alec and Magnus both startle and raise their eyebrows, staring in the direction the sounds came from.

“Or,” Magnus proposes, “we could eat out?”

“Good idea,” Alec agrees quickly.

In response to that, Magnus snaps his fingers and his eyes light up with excitement. “Oh, I know just the place. The best sushi in Tokyo!”

Alec blinks. “Tok… Tokyo?” he stammers. “I was thinking more of a–”

“Or! Have you ever been to Prague?” Magnus continues. “No? That’s where we’ll go, then! You just have to try the trdelník there!”

“No, see, I meant–” Alec tries to protest, but then he registers what Magnus just said, and blinks again in confusion. “Trd-what?”

Grinning wide, Magnus literally bounces on his toes. “Trdleník! Oh, you’ll just love it!”

Throwing on his jacket, Magnus opens a portal with a wave of his hand. Then he turns to Alec, who still looks more than a little bewildered, and reaches out towards him, his smile turning more gentle. “Trust me?”

Slowly, Alec smiles back and takes Magnus’ hand in his, his long fingers curling around Magnus’ palm. “Always,” he replies quietly.

Then, hand in hand, they step through the portal, leaving New York - and their worries - behind. At least for a moment.
Chapter Summary

Just a cute little Malec-y something set in 207. (Unbeta'd)

Magnus cannot stop touching the *omamori*.

“For me…?”

“Yes, you.”

Smiling softly, Magnus shakes his head a little. Only Alexander would give a protective charm to a *warlock*.

Using a tiny pulse of magic, Magnus lets himself feel Alec’s emotions, the little things that soaked into the paper charm while it was still in Alec’s possession.

…fondness/hope/embarrassment/confusion/exasperation/affection/warmth…

Magnus’ smile turns dreamy and he sighs, propping his chin on his hand. He knows he must look completely besotted, but he doesn’t care.

Alexander bought him a gift! Because he *likes* Magnus!

Sometimes, life’s simply wonderful.
A Different Kind of a Win

Chapter Summary

A parabatai pre-series story set in a world of A/B/O. The story deals with Alec’s canon feelings for Jace. (Unbeta’d)

Jace asks Alec to become his parabatai. But Alec has a secret. Or two.

“Tell me one good reason for why you don’t want us to be parabatai!” Jace exclaims, exasperated, and throws his hands up.

Alec stops with his back to Jace. His hand’s on the doorknob and his head’s down. One good reason? he thinks hopelessly. I can give you two. I’m in love with you and...

He decides to take a leap of faith.

“I’m an omega,” Alec whispers, for the first time ever admitting it out loud to another Shadowhunter.

Heavy silence settles over his bedroom. Alec waits.

“What?” Jace asks in the end.

Slowly, Alec turns around. Jace looks as shocked as his voice sounded just a moment ago. This… this won’t end well, will it?

Clearing his throat, Alec repeats, “I’m an omega.”

This will take care of Jace’s offer once and for all, no doubt. No one wants an omega for a parabatai. No one. Their… issues are not worth the bother. Alec just hopes his and Jace’s friendship will survive this. And that Jace won’t tell anyone. If he does… if he does, Alec will lose everything.

“Bullshit!” Jace replies. “I’m an alpha, I would know. I would smell it on you. You’re an average beta - no offense,” he adds quickly.

Alec’s not offended. He would give anything for that to be true, if he could be an “average beta.” He sighs.

“What you smell, it isn’t me, it’s this,” he says, walking up to the nightstand. From the drawer there he takes out a small brown bottle, half full of a white powder. He sets it down on the table.

Frowning, Jace steps away from the window. He picks up the bottle and inspects it. “What is it?” he asks, staring at the fine white powder inside.

Alec crosses his arms over his chest self-consciously. “It’s a medicine. As long as I take it, I can function as a plain beta,” he explains, watching Jace handle the bottle a little nervously - Jace’s holding Alec’s life in his hands. Maybe not literally, but this drug - and yes, it is a drug, he can admit it at least to himself - this drug is the only reason why he still has a future as a Shadowhunter.
Carefully, Jace opens the bottle and sniffs at its contents - Alec wonders what it must smell like to an alpha; to him, the powder has a sort of a grassy aroma.

“So, it’s masking your scent?” Jace hazards a guess.

Alec feels almost weak with relief that Jace seems to believe him - and he’s not freaking out. At the same time, anxiety seizes his heart. He hoped Jace would not ask about the drug. He could lie but… No.

Again, Alec clears his throat. “Not… exactly.”

Jace narrows his eyes suspiciously. “What do you mean by ‘not exactly’?”

“The medicine, it’s… altering my… body chemistry, not just my scent,” Alec admits reluctantly, realizing that it won’t go over well. And he’s right.

Jace’s eyes widen, then they narrow again. He closes the bottle and sets it down fast, rubbing his hands against his jean-clad thighs. His mouth twists.

“Your body chemistry, Alec?” Jace hisses. “Do you even know what you’re doing? Who gave you this stuff? It can’t be legal!”

It’s not. Actually, it’s highly illegal. If the Clave ever found out that Alec’s not only an omega but that he’s been using illicit drugs to suppress this side of himself… Alec can’t even imagine what they would do to him!

When he takes too long to respond, Jace takes a step closer, his anger turning into anxiety. “Alec, where’s the drug from - it is a drug and not a ‘medicine’, isn’t it? Who’s your supplier?”

Alec sighs. “There’s this warlock—”

“A warlock?” Jace snaps. “Have you lost your fricking mind, Alec? You went to a warlock? You played right into the hands of a Downworlder?”

Another sigh, a tired one. “Catarina’s not like that,” Alec assures Jace. “She’s a healer, she genuinely cares about people - yes, Shadowhunters, too!” he adds firmly when Jace rolls his eyes.

“Sure,” Jace snorts. “And I bet she’s helping you out of the goodness of her heart, right?” When Alec doesn’t respond, looking away again, Jace growls, “What did she ask for? Please, tell me you didn’t sign a blood oath!”

“I did not! I’m not stupid, Jace!” Alec retorts, now angry, too.

“That’s debatable!” Jace snaps back.

Alec grits his teeth to calm down. It won’t help if they start fighting. “I couldn’t pay her. So she settled for a future favor - without the blood oath!” he follows up quickly, seeing Jace’s eyes blaze. “She simply took my word for it, that if she ever needs my help, I will help her. She’s a good person, Jace.”

But Jace just shakes his head. “I can’t believe you,” he mutters. “Did she even tell you what’s in it? What it’s doing to you? Did you even ask? Because let me tell you, if it’s playing with your body chemistry, it can’t be good for you - it might be even slowly killing you, for all you know!”

Alec hugs himself. He has asked himself the same questions many times in the past - and he’s
always found it worth it, no matter the consequences. It is worth it, to be here, fighting side by side with Jace, instead of being locked up in the Iron Citadel, under the watchful eyes of the Iron Sisters, until a suitable… mate can be found for him. He would rather die than go down this path! He won’t be anyone’s broodmare, not now, not ever!

“I asked,” he assures Jace quietly, all anger gone. He feels… empty. Maybe he should’ve kept his mouth shut. “I asked and Catarina explained it to me, how it works, what it’s doing. She insists on examining me thoroughly at least once a year to make sure I’m following her instructions on the dosage and everything else. She’s - I am - careful!”

Jace stares at him blankly for a long moment. “Once a year? How long have you been taking it?” he asks in a numb whisper.

“Three years,” Alec replies truthfully. “I manifested at thirteen. Remember when that vampire took me? I was gone for a week.”

It’s Jace who looks away now. Even after years, that memory’s still painful for him, Alec knows, he knows that Jace hasn’t stopped blaming himself for what happened, even though it was not his fault, Alec’s convinced of that.

“We thought you were dead, that he sucked you dry and got rid of your body.” Even more silently, Jace adds, “That we would never find you again.”

Alec nods. “Actually, I killed him the first day - he wasn’t all that bright - but he bit me and, well,” he shrugs, “it must’ve triggered something and I manifested much earlier than is usual. I didn’t come back for almost a week because…” He falls silent. It’s too embarrassing to talk about.

Jace looks at him. “You were going through your first heat,” he realizes, his eyes widening.

Alec nods again, miserably. “It was… bad.” That’s all he’ll say about it. Now or ever.

Silence settles over them again. Jace’s staring at Alec as if he doesn’t even know him. Alec’s studiously looking away, praying to Raziel that this doesn’t break them, that they can still be friends.

When the silence becomes too much, Alec finally blurts out, “So, you see, I can’t be your parabatai. No alpha - or a beta, for that matter, no one! - would want an omega for a parabatai.”

“Bull. Shit!” Jace replies and his voice sounds remarkably calm. “I don’t care about that! And if you thought I would, then you don’t know me at all, Alec! I’m angry with you, yeah - for not telling me! And for doing this to yourself in the first place!”

When Alec opens his mouth, Jace cuts him off, “But I get it. I… do get it. I don’t like it, but if I were in your place, I would… probably do the same thing,” he admits in a much quieter voice. “And I still want you to be my parabatai,” he adds.

And Alec feels tears burning in his eyes. Tears of happiness - because Jace didn’t reject him - and tears of grief - because it’s never even occurred to Jace to offer Alec to become his alpha. There’s never been a chance for the two of them, not like that…

And in that moment, Alec decides to keep his other secret to himself forever, to never tell anyone.

Jace takes a step closer and rests his hand on Alec’s shoulder. “So,” he says with a small smile, “if I ask again, will you become my parabatai?”
Alec stares at him. “If anyone ever finds out what I’ve done…”

Jace runs his hand up Alec’s shoulder to squeeze the back of Alec’s neck. “We’ll deal with the consequences together. Like we always do. We’ll deal with everything together, even with that warlock woman of yours.”

Looking Alec deep in the eyes, Jace says, “I don’t like what you’re doing to yourself - frankly, it frightens me - but I promise I’ll do whatever I can to help you live the life you want. Alright?”

Alec can’t seem to breathe properly, his throat is so thick. Happiness and grief are at war inside him. Parabatai, that’s all he and Jace will ever be. But it’s much more than some people will ever have. It’s not a consolation prize, it’s just a different kind of a win.

“Alright,” Alec whispers.

And when Jace whoops in delight and hugs Alec tight, Alec allows himself to melt into his arms. He’ll always have this…
I took episodes 106 and 108 and smooshed them together while skipping 107 entirely. (Unbeta'd)

Jace’s on his way to pick up the ingredients Magnus asked for when he calls Alec - and Izzy picks up to tell him that there’s been an attack at the Institute. With a very different outcome.

“I'll be fine on my own!”

That’s the last thing Jace said to Alec. He said it in anger and he said it to hurt Alec. Now he would do anything to take it back, to undo it.

“I need your help!” Jace says into the phone the moment Alec picks up.

But it’s not Alec, it’s not him on the other side. It’s Izzy.

“We need you,” she says and she sounds anxious. “There’s been an attack at the Institute!”

And Jace freezes in the middle of the street, his errand, the things Magnus asked him to get for Luke, momentarily forgotten. His home was attacked. His parabatai was hurt! And where was he?

“Is Alec…?” he doesn’t dare to finish the sentence.

There’s a long pause. Then, “We don’t know yet,” Izzy whispers and there’re tears in her voice. “The Silent Brothers are with him now. Jace, we need you here. He needs you here.”

“I…” Jace stammers. He wants to go home, the need to be with his parabatai is almost choking him with its urgency - but... nobody can do more for Alec than the Silent Brothers. And if Magnus doesn’t get the things he asked for, Luke will die!

He tries to take a deep breath but his chest feels so tight his lungs refuse to cooperate. “I’ll be there as soon as I can,” he promises and hangs up on Izzy’s protests. Then he turns to Simon and snaps, “Come on, we have to hurry!”

And now he’s here, back at home.

Jace got Magnus the ingredients he needed and then he came straight back home, he ran like he’s never run before, and now he’s standing in the doorway of the infirmary, out of breath and shaking - and he can’t tear his eyes away from Alec who’s lying in one of the beds...

Later, Jace’ll watch the video of Alec and Hodge’s fight with the Forsaken and he’ll feel sick to his stomach seeing Alec get hit with the monster’s spiked club - it glances off Alec’s shoulder, hitting him on the side of the head with full force, and there’s blood, so much blood, a fine mist of it hanging in the air for a split of second, then Alec goes down and he doesn’t get up again! - and Jace’ll play that part over and over again, punishing himself, Where were you? Where the hell were...
But now he slowly walks up to the bed - he needs to be by Alec’s side but at the same time, he dreads it, too, because Alec’s unconscious, unmovable, his head’s swathed in bandages and the left side of his face’s black and blue and swollen, and it’s wrong, it’s so wrong!

Izzy’s sitting on the edge of the bed, holding her brother’s limp hand in hers, and she’s stroking the unbruised side of his face, whispering something to him.

“How is he?” Jace asks in a small, anxious voice.

Slowly, Izzy turns her head and glares at him darkly. “Nice of you to show up,” she mutters cuttingly.

Jace feels a sharp pang. He knows it was only logical to help Luke first, but his heart’s still telling him he should’ve been here, with his parabatai. “Izzy…” he whispers pleadingly.

She turns back to her brother. Alec’s head is turned slightly away from Jace and there’re tiny red spots on the bandages where blood managed to soak through. Jace knows it’s not good. The Silent Brothers must’ve used iratzes and other healing runes and magic, and if Alec still looks like this…

Izzy swallows hard and rubs her nose with the back of her hand. “He has a cracked skull. The Silent Brothers tried to stop the internal bleeding but…” Her voice breaks and she takes a shuddery breath. “They say that if he wakes up, it’s more than likely that there’ll be some brain damage…”

Jace can’t breathe. The words if he wakes up and brain damage echo loudly through his mind. His knees give out and he sinks down in the chair by Alec’s bed. His vision turns spotty and it’s all white noise in his ears. This can’t be happening, this can’t be true.

Blindly, he reaches out to take Alec’s free hand in his; his parabatai’s skin is dry and cold, so cold. Unconsciously, Jace starts rubbing Alec’s hand to warm it up as he stares at Alec’s face, at his closed, bruised eyes, willing him to wake up. He needs Alec to wake up. Please, wake up.

“What… what can we do?” Jace croaks up.

Izzy reaches out to smooth down Alec’s hair a little. Her voice’s unsteady when she replies, “All we can do is wait. And hope the runes will do their job.”

“We could ask Magnus Bane for help,” he suggests a little desperately.

Izzy nods. “Mom tried to call him already but he wasn’t picking up his phone.”

Because he was healing Luke, Jace knows. Because that’s where he was too, with Clary and Magnus, helping Luke. Instead of being here. It was the logical choice, the sound choice! Then why does it feel as if he did something wrong?

Because Jace should’ve been here! This is where he belongs, by Alec’s side! When did he lose sight of that?

“I’ll be fine on my own!”

How could he have ever said that? Thought that? Their bond’s dim, muffled, barely there now, as if Alec’s already halfway gone - and it’s the most terrible thing Jace has ever experienced. And if Alec…
Gripping Alec’s hand in both of his, Jace squeezes his eyes shut and begs silently, *Please, please, come back! Please, be alright! I’ll do better, I’ll never leave your side again. Just, please, don’t leave me, my parabatai, I can’t do this alone. Please, Alec…*

But Alec remains silent, motionless, lost to them.

They wait.
A pre-series Alec ficlet. I wrote this one a few days back, when I felt frustrated with pretty much everything. So… (Unbeta’d)

Alec has to work twice as hard to be half as good. Not everyone’s a “natural”.

“Come on, Alec!” Isabelle wheedles. “You can finish this tomorrow. There’s a party at Taki’s tonight!”

Jace leans against the table, crossing his arms over his chest, and smirks. “She’s right. You don’t have to work all the time! Live a little!”

Alec grits his teeth for a moment to push back his irritation and without looking up from his books, he replies, “I can’t. This needs to be done tonight. But you go ahead, have fun.”

Izzy huffs. She’s sixteen and she has the attitude to go with it. Usually, Alec doesn’t mind but tonight… He just wants her - both of them, actually - to go away so that he can finally be done with this assignment.

“Don’t be such a bore, Alec!” Jace teases. And then he flips the book that Alec’s been taking notes from shut, the smirk still firmly on his lips.

And that’s the last straw.

Alec gets up so fast that his chair makes a loud scraping sound against the floor, and he snaps sharply, “I said no!”

Izzy and Jace both straighten up, eyes wide, faces startled. They stare at him for a long moment, then Jace raises his hands in surrender. “Okay, grumpy,” he says, voice conciliatory. “We just thought–”

But Alec’s too angry now. “No, you did not! You never think - and you never listen! To anything I say!”

They blink, even more startled now, and Izzy says, “Alec–”

Making a cutting motion with his hand, Alec continues as if she hasn’t spoken, “I’m not as smart as you-” he looks at his sister- “or as strong or as… as agile as you-” he turns to his parabatai- “but everyone expects me to be both - as our parents never forget to remind me. I have to work twice as hard to be half as good as you two, and the last thing I want - or need! - is you making fun of how much work I have to put in and still be considered not good enough!”

Alec’s breathing hard now and Izzy and Jace are staring at him in shock. As if they’ve never seen him before.

“Alec–” Jace tries again, more gently this time.
But in that moment, Raj appears in the doorway of the library and says, “Alec, your mother wants to see you. Something about some reports you didn’t hand in, or something?”

Leaning his hands on the antique table, Alec hangs his head, closes his eyes and curses silently. He forgot about those. *Damn it.* “I’ll be right there,” he replies tiredly and Raj disappears again.

Silence settles over the room for a moment, then Izzy suggests reluctantly, “We could… we could help you with the reports.”

And for some reason that Alec can’t explain, it’s exactly the wrong thing to say. “I can do my own goddamn reports!” he explodes, slamming his hands against the table.

Seeing Izzy jump, Alec sighs. He straightens up and rubs the bridge of his nose. “Look, just…” He feels irritated and exhausted, and embarrassed by his outburst, and he has to go and deal with his mother, which he would rather do in private. “Go and have fun. I’ll see you in the morning.”

And then, without waiting for an answer, Alec picks up his books and papers and turns to go. Izzy and Jace, who’re staring after him wide-eyed and more than a little uncomfortable, are out of his mind before he’s out of the room.

*First talk to mother, then do the reports, then...*
“Alec?”

Alec looks over his shoulder at Magnus who stopped in the balcony’s doorway. Magnus looks a little wide-eyed and uncertain, careful, one hand touching the door frame. And Alec realizes what his lover must be thinking, having found Alec leaning against the stone railing, looking down at the street below. After what happened yesterday.

Straightening up, Alec smiles reassuringly. “I couldn’t sleep and I didn’t want to wake you. I thought that fresh air might help.”

Magnus’ shoulders relax a little. Still, while walking up to Alec, he watches him warily, ready to…. leap to Alec’s rescue if his brain becomes scrambled again, Alec guesses, feeling touched.

“What’s wrong?” Magnus asks softly. They’re both just in their sleeping clothes but the night’s balmy. “I admit I was a little surprised when you came back with Jace last night. Not that I wasn’t happy,” he adds hastily, “but I thought you would stay at the Institute, with your family, after the ceremony.”

Alec sighs and looks out over the city. “My family,” he says quietly. “I found out something that–” Out of the corner of his eye he sees Magnus turn away. “Sorry, I won’t drag you into it,” he changes tracks.

“No, no,” Magnus says and covers Alec’s hand with his on the stone railing. “That’s not it. I don’t mind when you talk about your family, really. Whatever you want to talk about, I’m here. I just wasn’t sure if I should be privy to your family matters, considering Maryse’s… opinion of me,” he finishes.

“But you are my family now, too, Magnus,” Alec replies softly.

When Magnus looks at him, startled, Alec smiles. “You are. And mother will have to get used to the idea because I will not hide my relationship with you like it’s some… some dirty secret.” He falls silent and when he continues, eyes on the sparkling lights of the city, his voice is very quiet, “I hate secrets.”

Smiling a little, Magnus squeezes his hand. “I know. And I promise, I’ll be always honest with you. You might not always like what I tell you,” he warns cheekily, “but I won’t ever lie to you.”

Alec turns his head to look at him and smiles too. “I know.”

Two days later, Alec follows Isabelle to Raphael Santiago’s flat, suspicious of what’s going on with her, and finds him biting her, drinking her blood. Finds out about her yin fen addiction, everything. And his world tilts on its axis because he missed this, he missed this completely.
And then *Magnus* walks in through the front door. Magnus who promised to be always honest with him. And who kept this from him, *knowing*! And Alec’s world cracks…
It isn’t until Clary yells, “Alec! Alec, no!” that Jace realizes what’s happening. Alec’s grief and despair filter through the haze of Jace’s own pain and they slam into him with such a force that it steals his breath away. Their parabatai bond’s flooded with suffocating blackness that clings to everything and pulls one down into its terrifying depths.

Jace’s eyes widen and for a second he can’t move because Alec’s emotions are weighing him down, turning his limbs heavy. It’s difficult to make sense of what’s seeping through to him from Alec’s side because it’s a mind-numbing, choking combination of guilt-sadness-unhappiness-pain-confusion. Jace has never felt anything like it.

Then Magnus moves and Jace follows, but the others get to the door first and the winding metal staircase leading up to the roof is too narrow to pass them, so Jace stumbles in the rear, his mind running in circles of whispered please-please-please, but he still doesn’t understand. What’s happening?

And then Jace arrives on the roof and his heart skips a beat because Alec’s on the ground, unconscious, and he hears what Magnus is saying and he’s seized with a dread so profound that his fingertips tingle.

Alec, Alec just tried to kill himself. He jumped! And if Magnus arrived a second later, Jace’s parabatai would now be dead. Alec would be dead.

Jace crouches down by Alec’s side and he doesn’t know what to do! He wants to hug him and take him away from all this, and the numbness of the bond now that Alec’s unconscious is almost worse than the previous flood of despair; now Jace can’t feel Alec at all and that’s just wrong, it’s wrong, especially considering what just happened! He needs to feel Alec, feel him alive!

But he can’t do anything about it - Magnus knocked Alec out for a reason! - but the need to protect his parabatai is so overwhelming that when Maryse touches Alec, Jace snaps at her because she just tried to kill Jace and he can’t trust her anymore, not around Alec, not when Alec’s unconscious, not when he can’t protect himself, so Jace has to guard him instead and… a tiny part of him is trying to tell him that it doesn’t make any sense but he isn’t listening. This is his parabatai!

And then he’s being pulled away by Simon - Simon, of all people! - and Jace’s so angry, so furious that he isn’t even sure what he’s yelling at the vampire, but his own hurt compounded with Alec’s despair and the cottony deafness of their bond now is taking over and–

Suddenly, it’s all over and silence settles over the roof. And they all look around in confusion because it feels as if someone flipped a switch, all the bad feelings are just… gone. What happened?
And Jace whispers something he hasn’t uttered for a very long time - “Mom?” - because he can’t believe he thought that Maryse would try to kill him and that he could attack her and there’s still a little boy in him trusting that Maryse - his mom, the only mom who ever counted! - would know what to do, what’s going on! But she looks as puzzled as he feels. What...?

Someone says Alec’s name and, yes, their bond’s back, Alec’s back, and his dark despair’s replaced with a confusion so deep it feels as if someone stuffed Jace’s brain with wool. But the bond’s back, it’s back and that’s the only thing that matters.

Jace drops down to Alec’s side again, trying to catch his parabatai’s eyes as Alec looks around in a daze. And Jace touches his knee in reassurance and he wants to ask Alec about what just happened, what drove Alec to this desperate action because this can’t - mustn’t! - happen again…

But it doesn’t come to that because all of a sudden, there’s a warlock on the loose and all their secrets - well, most of them - are revealed and Magnus’ story changes the game entirely…

And what happened back there, on the roof, is pushed aside, like most of their issues, it’s locked away and forgotten and… left to fester.
Restless

Chapter Summary

A parabatai scene, set in 208 between the party and the rune ceremony. Just a sweet little moment. (Unbeta'd)

“I thought you would be with Magnus,” Jace comments, letting his head loll to the side to watch his parabatai approach.

Alec’s bare feet make no sound on the paved roof terrace as he walks up to where Jace’s sitting, sprawled comfortably with his feet on the coffee table and his head resting on the back of the rattan couch.

“He’s exhausted. He used a lot of magic today and he needs rest,” Alec replies as he sits down next to Jace and copies his posture: head thrown back, feet on the low table. “But I couldn’t sleep and I didn’t want to disturb him.”

“Ah,” Jace says and looks up at the star-studded black sky. It’s a warm night in a city that never sleeps so faint traffic noises can still be heard in the streets down below despite the very late hour.

They both sit there, staring at the sky, their shoulders rubbing, and they’re quietly content just to be there together. Still, Jace can’t help but feel a certain numbness through their parabatai bond; the sweet happiness that radiated off Alec in the past few days is gone. And it makes Jace a little sad.

Still contemplating the blinking stars, Jace says softly, “It wasn’t your fault. Jocelyn, I mean. It wasn’t you.” And when Alec’s breath hitches a little, Jace turns his head to look at him. “It wasn’t.”

Alec’s quiet for a long while, eyes on the night sky, and when he responds, his voice’s just as soft, “People keep saying that and up here,” he taps his temple, “I know you’re right, I know how demon possession works, after all, but…” He sighs. “It’s like… it’s like there’s a disconnect between what I know and what I feel. And I have no idea what to do about it.”

Jace blinks slowly, still watching his parabatai. “Well, whatever you do, don’t do that again,” he says, waving a hand at the ledge. “Anything but that. Because there’re people who love and need you.” He pauses, then he adds in a quieter but much fiercer voice, “I need you!”

Alec turns his head to look at Jace. “And you have me,” he assures Jace. “You know that, right? Whatever happens, it won’t change anything between us. You have me. ‘If aught but death…”’

They stare at each other and after a long moment, both their breathing and their heartbeats match. Then Jace smiles, and looking up at the sky again, he pushes with his shoulder against Alec’s, rocking him a little. “I know.”

And Jace does know. Just sometimes, in the chaos of everything, he allows bad thoughts and dark feelings to overwhelm him - and he forgets. But then their bond comes back alive again, with strong emotions or Alec’s proximity, and he remembers that he’ll never be alone or unloved, as long as he has Alec.
Jace turns back to his parabatai, still smiling, and finds him fast asleep with his head tilted towards Jace. And Jace chuckles softly. Couldn’t sleep, my foot! he thinks, amused. He would bet that Alec sensed his restlessness and came up here to check on him. They do things like that…

Sighing, Jace decides to let his eyes rest for a moment, too. Max’s ceremony’s tomorrow and returning to the Institute will be… exhausting, painful. Luckily, he won’t be alone.

Without realizing it, he falls asleep.
A coda to 202, spoilers for 208. Maryse will always manage. She’s used to it.
(Unbeta’d)

Maryse stops pretending she doesn’t know about Robert’s affair when the fire message arrives; a fire message, nobody comes to tell them in person, that’s how far from grace the Lightwoods have fallen!

It is with deep regret that we must… your son, Alexander Lightwood… gravely injured while…

For a long while, Maryse just stands there, in the elegant entrance hall of the Lightwood mansion in Idris. Her hands are trembling, her heart’s beating so hard it hurts - and her mind’s completely blank. Impossible.

And then, she comes to a decision. Enough is enough. She opens the door and walks out, her high heels clicking furiously on the cobblestones, the fire message clutched tightly in her fist.

When Maryse knocks, a petite woman opens the door - she’s young and soft and everything that Maryse is not - and her eyes widen when she sees who’s standing on her doorstep. Yes, the wife has come a-knocking, dear!

“My husband, where is he?” Maryse asks coldly, and when the woman starts sputtering in protest, she cuts her off with a sharp gesture and even sharper words, “Stop making fools of us all. Where’s Robert?”

And then he’s there, the man she married, the father of her children, dressed in rumpled clothes and looking embarrassed, not meeting her eyes. “Maryse–” he says.

But she doesn’t let him finish. She slaps the crumpled fire message against his chest and holds it there till he takes it. “Maybe it’ll be of interest to you that your son is dying,” she says cuttingly. “Or maybe not,” she adds as her gaze swivels to the other woman who’s now shifting from foot to foot uncomfortably.

Robert pales and scrambles to read the message, eyes wide and frightened, but Maryse doesn’t wait for his answer, she turns and walks away, leaving her husband and his mistress standing there, on the threshold of their little… love nest.

If Robert follows her home, good. If not… Maryse will manage. She always does, after all.
They keep telling him that it wasn’t his fault, that it wasn’t he who killed Jocelyn - that he’s a victim, too…

But he knows better. Because he realized something they haven’t yet. But they will, he knows they will, any moment now.

The demon, it fed on negative emotions, it amplified them - and acted on them. And Alec… disliked Jocelyn deeply, for the havoc her mere existence caused in their ordered lives, for what she almost did to Jace, his parabatai!

He wanted her gone - and now she is gone.

The demon listened. And happily obliged.

It’s all his fault…
Maryse and Max are headed back home.

“… and whatever Valentine does, whatever he says - whatever anyone says,” Maryse adds firmly, one hand cupping Jace’s cheek, “never forget that you’re one of us, you’re a part of our family, you always have and you always will.”

Jace feels his eyes prickle, and when she moves in for a hug, he throws his arms around her - his mom - and clings to her, allowing himself to be rocked gently from side to side, just for a moment.

Maryse rubs his back affectionately, and when they move apart, her smile appears a little wobbly.

“Look at us,” she chuckles, “so emotional!”

He grins and replies a little hoarsely, “Don’t worry, I’ll go and punch someone just to prove how tough we are!”

Maryse laughs and pats his chest. Then she looks to where Alec’s crouching down and giving Max a warm goodbye hug. With a more serious expression, she requests quietly, “Watch out for him, okay? It worries me how easily he was driven to the edge. He’s not alright, no matter what he says.”

Jace looks in the same direction; Alec’s now laughing at something Max said. “I know,” he replies softly and his voice’s just as troubled as hers. When Maryse turns to him, he explains, “I can feel it through our bond. Something’s off about him but he’s refusing to talk.”

“Like someone else we both know?” She looks at him pointedly.

Pretending not to understand, Jace smiles crookedly. “I have no idea who you’re talking about…”
“Will it hurt?” Max asks in a small voice when Alec drops down into a crouch in front of him to straighten his tie.

Alec pauses and looks at him. “The rune drawing?” Max nods and Alec replies truthfully, “Yes, it will. It always hurts but never for long and you get used to it with time. The pain’s there to remind us that power doesn’t come for free.”

Max stares at his feet for a long while, then he raises his eyes to his brother and inquires curiously, “Which one hurt you the most?”

Alec thinks about it for a moment. “My parabatai rune, I think, because it reaches much deeper than all the others, right into my soul,” he explains, tapping Max on the chest with his forefinger.

“And was it worth it? If drawing it hurt so much…?”

Alec doesn’t hesitate for a second. “Yes, it was definitely worth it,” he replies with a smile. “I would never take it back, any of my runes - but especially not that one. They all made me who I am today.”

“Do you think I’ll be like you one day?” Max murmurs in an uncertain, anxious voice, looking down again.

“No,” Alec says, and when Max’s head shoots up and his eyes grow wide, Alec tweaks his nose and with a big grin he adds, “You’ll be better!”
Chapter Summary

I don’t know, I don’t know *hands* Blame it on too much anime during my impressionable youth. And it still doesn’t sound right *shakes the thing* (Unbeta’d)

They recover the Soul Sword. Now they have to hide it somewhere.

“I don’t like this plan, at all,” Magnus mutters, leafing through his spell book.

“Need I remind you that it was your plan?” Jace points out, voice dripping with sarcasm, as he hefts the Soul Sword in his hands.

Magnus glares at him. “It was just a thought, not a plan! I didn’t think that Alec - that anyone! - would actually consider it!”

Jace glares back. “As if you didn’t know Alec!”

The man in question rolls his eyes. “It’s a good plan!” he states as he pulls off first his leather jacket, then his long-sleeved black shirt. “We all agreed on that. The Soul Sword cannot be destroyed, so we need to hide it somewhere Valentine won’t be able to get to it - where he won’t even think to look. It’s a good plan!” he reiterates, dropping his shirt on the couch.

Magnus and Jace exchange an uneasy look.

“Come on, let’s do it!” Alec prompts impatiently.

Sighing, Magnus snaps his spell book shut and sets it aside, and throwing his arms up, he raises the wards around his loft, just to be sure no one will find out what they’re up to or all their efforts will be in vain.

Then Magnus takes a step closer to Alec and stops in front of him. “Are you absolutely sure about this?” he asks for the umpteenth time.

Alec rolls his eyes. Again. “Magnus…!”

“Fine, don’t mind me and my very valid concerns,” Magnus grumbles.

Positioning himself behind Alec, he grips Alec’s shoulder with his left hand and rests his right one against Alec’s spine, right in the center of Alec’s back - and Alec shivers a little. “You okay?” Magnus asks immediately.

“Your hands are cold,” Alec replies, a little amused.

Magnus’ lips twitch. “Alright,” he mumbles, taking a deep breath, “let’s do this.”

And then he pours his magic into Alec, all blue and strong and powerful, and Alec gasps. His skin prickles and his heart stutters as if he touched a live wire. Jace’s watching him with a worried frown now and Alec smiles at him a little in reassurance.
After a moment or two, Magnus looks over Alec’s shoulders at Jace, and nods. “Do it,” he tells Jace.

Jace lifts the Soul Sword with both hands, steadying it - and then, with its sharp tip resting lightly against Alec’s breastbone, he pauses.

“Alec…” he whispers, looking straight at his parabatai. His eyes are anxious, afraid even - if this goes sideways...


Without breaking eye contact, Jace plunges the Soul Sword into Alec’s chest.

Alec squeezes his eyes shut and arches his back. The feeling’s indescribable. Burning hot and freezing cold, it steals his breath. But strangely, it doesn’t hurt.

“Alec?” Jace exclaims, alarmed.

But Alec shakes his head and with a great effort, he forces himself to open his eyes and look at his parabatai. “O-kay,” he wheezes.

Jace stares at him, wide-eyed, the Soul Sword in his hands half buried in Alec’s chest. Alec wonders dimly what Jace must be sensing through their bond…

“Jace!” Magnus snaps, voice strained. The amount of magic he’s pouring into his lover is taking its toll on him.

Jace sets his jaw and with a renewed determination he leans against the Soul Sword, pushing it deeper and deeper into Alec’s chest. It’s a surprisingly easy and smooth move, Alec’s body’s offering no resistance, and when Alec looks down, there’s no wound, no blood, only a shining white light swallowing the blade. And then the guard. And the hilt…

And then, the Soul Sword’s gone and Jace has his hand pressed against Alec’s chest, his palm against Alec’s naked flesh. There are no fireworks, no clasp of thunder, nothing but a slightly burning sensation.

“It’s done!” Jace whispers, awed, staring down at Alec’s chest.

Gasping, Magnus lets go of Alec and his own magic and staggers back, breathing harshly.

Slowly, almost reluctantly, Jace lifts his hand from Alec’s chest and looks at his palm. There’s a mark on it, almost like a rune, sword-shaped - the same mark that’s on Alec’s breastbone, peeking through the dusting of dark hair there. They both look old, faded. Alec runs his fingers over it in wonder.

Magnus touches his shoulder and turns Alec around so that he can take a look at him. “How do you feel?” he asks, anxiously.

Under the watchful eyes of his lover and his parabatai, Alec takes a deep breath - and drops down on the couch. “Heavy,” he admits, bemused, rubbing his chest.

“Magnus!” Jace snaps at the warlock, glaring daggers, as if it were his fault, and sits down next to Alec.

“Well, what did you expect?” Magnus snaps right back defensively. “I did warn you, didn’t I?
Carrying an angelic artifact inside you isn’t like… like,” he waves his hands, “having the hiccups! He’ll need time to adjust.”

Still rubbing his chest, Alec looks up at him. “So, now, if we need the Sword, all Jace has to do is touch his mark to mine and he’ll be able to pull it out of me?”

Magnus sits down on the coffee table in front of the couch and gently moves Alec’s hand aside to inspect the sword shaped mark on his chest. “Yes. But I would not recommend making it a regular thing,” he admonishes worriedly, probing the mark with dexterous fingers. “Your body is not a scabbard!”

Alec covers Magnus’ hand with his and presses it against his chest. “Thank you.”

The corners of Magnus’ mouth quirk up, but then he mutters, seemingly annoyed, “I still can’t believe you talked me into this.”

Rolling his eyes, Jace reminds him, “It was your idea, Magnus!”

“A thought, it was a thought!” Magnus objects heatedly.

And Alec smiles, feeling the Soul Sword thrumming gently inside him.
Parabatai No More

Chapter Summary

So, a death story. Jace dies and is brought back. Alec’s… not. A TMI story set in the 3rd book, after the battle on Brocelind Plain. (Unbeta'd)

They welcome them as heroes, Clary and him, they killed Valentine, after all.

Clary’s family’s there but the Lightwoods… Jace keeps looking around but he can’t see them anywhere. He thinks it’s odd. And a little bit disappointing. He would never admit it aloud, of course, but he wants his family. After what he’s been through, he just… wants his family.

Grabbing one of the people who came to congratulate him, an older, slightly graying woman, Jace asks about them, about the Lightwoods.

The woman sobers immediately. “They’ll be at the Gard with the fallen, I’m sure,” she replies in a sad voice. “Their son died.”

Jace nods, grief resting heavily on his shoulders. “Yeah, I know about Max…”

Frowning a little, the woman shakes her head. “Not him, their eldest, Alec. He fell on Brocelind Plain.”

Breath hitches in Jace’s throat and he grows cold. “What…?” he whispers.

No. No, that can’t be true. Jace would know. Alec’s his parabatai. Jace would know if Alec were dead. His parabatai rune, it would… it would bleed, hurt. He would know!

There must be something in his eyes, in his face, because the older woman stammers something and retreats. He doesn’t pay her any mind, though, too busy tearing off his shirt, to check his parabatai rune - that’s not there!

Jace stares at the place where the rune used to be, for years. Now there’s… nothing there. Not even a scar. The skin’s unblemished, as if there’s never been any rune there in the first place.

Impossible!

He reaches out, searching for the connection that’s been a part of him ever since he spoke the words of the sacred oath - but there’s nothing. Not even a hole left where it used to be. He didn’t even realize until now. There’s nothing. Nothing!

Jace sets off, running like the wind, heedless of Clary calling after him. He’s sprinting through the streets of Alicante, past both crying and laughing people, bloody survivors of a terrible battle, and he’s pushing them aside in his haste to get to…

There. The Gard, the square, the… bodies. Rows and rows and rows of them, covered with white sheets, some surrounded by family members, some resting there all alone, with no one left to cry for them. Jace didn’t realize that so many Nephilim died on Brocelind Plain…

Then, when the crowd parts, Jace sees them, Maryse and Robert, they stand close, holding hands,
and he heads towards them, his fear driving him forward fast, fast, faster. And when he reaches
them, calling out their names, they turn to him with their eyes reddened from crying, faces pale and
tear-stained, and Isabelle throws herself at him, hugging him tight and hiding her face in his
shoulder, sobbing…

But Jace’s attention is on Alec.

Magnus Bane’s sitting there, on the cold, hard pavement, with Alec’s head in his lap, gently
carding his fingers through Alec’s dark hair. He seems broken, numb, tired to the bone, and his
lover…

Alec’s so very, very still. His face’s gray, his eyes are closed and his bloodless lips slightly parted -
he’s gone, unmistakably gone. Alec’s gone. Impossible.

As if in a dream - or rather in a nightmare - Jace extricates himself from Izzy’s arms and falls to his
knees by Alec’s side, reaching out to take his parabatai’s hand - the hand that slipped from
underneath the bloodstained sheet - in his. It’s cold, a dead thing, resting limply in his. No.

“He was glorious,” Magnus whispers in a thick voice, explaining without being prompted to, while
gently stroking Alec’s cheek with his knuckles. “I’ve never seen anyone fight like he did back
there, on the Plain. And then…then he just stopped, in the middle of a fight, he just froze. I don’t
know why. I thought that something happened to you, that he felt it, but…” He shakes his head
forlornly. “You’re here, so it must’ve been something else.”

Magnus traces Alec’s cheekbone with his fingertips as if trying to imprint it into his memory. He
still hasn’t looked up yet. “And the enemy took advantage of it, stabbed him right through the
chest. I was a fraction of a second too late to save him. Alexander died before he hit the ground. I
didn’t even get to say goodbye,” he adds in a hoarse whisper.

Jace just stares. He stares at Alec’s hand in his, at Alec’s face. Magnus’ words - I thought that
something happened to you - echo in his mind. Something did happen to Jace. He died, Valentine
murdered him - and Alec sensed it. And it got him killed.

When Jace set off after Valentine, he knew he would most likely die. And he made peace with it.
He would’ve gladly died if it meant taking Valentine down with him. And he did die. And
Valentine died, too. And then Jace was brought back by Raziel himself, on Clary’s request…

… if aught but death part thee and me. Jace’s death. Alec’s death. And though Jace was reborn, it
was without his parabatai bond. Because Alec was gone by then, he followed his parabatai into
death - but whereas Jace came back… Alec did not. If aught by death…

Jace squeezes Alec’s hand - his strong and gentle hand with long, calloused fingers, now so cold
and limp - and cradles it against his hitching chest; Jace hasn’t even realized he started crying at
some point. Alec…

Alec’s gone, he died and Jace didn’t even say goodbye to him last night - was it really only last
night? - all he did was leave him a note. A note! Because Jace thought that he would die. And he
did. And he should’ve stayed dead. Instead, he’s here. And Alec is not. And Jace doesn’t even get
to experience the agony of a broken parabatai bond. Not even that. Because there’s nothing left of
what they’ve been to each other. It’s as if their connection never existed at all, didn’t count at all.

And as Jace kneels there, bent over brokenly with his eyes clenched shut in despair, he thinks,
Raziel, why did you bring me back if you left him there?
Whom I Like

Chapter Summary

A missing scene from 210. Spoilers, of course! (Unbeta'd)

Magnus and Madzie and the man they both like lots and lots.

Magnus is about to ring the bell at Catarina’s door when he hesitates. He doesn’t want to traumatize Madzie further but he needs to know. He just… needs to know.

Crouching down, he smiles at the little girl gently. “Madzie, may I ask you something?”

She stares at him for a moment, then nods mutely.

Magnus tries to take a deep breath but his chest’s tight. “There was someone at the Institute tonight, a man. I wonder if you’ve maybe seen him?”

He lifts his hand and lets a picture of Alec appear above his palm, bluish and holograph-like. Alec’s his usual serious self in it and so lovely and handsome that it takes Magnus’ breath away, as always.

Madzie looks at the picture. And keeps looking. And Magnus is becoming a little desperate, not really knowing if he wants the girl to have encountered Alec back there, at the Institute, or not. Because if she did… Magnus saw the dead bodies. Just the thought that Alec’s might be among them, somewhere, in one of the halls…

And then Madzie nods. And Magnus’ world just… stops. No. Please, no.

“I pushed him into an elevator and sent him up.” She tilts her head to the side and her lips quirk up slightly. “He liked my gills. I couldn’t let him die.”

Relief hits Magnus so hard he feels slightly faint. He staggers a little and sits down hard on the cold stone steps. Madzie didn’t kill Alec. She didn’t kill him. Magnus’ eyes prickle a little.

She stares at him. “You like him, too?” she asks innocently.

Magnus nods jerkily. “Yes,” he croaks out. “I like him a lot.”

Once again, Madzie’s lips quirk up a little. “Good. He’s nice.”

And Magnus smiles back, replying softly, “Yes, Madzie, he is.”
“You do realize I know all your hideouts, right?” Alec comments dryly as he climbs into the bell tower and lets the wooden trapdoor fall shut with a dull thump.

Jace, who’s sitting on the dusty floor, leaning against the stone wall with his arms resting on his bent knees, sighs and rolls his eyes. But he’s not really annoyed. If he didn’t want Alec to find him, he would’ve left the Institute.

Alec starts circling the large bronze colored bell hanging mutely in the middle of the small room, unused for ages now. “So… did you tell her?”

Jace doesn’t respond. He just stares fixedly ahead with his jaw clenched tight.

“Thought so,” Alec mutters and rubs his breastbone hard with the heel of his hand.

Jace glances at his parabatai and away again.

Alec takes the next few steps in silence, and when he finishes his circle and stops in front of Jace, he looks down at him. “Why not?”

Sighing, Jace thumps his head against the wall lightly and closes his eyes. “Because she’s happy. Simon makes her happy. I don’t want to turn everything upside down for her again. Her happiness means everything to me,” he adds in a whisper.

Alec crouches down in front of him and touches Jace’s arm to steady himself. Jace opens his eyes and looks at him. “But what about your happiness?” Alec points out gently.

Jace turns away. He can feel Alec’s concern through their bond, it’s warm but heavy, worry always is.

Alec squeezes Jace’s arm and waits till Jace looks at him again. “Is it wise to keep this from her?” he asks in a soft voice.

When Jace doesn’t respond, Alec sighs and continues, “Look, how would you feel if someone you trust kept something so important from you?”

And Jace remembers all the things he still hasn’t told Alec and winces inwardly. Jace knows that they need to talk, about everything that happened, but he’s… afraid. Afraid of being judged by Alec in particular, even though deep down he knows it’s highly unlikely. But what if… what if…

Jace would never live through losing his parabatai’s unwavering support and devotion. Luke might have survived even Valentine’s betrayal, but Jace’s not so strong. Alec’s his rock. He can’t stand having Alec mad at him, let alone losing his trust.

And Clary… What if Jace told her the truth - and she still chose Simon? And she probably would,
she wouldn’t simply break up with Simon, drop him, even if her and Jace’s situation suddenly changed, she’s not so flighty. Jace knows that she must have genuine feelings for Simon or she wouldn’t be with him, she wouldn’t do that to him. And she’s loyal to a fault, it’s one of the things that Jace… likes… about her.

No, it’s better this way.

Jace looks Alec straight in the eyes. “Sometimes, we keep secrets to protect the people we love.”

Alec’s eyes become sad. “And sometimes, we keep them to protect ourselves from hurt,” he replies with more understanding than Jace thought possible.

And when Alec gets up and leaves, after touching Jace’s shoulder in comfort, Jace feels suddenly so cold, as if his parabatai took all the warmth with him.
Allowed to Cry

Chapter Summary

Just a little Izzy & Alec drabble set after the mid-season finale. (Unbeta'd)

The withdrawal from the vampire venom is as horrible as she feared.

Luckily, she doesn’t have to face it alone…

Alec carries her to the bathroom and holds her hair back while she throws up. He helps her into the shower and changes her sweat-soaked bed sheets. He holds her up while she sips the potion that Magnus brewed to ease her pain. And he lets her hold his hand, crush it even, when the cramps become too much…

And cradled in the safety of her big brother’s arms, Isabelle Lightwood, always so strong and proud, allows herself to cry.
Reparations

Chapter Summary

A what-if story set after 210. Their attack on Hotel Dumort comes back to bite them in the ass, courtesy of Camille. (Unbeta'd)

“Get out of my way or I’ll introduce my knee to your groin!” Isabelle snaps as she pushes past the Shadowhunter guard and enters the weaponry.

“Izzy,” Alec admonishes her, looking over his shoulder. “He’s just doing his job.”

“To hell with him and his job!” she all but yells, storming up to the counter, and looking down at the weapons Alec’s been laying out there - his bow and quiver, his Seraph Blade, all his knives - she breathes out in disbelief, “You can’t be serious. They can’t be serious!”

“They are,” Alec replies gravely, adding yet another knife to the pile - and then his stele, though he hesitates a little before he sets it down very carefully.

“The Clave cannot punish you for our attack on Hotel Dumort! We only did our job!” Izzy protests angrily.

Sighing, Alec rests his hands on the counter. “We activated the Soul Sword and we allowed Valentine to kill innocent Downworlders. The Clave needs to make reparations - this is just the first step.”

Izzy hits the counter with her fist. “It’s not reparations that Camille wants, it’s revenge! How can they even listen to her demands? She’s a criminal! She’s a murderer!”

Alec looks at her. “That doesn’t change the fact that the objections she raised against our attack were justified. The mission was unsanctioned.”

“She kidnapped Simon! She held a mundane hostage!” Isabelle exclaims.

“Yes,” Alec agrees calmly, “and how many of her people did we kill? They only followed her orders.”

“We, Alec! We!” she reminds him forcefully. “All of us should be punished, then. Not just you!”

He shakes his head decisively. “It was my mission. I could have - should have - said no—”

“You did, if I remember it correctly!” she interrupts him.

“—but I did not stop you. The responsibility is mine,” he finishes, then he looks at her and his eyes soften a little. “That’s what leaders do, Izzy. They take responsibility for their people’s actions.”

She stares up at him with heartbreak in her eyes. “But three months in the City of Bones? Alec, it’ll destroy you. It’ll ruin your career, if nothing else!”

He looks away.
Izzy takes a step closer and lowers her voice. “You do realize that Camille only did it to punish Magnus through you, right? She doesn’t care about her clan, she never did. She’s only after petty revenge. Don’t play into her cards. Don’t simply accept this.”

Alec clenches his jaw, then he looks at her. His eyes are hard - but there’s pain in them, too. Unhappiness. “I have no choice, Iz. The Clave’s decision is final. And they made it very clear that it can be just me, or all of us in that cell.”

He takes a deep breath and covers her hand with his. Then he tries to smile a little in reassurance. He fails miserably. “It’ll be alright.”

She turns her hand and squeezes his. “Alec…”

Then there’s a commotion at the door as footsteps echo in the hallway outside - the guards have come to take Alec away.

“Listen, Iz,” Alec whispers urgently, “I wasn’t allowed to call anyone, Magnus or even Jace! I…” His voice falters and suddenly, she can see just how desperate he is, how sad - and terrified.

“Could you tell them? Could you…?”

“Of course, I will, I’ll explain everything to them,” she promises immediately. “And we’ll do everything we can to get you out, I swear!”

“Just, don’t do anything rash,” he pleads with her. “That’s exactly that what got us into this mess. It’s just three months. I can handle three months in prison.”

Izzy throws her arms around him and hugs him tight, hanging on to Alec - her big brother! - for dear life. He hugs her back just as tight, clenching his eyes, as they rock from side to side gently.

“Alexander Lightwood?” a voice says from the doorway; a detached voice that belongs to a man dressed all in black, the commander of the prison guards. “You have to come with us now, sir.”

Alec lets go of Izzy and bending down, he kisses her forehead. “Three months, Iz,” he whispers, trying to reassure both her and himself. “I’ll see you in three months.”

And then he’s gone, escorted under guard to the City of Bones.
Good at Breaking Things

Chapter Summary

Yet another mushy parabatai scene set after the season finale. I just really love writing about them simply talking and being, well, mushy. Sue me. (Unbeta’d)

When Alec opens the door of Jace’s room and stalks in, up to the bed, and just stops there with his hands on his hips, Jace meets his glare with a dead stare - and a swig from the bottle of cheap whiskey that he bought in the liquor store down the street.

Alec huffs and rolls his eyes. He walks around the bed, grabs the bottle out of his parabatai’s hand and sets it down hard on the desk by the wall, well out of Jace’s reach.

Then, much to Jace’s surprise, Alec climbs into the bed, too, and settles down next to him, against the headboard and with his legs outstretched, his shoulder rubbing against Jace’s. And then… he just sits there, in the dark, not saying a word. Waiting.

In the end, it’s Jace who breaks the silence.

“I killed them,” he whispers hoarsely into the heavy silence.

“No, you did not,” Alec answers just as quietly but very gently.

Jace growls belligerently. “Maybe I didn’t burn them to death myself, but I just as well might have. I activated the sword. I let Valentine take it. I let him do that! That’s all on me!”

Alec’s silent for a very long time and Jace fully expects to be judged - he did almost kill Alec’s lover, after all! - but when Alec finally speaks, what he says comes completely out of left field.

“Do you blame Madzie for all the Shadowhunters she killed? They were our friends, our colleagues…”

Jace frowns. “Of course not!” he replies immediately, irritated. “Valentine tricked her! She thought she was helping save her nana.”

Alec’s response to that is a pointed silence, punctuated by a raised eyebrow.

And then Jace gets it. “No. No, no, no, you can’t compare Madzie’s situation and mine. They’re completely different!” he protests adamantly.

“Are they?” Alec asks mildly.

“Of course they are!” Jace snaps. “She’s a child!”

“And you’re his child,” Alec points out.

“I’m not!” Jace objects sharply, tensing all over. “I’m not Valentine’s son!”

“Maybe not by blood, but he raised you since birth, Jace,” Alec reminds him and his voice’s almost tender. “For ten years, he was the only father you knew.”
Jace’s mouth twists and he shakes his head firmly. “That’s no excuse. I should’ve known better exactly because he raised me. I know him. I know all his tricks. I know what he’s capable of! I should’ve known better,” he reiterates.

Alec sighs and bumps their shoulders together lightly. “Hey,” he whispers and he waits until Jace turns his head towards him. “I know you’ll have a hard time accepting this but you’re not all-knowing - nobody is - and hindsight’s always 20-20.”

Jace swallows hard. His eyes burn and his throat’s thick. “I only wanted to help.”

Alec reaches across and pats Jace on the chest. “I know.”

“Why do I have to destroy everything I touch?” Jace asks unhappily.

This question has been haunting him ever since he buried his dead falcon in the garden and now there’s so much despair, so much self-hatred in his voice that it makes even him cringe.

“You do not!” Alec protests vehemently. “I know it probably feels that way right now, with everything that happened, but you do not, Jace. Trust me on this.” Then, after a pause, he adds, “I am still here, am I not? You still have me.”

But Jace remembers, he remembers the expression on Alec’s face when he thought that Magnus died. Yes, Jace might not lose Alec physically - even that’s highly uncertain, though, considering - but that doesn’t mean he can’t break him. Jace’s so good at breaking things…

There must be something in his eyes, in his face, reflecting his fears, because Alec’s expression softens. “You won’t lose me,” he assures Jace affectionately. “I’ll always be here, till we’re both old and gray and all this feels like a long forgotten memory. I promise. Okay?”

And maybe this makes Jace needy but he really, really longed to hear that, to have this one constant in his life confirmed. “Okay,” he sighs, “okay.”

Tiredly, Jace leans against Alec’s shoulder and closes his eyes. His demons might still be lurking in the shadowy corners of his mind, but for the moment, he basks in the sunlit warmth of his parabatai bond. Okay.
I’m sorry about this! TW: death story and very, VERY unhappy to that! (Unbeta'd)

What if Jace did have demon blood?

Jace’s touch, tainted with demon blood, destroys the Soul Sword.

He dies but that’s not the worst part. Not once did it occur to him namely what the destruction of the Soul Sword would do to his parabatai. To their bond. To Alec’s soul, not just to his own.

Now, the ghost of Jace Wayland haunts the old church, forever shackled to it, howling in pain over a loss too profound to bear, while Alec Lightwood’s still alive, his heart’s still beating - but his soul’s gone, burned, his body’s hollow.

Jace never meets his parabatai again, he never finds peace.
When Magnus returns home that evening, he finds Alec there. “Everything alright?” he asks as he hangs up his coat by the door and enters the living room.

Where he freezes in midstep. Because Alec’s sitting on the couch… playing with Magnus’ kris! He’s turning the blade over and over and over in his hands, its tarnished metal in stark contrast with his pale skin.

Magnus glances up at Alec’s face, then back down at his hands. “Alec?” he asks uncertainly.

Alec doesn’t look at him. “Hm?” he replies absently.

Taking a measured step forward, Magnus inquires slowly, “Did something happen?”

“Hm,” Alec responds in an almost dreamy voice, still staring down at the blade that he keeps turning and turning in his hands. “Camille escaped from prison. With Iris’ help. They both fled from Idris back here, to New York.”

Breath hitches in Magnus’ throat and he looks up sharply, away from the kris and at Alec’s face; there’s an almost vacant expression there. “When?”

The blade keeps turning. “Yesterday,” Alec mumbles and blinks slowly; he has yet to look up. “We were sent after them, me and my men, and we found them easily—” He pauses, frowning, and the blade stops, too. “That was rather odd. We shouldn’t have— Hm…”

Then his brow smooths and the blade starts turning again. “We found them easily, in an old apartment building downtown,” he continues as if nothing happened, as if he didn’t pause at all.

Magnus narrows his eyes as anger, as white hot rage bubbles up inside him and sparkling blue magic pools in the palm of his hand. No!

“We cornered them and… and…” The blade almost slips from Alec’s fingers but he blinks fast and catches it deftly, setting it in motion again. “They had a message for you.”

Magnus readies himself. “What message?” he asks with false calm.

The blade stops and Alec finally looks at him; his eyes are blank, his face is blank and his voice’s completely void of emotions when he says, “It’s all your fault!”

And then he stabs himself in the throat with the kris.

Or at least he attempts to do so because Magnus’ hand shoots out and his magic wraps itself around Alec’s forearm, his hand, the blade itself, stopping the sharp point a bare hair’s breadth away from Alec’s vulnerable skin.
With a growl, Magnus pulls and tears the weapon out of Alec’s hand and sends it flying across the room where it embeds itself in the wooden paneling with a loud thump. And then, he’s at his lover’s side because Alec’s slumping, barely conscious now that the spell was broken.

“Alexander!” Magnus exclaims as he drops to his knees in front of Alec. Gently, he catches Alec by the shoulders and then pulls him into his arms, hugging him tight. So close, it was so close!

“What happened?” Alec mumbles into Magnus’ shoulder a moment later when he comes to again, then he pulls back and blinks at his lover in confusion. “Magnus? What...?” He looks around. “What am I doing here?”

Magnus takes Alec’s face in his hands to check his eyes. “What’s the last thing you remember?” he asks kindly.

Alec frowns. “We were searching for Camille and Iris - they escaped from Idris, you know? We actually managed to find them quite easily which I found rather odd. Iris is a warlock, one would think she would cover their tracks better. But we had to go and check it out anyway and…” He looks at Magnus, distressed. “I don’t remember what happened then.”

Magnus’ expression softens even further and turns a little pained. “They put a spell on you, a compulsion - to get back at me.”

Alec blinks at him. “What spell?”

“They ordered you to come back here, take my kris - and kill yourself with it in front of me,” Magnus explains quietly with his heart still clenched in agony. His hands settle on Alec’s forearms; he has to keep touching Alec, just to make sure that Alec’s alive and unharmed, unlike Magnus’ mother...

Alec glances over Magnus’ shoulder, at the blade embedded deeply in the paneling. “I gather you stopped me?” It’s not really a question.

Magnus just nods.

“And my men?” Alec asks carefully.

“They’re probably dead, my love, I’m sorry,” Magnus whispers, squeezing Alec’s forearms.

Alec closes his eyes for a moment. When he opens them again, he says firmly, “I have to see for myself, I have to check.”

Magnus nods again, understanding perfectly. “I’ll go with you.”

“You don’t have to--” Alec protests, but Magnus cuts him off.

“I’ll go with you,” he repeats and his voice leaves no room for argument.

Alec stares at him for a long moment, then he nods. “Alright,” he yields, then he gets up slowly and with Magnus’ help. Leaning heavily against his lover to steady himself, Alec asks, “And will you tell me what this was all about?” He waves a hand at the kris.

Magnus turns and looks at the weapon. He shudders.

“Yes, Alexander,” Magnus promises, pulling Alec closer, “I’ll tell you everything.”
“You can’t be serious,” Isabelle breathes out in disbelief. “A divorce?”

Alec’s leaning against the window frame with his arms crossed over his chest, staring outside. He’ll miss this, the view. They both loved it, he and Jace. But even now, the flat doesn’t feel like home anymore. Not without Jace here, at his side.

“Yes,” Alec responds in a quiet voice, not turning to his sister. “He asked me to let him go.”

And Alec… Alec agreed, though he almost died of heartbreak right then and there, at the restaurant. He hasn’t felt a pain so terrible since the car accident, since Jace almost died on him.

“But… but why?” Izzy stutters, still in shock. “I thought that everything was on the right track, that you’ve been working on your relationship, figuring it all out, the amnesia thing.”

_The amnesia thing._ The third entity in their marriage that’s been slowly destroying them, one good thing at a time, for months now, ever since Jace woke up in that hospital bed, bruised and broken, not remembering the last five years of his life - his husband included.

Alec was crushed but considering the doctors told him at first that Jace would not survive his injuries, he thought… he thought that it wasn’t as _bad_ as it could’ve been, that they could simply rebuild their life, start anew. _How naive of him…_ 

Shrugging, Alec stares at the people rushing back and forth on the sidewalks down below. “I thought so, too,” he admits very quietly - the only hint at how much all this is hurting him that he will allow himself.

“So… what happened?” Izzy asks carefully.

Alec’s quiet for a very long time, fighting down the bitterness that’s welling up in him. When he finally speaks, there’s almost no trace of it in his voice. “Jace fell in love again,” he replies, “just not with me.”

“What?”

He swallows hard because his throat’s getting thick and his eyes are starting to prickle. But he won’t cry in front of his sister, _he will not!_ “Her name’s Clary and Jace met her at the hospital. She was there to visit her mom, she’s in a coma or something, I don’t know.” Alec shrugs again. “And Jace… fell in love with her.”

Izzy’s staring at him - Alec can feel her eyes on him! - and when she speaks again, he can hear how shaken he is; no wonder, he and Jace used to be the epitome of an undying love for Izzy, the perfect example of what a marriage should embody: love and trust and friendship.
“But…” she starts but then she just leaves the word hanging there, not knowing how to continue.

Yes, but. That’s how Alec responded last night when Jace asked him for divorce over dinner. Alec thought… Alec thought that they were doing well, considering, that Jace invited him out on a date, maybe as the first step to patching up their marriage. But.

“I’m sorry, Alec, I’m so sorry, you’re a great guy, you’re really amazing, but…”

But. But Jace doesn’t love him anymore. Jace doesn’t even feel attracted to him anymore, not like that. Jace has never been attracted to men in general, Alec was his one exception to the rule and Jace wore his heteroflexible label - “Ha! I knew there had to be a term for people like me! I’m all… flexible for you!” - with pride. Apparently, not anymore.

Now, it’s all in ruins, their marriage, Alec’s life… And Alec can’t even be angry with Jace, that’s… that’s probably the worst thing. Because he can sense how distraught Jace is, how unhappy, because he hates causing Alec pain, he always did, at least that didn’t change.

And because none of it is Jace’s fault. He doesn’t remember all they’ve been through together, all the pain and suffering that brought them close - like Alec’s younger brother dying of leukemia or Jace’s stepfather ending in jail - and all the baby steps that made them the couple they were before the accident. It’s all gone now. And it can’t be relearned, it has to be lived through…

“But, Alec,” Izzy whispers in tears, “he’s your husband, he’s your Jace!”

And now Alec finally looks at her and his eyes are empty and his voice’s hollow when he replies, “No. My husband died in that car crash, Izzy. Whoever this Jace is, he’s not mine anymore.”

A happy - or at least hopeful - ending can be found here, written by the amazing write-yourself!
Set in the 110!AU. I noticed that Jace and Alec weren’t close in that AU, they never once talked. And I wondered why. Set in the same ‘verse as my Malec ficlet A Late Night Talk (Chapter 348), the same setting, just told from Jace’s POV. (Unbeta’d)

Following the party at the Institute - from which he remembers very little, even though he did not get drunk, no matter what the others think! - Jace’s plagued with strange dreams of a world that he knows does not exist, of a world where he’s some kind of an angelic warrior - a tattooed, leather-wearing and sword-wielding warrior! - and where all his friends are supernatural creatures.

Jesus!

He doesn’t talk about it with anyone, not even with Clary - especially not with her - because he doesn’t want them to think that he’s some kind of a nutjob or something.

He wonders what it says about him that it’s not the demons or the swords or even the magic that weirds him out the most, no, it’s the close relationship that he seems to have with Alec Lightwood in this imagined world of his. He wonders why his mind conjured a literal soul-bond between him and his one-time best friend…

Still, he would hand-wave it all, put it down to his brain’s way of dealing with some lasting issues, if it weren’t for that one dream, a late night glimpse into this fantasy world, that shifts his perspective in a subtle, yet undeniable way…

“You love me, so? I love you, too, Alec…”

There, those words. That other Jace means them, he really means them. His feelings for his Alec aren’t romantic - they’re completely different from what he feels for his Clary - but they’re just as deep.

And he isn’t ashamed of them. The other Jace loves his brother, his parabatai, his best friend and he isn’t afraid of saying it aloud. To another man. And gay man to that. And Jace… feels awful, ashamed of himself, his real self.

Because when Alec told him he loved him, Jace freaked. Looking back, he can’t believe just how terribly he fumbled the situation back then. Not that he called Alec names, nothing like that, he just… cut off all his ties with him, one by one, in a way that wasn’t even noticeable to their friends. But Alec did notice. And it hurt him. Jace hurt him.

And now, after that glimpse into a world that does not even exist, into the mind of a Jace who knew - or at least suspected - the truth about his best friend for a long time and he didn’t care, Jace’s disappointed with himself. Disappointed and disgusted and angry. And he’s missing a relationship that he could’ve had and threw it away.

Maybe this is his mind’s way of telling him he should apologize, that he should stop being a dick, stop avoiding Alec, and start making amends. Maybe… just maybe there’s still something
salvageable about their relationship? *Something.*

“You love me, so? I love you, too, Alec…”

Yes, he’ll talk to Alec. Tomorrow, at Java Jace, when they all get together for their regular cup of coffee, he’ll take Alec aside and talk to him. Yes. First thing tomorrow.
Just Them

Chapter Summary

Sequel to A Loss Too Profound (Chapter 465). Don’t go where I can’t follow. (Yes, I’m rubbing salt in it.) (Unbeta’d)

Jace’s ghost doesn’t let them take Alec away.

Windows rattle in warning when the men with the stretcher enter Alec’s room.

Maryse’s heart’s breaking when she speaks soothingly, “Jace, please, he’ll receive much better care in Idris.”

The windows stop rattling, but books start flying across the room, pelting the intruders, making Jace’s point quite clear.

In the end, Maryse waves her men back.

Crying quietly, she looks around the room - at Alec, lying unaware in his bed. Soulless.

“It’s not him anymore, Jace,” she whispers hoarsely.

Gently but firmly, Maryse’s pushed out of the room. The door slams shut.
It’s around his 14th birthday that Jace realizes he’s in love with Alec.

And yet, he decides not to do anything about it, not even when he suspects that his feelings might be reciprocated. Because he’s learned his lesson.

“To love is to destroy, Jonathan, never forget that!”

But Jace just can’t let Alec go, not completely. Alec’s as vital to him as oxygen. He needs to keep Alec in his life. Somehow!

So.

“Will you be my parabatai?”

What an elegant solution, the perfect safeguard! Jace can’t destroy half of his soul, after all - not without destroying himself, too.
Eventually

Chapter Summary

What if Max Lightwood lived? (Unbeta’d)

What if Max Lightwood lived?
What if he fell in love with Madzie?
What if...

“One day, we’ll lose them,” Madzie whispers, watching their husbands bicker playfully. “One day, they’ll die and leave us here all alone.”

Magnus feels a sharp pang in his chest; there’s silver in Alexander’s hair these days and his laugh lines turned into wrinkles years ago. “Yes,” he replies softly, “but not today. And not even tomorrow. We still have many happy years ahead of us. And we should enjoy them to the fullest.”

Because grief will come, eventually, and then it’ll never leave again.
Unintentionally, Unknowingly

Chapter Summary

Jace has a bad habit. Alec learns it from him. TW: self-harm. (Unbeta'd)

It’s Jace who starts it all, unintentionally, unknowingly…

… because his father’s never satisfied, Jace, a boy of barely ten, keeps training hard, harder, till he aches, till he bleeds…

… and then his father’s murdered and Jace goes to live with the Lightwoods, but old habits die hard - and Alec sees…

… Alec who’s never been good enough in his parents’ eyes, who’s wrecked with emotions for which he’s never had an outlet before - until now…

… and later, much later - too late! - when Jace sees Alec’s torn, bloody hand, he realizes, “I’ve done this, this is my fault…”
Alec's Laugh

Chapter Summary

Mush for mush’s sake. I wanted to see if I could still write pure, unadulterated fluff. Behold, I succeeded! Malec being all sugary sweet. (Unbeta'd)

It’s the softest of sounds that wakes Magnus up - a laugh - wafting in through the open bedroom window, down from the roof…

Still half asleep, Magnus reaches out for his lover, only to discover that there’s no Alec in reach. Or in sight as it turns out when he lifts his head groggily and looks around, blinking slowly to get his eyelids unstuck. Magnus is alone in their bed. What a terrible offense at this ungodly hour!

Grumbling under his breath, Magnus crawls out of their comfortably rumpled bed and pads up the metal stairs in nothing but his purple pajama pants and matching slippers, his hair imitating an angry porcupine. Rubbing his eyes sleepily, he arrives at the half open metal door leading out onto the terrace - and there he stops. And stares.

Because there’s Alec, sitting on the paved ground in the dim pre-dawn light - surrounded by cats of all shapes and colors, by purring fuzzballs begging for his attention. Magnus had no idea there were so many cats on the whole block!

Magnus opens his mouth to say something, when he hears it again, the laugh. Alec’s laugh. One of the kittens, a fuzzy reddish thing, that climbed into Alec’s lap, is now bumping its head gently against Alec’s chin… making Alec laugh!

And Magnus simply stares and listens. In all the time they’ve been together, he’s seen Alec smile, grin and even chuckle, but he’s never heard him actually laugh. Not until now. And it’s a marvelous thing, a thing to behold, this laugh, and Magnus wants to urge the cat to “Do it again! Make him laugh again!”

Instead, Magnus just drops down onto the last step, as quietly as possible so as not to spook the jumpy creatures that are the neighborhood’s cats, and watches as his lover cuddles and pets the suddenly oh so friendly beasts that tend to give Magnus the evil eye on general principle, it seems - unless there’s food served, of course. Cats!

But right now, Magnus loves them, every single one of these hairballs, and hugging his knees loosely, he smiles softly. Alec’s laugh, such a simple yet beautiful gift…
Chapter Summary

Written for a friend's B-Day! Alec's about to have his 19th B-Day. Jace gets him a gift.
Ages are based on the TV show! (Unbeta'd)

Jace hasn’t been back to the Wayland mansion ever since his father died, he simply couldn’t return there. Every time he visited Idris with the Lightwoods, he stayed with them, in their house in Alicante.

But now he is back. Because tomorrow, Alec will be nineteen. Tomorrow, his parabatai will officially become an adult in the eyes of the Clave and everybody else. And Jace suspects that many things will change…

As he wanders through the musty halls of the old house with his hands in the pockets of his leather jacket and his heavy boots so loud on the checkerboard tiles, Jace thinks about that. About changes. About great upheavals.

Nine years ago, his world turned upside down from one moment to the next when his father was murdered, when the Lightwoods took him in - and when Alec came into his life. How strange that without the former, he wouldn’t have the latter; if he still had a father, he wouldn’t have a parabatai now…

And that’s why he’s here today, to reconcile his past with his present, in a way, he muses as he enters the old weapons room and looks around. Everything’s as it used to be, as Jace remembers it, all the weapons he used to train with are still here, dust covered and forgotten. Including the one he came for: the magical bow with its equally magical quiver.

His father presented it to Jace when he was barely eight, still too small to use it, and he turned the weapon into a mythical prize, a Holy Grail that would be bestowed upon Jace one day, once he became strong enough, powerful enough… good enough in his father’s eyes.

But then Michael died, he died before Jace had the chance to prove himself to him, and the bow was forgotten, it became unimportant to the grief-stricken orphan who would’ve given all the bows, all the weapons in the world just to have his father back.

And over time, Jace started favoring the blade, it became an outlet for all his pent-up rage, it allowed him to be right in the thick of it and experience battle in all its immediacy. Because his parabatai always had his back, covering him from afar with deadly accuracy - his parabatai, the archer.

Jace crosses the room to where the bow and the quiver have hung in a place of prominence ever since his father brought them home one day, all those years back. He takes them down from the wall and inspects them for damage, finding none.

Smiling, Jace rubs his thumb over the runes etched into the bow. Alec will love it, Jace’s sure of that. He can already see it in his mind’s eye, Alec’s face all lit up with pleasure, and just that image makes something soft and warm settle around his heart; Alec’s happiness has always had this effect
Jace’s smile widens as he hefts the bow in his hand and nods. Yes, this feels right. Maybe he’s never been good enough in his father’s eyes to deserve to wield the magical weapon, but Alec’s definitely good enough in his. With this bow, his parabatai will be unbeatable, glorious, even.

Yes, the perfect birthday gift for the most important person in his life.
Merciless

Chapter Summary

Based on episode 109. Alec refuses to go with Jace and Jace leaves. He leaves Alec all alone there, with vampires and werewolves hiding in the shadows… TW: death, gore. (Unbeta'd)

Alec doesn’t know how long he’s been sitting there after Jace left, after his parabatai asked him to betray all that he believed in and Alec said no. He just sits there, unable to move, frozen, just staring ahead, until…

A whisper of sound in the shadows, quiet, growling voices - that’s him, that’s the leader, he brought Meliorn here, he led the attack on Hotel Dumort, he was there, at the Jade Wolf, that’s him, yes, that’s him - a flicker of movement…

Slowly, Alec gets up, looking around covertly and seeing them, the creatures, werewolves and vampires with their teeth bared and eyes glowing, working together, their differences set aside for once to hunt down a hated enemy. There’s at least half a dozen of them there, in the dark…

And Alec’s seized with fear, with dread so terrible that it steals his breath away when he really grasps what’s going on, when the reality truly sinks in - there’s no way he can take them all, there’s no way he can get away.

Before Alec set out on this mission, he hated it, what he was ordered to do. He worried about Meliorn, he worried about the impact of what they were about to do, he worried about his sister and his parabatai when he noticed them there - but not once did he worry for his own life. What an irony…

In the shadows, the werewolves rumble and the vampire hiss, closing around their prey, and a strange calm settles over Alec. This is truly the end, isn’t it? If Jace were here, then there would be a chance. But he isn’t, his parabatai isn’t here. And maybe it’s better this way…

Alec feels empty, as if he’s already halfway gone, still he pulls out his Seraph Blade and activates it. If he’s going to die, then he’ll go down fighting, like a proper Shadowhunter should.

He takes a deep breath - and the Downworlders attack.

All the way to Hotel Dumort Jace doesn’t say a word, he doesn’t react to Clary’s attempts at striking a conversation, to her questions or worried glances. He’s too devastated. Alec almost killed him. Alec rejected him. And now their bond feels numb, deaf. They fought in the past, too, but not like this, never like this…

They’re at the door of the hotel when Jace feels it: a stab of dread so deep, so terrible that he staggers, that his fingers and toes tingle with it. And it’s not his fear, it’s… it’s Alec’s! And it’s so strong that it tore through the haze that’s filled their bond. Something happened, something…

Clary whispers his name but Jace doesn’t pay attention because the fear’s now gone, it was there
before and now it isn’t, as if someone simply cut it off, stomped on it, pushed it down to… to do what? What’s going on?

Jace pulls out his cellphone with shaking hands and tries to dial Alec’s number because, it doesn’t matter if they’re angry with each other or not, what matters is Alec’s safety, Alec’s life!

But before he can press the call button, his body, his side, his *parabatai* rune’s seized with pain, with pure agony so terrible that it makes Jace scream and the phone falls out of his hands, it clutters to the ground and shatters to pieces…

Jace’s knees buckle and then Clary’s there, trying to hold him up, calling his name in a desperate, fearful voice, but Jace can’t focus enough to answer her, he’s leaning against the dirt covered wall of the rundown hotel, hand pressed against his *parabatai* rune, and he’s groaning through tightly clenched teeth because it hurts!

And because Jace knows what it means, though he’s never experienced this before, he gathers all his strength and pushes away from the wall, away from Clary, and he runs, he runs back to where he left Alec, knowing he has to get there, to him, *now, now, now* or…

When Jace enters the rundown building that houses the gate into the City of Bones, the air’s thick with blood, the dusty floor and the walls are covered with red smears and splatters as if someone stumbled through here, was dragged or carried out, and Jace runs through the empty corridors, towards the room where he left his *parabatai*, and there…

He stops, freezes in mid-step, his side still throbbing with nauseating agony, he stops and stares at the… *thing* on the floor in the middle of the room, mangled and torn, lying in a puddle of slowly congealing blood. He stops and stares, unable to move for the longest time. This… this *thing*, it can’t be…

Slowly, as if in a dream, in a nightmare, Jace staggers towards… towards… and then he drops to his knees, not caring that blood’s now soaking into his clothes, and he lifts his hands to touch his… his…

“No,” Jace whispers, “no, please, *nonononono, please*…"

He doesn’t feel the tears that run down his cheeks as his hands flutter over… over his… that’s his *parabatai*’s body, *Alec’s body*, *Alec’s dead*, torn, shredded, mangled, *Alec’s dead*, and his eyes are open, Alec’s eyes are open and dead, and Jace’s holding Alec’s face in his hands, cradling it gently, begging, begging… *Please, no, not this! Not this...!*

“Alec, please, don’t leave me, please...!”

Jace’s *parabatai*’s dead. Half of his soul is dead. And that changes everything.

He hunts them down and kills them all, every person who was there, everyone who knew and did nothing to stop it. He kills them slowly, painfully, *mercilessly.*

His father is so proud.
Look, ma, no angst! Post mid-season finale Malec ficlet. Alec has a present for Magnus… (Unbeta’d)

“I’ve got something for you,” Alec announces when he enters Magnus’ loft. He looks a little smug and a little cheeky and very, very pleased with himself.

Magnus immediately perks up. “Did you get me a present?” he asks teasingly.

Slowly coming closer while hiding the mysterious thing behind his back, Alec smiles. “Something like that.”

And then he hands the thing to Magnus - and Magnus stares. It’s his spellbook, the one that Iris stole from him a few nights back!

“How?” Magnus whispers, dumbfounded, as he opens the book and leafs through it. Yes, it is his spellbook, his spells, *his life’s work*!

“Valentine had it on him when Jace brought him in,” Alec explains.

Magnus glances up. “And Aldertree just let you to take it and return it back to me?”

And now Alec looks smug again. “Let’s just say that I was very… persuasive.”

Magnus narrows his eyes a little. He knows there must be a story behind it. But he’ll ask Alec later about it. Now… now he’s too awestruck to think about that.

Shaking his head, Magnus runs his fingers lightly over the leather bound book. “You have no idea what this means to me, Alexander,” he breathes out.

Alec smiles. “I gather the spells in it are pretty powerful, huh?”

Magnus’ eyes prickle a little. “It’s more than that. Yes, the spells *are* powerful - and in the wrong hands, they could be dangerous - but…” He swallows hard. “This is my history, my past! I’ve had this spellbook for centuries, on many of these spells I’ve worked with my friends, with my dear friends who’re gone now…”

*With friends like Ragnor Fell*, he thinks and his throat thickens with emotions when he remembers his grumpy best friend.

Alec glances down at the book and his face softens. “Then I’m glad I could get it back for you,” he says gently.

Magnus looks up and throws his arms around his lover, standing on tiptoes to hook his chin over Alec’s shoulder comfortably, and he squeezes his eyes shut when Alec’s arms wrap around him, too; the hug feels warm and safe.
“Thank you, Alexander,” he whispers.

“You’re welcome,” Alec whispers back.
The Innocence They Had Left (Gone Now)

Chapter Summary

A what-if story. What if episode 204 went down differently. A story about the parabatai with a smidgen of Malec and Lightwood Family Feels… (Unbeta’d)

When Jace rushes back from the City of Bones, escorted by Victor Aldertree himself, he finds the Institute in chaos - and his life in shambles.

Clarissa Fairchild, Clary, his sister, the girl he might’ve loved under different circumstances, is dead, killed, murdered, her heart ripped out by the demon his father sent to cause havoc - by the demon possessing his parabatai.

And now the demon’s gone, escaped, having slaughtered everyone in its way, while wearing Alec’s body like a protective shell. The thing took his sister away from Jace and then Alec, too - but unlike Clary, his parabatai Jace can still get back.

Pushing his grief aside - there will be time for mourning later - Jace gears up and gathers their people. He’s sure that with their help, he can get Alec back, they’re all willing to do anything to save the man they still consider their leader.

But then Aldertree steps in and…

“You can’t be serious!” Jace snaps, going toe to toe with the Acting Head of the Institute. “You can’t issue the order to kill him on sight!”

Aldertree stares at him calmly. “I can and I just did, Mr Wayland. That thing is not Alexander Lightwood anymore, it’s a demon who killed innocent people - your sister included.”

Jace grits his teeth at the reminder, but he’s not about to give in, not when Alec’s life is at stake. “Alec’s possessed but he’s still in there. You’ve seen it yourself, the footage. Several of our people went through the same thing and they’re all fine now. All we have to do, is capture the thing and exorcise it!”

But Aldertree says, “And what if the demon continues killing while you try to save your friend, Mr Wayland? How many innocent people are you willing to sacrifice to save his life? Wouldn’t he be the first to agree with me? Wouldn’t he thank us that we stopped him from hurting more people?”

And Jace has to look away because he knows that Aldertree’s right. Alec would thank them if they stopped him, even if it meant killing him in the process. Jace would, too, if he were the one possessed. But that doesn’t mean he’ll allow it to happen, regardless of what Alec would want. Alec will not die on him. Nobody else will die on him!

So, Jace leaves them to it and sneaks out, nodding a silent thanks to the others who hide his escape by shifting around, by making sure Aldertree’s attention is diverted elsewhere; like him, they might understand the logic behind Aldertree’s orders but that doesn’t mean they have to like them!

Jace’s about to leave the Institute through the side entrance when Izzy catches up with him, calling his name. She doesn’t know what’s going on since she was in the Ops Centre, gathering data, and
not in the weaponry when Aldertree issued his orders.

Looking around furtively, Jace pulls her through the door outside. “Aldertree ordered Alec killed. He doesn’t want to risk the demon escaping again.”

Izzy’s eyes widen; they’re a little red-rimmed from crying. “That’s insane,” she breathes out. “He can be saved, he’s still in there!”

Jace nods. “I agree. I will not let it happen!” he swears.

Izzy looks him in the eyes for a moment, then she nods, too, gravely and with determination. “Where are we going, then?” she asks.

Jace doesn’t asks her if she’s sure about this, he doesn’t insult her like that. Insubordination is the least of their worries right now. They would do anything for their brother.

“We,” Jace says, “are going to Magnus’!”

“Ah, you’re back!” Magnus welcomes them with a pleased little smile - that quickly turns into a frown when he sees Jace’s and Izzy’s expression. Then he asks tiredly, his shoulders slumping. “What now?”

“It’s Alec,” Izzy says.

“What happened?” Magnus asks immediately, straightening with a snap.

“There was an attack at the Institute, a demon,” Jace responds. “Valentine sent it. It…” His voice breaks and he has to look away. Damn it!

Izzy steps in. “It possessed Alec. And… it made him kill Clary,” she explains a little hoarsely. Her eyes are flooded with tears again.


Jace shakes his head. “That’s why we’re here. The demon, it escaped - in Alec’s body. As far as we know, it’s still inside him. And Aldertree gave the order to kill him on sight. We have to find him first, we just have to!”

He knows he sounds desperate but the idea of losing Alec, too, makes it hard to think, hard to breathe.

Magnus nods firmly. “Yes, yes, of course. I’ll help you track him down,” he promises as he turns and heads towards the living room.

Jace and Izzy follow him.

“Thank you,” Jace says gratefully. “We wouldn’t have bothered you if there was another way. The truth is…” He touches his parabatai rune and squeezes his eyes shut. “The truth is I can’t feel him through our bond.”

That forces Magnus to stop and turn around; there’s a deep apprehension on his face and his eyes are full of questions.

Izzy grabs Jace by the arm and jerks him around, towards her. “Why didn’t you tell me this? Is he…?” She swallows hard, unable to finish the sentence.
Jace looks at her, then at Magnus. “He isn’t dead,” he assures them and they both breathe out in relief. “It’s not that. It’s as if something’s… blocking our bond. In the City of Bones, I thought their protective wards were at fault, that they were somehow blocking the magic of our bond. But then we left and,” he shakes his head anxiously, “the bond didn’t come back, even outside the City’s perimeter.”

Izzy keeps staring at him. “It must be the demon. It kept jumping from one Shadowhunter to another till it reached Alec. Only then did it take away. I wish we knew why…” she murmurs.

Magnus who started gathering the things he would need for his spell, turns to her with a raised finger. “I don’t know much about Shadowhunter customs but, aren’t you lot protected from possession by a ritual? By wards that prevent exactly this from happening by forcing the demon out of you?”

“But why was it able to remain inside Alec, then?” Izzy asks, confused.

Jace closes his eyes as it dawns on him. The pain of that realization, of its consequences, almost takes his breath away. “It’s because he died, isn’t it?” he croaks out. “He died in my arms, right here. His heart stopped. And that broke the protection, didn’t it?”

Magnus pauses again. “Yes, probably,” he responds slowly and quietly. Then he shakes his head. “I should’ve thought about it!”

They all just stand there for a moment looking at each other anxiously; they know that this changes everything. If Alec has no protection against the demon taint, will there be anything left of him even if they manage to force the demon out? Or is it too late? Has his soul been tainted too much for him to be saved?

“We’ll find him,” Magnus states firmly. “We will. And I swear I’ll do everything in my power to get that thing out of him. You have my word. I’ll do all I can to save Alexander.”

Jace stares at him for the longest of moments, then he nods. He knows that Magnus is telling the truth. He would do anything for Alec, just like Jace. Just like Izzy.

And that’s when the front door swings open and there, on the threshold, the thing wearing Alec’s body stands.

They all turn towards the entrance and stare, wide-eyed, as the demon steps in. Its movements are unnatural, jerky and hard, and its eyes, they’re entirely black.

Jace’s heart clenches painfully when the thing tilts Alec’s head sharply to the side and a cruel smirk appears on Alec’s lips. It’s Alec but it’s not him. And his hands, his clothes are still splattered with dried blood and Jace knows that some of it is Clary’s…

When the demon speaks, its voice sounds nothing like Alec’s, it’s almost metallic and full of spite. “How convenient,” it comments. “All of you in one place together. Like sheep to the slaughter.”

Magnus waves his hands and the door slams shut behind the demon. The wards come up next, effectively trapping the monster inside with them. Izzy unwinds her whip and Jace pulls out his Seraph Blade, activating it.

But the thing just grins, all teeth and malice, and beckons to them. “Come on, then, come. He keeps wailing about you in there,” it hits Alec’s temple with the heel of Alec’s palm several times, hard, then harder, ”and I need him to stop, I need quiet, quiet in there!”
Jace has barely time to register the words - to gain hope from them that Alec’s not gone yet - and then the demon attacks.

The fight is brutal, Magnus’ magic and the Shadowhunters’ agility against the demon’s alien strength, and though it’s three against one, the advantage is all on the monster’s side because it doesn’t care about the damage it wreaks to its vessel but they do, they care so much that they try to restrain the thing without hurting Alec and that’s not easy.

Then, Magnus throws the door into the adjoining room open and yells at them to drive the demon in there - and Jace remembers: it’s the room where they invoked the memory demon!

With a roar, Jace tackles the monster. They tumble through the open door together and drop hard, sliding across the floor - and right into the protection circle etched into it. Jace’s holding the thing down now, staring into its snarling face with a painfully clenched heart, because Alec’s still in there, he knows it!

“Get out, Jace!” Magnus yells as he drops to his knees at the circle’s edge. “Out, now!”

And Jace lets go of the demon and tries to rise and jump back, but the thing’s holding onto him now, knowing that Magnus cannot close the circle and drive it out of Alec’s body until Jace gets out of the way, and Jace grits his teeth and punches the demon, trying to get it loosen its grip. The demon’s holding on, though, and Magnus is still yelling at Jace to get out, get out, get out!

Then Izzy’s there, she grips Jace by the back of his leather jacket and jerks back with all her strength, and together, they break the demon’s hold and Jace kicks at it for good measure to force it to stay down. And then they’re out of the circle and Magnus activates the sigils and when the thing jumps to its feet and rushes them, it hits the blue glowing shield hard, snarling.

Izzy drags Jace back, hugging him around the waist from behind while Magnus gets up from the floor, and lifting his arms he starts his incantation, the words thrumming with the power in his voice and his determination to save Alec.

The demon screeches and Alec’s back arches painfully and as Magnus’ chant reaches its climax, an ugly, foul thing pours out of Alec’s mouth and his nose and his eyes and it keeps pouring and pouring as if it shall never end. But then it does and Alec drops to the floor unconscious, the black demonic cloud roiling above him.

“Break the ward!” Jace shouts at Magnus.

And when Magnus complies, Jace throws himself at the demon and before it can dissipate and return back to its realm, he hacks the smoke in half with his Seraph Blade, destroying it once and for all. This demon will never hurt anyone again.

Then they’re all dropping to their knees at Alec’s side. Izzy’s gently touching her brother’s face, calling his name, and Jace’s gripping Alec’s hand hard but his throat is too thick, his chest too tight to get a single word out. With prickling eyes, Jace watches as Magnus runs his hands above Alec’s body frantically, trying to detect hidden injuries, hidden damage…

Suddenly, though, Alec wakes up with a sharp gasp and his eyes fly open and he’s screaming, screaming loud, trying to scramble away from them, gripped by blind panic, and it takes them long minutes to talk him down, to calm him down, to soothe his terror…

In the end, Jace throws his arms around Alec and simply holds him, rocking him from side to side, letting their bond do what he can’t, assure Alec that the demon’s really gone, that Alec’s free, until
Alec believes him and returns his embrace desperately.

“I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m so sorry,” Alec keeps whispering into Jace’s shoulder while Jace’s holding him tight and Izzy’s stroking his hair and Magnus is gently touching his back…

And Jace keeps whispering back, “Not your fault, it wasn’t your fault, wasn’t your fault…”

Jace doesn’t know how they’ll ever recover from this. They’re damaged, broken, maybe beyond repair, and they all lost so much: family members, friends, all the innocence they had left…

But right now, he’s simply glad that he didn’t lose Alec, too.
“Where are we going?” Jace asks when he joins Alec at the front door of the Institute.

Alec rolls his eyes while pulling on his fingerless gloves. “We aren’t going anywhere. I was ordered to deliver a message to Hotel Dumort.”

Jace immediately perks up. “Is it about the disappearances? Did the Clave finally decide to do something about them?”

Nodding, Alec opens the door and steps outside. Jace follows him, of course, which makes Alec roll his eyes again.

“Yes, if you must know,” Alec replies in an exasperated tone of voice. “Intel says that Camille Belcourt, the head of the New York vampire clan, is having… guests over, from France. And they don’t seem to follow our rules. Mother sent me to ask them politely to cease and desist what they’re doing.”

Jace stares at him in disbelief. “Politely? Those creatures are taking and murdering mundanes!”

Alec starts down the front steps. “Yes, but we have no solid proof of that. And without proof, we can’t actually accuse them of anything, not officially.”

And Jace follows him again, of course. “That’s bullshit.”

“That’s politics.”

Now it’s Jace’s turn to roll his eyes. “As I said, bullshit.”

Alec doesn’t deem it necessary to answer that and keeps walking. Jace keeps following, of course.

“And Maryse thinks that a stern warning delivered by her teenage son will force a possibly centuries old vampire - or vampires, plural - to stop snacking on people?” Jace asks, his voice once again full of disbelief. Then, when he sees Alec’s annoyed glance, he hastily adds, raising his hands, “No offense.”

Alec stops glaring and sighs. “That’s the whole point.”

Jace frowns. “I don’t get it.”

“I’m fully aware that I’m a tool - oh, shut up,” Alec snaps, hitting Jace in the shoulder when Jace starts snickering. “I’m simply means to an end in this case. Without proof, the Clave cannot accuse Camille’s guests of anything, all they can do is deliver a warning that, should the vampires prove to be the cause of these people’s deaths, they will be punished.”
“And you fit into it how exactly?” Jace still doesn’t get it.

“Imagine a stern warning from a body as powerful as the Clave - delivered by a kid,” Alec explains patiently. “Yes, the son of the Institute’s head, which is very courteous - but still a kid.”

It finally dawns on Jace. “So, it’s a warning and an insult in one?”

Alec nods. “Exactly.”

Jace huffs in irritation. “Politics! By the Angel, I hate politics.”

Alec rolls his eyes again. One day, they’ll get stuck like that and it’ll be all his parabatai’s fault. “I know that, which is why I didn’t ask you to come with me.”

“Well, you’re not going alone!” Jace states that as a fact.

Sighing, Alec stops. “Jace, you’re a great fighter - don’t look so smug! - but when it comes to political affairs, you have the sensitivity and the tact of a bull in a china shop. You’re not coming with me! This is a delicate matter.”

“Well, you are a ‘delicate matter,’ too!” Jace objects, poking Alec in the chest. “I’m not letting you go alone into the vampires’ den!”

“Listen–” Alec tries again.

“No, you listen,” Jace cuts him off. “These vampires are killing people. They’re murdering them,” he says slowly and deliberately. “And you’re planning on just waltzing in and telling them that we know. No way will you do it alone!”

Alec’s face softens a little, but he still sounds irritated when he says, “Jace, if this is supposed to work, I need to go in alone. They need to realize that we’re not afraid of them.”

“We are not afraid of them. I am not afraid of them. But I’m also not stupid,” Jace snaps, now irritated, too. “I’m not risking your life to make a point!”

Alec sighs. “Jace…”

“How about a compromise, then?” Jace suggests. “I’ll come with you and wait outside, stay in a shouting distance, just in case.”

Alec throws up his arms. “Fine!”

Jace grins at him. “Great. And if they nibble on you, I’ll single-handedly hack them to pieces!” he adds with gusto.

“Jace!”

Jace meant it as a joke. It should’ve been a joke.

Jace’s loitering around the main entrance of Hotel Dumort, idly kicking an empty beer can around, while he waits for Alec to conduct his business. And that’s when it happens - their bond’s flooded with a turmoil of emotions, so turbulent and overwhelming that Jace can’t pick them apart. But whatever it is, whatever’s happening, it’s not good and that’s all that matters to him.

Instinctively, he pulls out his Seraph Blade and starts running, in through the door and up the stairs,
shoving aside, pushing down, even cutting down anyone who tries to stop him, consequences be damned. Maryse and Robert, the Clave, they can all punish him later for messing up their politicking, right now, all that’s on Jace’s mind, is to get to Alec, nownownow!

When Jace gets to the top floor - it only takes him a couple of minutes to get there but even that seems too long because the storm of emotions roiling through their parabatai bond’s dulling, growing hazy and that terrifies him! - he throws open the door to Camille’s audience room that’s all made up in black and gold and burgundy red, and the first thing he sees are arrows, Alec’s arrows, two of them lying in two small piles of ashes - vampire ashes. Shit!

Then he looks up, he follows the clues on the carpeted floor - another arrow, Alec’s Seraph Blade… - and then he freezes, his blood running cold. Because there, on the other side of the room, by the elaborate fireplace with its blue gas fueled fire, there’s a vampire, an old, gray-haired one in an elegant black attire, kneeling on a lush rug, bent over Alec who’s not struggling anymore - and he’s feeding from Alec’s wrist, fangs sunk deeply into Alec’s pale flesh. Hell no!

With a roar, Jace throws himself at the vampire but in the last possible second the creature moves out of the way with a terrifying speed and Alec drops limply to the floor, barely conscious, his breath a loud, rattling rasp. Jace spares him only a glance, though, then he pursues the vampire because he knows that he needs to destroy the creature, he has to, or they’ll never get out of here alive. The vampire cannot allow them to escape now, not when he attacked and bit a Shadowhunter diplomat, however young.

They chase each other through the room, Jace having slammed the door shut and locked it to stop reinforcements from arriving when their positions changed once more and he stood with his back to the door, and now they’re both snarling in fury. The… thing is trying to talk, to say something, but Jace’s not interested. All he sees is Alec’s blood on the vampire’s lips, running down his chin. Jace will make him pay, he’ll make him pay, he will!

They’re running and slashing at each other, ducking and jumping back, and Jace’s glad, so very glad that he’s a fighter, as Alec told him before, a fighter and not a diplomat. To hell with diplomacy! But even though he gives it his all, it’s still a stalemate because the vampire’s old and skillful and he just fed and Shadowhunter blood, too, and Jace’s starting to feel tired...

And that’s when the vampire stumbles.

Both the creature and Jace pause and look down - and it’s Alec, he came to enough to activate his bow and he snagged the vampire’s foot with it when the vamp was running past. And though Alec has no real strength left, it was enough to make the vampire stumble.

And Jace doesn’t let his chance pass, just the opposite, he uses it to his full advantage - and slashing across with all his might, he cuts the vampire’s head off with one swing. The creature turns into ash and hot, glowing embers and dissipates.

Then Jace’s at Alec’s side, his Seraph Blade back in its holster, and he grips Alec’s arm, the bitten and torn one, and lifts it up high to staunch the blood flow because the wound’s wide, gaping and bleeding hard. There’s a loud banging on the door but right now, this is more important - there will be no saving his parabatai if Alec bleeds to death!

“Aren’t you glad you took me with you?” Jace tries to joke as he tears a strip from his t-shirt and binds Alec’s forearm with it tightly.

“Ecstatic,” Alec rasps, his voice breathy and eyes glazed with more than pain.
Suddenly, the door bursts open, the lock smashed, and the vampires pour in with Camille and Raphael Santiago at the head of them, their faces set in masks of fury.

Jace moves to stand in front of Alec, but his parabatai grips his hand hard and whispers, “Help me up!”

Jace doesn’t like it because Alec obviously won’t be able to stand on his own and supporting him will restrain Jace’s movements, on the other hand, facing a horde of vampires while lying on the floor isn’t the best idea either. So he helps Alec to his feet and throws his parabatai’s arm across his shoulders; he makes sure the vampires don’t see just how heavily Alec’s leaning against him, they would be dead if the creatures knew.

“Where’s Guillaume?” Camille asks sharply having come to a stop barely ten feet away from them.

Jace smirks at her with false bravado; he mustn’t let them sense his fear so he feeds his anger instead. “If you want to see him again, you’ll have to invest in a good vacuum cleaner, I think.”

Camille hisses. “You’ll pay for this, Shadowhunters. I’ll–”

It’s Alec who cuts her off. “Watch your words, madame,” he warns, and though his voice’s quiet, his tone is firm. “We are the Clave’s emissaries and we were attacked, unprovoked, in your home.”

“Nobody will find out if we get rid of you!” Camille snaps back. But Raphael, standing behind her, shuffles uncomfortably.

Alec continues, seemingly unafraid, “If we disappear, others will come and they’ll burn this place down, with you inside if need be, to find us.”

“Are you so sure about it, boy?” she growls, taking a step closer.

Alec stares her in the eyes unflinchingly. “Yes,” he answers plainly.

Camille hisses again and throws herself forward, but Raphael catches her arm and pulls her back, then he whispers something urgently in her ear. She glares at him but doesn’t try to stop him when he steps forward.

“What do you want?” Raphael asks coldly.

Alec takes a deep breath and Jace can feel him starting to tremble minutely; the blood loss is taking its toll. “I was here to deliver a message from the Clave regarding the mundanes that have gone missing in your territory in the past few weeks when… Guillaume, was it?”

“Guillaume Lacroix,” Raphael fills in.

“When Mr Lacroix attacked me,” Alec goes on. “I think this pretty much confirms our suspicion that it was your guest who was kidnapping - and killing - mundanes in your territory. And that’s what I’ll report back to the Clave, that the threat was neutralized. If no other people go missing, the Clave won’t interfere in your business anymore. Unless…”

Alec looks straight at Raphael, then at Camille. “Unless you’re of the opinion that Mr Lacroix was innocent and we breached your hospitality by killing him. Then you can either kill us, which will result in the Clave’s further - and much more thorough - investigation or you can file a complaint against us, which will result in the same, I’m afraid. But I’m sure you have nothing to hide,
madame.”

Raphael turns to Camille who just stands there, gritting her teeth. Then, after a long while, she snarls furiously, “My dear friend Guillaume seems to have betrayed my trust. I… thank you for bringing this to my attention. And dealing with him, Shadowhunters.” Then she waves her lackeys back. “Let them go.”

When the vampires file out, leaving Camille and Raphael alone with Jace and Alec, Camille steps forward and growls, her eyes on Alec, “I’ll kill you one day, I swear!”

In a heartbeat, Jace has his Seraph Blade out and activated, its sharp point bare inches away from Camille’s throat. “Bring it, leech!” he growls back.

Baring her teeth at him, Camille hisses - and then she’s gone, simply gone, as if she’s never been there in the first place.

With a sigh, Raphael bends down and picks up Alec’s deactivated blade. Stepping around Jace’s still pointed weapon, he hands the Seraph Blade back to Alec. “Be careful,” he warns in a quiet voice. “You can’t even imagine what Camille’s capable of.”

“Oh, I have a big imagination,” Jace assures him bitterly, but Alec just nods.

Raphael nods back, then he turns and walks out, slowly and without another word.

Once they’re alone, Jace lets out a heavy breath, dropping his hand with the blade. “By the Angel, that was close,” he whispers.

Alec smiles at him wanly. “That was diplomacy.”

Jace’s mouth twists wryly. “I’ll rather stick with my blade, then, thank you very much,” he says, hefting his weapon. Then, with more concern, he asks, “Can you make it? Can you walk?”

With Jace’s help, Alec takes a wobbly step, his torn arm pressed against his chest. “Yeah, probably. If you don’t drop me,” he adds.

“I should,” Jace replies, “just to see if you would bounce.”

But then he pulls Alec a little closer in reassurance. “I’m glad you’re okay,” he says softly as they shuffle towards the door.

Smiling, Alec leans against him a little more heavily for a second. “And I’m glad you’re here.”

Jace smiles back at him. “Always.”
Magnus doesn’t manage to get them out in time.

When the Soul Sword blazes with pure white angelic energy, all he can do is hug Madzie tight and whisper, “I’m sorry…”

Then he closes his eyes and thinks of Alexander.

But…

Nothing happens. They’re… alive. Still alive. Not burned, not destroyed by the unbeatable power of Raziel’s sword, not gone… Alive.

How?

Magnus slowly opens his eyes - and stares, startled, dumbfounded, shocked!

The Soul Sword’s blinding light is flowing around them - around them! - leaving them untouched, unharmed, safe in a bubble of… what exactly? This is not Magnus’ power, he’s not doing this, so… who?

Slowly, he looks down. Madzie’s still protectively tucked against his chest, but no, it’s not her either, so… what? What - who - is doing this? Wha–?

Throbbing. There’s something warm throbbing over his heart, some sweet power tasting of pure, selfless affection, of the desire to protect, keep safe, watch over.

“It’s supposed to bring you luck and protection.”

The omamori. The protection charm that Alec gave him… safety, peace… freely given by a child of Raziel’s, by an angelic being. A powerful thing, certainly, but Magnus would never have thought…

The Soul Sword’s light dims, its power peters out.

And they’re still here, alive and well.

Magnus touches his chest, the pocket into which he tucked the charm almost absentmindedly that morning, one of the things you do without thinking about it. It’s still a little warm, the last remnants of the charm’s power are still dissipating…

“Alexander,” Magnus whispers in awe, then his face softens with an affectionate smile. “You never cease to surprise me.”
When Alec finishes drawing the parabatai rune on Jace’s left side in preparation for the upcoming ceremony, Jace grins, amused by the little frown of intense concentration wrinkling Alec’s brow.

“Now, where do you want yours?” Jace asks, twirling his stele between his fingers.

Alec touches his left side, too, but closer to the center of his body. “Here.”

“Alright,” Jace says, stilling his stele. “Any particular reason?”

Jace chose the placement of his parabatai rune after a thorough consideration; it’s the one rune that can’t be replaced, after all - and the most cherished one, too - yet it’s often targeted by enemies intent on weakening a parabatai pair in battle. So yes, access is needed - but protection, too!

“Yes,” Alec says softly, glancing at Jace, then away again. “If someone tries to destroy it, they’ll have to kill me doing it.”

Jace’s eyes widen and he swallows hard as Alec’s words sink in. As the weight of what they’re about to do, as the true meaning of the parabatai bond and its importance finally settle in. As the impact this bond will have on their lives truly becomes clear to him.

His stele hovers in mid-air for a moment, an inch away from Alec’s naked skin - and when he finally starts drawing the rune on his soon-to-be parabatai’s body, his hand trembles a little.
Warmth

Chapter Summary

A happy Malec drabble, a 207 coda. (Unbeta'd)

Magnus wakes up to a wonderful warmth, to a warmth he hasn’t felt in years, *decades* even - to the warmth and safety of a lover’s arms.

For a heartbeat, he startles because only yesterday, he woke up alone in his bed, cold despite the fluffiest of pillows and softest of bedsheets, cold because he had no one to share them with.

And then, with a goofy smile he recalls last night. *Alexander*…

Magnus snuggles deeper into his lover’s embrace and sighs contently, closing his eyes, when Alec pulls him closer in his sleep. *Yes, another nap. What a marvelous idea…*
A tragically sad Jalec drabble, an AU with no powers. I wanted to try something different, a different form… TW: death. (Unbeta'd)

“… and when I found out that the treatment didn’t work, that he was dying, I decided to give him what I’ve always known he wanted: my love, the love of a lover, not just that of a friend, and I gave him everything, I held nothing back, because it wasn’t about me, it was about him, and I never thought I could feel that way about another man, not once, but I did, I did, about him…

… and you know what the most tragic part of this is? Just before he died, he said to me, ‘Thank you for pretending.’”
Yay, Shadowhunters won the GLAAD award! And to celebrate that, here, have a sweet shorty-short something. Based on Magnus’ words, “I can take care of myself.”
(Unbeta'd)

“What part of ‘I can take care of myself’ didn’t you understand, Alexander?” Magnus chides with exasperated fondness.

Alec hisses when Magnus applies another layer of poultice on his burns to draw out the last remnants of the demon venom. “I understood you perfectly, it’s just that…” He huffs in frustration. “I protect what’s mine, I can’t help it!”

Magnus smiles softly. “So, I’m yours?” he asks tenderly.

“Yeah,” Alec whispers, and hugging Magnus around the waist, he buries his face in his lover’s stomach.

Magnus chuckles down at him, then he sighs and raps Alec’s head with his knuckles gently. “Can you at least promise me to remember that I’m the High Warlock of Brooklyn and not a Victorian lady prone to the vapors next time?”

Alec peeks at him with one eye. “I can promise I’ll try?”

Laughing, Magnus winds his arms around Alec’s head and pulls him closer, mindful of his lover’s injuries. “Oh, Alexander, what ever will I do with you?”

“Love me?”

“Always.”
Captured Moments

Chapter Summary

A Malec death story. My muses are cruel mistresses. I’ve been mulling over this ever since 205, ever since Magnus pulled out that photograph out of thin air. (Unbeta'd)

Ever since Alec died, Magnus hasn’t responded to any of Catarina’s calls, to any of her messages. And when she goes to visit him, all his wards are down and the front door’s open, as if he’s inviting his enemies to enter, disaster to strike him. And then she finds him…

He’s sitting on the floor in the middle of his living room, doing magic, pulling one photograph after another out of thin air, memories imprinted on pieces of paper. His memories… of Alec. Alec laughing, frowning and dozing, doing the dishes or gazing into the distance… Some of them are sharp, some a little out of focus and all of them are full of love. There are dozens of them, hundreds even, scattered around layers deep and Magnus…

Magnus looks pale, disheveled, his eyes are sunken and full of agony too profound to be called simply grief. He’s making soft, pained noises that he isn’t probably even aware of and he seems almost frantic, fully focused on his task. Catarina’s heart breaks for her friend.

“Magnus,” she whispers, and when he doesn’t react, she walks up to him, careful not to step on any of his memories. She crouches down, gently lays a hand on his shoulder - he’s shaking - and says, “Magnus, you have to stop.”

He pauses, only for a heartbeat, though, then he pulls another picture of Alec out of the depths of his mind and stares down at it for a long moment. In the photograph, Alec’s working on his arrows, drawing runes on them to make them more powerful, and he looks completely focused, unaware of his surroundings, unaware of being watched.

“I can’t,” Magnus answers hoarsely, still looking down. “I have to… before they start to fade… before I lose them like I lost him… before they’re gone… I have to…”

Catarina blinks back tears. “Oh, Magnus…”

The photograph trembles in his hand. “He died on me, Catarina. He up and died on me! Just like that, without warning. He left me!”

And Catarina drops to her knees and pulls him into her arms, rocking him gently - and Magnus cries, surrounded by memories of his happiness, now gone forever.
This is fluff for fluff’s sake. Malec. Magnus’ naked buttocks, Alec’s chest hair and an overabundance of The Cute™! (Unbeta’d)

“You’re brooding, love,” Magnus comments softly, snuggled against Alec’s side.

Alec smiles, still looking out of the windows set high in the wall just a step away from the bed. The night’s clear and the stars are shining. It’s very pretty. “What makes you think that?”

Magnus props himself up on his elbow. “You always get this wrinkle when you brood, right… here,” he says as he lifts his hand to rub the spot between Alec’s brows with his thumb.

Alec turns his eyes to him fondly and his forehead smooths out. Then he runs his hand down Magnus’ back and lets it rest on his lover’s naked buttocks. “I’m not brooding, I promise. Just thinking.”

“About?” Magnus asks. He’s playing with Alec’s chest hair now, twirling it into little tufts with a very serious expression on his face.

Amused, Alec watches him for a second, then he replies, “About how much my life has changed ever since I’ve met you.”

Magnus stops playing. He lets his hand rest on Alec’s stomach, his eyes are still trained on the miniature cyclones that he sculpted from Alec’s chest hair. “Changed… for the better?” he asks, tensing almost imperceptibly.

“Changed… for the better?!” Alec assures him affectionately.

Magnus relaxes immediately and with an airy wave of his hand, he claims pompously, “Well, of course. I’m amazing, after all.”

“Yes. Yes, you are,” Alec agrees softly and brushes his lover’s bangs off his forehead.

Magnus starts. Apparently, it was meant to be a joke - but Alec’s response was serious, earnest. And Magnus blushes.

It lasts only a heartbeat, though. Then Magnus clears his throat and with a devilish grin, he straddles Alec and wiggles his butt mischievously. With his hands on Alec’s chest, he then leans down and whispers seductively, “And what will I get as a reward for being so… amazing?”

Alec grips Magnus’ hips tightly, and after a quick peck on his lover’s lips, he responds breathlessly, “Me!”
“Alec, stop!” Jace snaps when Alec hits his shin against the low coffee table for the *third time* because he’s too distracted to pay attention to his surroundings.

Alec freezes in place, grimacing both in pain and in embarrassment, and twists his cane in his hands anxiously. “Sorry. I’m just… “

“Nervous?” Jace finishes for him, amused, while he moves the coffee table out of the way. Then he informs Alec, “It’s now three steps to your right.”

Nodding in thanks, Alec taps his cane against the floor in agitation. “Terrified!” he admits as he would to no one but his *parabatai*. “What if I’m wrong? What if I forgot something? What if—”

“Alec,” Jace says firmly, making sure that Alec hears him step in front of him. “Do you believe that this Treaty will help the Downworlders?”

Alec frowns behind his wraparound sunglasses. “Yeah, it’ll ensure their equal rights and—”

Jace interrupts him again, “Do you believe that this Treaty will help the Shadowhunters?”

Now Alec looks downright offended, as if Jace’s being purposefully obtuse. “Of course it will! We won’t be left battling demons all by ourselves anymore. Ever since we started working together with the various Downworlder factions, our survival rate went up—”

“Then *why* are you so worried?” Jace cuts him off once more. “You, Magnus, Maia and Lily have been hammering out the Shadow Treaty for months now. You discussed every damn line of that thing in such detail that even I could recite it backwards! You even got the Seelies to respond! So – I’m going to touch you now” –he squeezes Alec’s shoulders– “I *promise* you, it’ll be *fine*.”

Alec takes a deep breath, holds it for a heartbeat or two, then lets it out again and nods. “Okay, okay,” he mutters, then he smiles gratefully. “Thanks!”

Jace grins up at him. “Hey, that’s what I’m here for, right?”

Alec’s smile falters. He taps his cane against the floor again in a nervous habit. “Do you…?” He stops and clears his throat, then tries again. “Do you ever regret it?”

Frowning, Jace asks, “Regret what?”

More tapping. “You know, staying with me. After the war with Valentine, after Sebastian and the Endarkened, you were hailed a hero, you and Clary, both. You could’ve been anything, *done* anything! But you turned all the offers down, you even left the New York Institute to *Izzy—*”
“And she’s doing an amazing job!” Jace states.

Alec nods. “She really is. But mom offered the position to you. And you turned it down. To stay with me.”

“Well, of course I stayed with you, you are my parabatai,” Jace tells him in a “duh” voice. “Where else would I be? And as we established, you do need me. How many times did they try to kill you over the last five years?”

“Three times,” Alec allows grudgingly. Then he sighs. “Still. I can’t help but feel that I’m holding you back. It couldn’t have been your dream to become some glorified clerk’s bodyguard one day. You must be bored silly…”

“Alec…” Jace says softly, shaking his head. “I fought in two wars before I was twenty-five. I killed more people that you’ve shaken hands with. I was tortured, I died…” He swallows hard. “I don’t ever want to have to go through that again. Even if you weren’t my parabatai, I would be honored to guard you. You’re helping make this world a better place so that what we’ve been through never happens again. And I get to be there and see it. Don’t you understand that it is a dream come true for me?”

Alec blushes a little and taps his cane against the floor again.

Grinning again, Jace adds mischievously, “And I get to brag, too! My parabatai, the founding member of the Shadow Council! All the idiots who’ve ever looked down on you because of your blindness can now kiss your–”

Alec raises his hand sharply. “I get it! No need to be crude!”

Jace laughs which makes Alec smile, too.

“I’m going to hug you now,” Jace warns after he finally calms down and when Alec moves his cane aside, Jace wraps his arms around his parabatai who returns the hug just as fiercely.

“Besides, I’m happy to be by your side. That alone would be enough.”

“‘If aught by death,’ huh?” Alec whispers.

“Not even death,” Jace responds fiercely.

The door opens and Lydia Branwell, the Consul herself, sticks her head inside. “Here you are!” she exclaims exasperatedly. “I was about to call Magnus a liar - he swore to me up and down that you did arrive together - which would’ve gotten me turned into a toad and it would’ve been all your fault! The signature ceremony’s about to start and the others are already seated! Come on!” And with a harried air she slips away again.

They let go of each other and Jace reaches up to straighten Alec’s tie. “Ready to change the world, Councilor?”

Alec grips his cane tightly and gives Jace a firm, determined nod. “Yes.”

“Then let’s go!”
Unraveling

Chapter Summary

For adidas-queenb who asked me to describe Alec and Jace’s emotions during their 109 fight. Aaaaaaand I turned it into a ficlet! (Unbeta'd)

… he’s furious, he’s so furious, his life’s falling apart, everything’s falling apart, and it’s Jace, it’s Jace, his parabatai, the man he’s given everything, the man he’s trusted the most, the man he’s in– it’s Jace who’s doing this, destroying everything they’ve built together over the past 10 years, Jace’s tearing it - him! - apart, piece by piece, for a girl, for someone they all met only a week ago, for her Jace’s betrayed the Clave, betrayed him, attacked him - and he’s going to make Jace pay, he’s going to show Jace how it feels, he’s going to…

… he’s blocking and punching and ducking, trying to stay on his feet, and he’s barely keeping up because he’s never seen Alec so angry, so enraged, Alec’s fury’s burning like acid through their bond and it hurts, it’s agony, it’s wrong, so wrong, how come they let it get this far, how did he let it get this far, how come when he promised himself, he swore to himself that he would never hurt Alec - to love is to destroy, Jonathan! - Alec’s his parabatai, Alec’s… everything, how come…

… there’s a blade at Jace’s throat and everything freezes for a moment…

… how/when/why did it happen?!

Do it. Do it! I don’t wanna be alive if we’re on different sides, Alec.

… but Alec doesn’t do it, Alec sits down hard, shaken and shocked, and Jace gets up, shaken and shocked, and they can both feel it, their bond’s trembling as if someone’s plucking at it, tearing at its strands, unraveling them slowly…

I’m begging you, my parabatai my brother. Please, Alec, come with me.

No.

The blade would’ve hurt less.
Jace’s talking to his grandmother, Queen Imogen, and he’s smiling, basking in her proud attention. And Alec’s smiling, too, just because Jace’s happy. That’s enough to make Alec happy.

“When will you finally tell him?” Isabelle, his sister, whispers at his shoulder very discretely because they’re standing at the back of the lecture hall with Moroi students, teachers and other dhampir guardians milling around.

Alec shoots her an annoyed glare. “There’s nothing to tell,” he mutters, the tone of his voice very finite.

And there really isn’t. Yes, Alec’s in love with Jace - he isn’t denying that, at least not to himself, he’s always been brutally honest with himself - but that doesn’t mean anything. Because even if Alec were of the right gender for Jace to like him like that, Jace’s a Moroi and Alec’s a dhampir. Jace’s a Royal, the last of the Herondales, his grandmother’s, Queen Imogen’s, only living relative, and Alec’s a guardian, Jace’s guardian. One day soon, Jace will marry a girl of a good standing and continue his lineage - and Alec will be there, guarding him, making sure that he gets to do that. Alec’s made peace with that a long time ago, he’s made Jace’s happiness and safety his mission in life. If Jace gets to be happy… it’ll be enough for Alec.

Izzy touches his arm. “Alec…” she whispers unhappily, looking up at him.

He gives her a half-smile and pats her hand. “Don’t worry about it,” he tells her. And when she still keeps watching him with concern, he changes the topic. “What about you? I heard you were given a new assignment?”

She frowns, making sure he knows that she knows what he’s doing. Then she sighs. “Yeah. One of the up-and-comers among the Royals, Valentine Morgenstern, is coming to Alicante. His wife, Jocelyn, requested a female guardian for their daughter.” She wrinkles her nose a little. “I hope the girl isn’t some spoiled brat of a princess. I’m to be her guardian, not her nanny.”

Alec smirks at her. “You’ll do just fine. Just use your unbeatable charm on her.”

And that’s when Jace turns around and waves at him, beckoning him closer.

Quickly kissing his sister on the forehead, Alec whispers teasingly, “Good luck with your babysitting job!”

Izzy calls after him wryly, “Thanks, big brother!”
Alec flashes her a smile, then he schools his expression quickly and when he joins his charge and his queen, his expression is as serious as ever. He bows a little to the monarch. “Your Highness.”

Jace touches his arm. “Grandmother, this is Alec Lightwood, my guardian,” he introduces him.

The queen looks him up and down sternly and without a smile. Alec feels like a weapon being judged by its sharpness. “I know your mother, young man. She used to be my guardian back in the day.”

Alec stiffens and Jace must feel it because he squeezes Alec’s arm in support. “She’s proud to have served you, Your Highness,” Alec responds with another little bow.

The queen narrows her eyes a little and hmms. Everybody knows that the queen and the Lightwoods have a… history that nobody ever talks about. Alec only hopes that whatever happened between his mother and the queen won’t reflect badly on him. He can live with Jace never reciprocating his feelings - he can’t live with not having Jace in his life at all.

“You will guard my grandson well, Alexander,” the queen says and it’s not a question, it’s not a statement - it’s an order.

“Grandmother…” Jace protests.

But Alec looks her straight in the eyes and replies gravely, “With my life, Your Highness.”

The queen stares at him a moment longer, then she nods sharply and turns back to her grandson.

“We’ll see each other again before I leave, Jace,” she says and offers him her cheek for a kiss.

Jace complies. “I’m sure we will, grandmother,” he answers.

They both bow - Alec deeper than Jace - and the queen leaves, followed by her own retinue of guardians.

Then Jace rounds on Alec and pokes him in the chest hard. “What did I tell you? I don’t want you to die for me! You will not die on me!” he orders Alec sternly.

Alec raises his eyebrows a little. “I’m your guardian, Jace. You can order me to do many things, but not not to die. You realize that there’s a good chance that exactly that will happen one day, right? That’s what guardians do!”

But Jace’s glare darkens even further and he takes a step closer. “But not you! You’re not just my guardian, you know it. You’re…” He pauses, overwhelmed by… something and looks away. When he continues, his voice is very soft. “You’re not going to die.”

Alec’s face softens. “I’ll do my best,” he promises - and it’s all he can do and they both know it.

Jace looks back up at him and after a long moment, he nods. “I’ll hold you up to it,” he whispers.

Then Jace slaps Alec on the shoulder and with much more energy, he says, “Now come. There’s some new bigwig arriving, Morgenwhatever, and I was tasked with welcoming him to our humble city. Me, a diplomat? Can you even imagine?” He snorts.

Alec rolls his eyes - and follows Jace, as he always does.
Not Ashamed to Beg

Chapter Summary

A parabatai drabble set in 203. (Unbeta'd)

When Clary informs him that he needs to come back, that Alec’s asleep and cannot wake up, Jace… doesn’t understand. His bond’s telling him nothing. Actually, *nothing at all*. How did he not notice before?

He can wake Alec up, though, he can bring him back. All he has to do is get there, reach Alec, and everything will be alright, for sure.

But now, he’s here, he’s holding Alec in his arms - and Alec’s… *dead*. Alec’s *gone*! And their bond’s already starting to unravel and break apart. And Jace… Jace’s not ashamed to *beg*.

“Please, don’t leave me, Alec!”
To Prevent a War

Chapter Summary

This is a death story. A what-if ficlet set in episode 210. To stop Valentine from activating the Soul Sword, Alec and Aldertree come to a decision that changes everything. (Unbeta'd)

“Years ago, when I was still making my way up through the ranks of the Clave, I fell in love with a woman,” Aldertree starts saying as the access hatch hiding the control mechanism of the angelic power core beeps, refusing to open - again.

And Alec’s had enough. “I’m sure your sob story’s very touching, but I really don’t care,” he says. “We need to shut down the core and we have to do it now or many more innocent people will die.”

Aldertree shoots him an angry look. “And what do you think I’ve been trying to do here?” he snaps in annoyance. “I’m locked out! Valentine must’ve changed the access codes. Without them, nobody’s going to open the hatch. So, if you have a better idea, Mr ‘I’m calling the shots,’ I’m all all ears.”

Alec glares at him for a second, then he turns his eyes to the access hatch - and something flickers through his eyes. “Well then,” he says and he squares his shoulders with determination. “If we can’t shut the angelic core down, we have to destroy it. Valentine must not activate the sword.”

And with that he pulls out his Seraph Blade.

Aldertree stares at him, aghast. “The destruction of the core would cause a major implosion!” he protests. “It would wipe out everybody on the premises, not just Valentine’s henchmen, but our people, those who’re still alive, too! It would kill us!”

Alec keeps staring at him unflinchingly; his eyes are merciless. “Yes.” He’s aware of that. He knows very well what’s going to happen if they do this - all the people under his command, sweet little Madzie, even that stupid, stupid vampire Simon, they’re all going to die. But he can’t think of those caught up in Valentine’s siege or of his loved ones right now - of Magnus and Jace, Izzy and Max, his parents! - or he wouldn’t be able to do this. It’s the leader’s duty to make the hardest decisions and Valentine needs to be stopped!

Aldertree gapes at him, too stunned to say anything more.

“We can stop Valentine, right here, right now, and everyone will be safe,” Alec says, completely calm now. He made his decision and there’s no use looking back now. “With one strike, we can prevent a war. Tell me I’m wrong, Victor.”

Aldertree stares at him a moment longer, then quietly, he admits, “I can’t.” With a deep breath, he pulls out his own Seraph Blade and says, “Alright. Let’s do it, then.”

The following implosion, blinding in its intensity, happens in absolute silence. A miniature star’s born and when it dies again a heartbeat later, when the angelic core collapses into itself, it takes
the Institute and everyone inside with it. There’s nothing left - no bodies to bury, no ruins to comb through - just a hole in the ground where the old church used to stand.
Chapter Summary

A what-if parabatai story. What if their fight in 109 went down differently? (Unbeta'd)

Alec just stands there, staring at him in shock, and Jace can feel the storm of his parabatai’s emotions seeping through their bond: the coldness of disbelief, the foulness of betrayal - and pain. So much pain.

It makes Jace angry. Angry at the situation at hand, angry at Alec for refusing to listen - but most of all, angry at himself for seeing no other option and doing this to them!

His anger fuels his determination to see this through to its bitter end because there’s no going back now, not anymore, because Alec knows and there’s no unknowing this. And so, when he attacks, when he tackles Alec to force him to let go of Meliorn, he uses his full strength, he puts everything he has into it.

But Alec doesn’t expect it. Even faced with his parabatai’s betrayal, he doesn’t expect an outright attack. He doesn’t defend himself. He doesn’t do anything because, despite everything, he still trusts Jace not to do… this.

That’s why, when they hit the ground, there’s a sickening crack as Alec’s head smashes against the hard, unforgiving concrete and it’s deafeningly loud in the vast, empty room. And Alec goes limp beneath Jace, the flood of his emotions simply stops as their bond turns absolutely quiet.

Jace freezes with one hand on Alec’s chest, the other on the dust covered floor. He props himself up and looks down, wide-eyed. “Alec?” he whispers, terrified, but Alec doesn’t respond.

“Jace?” Clary asks uncertainly.

Jace doesn’t even glance at her when he orders her to run, his look is fixed on Alec; his parabatai’s eyes are closed and his face’s slack, turning from pale to ashen fast.

When Clary protests vehemently, Jace finally turns to her, angry and desperate, and barks out, “Clary, Meliorn, go, now!” And they do, they obey. With one last fearful glance over her shoulder, Clary leads Meliorn away, leaving the parabatai alone in the dimly lit, cold room.

“Alec?” Jace whispers brokenly as he runs his shaking hand over Alec’s cheek, down to the back of Alec’s head. His fingers come away bloody. He stares at them with horror. “Alec?”

He touches Alec throat, then. The heartbeat’s still there, but it’s fluttering and fast, erratic, nowhere near as strong and steady as the beat that Jace’s used to feeling under his hand during their sparring matches and warm hugs.

Slowly, as if in a nightmare, Jace raises himself to his knees, reaching out for Alec but afraid to touch, afraid to move him. Jace did something, something to his parabatai, he hurt Alec and he’s afraid of doing even more damage but…

Alec’s face’s now the color of the concrete that he’s lying on, his lips are almost white and there’s
a dark puddle spreading from underneath his head: Alec’s blood’s soaking into the dust.

“Alec?” Jace demands hoarsely.

And then Clary’s back, running up to him, gripping his shoulders and pulling him away. Why? Jace can’t! He can’t leave Alec here! He can’t… He tells her.

But she’s shaking her head, shaking him, and whispering urgently, “We have to go! We have to go now, Jace! Please! The Shadowhunters are coming, they’ve regrouped and they’re coming.”

There’re tears in her eyes and in her voice as she’s trying to pull him away from Alec. “They’ll be here any second now. They’ll help Alec, they’ll take him back to the Institute or… or to the City of Bones, they will help him, I promise, Jace, but we need to go. If they catch us here, it’s over! If they catch us, you’ll never get a chance to make it right!”

That’s what finally gets him moving. The chance at redemption. Because Clary’s right, if the others catch them here, they’ll be locked up or sent into exile, and he’ll never get a chance to fix it.

Jace lets Clary lift him up but he stumbles over Alec’s legs and Alec’s head lolls to the side, and Jace’s breath hitches sharply because there’s blood trickling from Alec’s ear now and that’s bad, that’s bad, very bad. Jace’s knees almost betray him, he almost sinks back to the ground because, Raziel, what has he done?

In the end, Clary manages to drag him deep into the looming shadows only seconds before the Shadowhunters burst in, led by Raj, and Jace can only watch helplessly as Raj’s eyes widen when he sees Alec lying unmoving on the ground, as he runs to Alec and drops to his knees by his side - “By the Angel, he’s bleeding!” - as he yells at the guards to get the Silent Brothers, to get help…

Only then Jace allows himself to be pulled away, their running footsteps covered by the outraged shouts of the Shadowhunters in the room behind them, but he doesn’t look where he’s going, he trusts Clary to lead them, because he’s staring down at his hand, at his shaking fingers covered with his parabatai’s drying blood.

He’ll fix this. He will… somehow, he’ll make this right. It will be alright…
I Belong

Chapter Summary

A parabatai ficlet set after 210! (Unbeta'd)

“Today, when Aldertree called me up and praised me for capturing Valentine, I felt like a fraud,” Jace admits with a sigh. He’s sitting on the steps in one of his favorite hideouts, in the little used stairwell at the back of the Institute, with his arms crossed and resting on his bent knees. And he looks miserable.

Alec, who’s leaning against the wood paneling at the foot of the stairs, frowns. “Why?” he asks, confused.

Jace shakes his head. “Not because of Aldertree’s commendation - I deserved that and more from that bastard and he can choke on his words! - but because of the name: Jace Wayland.” He snorts derisively. “Wayland! I’m no Wayland. I’m not even a Morgenstern. I have no idea who I really am anymore, where I actually belong.” He rubs his face tiredly.

“You belong with us,” Alec chides him gently.

Jace drops his arms and smiles at his parabatai. “Yeah, that’s the only thing I’m sure of. The last twelve years that I’ve spent here, with you. And with Izzy and Max and Maryse and Robert. I have no idea what I would do without you. That Valentine sent me to your family, it’s the only good thing he’s ever done for me.”

Slowly, Alec climbs the steps and sits down next to his parabatai, mimicking his pose. “You’re a part of this family, Jace. You have been ever since you came to live with us. Whoever your real parents are - and we will figure it out, I promise - it won’t change the fact that you’re a Lightwood in all but your name.”

Jace looks at him, smiling again, and this time, his eyes warm up, too. “Jace Lightwood, huh?”

Alec returns his smile and bumps their shoulders together. “Yes, if that’s what you want.”

“I like the sound of that…”
Chapter Summary

A fluffy Malec piece. Just because. Magnus has his priorities straight. (Unbeta'd)

This time, Magnus takes Alec to Paris and their date’s a glorious success. Now, as they head home, he’s laughing, telling Alec some silly joke that he plans on finishing on the other side of the portal…

But as soon as they step out of the glowing, swirling gate, in the entrance hall of his loft, Magnus is seized from behind and thrown aside, to the left, towards the cabinets neatly lined with potions and other ingredients. He doesn’t hit the ground, though, because it’s Alec holding him tight and he twists them around so that he cushions Magnus’ fall, but Magnus still ends up bruised and aching from rolling across the hardwood floor and hitting the cabinet so hard that the bottles inside rattle dangerously.

“What–?” Magnus starts asking, but before he can actually finish his question, he hears it, the loud hissing sound, distinctly non-human, and the sizzling and popping coming from the direction where they were standing only a heartbeat ago.

Magnus lifts his head and his eyes grow wide when he sees the large, smoking hole in his main door, burned through with… acid? What the hell?

And then he sees the other thing that definitely wasn’t there when he left, the black chitinous six-legged monster with a long tail skittering around his living room, mouth open and dripping yellow poison that’s leaving smoking holes in his priceless carpets. The monster turns its head towards them and with an unholy shriek, it spits acid at them again. Yuck!

Magnus flings his hands up, raising a protective shield around them, and the poison splashes against it, dripping down to the floor, splattering around and burning Magnus’ books and antique furniture, creating more choking smoke.

“You okay?” Magnus calls out over his shoulder, he doesn’t dare to take his eyes off the thing, though.

“Fine,” Alec responds, coughing as the smokes rolls over them.

Reassured, Magnus drops his protective shield, and gathering his magic in his hands, he starts flinging balls of red, angry fire at the monster. But the creature is faster than he thought - and more agile as it turns out! It slitters away, up the wall and across the ceiling, waving its tail and still spitting poison.

Magnus growls in frustration because he has to roll away and jump aside and duck to avoid being showered with acid and he keeps missing the darn thing! Half of his loft is now in shambles, burning or smoking! Magnus is not afraid, he’s furious! Some of the furniture pieces were irreplaceable!

And then, an arrow whizzes past Magnus’ shoulder - Alec’s arrow! - hitting the monster with
deadly accuracy, pinning its tail to the wall and stopping it in mid-crawl. The creature gives out a deafening screech - and Magnus uses it to his full advantage. He flings a huge ball of red energy at the monster, burning it to a crisp, turning it into ash that slowly flutters to the ground and disappears.

“You alright?” Alec asks worriedly as he comes up to him from behind and touches Magnus’ back gently, bow still in hand, surveying the loft.

“No!” Magnus snaps in annoyance and settles his hands on his hips. “Look at my flat! Just look at it. It’s in ruins! Whoever summoned that beast, I’ll make them pay. Literally. I’ll send them the bill! That was a Persian rug!” He points.

Alec lifts his eyebrows. “Priorities much? Someone just tried to kill you.”

“Pah,” Magnus replies, waving a hand. “That tends to happen every few years or so. Usually for rather petty reasons.”

“Like maybe the company you keep?” Alec murmurs softly, and when Magnus looks at him, Alec’s eyes are serious, his expression gloomy. “Maybe someone doesn’t like your choice of partners?” he suggests carefully.

Now Magnus turns to him fully. He grabs Alec by the front of his jacket and pulls him down to kiss him hungrily, possessively, thoroughly. “Alexander,” he says a little breathlessly when he finally pulls back, “I like my choice of partners very much and nothing else matters. And if someone has a problem with that, I’ll squash them like a bug.” He leans back in and whispers against his mouth, “Is that understood?”

“Yeah,” Alec croaks out, blinking dazedly, then he clears his throat and says in a stronger, firmer voice, “Yes. Like a bug. Like the demon. That destroyed your rug.”

“Persian rug,” Magnus corrects him very seriously, staring into his eyes.

“Persian rug,” Alec agrees, just as seriously.

“And now,” Magnus says as he pecks Alec on the lips one last time, then he pulls away and smooths down Alec’s jacket. “I’ll do some magic and find out who had the bad taste to try to pickle us with acid. Then, we’ll kick his or her ass. And then–”

Alec lifts his eyebrows again, amused. “And then?”

Eyes sparkling, Magnus raises his forefinger. “And then, we’ll redecorate, my love! Starting with” –he gives Alec a smoldering look– “the bedroom!”
A teen parabatai story set between Alec’s confession to Izzy and the parabatai ceremony. It deals with Alec’s unrequited feelings for Jace. (Unbeta’d)

“I love him, mother.”

“No...”

“What...?” Jace utters quietly as he stares at Maryse in disbelief.

She leans forward in her seat and clasps her hands together on her desk, looking very prim and proper. “I called off your parabatai ceremony, Jace.”

This can’t be happening. “Why?” he demands, shocked.

Maryse holds her head high, but it’s rather obvious that the whole thing makes her uncomfortable. “Alec has... other duties now that will keep him away from New York, from the mundane world in general, actually, for extended periods of time. And since you’re the best among our young fighters, we need you here, on the front line.”

Jace keeps staring at her, not really getting what she’s saying. “What ‘other duties?’”

Maryse opens her mouth to answer, then she closes it again and clears her throat. In the end, she gets up and walks over to the stained glass window in her office, hands clasped behind her back.

“Alec’s getting married,” she replies, staring out into the courtyard.

Jace’s eyes grow wide. “What?”

Maryse’s back tenses even more. “We decided - me, Robert and the Branwell matriarch - that it would be wise to join our families. They have a daughter of a marrying age and Alec’s... suitable, too.”

“He’s sixteen!” Jace objects sharply.

She nods. “Yes, I understand that the girl’s slightly older but in a few years, that won’t matter anymore,” she replies, willfully misunderstanding him.

“And Alec just agreed to it?” Jace asks in disbelief, still reeling from the news.

Now Maryse turns to him. “He understands he has obligations to this family.”

Jace’s still staring at her. He can’t believe this. He can’t believe that Alec would just let it happen like that. That he wouldn’t object. That he wouldn’t fight for them, for their parabatai bond.
Jace gets up from his chair in front of Maryse’s desk. “I have to talk to him--”

“He already left for Idris,” Maryse interrupts him. “This morning. We all want this wedding to take place as soon as possible and there’s so much to be done in Alicante.” Then, as if she finally noticed his look, she says persuasively, “It’s a smart political move, for all of us. With the Branwell’s backing, Robert could maybe even become the next Inquisitor! Think of all the doors that’ll open to you, Isabelle and Max!”

Jace’s too shaken, too shocked to say anything. His mind is empty. His whole world seems to be falling apart - again! - and the last thing he thinks about now is his career. Doesn’t she get that?

Apparently, she does. Stepping towards him, Maryse rests her hands on his shoulders in an affectionate, even tender gesture. Her smile’s gentle and her voice kind when she says, “Jace, don’t worry. I’m certain you’ll find someone else who’ll become your parabatai. Someone better suited than Alec.”

And in that moment, looking into the eyes of the woman he loves like a mother, Jace realizes that Maryse will never understand what it means to have found that one person you’re willing to bind your very soul to.

Jace will not allow her or anyone else take this, take Alec, from him.

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Sitting in the window seat, Alec leans his head against the cool glass and closes his eyes, not looking out into the garden of their Alicante mansion. It’s dark outside, night has sneaked in while he wasn’t looking. Barely a day has passed since he arrived in Idris but it feels like a lifetime already.

He has no idea what possessed him to tell his mother the truth when she asked why he was hesitating to become Jace’s parabatai. Maybe he wanted an advice from someone older and wiser than him, from someone who has seen the world and had to deal with the consequences of their own actions. Or maybe he just needed his mom to tell him that everything would be alright.

And now, Alec’s here, engaged to a girl he has never met before. Lavinia? Lourdes? He can’t remember now. He should’ve kept his mouth shut. If he had, he would still be home, with Jace.

There’s a soft sound and when Alec opens his eyes and turns his head, his breath catches in his throat. Jace!

It’s really him, Jace. He slips inside Alec’s room and closes the door very softly. Then he stops there, in the shadows, and watches Alec in the darkness lit only by the silvery moonlight falling in through the windows.

“How did you get here?” Alec asks quietly, surprised, though he shouldn’t be. He should’ve known that Jace wouldn’t simply let this go.

“Izzy smuggled me through the gate. Apparently, she has friends everywhere. She will go places, that girl,” Jace answers, smirking a little. But then his smile falls away.

They stare at each other for several heartbeats, seemingly frozen, then Jace walks up to Alec slowly, and Alec has no idea what Jace’s seeing in his face but there has to be something otherwise he wouldn’t be approaching him as if Alec were a spooked animal.
Alec doesn’t say a word when Jace sits down next to him in the window seat. Jace’s bent leg is resting across Alec’s bare toes and Alec pulls his knees closer to his chest to make more room for him but Jace only shuffles closer, maintaining the contact.

Then Jace whispers gently, “Alec, what are you doing?”

Alec looks away, ashamed. What can he say? How can he explain when his mind’s a whirlwind of thoughts he can’t seem to sort out, his heart a storm of feelings? All the wrong feelings?

Jace reaches out to touch Alec’s chin and forces him to turn back. “Hey. Come on, talk to me!”

Alec swallows hard and stares at Jace. He’s drowning in his mismatched eyes. “I have to do this, Jace,” he responds finally in a hoarse voice. “It will be good for everyone. For you. And for Izzy. For Max. Father might even become the next Inquisitor.”

“And what about our parabatai bond?” Jace asks, his face unreadable.

Alec has to swallow again because it hurts to say this. “You’ll find someone better suited than me, you’ll see.”

Jace stares at him quietly for a moment and with every passing second of silence, Alec’s heart’s hammering a little harder. Say something!

“‘Better suited,’ huh?” Jace comments finally. And then, after another heartbeat of silence, he snaps, “Bullshit! That’s Maryse talking, not you! We’re a perfect match, Alec. There’s no one else for me. No one! Tell me you don’t feel it! Tell me you can’t feel the connection between us, that we’re fated to become one. And I’ll leave, I won’t bother you anymore. Tell me!” he demands harshly but still quietly so as not to be overheard.

And Alec can’t tear his eyes away from him. And he can’t lie to him. The lies refuse to pass his lips. “I can’t,” he admits.

Jace moves closer. “Then tell me why? Why did you let your mother call our parabatai ceremony off? If you’re intent on doing this - personally, I think it’s the dumbest idea I’ve ever heard, you married at sixteen! - but if you truly do want to do this, we can still become parabatai. I can move back here. I can--”

“Do what?” Alec interrupts him. “Mother’s right. You’re the greatest fighter of our generation, you’re a born warrior. You belong on the front lines. If I marry that Branwell girl, I’ll be destined for a political career, that’s where mother and father want to see me. What would you do here, in Alicante? Become a politician, too? You would be bored out of your mind within a week. Or would you want to guard the gates of Alicante? It’s an honest job, a necessary job, but not for someone like you!”

“If you marry her?” Jace asks with renewed hope in his voice. And of course he would jump on that and disregard everything else.

Alec hugs his knees and looks away, not responding.

“If?” Jace prompts again.

“Jace…” Alec whispers forlornly.

“No, Alec!” Jace says firmly. “So far, I’ve heard all about what’s good for our family, for your father, I’ve heard about what your mother wants - but what about you? What do you want?”
You, Alec thinks with despair. I want you to love me and to never leave me. I want to spend my life with you, I want to give you my heart and everything else, too.

But that’s not possible and Alec knows that. Because Jace simply doesn’t feel the same way about him. Jace loves him but not like that. Still, he does want to spend his life with Alec, to give Alec as much of himself as he can. And if Alec can’t give Jace his heart… he will gladly give him his soul instead.

He opens his mouth so say that when the door opens and the overhead lights are turned on, making them both blink in their blinding glare. And there, in the doorway, stands Maryse, glaring at them with Izzy peeking over her shoulder, grimacing apologetically.

“Here you are,” Maryse says coldly.

Alec winces and Jace must feel it because he jumps to his feet and steps in front of him protectively with his hands on his hips. “Yes, here I am. Don’t tell me you actually expected me to simply accept this meekly and not try to talk Alec out of it. I want him to be my parabatai, him and no one else. I don’t need anyone ‘better suited’, Alec and I are a perfect match. And as I told him,” he adds firmly, “if I have to move back here to become his parabatai, I will. Try and stop me!”

Slowly, Alec gets up to stand by Jace’s side. He feels a sweet, warm ache in his chest; nobody has ever fought so hard for him. Nobody. He wanted to do what his mother wanted because he thought it would help him overcome his inappropriate feelings, help him avoid twisting their parabatai bond into something unnatural through his heart’s desire - his mother’s greatest fear - but all it would’ve done was make him lose Jace once and for all. And he can live with Jace not loving him back. He can’t live without Jace in his life at all.

Maryse’s grim look holds for another heartbeat or two, then it drops. And suddenly, she looks tired. And strangely old. “That won’t be necessary,” she says quietly. “There won’t be any wedding.”

Both Alec’s and Jace’s eyes widen. “What?” Jace asks.

Sighing, Maryse rubs her forehead. “That Branwell girl, she ran away with her boyfriend.” She closes her eyes. “By the Angel, what a scandal this will be! We need to return to New York immediately and stay away from Idris until the gossip dies down a little. What a nightmare!”

Alec stands there, stunned, his mouth half open. But Jace’s grinning widely. He turns to Alec to grip his shoulders and shakes him excitedly. “Congratulations,” he exclaims, “your wedding was just canceled! Now, nothing can stop us from becoming parabatai!” And he throws himself at Alec to hug him hard.

Slowly, Alec wraps his arms around Jace to return his hug. Over Jace’s shoulder, he meets his mother’s eyes. Maryse’s face looks unreadable.

“So, you’re really determined to do it, then,” Maryse states quietly when she steps into her son’s room at the Institute.

Alec turns. He’s dressed in black pants and a gray undershirt. Not a common attire for the parabatai ceremony but he doesn’t care and neither will Jace, he knows. They’re simply glad that they’ll actually get to do this - have this - even if the ceremony will happen without the usual pomp that would take weeks to set up again following Maryse’s cancellation of the event. They both
agreed to keep it simple and do it now. Who knows what could happen in a few weeks?

Alec nods and replies simply, “Yes.”

She walks up to him and rests her hands on his shoulders. “Do you realize just how dangerous this could be? And how lonely?” she implores worriedly. “You’ll have to hide your feelings constantly. You won’t ever be able to show them, to do anything that could actually make him love you back the way you wish him to, because it would twist your bond and doom you both. And if the Clave ever found out… you would be stripped of your runes and exiled, at the very least. Because--”

“--romantic love between parabatai is strictly forbidden,” Alec finishes for her quietly. “I know.”

Maryse smiles sadly at him and strokes his hair. “Is it really worth it, son?” she asks him with deep concern in her eyes. “Is it worth the pain?”

And without any doubt, Alec replies. “Yes.”
A Different Kind of Poison

Chapter Summary

Another teen parabatai story. But this one’s rather dark, with heavy themes. If you’re easily triggered by hints of non-con (nothing happens!) and mentioned victim blaming, then stay away. I mean it. You have been warned.

Alec kills a succubus. It has consequences. (Unbeta’d)

The demon flaps its huge leathery wings but Jace’s too fast and he hacks the monster apart, turning it into a pile of ash. Without pausing, he runs on, down the hallway, looking for Alec.

They were separated shortly after entering the demons’ lair, the derelict warehouse that the creatures turned into a labyrinthine nest of small and large rooms and seemingly endless corridors. And now Jace can hear the rest of the squad fighting somewhere to his left, but he’s sure that Alec went further in, he doesn’t know how he knows, he just does, their newly formed bond pulling him forward like a leash.

Another room and another demon destroyed and - there!

Jace stops in the doorway of the vast storage space, open in the back, and his eyes widen as he sees Alec on his knees in a pile of still glowing embers, the remnants of a demonic being. Alec’s gasping hard, trying to pull up the sleeve of his leather jacket to draw a rune on his skin.

“Alec!” Jace exclaims, running towards his parabatai. “What--?” he asks as he drops to his knees by Alec’s side, reaching out but afraid to touch, not knowing what’s wrong.

Alec looks up at him. His pupils are blown, his face’s flushed and there’s a sheen of sweat on his forehead. His lips are bitten almost bloody and he can barely catch his breath. He fumbles and his stele slips out of his trembling hand.

“Suc-succubus,” Alec stammers, groaning loud. His eyes flutter shut and he bends over, one hand pressed to his stomach, forehead almost touching the ground.

Realizing what happened, Jace freezes and pulls back sharply. Alec killed a succubus and he must’ve been touching the thing when it happened because he caught a blast of its power when it died. Not an uncommon thing, but now, Alec’s body’s flooded with unnatural, alien lust, desire that’s not his and that he has no control over. And Jace desperately wants to help but he knows that the last thing his parabatai needs right now - that either of them needs right now - is someone touching him.

Curling in on himself even further, Alec moans in lust that crossed the line into pain, whispering, “Please, Jace… put me… put me to sleep! I can’t… I tried to… do it myself… I can’t-can’t… please! Put me to sleep.”

To hell with it, Jace thinks, he can’t simply stand by and watch Alec suffer. He reaches out for Alec, trying not to touch his naked skin. Whimpering softly, Alec uncurls and leans against Jace, forehead pressed against Jace’s chest, and he allows Jace to take his hand to push up his sleeve,
trusting Jace fully.

Even though Jace tries to brace himself, the moment he takes Alec’s hand in his, it feels as if he touched a live wire. In the blink of an eye, and catching the barest reflection of the demonic power coursing through Alec, Jace’s painfully aroused and so overwhelmed by desire that his mind turns foggy. And their bond flares up with lust so powerful that it takes his breath away. He’s never felt anything like that before. He’s frozen and gasping, but he needs to… he needs… what was it?

“Please,” Alec groans, eyes squeezed shut, “make it… make it stop. I don’t… I don’t want this, that’s not me… I don’t want to feel like… Put me to sleep, make it st-stop!”

Alec’s words are like a bucket of ice water, they help Jace clear his mind and clamp down on the feelings that he suddenly realizes aren’t his. He knows it! He grits his teeth hard and with a growl, he pushes Alec’s sleeve further up his forearm and with a few fast, focused strokes he draws the ‘sleep’ rune on his parabatai’s skin.

It’s as if someone flipped a switch. Alec slumps against with a long exhale, his body turning boneless, and the unnatural passion burning hot in Jace’s veins fizzes out to almost nothing. Almost. It’s still simmering inside him, deep under Jace’s skin, an echo of the storm of the alien magic raging through Alec’s body.

Jace’s shoulders drop and he wraps his arms around Alec so as to keep him from falling. “Raziel…” he mutters, suddenly exhausted. He’s breathless and aching all over - and still aroused! - but he finally feels like himself again, like the master of his own body.

He looks down at Alec, fast asleep but still flushed and breathing fast, and he touches Alec’s throat - there’s another zing of lust that kicks in at the touch but he clamps down hard on it - to check Alec’s pulse; it’s dangerously thready, but there’s nothing Jace or anyone else can do about it, Alec has to ride it out and wait for it to fade.

“Raziel,” Jace whispers again and closes his eyes. He feels so…

There’re quick footsteps in the corridor outside the room and Jace’s eyes fly open in alarm. But it’s just Izzy and he relaxes again.

“Alec!” she cries out the moment she sees them. She runs towards them with her eyes wide and face panicked. “What happened? Is he alright?”

Jace shakes his head and answers softly, “He killed a succubus, Iz.”

She blinks. And then she stares at him for a long moment as his words slowly sink in. “By the angel,” Isabelle mumbles in shock.

Then she looks over her shoulder, towards to doorway, because there’re voice coming closer and shuffling footsteps headed their way.

Izzy turns back to Jace and tells him urgently, “Get him out. I’ll cover for you, don’t worry. Just” – she looks down at her brother, eyes worried; she wants to touch him so badly, it’s obvious, but she doesn’t dare to– “don’t let them see him.”

And then she runs out, yelling something about escaping demons at the approaching squad members.

Quickly, Jace gathers their steles and blades, stowing them away. Then he picks Alec up - Alec’s head lolls against his shoulder limply and Jace looks down at him, wondering for a second how
long he’ll still be able to do this, considering Alec’s recent growth spurt - and he leaves the room, too, but through the back.

Because Izzy’s right. There’s nothing all that unusual about a power backlash caused by the killing of a demon, it happens, especially with stronger beings, and yet - this, an unwanted, alien rush of lust caused by the power discharge of an incubus’ or a succubus’ death, is still considered shameful, somehow the victim’s fault, a proof of their weakness, of their inability to keep their own body under control…

As if it were a thing of choice, Jace thinks angrily because Alec’s pain and despair are still vivid in his mind. The succubus’ lust is no different than any other demonic poison, the fact that it attacks one’s libido, one’s sex drive, doesn’t make it any less unwanted, any less of an intrusion, damn it!

His anger helps Jace eradicate all remaining traces of the demon induced arousal; his anger and his worry for Alec. Because Alec would die of shame if anyone else found out about what happened here. He would never get rid of the stigma.

And then there’s the fact that Alec’s already very… restrained when it comes to sex - as far as Jace knows, his parabatai’s still a virgin - and this… Jace has no idea what this will do to him.

But first thing first. He needs to get Alec out of here, unnoticed.

Pulling Alec closer to his chest, Jace disappears into one of the side rooms to hide from the members of their squad that rush by, searching the warehouse. Only after they’re safely gone does he dare to step back out and head for the side entrance again.

Yes, first, he’ll get Alec out of here and somewhere safe to let him recover in peace. And then… then they’ll deal with the fallout. Together.
Compulsion

Chapter Summary

Another teen parabatai ficlet. H/c ahoy! Jace’s attacked by a vampire. (Unbeta'd)

Alec kills the vampire who attacks Jace. He chops his head off and turns him into a pile of ash and glowing embers. And that’s that.

Or not.

They’re sparring in the training hall, but the usual clack-clack-clacking of the wooden staffs sounds much slower today; Alec’s holding back because Jace seems distracted, not altogether focused on what they’re doing, and their bond’s buzzing with anxious energy, seeping through from Jace’s side.

“What the hell is wrong with you today?” Alec snaps when Jace fails to block a broad stroke that Alec advertised long in advance, and the end of Alec’s staff clips Jace’s on the cheek, bruising him. “I could’ve put out your eye, you idiot!”

But when he reaches out to check the injury, Jace slaps his hand away with an almost stinging force and growls, rubbing his cheek, “I’m fine! You got lucky!”

Alec glares at him for a moment, but then he sighs and leans against his staff. “Alright, what gives? Talk to me,” he implores because this is truly unlike Jace.

Jace twists his lips and grits his teeth, looking away from Alec, then he mutters angrily, “He got me! I didn’t even see the bastard coming, he was just suddenly there and he got me. Like a novice! Like a complete fool!”

Blinking, Alec frowns. “The vampire?” he asks in disbelief. “That’s what this is about?” And when Jace shoots him a furious glare, Alec rolls his eyes. “Raziel, so our resident golden boy, Jace Wayland, is not perfect, he’s fallible, too. Big deal. Welcome to the club!”

Alec understands that Jace’s not used to failing at anything, but this is simply ridiculous. Stuff like that happens, especially when they fight in an unfamiliar environment against an unknown number of enemies. They’ll learn from this and move on, that’s all!

Apparently not.

Because all of a sudden, Jace whirls around and shoves his parabatai hard, and Alec, who didn’t expect such a reaction at all, stumbles back, stunned. “What—?”

“Fuck you!” Jace yells at him, eyes ablaze and cheeks flushed, the right one already swelling a little. “Fuck you and your condescending bullshit!” And with that he throws his staff to the ground - it clatters loudly, causing others to turn their way in surprise - and storms out of the training hall.

Alec gapes for a second. Anger swells inside him but he clamps down on it hard, because something’s seriously wrong, he can feel it. The anxiety that’s seeping through their bond from
Jace’s side is turning into a full-blown panic, making even Alec jittery with its force. He can’t let Jace simply go feeling like that, who knows what he would do!

Setting down his own staff, Alec runs after Jace, calling his name. And there he is, striding down the hallway, away from the training hall and towards the living quarters, not turning back, not reacting to Alec’s calls. His back is straight and tense, his hands clenched into fists by his sides.

Alec quickens his steps and when he’s in reach, he makes to grab Jace’s arm, to force him to stop and turn, to talk to Alec. But before he can even touch his parabatai, Jace twists around and throws a mighty punch in his direction - and Alec jumps back lightning fast, avoiding Jace’s fist by a mere inch.

“What the hell, Jace!” Alec yells, but that’s as far as he gets because then Jace is on him, fists swinging and legs kicking, and Alec can barely keep up, he can barely defend himself against his parabatai’s unrestrained, furious attack, let alone go on the offensive.

And then Jace manages to kick his legs out of him and Alec hits the floor hard, almost getting the wind knocked out of him, and when he blinks his eyes open, wheezing, he sees Jace above him, he’s straddling Alec with his left hand fisted in Alec’s shirt and his right one raised for a punch.

“Jace!” Alec shouts, and closing his eyes, he cringes away from the blow that will definitely break bones.

It lands and there’s the unmistakable sound of something cracking - but Alec… Alec’s unharmed.

Slowly, he opens his eyes and looks up. Jace’s fist passed him by, so close, though, that Alec’s cheek’s resting against Jace’s bare forearm now that he turned his head back. And he’s staring up at Jace who’s breathing hard and whose face is paper white and blotchy. Jace’s eyes are wide and filled with absolute horror over what he’s almost done.

“Jace?” Alec asks uncertainly.

When Jace doesn’t respond, when he seems frozen in place, Alec raises his hand slowly to touch Jace’s shoulder. Jace’s trembling and his skin feels too hot, almost feverishly so, through the thin cotton of his t-shirt. What’s going on? Is Jace sick?

“Jace?” Alec asks again, his voice quieter, gentler.

Jace closes his eyes, seemingly folding in on himself. He sits down heavily on Alec’s thighs and drops his forehead to Alec’s chest as if all his strength has left him. “Sorry,” he whispers. “Sorry, sorry, so sorry.”

Alec starting to really freak out now. He moves his hand from Jace’s shoulder to his back in a loose hug. “It’s fine. Nothing happened. I’m okay - we are okay. Just… talk to me. Tell me what’s going on!”

Jace takes a shuddering breath and with his face still hidden in Alec’s chest, he confesses in a voice that’s barely a whisper, “He forced me to drink his blood. He didn’t just take mine, he made me drink his.”

Alec’s breath catches in his throat because he understands very well what it means. The vampire created a fledgling bond between himself and Jace, a bond that’s calling to Jace, luring him back, demanding the completion of the transformation. If Alec hadn’t killed the vamp, he might’ve called Jace back and–
Alec wraps both arms around Jace and pulls him into a hug. “It’s okay,” he whispers fiercely. “The vampire’s dead. He’s gone and the compulsion will fade. You know that. It’ll take a few days, sure, but it’ll fade. It’ll be fine. You know that, Jace.”

“I do,” Jace agrees, his breath ragged. “But I can still feel him in my head. I can still see him, out of the corner of my eye, and I know he isn’t there, I know that, but…”

Jace pulls away, looking down at Alec, and Alec lets his hands slide down and rest lightly on Jace’s waist. Under different circumstances, such intimacy would be a sweet torture for him, but right now, he can only think of his parabatai whose eyes are a little red rimmed, his pupils blown.

“He’s dead - but there are other vampires in the city, Alec,” Jace points out hoarsely. “And I’m not sure… if I’m strong enough to keep away, to not seek them out. I feel like I’m… missing something, like I’m… thirsty, dying of thirst, and only they can give me what I need.”

Alec’s heart skips a beat. He knows how much such a confession must’ve cost Jace and if he actually admitted how bad it was… Raziel!

Hiding his fear, Alec nods firmly. “Alright,” he says and he marvels at how calm his voice sounds. “Alright, then we’ll go back to Idris for a few days, away from all this.”

Slowly, Alec sits up, allowing Jace to move back a little. “I’ll ask mother to let us return to Alicante - I’ll come up with some good reason - and we’ll stay there until the compulsion fades. Nobody has to know what happened. It’ll be fine, I promise. Alright?”

Jace slumps a little and drops his head, his long bangs hiding his face. He nods. “Alright. Okay.” Then he hisses sharply when he moves to get up and leans against his right hand. “Dammit!”

Frowning, Alec takes Jace’s hand in his and grimaces at how swollen it already is. Yes, the punch definitely broke bones, just not his. “Well,” he says, “look at it this way: now we have the perfect explanation for why you need a few day off. Even with an iratze this won’t heal overnight.”

Jace’s grimace matches his own. “Joy,” he mutters sarcastically.

Alec smirks at him. “Come. Let’s get the healing started. And then I’ll go and talk to mother.” As they get up, Alec looks at Jace with genuine concern. “Do I have to lock you in your room for the time being or can you manage till I get back? Be honest.”

Jace hisses again as he stands up and presses his broken hand to his chest. “I can manage,” he assures Alec and when Alec lifts one eyebrow doubtfully, he repeats more firmly, “I can manage, I swear. Now that it’s out in the open, the compulsion’s easier to handle.”

Then he winces. “Ah… sorry about what I said back there” –he points over his shoulder with his thumb– “and for trying to beat the crap out of you. I was a little, uh…”

“Prick?” Alec supplies cheekily, relieved now that he has a set course of action.

Jace glares at him. “I wouldn’t go that far.”

“I would,” Alec replies, but when Jace stumbles a little, he slides one arm around his shoulders to support him. “But it’s okay. I’m used to it. Nothing I can’t handle.”

Jace mutters something under his breath, but he leans against Alec and allows himself to be led away.
Alec smiles. “I love you, too.”
Demons No Longer Imagined

Chapter Summary

This is a prequel to my story Habit (Chapter 39). It takes place during Jace and Alec’s teen years (of course it does XP) and it’s told from Maryse’s POV.

How did Alec hurt his knee? (Unbeta’d)

“Mom?” Alec whispers hoarsely, his eyes feverishly bright and lips cracked. “Mommy?”

Maryse’s heart breaks a little. He hasn’t called her that since he was small enough to crawl into her lap, seeking protection from demons that were still only imagined back then.

She squeezes his hand and lifts it from the infirmary bed to press it against her cheek. “I’m here,” she whispers back, stroking his sweat-soaked hair tenderly. “I’m here. Everything will be fine. It’ll be over soon.”

Alec blinks slowly, staring at her without really seeing her. She’s not sure if he actually understand what she’s saying, but she keeps repeating her words, trying to comfort him as best she can.

There’s a commotion at the door to the infirmary, voices raised and shouting, and without looking, Maryse knows that it’s Jace, demanding to be let in again - “He’s my parabatai! I have to be with him!” - but she posted the guards there for a reason. Jace’s simply too distraught, too anxious to be of any help here.

But Maryse understands his anguish. Swallowing hard, she looks down at Alec’s injury: his left knee is bloody and torn, butchered by a demon with big teeth and even bigger claws, his muscles and tendons are shredded, bones exposed… and the venom, it’s spreading fast down to his toes and up his thigh, reaching for his hip. She feels sick.

Alec’s starting to tremble now - the iratzes are losing their effect fast - and Maryse presses her cool hand to her son’s fever-hot brow, whispering words of comfort. Her throat is painfully tight and tears are burning in her eyes because she can’t do anything for him, nothing more than she’s already done. She brought in the Silent Brothers whose attempts at healing Alec failed miserably. And then she found a warlock actually willing to help a Shadowhunter, but if the woman’s magic’s not strong enough to heal her son…

Maryse squeezes her eyes shut. They’ll have to amputate Alec’s leg to save his life, to stop the venom from spreading further. But even that might not be enough anymore, they might’ve waited too long.

“Mrs Lightwood?”

Maryse opens her eyes and turns. The female warlock’s standing by the bed with a cup full of a gently steaming liquid. The woman’s dark-skinned and very tall and imposing. She’s staring at Maryse impassively and that makes Maryse mad because it’s her son lying in the infirmary bed, dammit, and he’s suffering, it’s not some--

No, that’s not fair. Maryse realizes that she’s not being fair. This woman came when nobody else
would. And Maryse should be grateful. And she is, she truly is. She takes a deep breath and pushes down all those ugly, irrational feelings.

“Yes, Miss Loss?” Maryse replies softly.

“I’m ready to begin now,” the warlock - Catarina Loss - says in a calm voice. “I promise that I’ll do everything I can for your son, but you have to know that not even I can do miracles. He still might lose his leg. He still might die. Do you understand that?”

Maryse blinks rapidly to hide her tears. “I understand,” she croaks out.

Catarina nods and then she leans over Alec - and Maryse realizes that she was right to push back her ungrateful thoughts, that she truly was being unfair, because when Catarina lifts Alec’s head and presses the cup to his lips, she’s so very gentle, almost loving, and there’s the loveliest smile on her lips, just for him.

When the cup’s empty, Catarina sets it aside and allows Alec to rest for a moment, stroking his hair till his eyes close in exhaustion.

“The potion will help with the pain. It will still hurt, a lot, and I can’t do anything about that, I’m sorry,” Catarina explains to Maryse seriously. “The damage is extensive and to repair it, I will need all my power.”

Maryse swallows hard and nods, gripping Alec’s hand.

Catarina straightens and moves over to Alec’s legs. She holds her hands over his mangled knee and a golden glow gathers in her palms. With a deep breath, she lets it sink into his torn flesh.

And Alec starts screaming.

Maryse’s standing in the doorway with her arms crossed over her chest and she’s watching her son, lying asleep in his infirmary bed.

After the healing - and the screaming, oh, the terrible, horrible screaming! - was over, Maryse finally let Jace and Isabelle in. Jace’s now sitting in her chair, holding Alec’s hand in his, not looking away from his parabatai, not even for a second, as if afraid that Alec might disappear on him if he isn’t vigilant enough. And Izzy’s asleep, curled up in the chair on the other side of the bed, holding Alec’s other hand.

Her children...

When Catarina Loss approaches her, wiping her hands on a paper towel and looking haggard, almost ashen, Maryse asks eagerly, “How is he?”

Catarina throws the paper towel into the bin. “He’ll live,” she replies. “And he’ll keep his leg. There will be some lasting damage and pain - I can’t replace what the demon tore out - but he’ll be able to walk and in time, maybe even run and fight. He’ll be fine.”

For a second, Maryse’s so overwhelmed with relief, with pure happiness, that she closes her eyes and presses her right hand to her lips to stop herself from sobbing. Her son will be alright, her baby boy will be just fine, he won’t die, he won’t lose his leg, he will be fine! Alec will live!

But it lasts only a couple of heartbeats. Then she pulls herself back together again.
Regaining her composure, she squares her shoulders and smooths down her elegant dress primly, visibly becoming Maryse Lightwood, the Head of the New York Institute again, a woman of a stalwart nature and boundless dedication to her duties.

She clears her throat. “Thank you, Miss Loss, for your services” she says, her voice firm and seemingly emotionless. “I’ll make personally sure you are paid in the shortest time possible, you have my word.”

And then, without another word - and feeling Catarina Loss’ look of pity on her - Maryse goes back to her office with her head held high and her steps steady - to break down and cry where nobody can see.
Quagmire

Chapter Summary

A what-if parabatai ficlet set in 109 and branching away from the show canon. I was just full of parabatai feels, sue me! (Unbeta'd)

“I don’t wanna be alive if we’re on different sides, Alec!”

That’s what Jace says and his voice’s desperate, pleading. He hopes to reach his parabatai who seems furious beyond reason. What’s happened to them? They’ve always bickered but this… this feel wrong!

And for a moment, it looks like Alec will listen, like Alec has realized the same thing, that it went too far. Jace can feel Alec’s anxiety and frustration layered over general unhappiness. But then… Something changes and without warning, their bond’s flooded with something so ugly and dark that it makes Jace’s skin crawl, it makes him want to retch.

Alec tilts his head sideways like a curious bird and the motion is sharp, jerky and very inhuman, and all of a sudden, Jace’s absolutely sure that it’s not Alec anymore who’s looking down at him out of Alec’s eyes. Jace’s heart skips a beat.

And then the thing wearing Alec’s skin slashes down with the Seraph Blade.

But the bond gave Jace a split of a second warning and that’s all he needs. He slips out from underneath Alec and flips him over his head, and then he jumps to his feet and turns around, ready to face his enemy - because it is an enemy, it’s not Alec in the driver’s seat anymore, their parabatai bond’s screaming that at him.

Slowly, Alec rolls to his feet and turns, crouching low in a fighting stance that Jace has never seen Alec use before, and there’s a terrifying smile on his lips. But it’s not Alec’s expression that catches Jace’s eye and makes him gasp. It’s the… thing on the left side of his neck, peeking out from underneath his collar: grey and black veins, swollen and reaching up like the tendrils of some alien plant.

Up and… down, as Jace realizes when his eyes drop to Alec’s hand because the Seraph Blade flickers and then dies. Alec’s hand is encased in those alien things, his skin’s mottled and gangrenous-looking, and the fact that the blade deactivated… that’s bad, that’s really bad because the adamas is no longer recognizing Alec as a Nephilim.

What the hell?!

Alec snarls and throws the now useless hilt away. But he doesn’t need a blade, not anymore, because the nails on his left hand are visibly growing longer, turning black and becoming more and more claw-like by the second. Alec looks down at his hand, first curiously, but then, as he flexes his fingers, with a deep satisfaction.

“Alec…” Jace whispers in horror. He has no idea what’s happening but this is wrong. Something bad’s going on here, really bad!
Snarling again, Alec throws himself at Jace, slashing with his claws, and Jace barely manages to duck. He hits Alec in the stomach, then he twists around and strikes again, catching Alec on the left upper arm with the edge of his hand - and Alec screams, bending at the waist and grabbing his left arm.

Jace freezes for a second, then he quickly dances away, eyes wide. What? That hit wasn’t even that hard, it shouldn’t have… Then it dawns on him. The wound, the damn Forsaken wound that Alec assured them wasn’t that bad. By the Angel! There must’ve been poison in it and only Raziel knows what kind, considering Valentine’s penchant for playing with strains of Downworlder DNA.

Alec throws Jace a narrow-eyed look over his shoulder - and Jace notices that the dark tendrils are touching Alec’s jawline now. The poison, whatever it is, is spreading incredibly fast now as if something’s fueling it, maybe the adrenaline in Alec’s blood, maybe his elevated heartbeat, Jace doesn’t know. What he does know is, that he has to stop Alec, he has to get him help and fast or–

Suddenly, people barge in through the doorway, the dark clad members of the Shadowhunter escort that Jace and Izzy and their friends incapacitated to free Meliorn. But they’re back on their feet now and they’re rushing in to help, but they don’t know, they don’t realize, that–!

“Watch out!” Jace yells. But it’s too late.

Alec attacks, furiously and without hesitation, and their people might be good - and they are, they really are - but Alec’s something else now, he’s evolving fast, his movements are a blur, his strength staggering, and he mows down the whole group, five people altogether, in a matter of seconds. Their colleagues, their friends, are dead, and when Alec stops finally moving again, standing unnaturally still, poised for another attack, his claws are dripping with their blood.

“Alec…” Jace whispers, one arm outstretched pleadingly. Because he’s the best of them - no false modesty there - but not even he might be able to stop Alec now. Not without killing him. And Jace’s not ready to do that, not yet. Not ever.

Slowly, Alec turns around to face Jace. He lifts his left hand and stares at it as if in fascination; his mottled skin turned dark, almost black, and his nails became long and needle sharp. When he looks past his hand, directly at Jace, there’s no recognition in his eyes, no life.

“Alec, please,” Jace begs and very carefully, he takes a step forward.

Alec runs, though, fading into the shadows before Jace can do anything to stop him.

In the eyes of the Clave, it’s all Alec’s fault.

They blame him for Meliorn’s escape, for the murdered Shadowhunters and for everything else that has gone wrong, too. They call Alec Valentine’s mole and a kill order is issued.

Nothing Jace or Izzy say seems to matter, not their confession to the crime, not their “tall tale” about Alec’s poisoning. The Clave insists that it’s all lies, a misguided attempt at protecting their brother. And even if it weren’t so, even if Alec were infected - shouldn’t that be even more of a reason to put him down?

Put Alec down. They talk about Jace’s parabatai as if he were a rabid dog!

Jace’s furious and frustrated - and terrified. This can’t be happening. Alec’s not gone yet, not entirely, Jace knows that. Their bond’s a quagmire of dark, ugly feelings, but it still exists, it’s not
broken - yet! And that means that there’s still time, that Alec, his Alec, his *parabatai*’s still in there somewhere, buried deep, but not *gone*!

And Jace will be damned if he allows anyone to take Alec from him. He’ll save his *parabatai* - or go down with him!

When Valentine and his men step out of the portal, leading from the Chernobyl power plant onto the ship anchored in the harbor, Alec’s waiting for them there, standing at ease with his legs slightly spread and hands clasped behind his back. The tendrils of the Forsaken poison are now covering his left cheek and reaching for his left eye that’s turning cloudy white. His face’s expressionless, its emptiness almost inhuman.

And Valentine welcomes him with a smile.
Chapter Summary

This is set after ep 210. It’s a Malec and Lightwood family feels story with a smidgen of parabatai feels. Longer than is usual for me, so please excuse all the mistakes, I’m exhausted. (Unbeta’d)

Alec hasn’t always hated spiders.

As a little child, Alec saw spiders as weird looking creatures - alright, ugly, ugly creatures - but he didn’t see their weirdness or ugliness as a reason to fear or hate them. He was simply… respectfully wary of the hairy beasts.

And then…

When Izzy comes to tell them in a very surly tone of voice that her brother’s not talking to her, that he didn’t even bother to open his door, Maryse frowns. Alec’s barely ten but he’s a very good, responsible child, not prone to temper tantrums, so report like that is a cause for worry rather than annoyance.

Maryse tells Izzy to go and eat breakfast alone, then she catches Robert’s eye across the room and nods towards the exit, asking him to join her. He complies and on the way to Alec’s room, Maryse explains to him what Izzy just told her. She and Robert rarely agree on anything anymore, but in this case, he shares her concern.

When they reach Alec’s room, Maryse knocks on the door and calls her son’s name, but there’s no response. So she tries the doorknob but the door refuses to open. And it’s not that it’s simply locked, the doorknob refuses to move at all, as if something’s holding it tight.

Maryse and Robert glance at each other again; their worry’s quickly turning into anxiety, maybe even fear. Deciding not to panic before she knows for sure that there’s an actual reason for it, Maryse pulls her stele out of her pocket and draws the listening rune on the back of her hand. Then she presses her palm against the door and allows her hearing to expand.

There, a heartbeat, more than likely Alec’s. And the sound of breathing. But it’s all… muffled, as if she’s listening not just through a wooden door but through a thick layer of insulation. And that’s not the only thing that worries her. Alec’s heartbeat is slow, very slow, too slow even for someone deeply asleep.

Well, that is a reason to panic alright.

Putting her stele away, Maryse pulls out her Seraph Blade instead, the small dagger-like thing, not a proper fighting blade; there’s no reason to walk around armed in their own home, after all - or at least there hasn’t been before today. Ignoring Robert’s questions, she rams the dagger into the door hard and she saws through the wood around the doorknob and the lock. It parts like butter but there’s something else behind it, something…
The cut out piece falls into her waiting hand - but there’re threads sticking to it, white and elastic and very, very strong threads that refuse to break. They look like... spiderwebs, she realizes and her eyes widen. She tries to cut them with her blade but the moment the adamas touches the strands, they catch fire and bright blue flames race up the white threads, disappearing into the hole that Maryse just cut out, only to fizzle out barely an inch deep.

Maryse and Robert exchange a horrified look. Then Robert whips out his own dagger, too, and they start sawing through the door, Maryse cutting up and to the left, towards the hinges, Robert down and in the same direction. The door opens inwards so they can’t just pry it open. This is the only way how to get inside - and they have to get inside, they have to, their son’s in there!

When the cut out piece of the door sags outwards on sticky webs, they burn the strands with their daggers and the wood drops down onto the carpeted floor with a dull thump. The blue flames climb up and down, sideways and inwards along the threads, until they finally burn through, and Maryse realizes that the layer of spider silk is almost half a foot thick.

They look inside with their hearts in their throats. Everything’s covered with spiderwebs, everything, the walls, the ceiling, the floor, every piece of furniture, and there’re spiders everywhere, small and big, poisonous and completely harmless, too, there’re dozens if not hundreds of them everywhere! And in the center of the room, halfway up between the floor and the ceiling, there’s Alec! He’s hanging there limp and unmoving, wrapped up in layers and layers of spider silk, suspended in the air on strands and strands of it.

Maryse cries out Alec’s name and she wants to rush inside to save her little boy, but she knows she’ll be useless to him if she gets stuck in the webs, too. She reaches out and Robert hands her his dagger, then he starts calling for help, demanding that someone check the perimeter and the wards, because there’s no doubt that this is the work of a demon and if it got inside, then the wards must’ve been breached!

For once, Maryse doesn’t care about that in the least. The only thing on her mind right now is her son. She stabs both daggers into the layer of spiderwebs and starts sawing up and down, deeper and deeper, letting the blue flames do their job, and the fire’s spreading now, faster and faster, and even though it’s not burning anything but the webs, the spiders are running, fleeing towards the open - broken? - window. And though Maryse hates spiders - she hates them with passion - she still climbs in through the hole in the door because spiders or not, her son’s in there!

The flames have now burned the webs across half the room, self-sustained and sizzling, eating up the foreign mass with lightning speed, and Maryse’s eyes widen as the fire reaches the threads holding Alec up - and they snap!

She drops her weapons and throws herself forward, catching Alec as he falls, catching him while the spider webs cocooning him are still burning bright, but it doesn’t even sting and she wouldn’t care if it did, she can’t risk Alec falling and getting hurt. She pulls Alec to her chest and turns around mid-leap, hitting the floor back first and cracking her head hard against the bed.

Blinking back pained tears, Maryse sits up, holding Alec in her arms; he’s small and light for his age, still fitting snuggly in her lap. She pushes him away a little and runs her hand across his face frantically to check if he’s still breathing, if his heart’s still beating. And it is, it is.

When Alec opens his eyes sleepily and looks up at her, Maryse breathes out a sigh of relief and kisses his forehead hard, rocking him gently.

“Mom?” Alec croaks out in confusion. “What’s going on?”
They never find out what the whole thing was about, what demon caused it or why, or how it breached the wards. And Alec doesn’t remember anything about that night either - since then, though, he becomes terrified of spiders.

Magnus laughs, running the knuckles of his right hand up and down Alec’s naked back gently. “Alexander, I can’t imagine you being afraid of anything!”

“Hm,” Alec mumbles into Magnus’ chest. He throws one arm across Magnus’ stomach and pulls himself closer, snuggling against his lover. “I’m afraid of spiders,” he admits in a quiet voice.

Magnus wants to chuckle again because in his mind’s eye, he sees Alec as a tough warrior, the toughest of them all, standing tall and proud and killing all the beasts that come along, including spiders. But then Magnus feels Alec shiver and he pauses with his hand pressed against Alec’s spine.

Alec starts whispering then and his voice’s haunted and full of fear, “Spiders are creepy, terrifying, dangerous, they crawl out of dark holes, they sneak in silently, unnoticed, they come to hurt you, to do harm, to—”

“Alexander!” Magnus interrupts him loudly and Alec jerks a little and gasps, as if he were drowning and Magnus pulled him up to the surface, allowing him to breathe again.

Magnus lifts his head from the pillow and looks down at his lover, still nestled against him. He reaches up with his left hand to stroke Alec’s ruffled hair while he hugs him tight with the other. “You okay, love?” he asks in concern.


“Anything you want, Alexander, anything you want.”

Something wakes Magnus up. Maybe a sound or a breeze or the shifting of the bed covers. He doesn’t know what pulls him out of his dreams, but whatever it is, it saves his life.

Because when he opens his eyes, he glimpses a movement, the silvery light of the moon reflecting off a sharp object suspended above him - and he rolls off the bed without hesitation, without a thought, he simply reacts. And the dagger plunges down, burying itself deep in the mattress.

Still on the floor, Magnus flings his hand out to turn on the lights - but nothing happens. The power must be out. He summons a witchlight, a glowing globe of bluish white light, and lets it float up, so that he can see what’s going on, who’s trying to kill him and where’s Alexander because they just fell asleep in each other’s arms, so who–

Magnus’ eyes widen when he sees. The one holding the dagger, the one who just tried to murder him in his sleep - it’s Alec. No way. Impossible. That can’t be. Not his Alexander, never him! Alec would never betray him like that!

But it really is Alec and he’s kneeling on the bed in nothing but his black boxer shorts, slowly pulling the dagger out of the mattress, eyes focused on Magnus - black eyes with no white, with no hazel color in them. Alec’s eyes are simply black, like two bottomless pools of darkness.

And there are spiders everywhere, crawling all over the walls and the ceiling, covering the door and even the windows now, apparently keeping Magnus in the room with his wannabe killer, making sure that there’s no escape for him.
Well, they don’t know him well then, Magnus thinks furiously. He lifts his hands to smite them all, every crawlly thing in the room, no, in the loft, because how dare they?! How dare they invade his home and–

The magic in his hands fizzes out. He can’t risk it. He can’t burn the spiders to ashes without knowing what’s actually happening here. If they’re somehow connected to Alec - which is not impossible considering the amount of power it must’ve taken to summon them through Magnus’ wards! - he could hurt Alec, kill him by killing them!

How did this happen? What caused it? A demonic possession? He remembers their talk about spiders earlier that night, he remembers how afraid Alec was…

“Alec?” Magnus asks, slowly getting up. The spiders skitter away from him, wary of being trampled. Magnus doesn’t pay them any heed, they’re not important. Only his lover is. “Alec, talk to me. Who did this to you?”

Alec straightens up, dagger still in hand, and in the glow of the floating witchlight, Magnus sees the dark shadow on Alec’s chest, directly over his heart: it has the shape of a spider and it seems to be moving under his skin.

Magnus recognizes it. It is a demonic possession, a spider demon, *the weaver of dreams*, it must’ve infected Alec at some point during his sleep but… no, not tonight, not even last week or last month. It must’ve happened a long time ago, a very long time ago, if the thing buried itself so deep that Magnus has never noticed. Spider demons are not exactly inconspicuous, considering their multi-legged followers.

But why did it manifest now? And how can Magnus pull that thing out of Alec without–

Alec throws himself at Magnus so fast that Magnus doesn’t have any time to react. He’s brought down to the floor, hard, and though he manages to flip them over, Alec flips them right back again; his physical strength is superior to Magnus’. Magnus could take Alec out with his magic, of course, but he doesn’t dare to risk it.

“Why?” Magnus grits through his clenched teeth as he does his best to keep the blade away from his throat. “Tell me why, you monster? Why now? Why Alec? If you wanted to kill me, why use him?”

Alec leans down and stares at Magnus without blinking. “Why him?” he asks in a distorted voice. “Because your father considered it poetic justice!”

Magnus freezes at those words, suddenly chilled to the bone. No wonder the spider demon managed to possess Alec, no wonder it managed to tear down his wards and bring in his little hairy helpers. Nothing is impossible when Asmodeus is involved, one of the Seven Princes of Hell.

The dagger inches closer to Magnus’ throat. But he needs more information, now more than ever. Is he willing to risk a slashed throat to save Alec? Yes.

“How long? How long have you been possessing him, waiting for the right moment?” Magnus asks breathlessly.

Alec - or, better said, the thing inside Alec - grins malevolently. “Since he was ten years old,” he - *it* - answers with glee. “Such a sweet, *sweet* child he was, still unruned and so vulnerable behind those oh so weak wards protecting the Institute. And so we climbed in one night, under our master’s watchful eye, and we took him. We crawled inside him and we waited. Because
Asmodeus knew, even back then, that this one would be yours one day. All we had to do was wait - and then stab you with his hand!"

The demon breaks Magnus’ hold, then it tries to stab down, but Magnus blocks the attack again.

“But why now?” Magnus wheezes, feeling the dagger’s point in the hollow of his throat. This is the last thing needs to know. He has his suspicion and if it proves to be true, then he’ll have a solution, however terrifying.

Leaning against the dagger hard and drawing a droplet of blood, the demon grits out, “Because he died and that broke the extra protection his paranoid mother layered over him after we took him. She had him runed the very next day and she ordered the Silent Brothers to use powerful runes of protection, old runes that burned us. But then he died, trying to reach his parabatai, and that broke them all.” Another gleeful grin. “Stupid, stupid of them not to think of that. But then another took him, took the vessel that was ours - how dared it? - and weakened us again, and we had to wait and recover again. But now” –the demon leans in closer and the dagger tears at Magnus’ skin– “it’s time.”

“Yes,” Magnus agrees. “It’s time to end it!”

And with that, Magnus lets go of the dagger with his right hand, accepting the resulting wound, and he hits Alec in the chest, he slams his palm right against the center of the dark spider-like stain over Alec’s heart - and he releases his magic in a blinding burst of blue light.

If spiders could scream, they would’ve in that moment.

Magnus is standing in the doorway of his guest bedroom - his main bedroom’s still a graveyard of spiders and thus very unappealing and unusable - and he’s staring inside, watching Jace and Izzy hover over their injured parabatai and brother. They’re each perched on one side of the bed, Jace’s holding Alec’s hand and Izzy’s stroking Alec’s hair.

Alec’s asleep now, only asleep, thank all the gods who were willing to listen to Magnus’ prayers. Before, however, his Alexander was dead. Magnus stopped his heart with his burst of magic because he couldn’t see any other option how to pry the spider demon out of his lover. It was nestled too deep, tainting Alec for far too long to be simply exorcised. Magnus had to force the thing to leave of its own volition.

Fingering the wound on his neck, only bandaged and barely healed because Magnus has no magic left, not a sputter of it, he gave it all to Alec, he remembers with his heart still clenched anxiously the long, terrifying seconds, then a minute, then two as he knelt by Alec’s side and prayed that the demon would blink first, that it would believe that Magnus was willing to let Alec die - Magnus wasn’t, isn’t, never will be! - and escape Alec’s body rather than risk dying together with the Shadowhunter.

And as Magnus knelt there, pleading silently, his eyes were slowly filling with tears because it wasn’t working, Alec was dying - dead! - in front of Magnus’ eyes and the demon wasn’t budging - and then it was!

It escaped from Alec’s body in an ugly, oily black cloud that oozed out of the spider-shaped stain on Alec’s chest - and with a roar of fury, Magnus burned the thing, he burned it, he burned it! And then the spiders, all frozen in place since Magnus stopped Alec’s heart, died too, one by one, raining down from the ceiling and from the walls with silent whispers of sound.
Only then Magnus leaned over Alec, and sweeping the dead things off him, he started administering CPR. He flooded Alec’s body with healing magic, coaxing Alec’s heart back to life with all he had, with his powers and his love and his pleas. He was almost sobbing with despair by the time Alec’s back arched and he drew in a wheezing gulp of air, coming back alive, coming back to Magnus.

And Magnus dropped his head down on Alec’s chest, and curling up around his lover, he held him tight and he cried, right there, surrounded by layers and layers of dead spiders and with the smell of burned sulfur still hanging in the air.

He wasn’t surprised when only minutes after he settled Alec down in his guest bedroom the loft’s door burst open and Jace and Izzy rushed in, demanding to know what happened to Alec because, of course, Jace felt it happen, he felt Alec die through their parabatai bond - Magnus suspected that his and Alec’s cellphones must’ve been ringing like crazy for who knew how long before finally falling silent, though he didn’t even notice.

So, their rather forceful visit didn’t surprise - or bother - him, he understood their anxiety perfectly. What did surprise him was that they brought Maryse Lightwood with them! Maryse Lightwood. In his apartment. Again. And in a situation like this. Well, damn.

And now Magnus is standing in the doorway of his guest bedroom, the one Jace used while he was staying here, and Maryse’s hovering behind him in all her straight-backed, terrifying glory. They haven’t spoken a word yet and if this tension continues for much longer, Magnus will do something drastic, like start chewing on his nails. Maryse Lightwood, the head of the New York Institute, is an inconvenience that he can deal with. But Maryse Lightwood, Alexander’s mother… well, that’s another thing entirely.

Then Maryse takes a step forward and Magnus tenses.

“Magnus…” she starts reluctantly.

Magnus takes a deep breath and turns to her. When they arrived, he told them the truth about what happened, everything, because he felt he owed it to them. If it wasn’t for his father and his twisted games, this never would’ve happened to Alec. And now… now Maryse will blame him.

But she takes him by surprise - like son, like mother? - because instead she says, “I want to thank you for saving Alec’s life.”

Well, this he did not expect, that’s for sure. But he recognizes an olive branch when he sees it. So he tells her kindly, “You don’t need to thank me, Maryse, really. I love him. I just… I love him, more than my own life.”

She stares at him searchingly for a moment, then she smiles a little, though her expression is rather pained and her eyes are full of regrets. “You truly do mean that, don’t you?”

Smiling too, Magnus nods, feeling a fragile understanding grow between them. “Yes, I do. Alexander is… he’s everything.”

Maryse hesitates another moment, then she reaches out and touches his arm in a comforting gesture that startles them both a little. And then, with another small smile, she steps inside the bedroom and heads for the bed where her son’s slowly waking up.

Magnus’ heart leaps with joy and he’s about to follow, when he sees it - the big black spider crawling down the wall by the door of the guest bedroom. With a quiet growl, Magnus grabs a
book from the shelf and with a wet crunch, he grinds the creature into a pulp.

“Never again, father,” Magnus swears silently. “As long as I live, never again.”
“Seriously, what is wrong with you?” Alec asks in exasperation. “Besides the obvious, I mean. You’ve been skulking around as if you’re just waiting for the other shoe to drop or something.”

Jace sighs. He’s sitting on the stairs with his legs bent and arms crossed and resting on his knees. “Fine, if you really want to know, I actually failed the Trial by Sword. I couldn’t swear my unwavering loyalty to the Clave because I don’t trust them anymore,” he confesses quietly.

“Well,” Alec says after a short pause and he climbs the stairs to sit down next to his parabatai. “And I blackmailed Aldertree, threatened the bastard right in front of half the crew. Look at us, being all shady and stuff.”

Jace blinks at him in disbelief. “You blackmailed Aldertree? You?”

Alec shrugs. “Your rebellious streak must be catching or something.”

“Is that the reason why he hasn’t kicked me out again?” Jace asks as if the thought just occurred to him. “He has my trial recorded, you know, as he loves to remind me.”

“You did capture Valentine,” Alec points out. “That means—”

“Exactly nothing to Aldertree. He hates my guts on principle!”


Jace sighs again and looks at Alec with concern. “You are being careful, right?”

Alec smiles at him. “You know me.”

Groaning, Jace thumps his head against his crossed arms. “Yeah, I do. That’s the problem!”

Chuckling, Alec bumps their shoulders together. “Now you know how I have felt these past ten years, worrying about you.”

“I don’t like it,” Jace complains.

“But you like me.”

Jace peeks at him through his bangs and smiles. “Yeah, I do.”
Jace sees the *parabatai* bond as a great opportunity. He and Alec are already a fantastic team but this will make them unbeatable, the best team anyone has ever seen.

And Jace won’t be a stray anymore. He won’t be just Alec’s *friend*, he’ll be his *parabatai*, a status held in the highest regard by all Shadowhunters.

That’s what’s on Jace’s mind when he clasps arms with Alec and recites the oath. But when the bond falls into place and his soul’s linked with Alec’s…

*Love*, that’s what he feels, that’s the first emotion that seeps through the newly established bond: *Alec’s love for him*, deep and true and almost overwhelming. Jace has never been loved like this, by anyone.

And in that moment, Jace truly realizes that the bond’s not just an opportunity, it’s a commitment, too. A promise to love and protect Alec, to lay down his own life to save his if need be. And Jace intends to keep that promise.

Pulling Alec closer by their clasped arms, Jace hugs his *parabatai* tight and basks in his love - and he swears to himself that he’ll never betray that love, that he’ll never allow it to wither and die.

Because now that Jace’s experienced it, he doesn’t think he could ever live without it.
Worn Thin

Chapter Summary

This is a missing scene from my Jalec ficlet Inextricable (Chapter 172). It's a no-powers AU where Clary and Magnus die and Jace and Alec just... happen. In this missing scene, Maryse comes to comfort Alec after Magnus’ death. I just really wanted to write a fic where Maryse would hug Alec (and Jace). (Unbeta'd)

When Jace calls her - “Maryse, *please*…!” - she comes. She drops everything and she comes because Alec needs her and the silence between them lasted long enough.

Maryse takes a deep breath to calm her jagged nerves but when she knocks and Jace opens the door of his apartment, her own anxiety is all but forgotten. He looks so sad and haggard, this boy that she and Robert took in at the age of ten, the boy she’s considered her son - the boy she’s lost when she rejected her eldest, Alec, over such a stupid thing as the “wrong” sexuality. God, what a fool she was…

“Mom…” Jace whispers brokenly and she takes a step forward and hugs him, holding him tight when he leans against her heavily and allows her to carry his weight for a moment, just a moment.

Maryse’s eyes prickle when she realizes how much her children have suffered and that she should’ve been there, all along, helping them, supporting them, instead of nurturing her wounded pride.

“You alright?” she asks as she pulls back and smooths Jace’s hair off his face.

He looks older; they haven’t seen each other in over ten years, after all, but it’s more than that, he looks worn down by life. He’s barely thirty and he already had to bury his wife - and now his best friend’s husband, too.

Jace smiles at her wanly. “Never mind me, I’m fine, really. It’s Alec I’m worried about. Magnus’ death” –he shakes his head– “it broke him. And I don’t know what to do anymore, that’s why I called.”

And Maryse’s grateful. She’s so grateful that he did. That he had the courage to take the first, most painful step. Maryse was too much of a prideful coward, desperately lonely and plagued with regrets, but still too proud and too cowardly to reach out herself.

Maryse didn’t know Magnus Bane, she’s never met him. She wasn’t at her son’s wedding, she missed all the happy days that he got to spend with his husband... but maybe, if Alec allows her to, she could be there for him now - for him and Jace both, even though Jace lost his Clary over two years ago. Another thing she missed because of her own stupidity.

“Where is he?” she asks softly.

And Jace takes her to Alec, to the guest bedroom where Alec’s lying curled up on the bed with his knees pulled up and arms wrapped tight around his chest - a man as tall as her eldest son shouldn’t take up so little space! - not reacting to Jace’s soft announcement of her arrival.
But Maryse doesn’t let herself be discouraged by his non-reaction, not now when she’s actually here, trying to build new bridges to replace the old ones that she tore down with her own hands.

Slowly, she enters the room, leaving Jace standing in the doorway. She walks up to the bed and stops there, at the foot of it, with her heart breaking for her son, so pale and seemingly frozen, staring at the wall with dry eyes; he hasn’t cried once since Magnus died, Jace told her, it’s one of the things that worries him deeply. Alec’s always been sensitive, though he tried to hide it, and this is eating him up from the inside, she can see it.

And so, Maryse Lightwood, the CEO of Lightwood Industries, the smooth and stylish lady with not a hair out of place, kicks off her shoes and heedless of her designer pants and a silk blouse, she climbs onto the bed and curls up around her son, she hugs him and she holds him, stroking his hair, as if he were still a child afraid of monsters under his bed…

“I’m sorry, honey,” she whispers gently. “I’m so very, very sorry…”

And Alec shudders and gasps - it’s a soft, unhappy, lost sound - and finally, finally, he starts crying.
**Projected Losses**

Chapter Summary

Yay, I wrote something for Malec Week! Day #1: Future Scene. Not so distant future but definitely about their future. (Unbeta’d)

“What’s wrong, love?” Magnus murmurs sleepily as he pads out on bare feet onto the balcony and hugs his lover from behind, kissing his shoulder blade.

Alec leans back a little into the embrace and rests his hands on Magnus’ arms, wrapped around his stomach. “There’s going to be a war,” he whispers, looking out at the city slowly waking up in the pre-dawn light. “And we’re going to lose.”

Magnus rests his cheek against Alec’s naked shoulder. “You don’t know that.”

Alec sighs. “Actually, I do,” he replies. “That’s why I was in Idris. I’m still the acting head of the Institute, even though my family’s not running it anymore. There was a meeting… I saw the Clave’s analyses, estimates and projected losses. That’s what my father’s been working on. I don’t like him much right now for what he did to mother, but I won’t deny that he’s a great strategist.”

Magnus is slowly rubbing his cheek against Alec’s shoulder. “What do the analyses say?”

“That there will be a war with Valentine’s followers,” Alec responds. “The theft of the Soul Sword proves that there’re other people out there leading his army, his capture didn’t stop this threat. And while we’ll be fighting his new breed of Shadowhunters, the Downworlders will turn against us, too.”

Magnus pauses.

Alec continues and his voice’s very quiet, “They blame us for the activation of the Soul Sword and they’ll use this opportunity to eliminate what they consider the greatest threat - us, the Shadowhunters. The Seelies are already wearing their war colors and the werewolves and the vampires will soon join them, too.”

Magnus wants to say that it’s not true, that his people - because he considers all Downworlders “his” people, not just the warlocks - wouldn’t do that. But he can’t. He witnessed how they reacted to the activation of the Soul Sword, to their losses. They thirst for revenge, and not just against Valentine.

“We can’t fight an all-scale war on three fronts - against Valentine’s army, against demons and against Downworlders, too - and win, Magnus. We’ll lose and we’ll die,” Alec says and his voice sounds too detached, too calm as if he’s already made his peace with this. “And then the Downworlders and Valentine’s army will turn against each other, both sides will be so sure that they can take the other. And the demons will destroy them all.”

All of a sudden, Magnus feels cold despite the warmth of the early hours of a beautiful summer morning. He’s still hugging Alec, pressed tightly against his naked back as if trying to soak up his lover’s body heat.
“You know I’ll do everything I can to help, right?” Magnus whispers, kissing Alec’s runed skin tenderly. “I would do anything for you.”

Alec entwines the fingers of their right hands where they rest against his stomach and squeezes Magnus’ hand gently. “Would you leave if I asked you to?” he enquires softly, and when Magnus tenses, he explains, “I want you to live, Magnus. No matter what happens, I want you to live. Would you go if I asked?”

“No,” Magnus replies after a moment just as softly. “Anything but that, love. If you stay, I stay. We live… or die together.”

Alec sighs, then he chuckles sadly and shakes his head as if he should’ve known better. When he turns around in Magnus’ arms, he takes Magnus’ face in his hands and kisses him gently. “I love you, you know that, right?” he says, running his thumbs over Magnus’ cheekbones.

Magnus stares up into his lover’s hazel eyes for a long time - their beauty’s still as breathtaking as when he looked into them that first time - and then he pulls Alec closer, running his hands up Alec’s back. “And I love you,” he whispers against Alec’s lips.

And when Magnus kisses Alec deeply, thoroughly, passionately, his mind whispers, I’ll burn down the world to keep you safe.
Nightmare (As Seen From the Other Side)

Chapter Summary

This is a companion ficlet to my story Nightmare (Chapter 107) in which Magnus accidentally stops Alec’s heart. Told from Jace's POV. (Unbeta'd)

Jace wakes to a terrible pain. For a heartbeat or two, he just stares up at the ceiling of his and Clary’s dark bedroom, wide-eyed and uncomprehending. And then he screams: one word, one name.

“Alec!”

Because Alec’s gone, their bond’s torn, broken, shattered, Alec’s not there anymore, and Jace feels so empty, so terribly empty like the time, all those years back, when Alec died in his arms, it’s the same feeling. No!

Clary switches on the bedside lamp, asking him what’s going on, but Jace doesn’t pause to explain, he scrambles off the bed to dress and go… where? To Magnus’ where Alec planned on spending the night, that’s where Jace will find his parabatai and then he’ll… what? What will he do?

Groaning in pain, Jace grabs at his parabatai rune again as his knees buckle so hard he almost drops to the floor, but he manages to catch himself and he reaches for his pants to dress, while vaguely listening to Clary calling Magnus’ number, telling Jace that nobody’s picking up, Jace doesn’t have any strength left to answer, though, he has to focus, pants and boots and… that’s enough, it’s raining outside, but it doesn’t matter, he has to go, he has to…

He runs.

And when the bond snaps back into place with a flare of agony, like a broken bone set properly, Jace… falls. This time, his knees give out entirely and he stumbles and falls, the pavement rushing up to greet him and scraping his knees and palms and elbows bloody…

But Jace doesn’t feel any of it, he doesn’t even register the burning pain. He simply lies there, in a shallow puddle of dirty water only a street away from the Institute, half drowning in the torrential rain, shivering hard and unable to move because Alec’s back - he’s back, he’s back, Alec’s back! - and nothing else matters.

Then Clary’s there and she’s gently helping Jace to his feet, hailing a cab to take them to Magnus’ because she knows that that’s where he needs to go now, to Magnus’, to Alec, he has to be with Alec, he has to…

When Magnus opens the door, looking pale and not a little shell-shocked, he tells them, “He’s in the bedroom,” and then he steps aside to let Jace stumble past.

And Jace goes, he knows where their bedroom is, Alec and Magnus’, and the door’s open and he can see Alec sitting upright in the bed with a sheet thrown over his lap, and he’s rubbing his chest as if trying to chase away a phantom pain, and when he looks up and sees Jace there, his eyes widen and he breathes out Alec’s name.
And Jace hugs him. He throws himself at Alec, throws his arms around Alec, heedless of his own wet, disheveled and scraped state, he hugs Alec and he clings to him desperately, whispering over and over again, “You’re okay, you’re okay, you’re okay.”

And Alec hugs him back. Alec’s warm and alive and strong and _there_ and he hugs Jace back. And he holds Jace, rocking him gently, whispering over and over again, “I’m fine, I’m fine, I’m fine.”

Magnus and Clary stay back, in the bedroom’s doorway, and Magnus is trying to explain what happened in a hoarse, broken, desperate voice, that it was an accident, he didn’t mean to, he would never hurt Alec, “You have to believe me!”

And if it were anyone else, Jace would kill them, he would tear them apart, limb by limb, for hurting Alec so badly, but this is Magnus and if there’s anyone out there, in the whole wide world, who loves Alec as much as Jace, it’s _Magnus._

When Jace finally pulls away, when he’s finally able to let go of Alec without fearing that his _parabatai_ will simply disappear on him, he whispers urgently, “Don’t do that to me ever again. I _forbid_ it, you hear me? I _forbid_ you to die. You’re not allowed to leave me, do you understand? You’re not allowed to—” His voice breaks.

And Alec whispers back very gently, “Alright, I won’t, I won’t.”

Jace nods, swallowing hard. And though they both know that he can’t promise that, not really, no one can, because life’s cruel and unpredictable, just for the moment, they both pretend.
All-Knowing

Chapter Summary

This is a self-indulgent Malec h/c. Emphasis on self-indulgent. Nothing new or original, I just saw this gif of a frustrated Magnus from 203 and I wanted to use that reaction of his in a fic. So there *shrugs* Book spoilers! Todd Slavkin said that they would use their own twist on the Seelie Queen’s aging spell from the book. Well, this is mine. (Unbeta’d)

It’s not working. It’s not working. It’s just not working!

Growling in frustration, Magnus sweeps everything off the table; loose pages filled with spells fly everywhere and glass vials shatter on the hardwood floor. Then he hunches over, hands pressed flat against the smooth surface of the table, and he breathes hard for a moment. He feels like crying.

“Hey,” a voice whispers.

Magnus’ head shoots up. He turns towards the bed where Alec’s resting on a mountain of pillows to ease his breathing and finds him watching Magnus with feverish eyes. Alec’s sick and Magnus can’t help him - and now he woke Alec up with his little temper tantrum, too. Great job!

Alec pats the bed beside him. “Come here.”

Straightening, Magnus slowly approaches the bed and sinks down onto the edge, his hip barely touching Alec’s. He takes Alec’s hand in both of his and brings it up to his lips to kiss it. “I’m sorry, love, I’m sorry that I woke you up.”

I’m sorry I’m not smart enough or knowledgeable enough or powerful enough to help you, he adds in the privacy of his own mind.

Alec curls his fingers around one of Magnus’ hands and smiles at him. “That’s okay. All I seem to do is sleep.” He glances at the mess that Magnus made. “Not going well, huh?”

Magnus lowers Alec’s hand into his lap and holds it there, running his thumbs over Alec’s knuckles. He’s staring down at that hand, so strong and so gentle, made for fighting and for loving. Because he can’t to look Alec in the face - his too pale, almost sallow face - without feeling even more like a complete failure. He just shakes his head.

“Magnus,” Alec whispers and his voice sounds hoarse, weaker than yesterday and much weaker than the day before that. “Hey, Magnus, look at me.”

Magnus hesitates for a moment, but then he complies. His heart clenches at the depth of love in Alec’s expression. He blinks hard but tears keep flooding his eyes. He sniffs and rubs his nose with the back of his hand.

“Magnus,” Alec whispers and his voice sounds hoarse, weaker than yesterday and much weaker than the day before that. “Hey, Magnus, look at me.”

Magnus hesitates for a moment, but then he complies. His heart clenches at the depth of love in Alec’s expression. He blinks hard but tears keep flooding his eyes. He sniffs and rubs his nose with the back of his hand.

“Magnus, you’re doing your best. You know that I know that, right?” Alec asks gently. “Even if–”

Magnus shakes his head vigorously. “No! I’ll find a cure. I promise. I just need a little more time to figure out what’s causing… this.”
This being the inexplicable weakness that’s been stealing his lover away from him for days now, silverying his hair and turning the laugh lines around his eyes into an old man’s wrinkles prematurely. It’s been happening ever since Alec and his siblings returned from the Seelie Queen’s court and Magnus doesn’t know why, he just doesn’t know why!

Alec stares at him for a moment, then he smiles a little, squeezing Magnus’ hand. “Alright. But if you don’t - if you don’t,” he repeats more forcefully when Magnus opens his mouth to protest, “it still won’t be your fault and I want you to know that. Even high warlocks aren’t all-knowing.”

But they should be, Magnus thinks stubbornly and he’s furious with himself. I should be! What’s all my power for if I can’t save you?

Huffing in frustration, Magnus shakes his head. “No. I’m missing something. I have to be. Something important.” He sits forward a little, hugging Alec’s hand to his chest, and he looks at his lover intently. “Tell me again what happened at the Seelie Court. The queen must’ve used some spell on you, she must’ve done… something.”

“Magnus…”

“Tell me again, Alexander. Just… try. Please,” Magnus begs and he reaches out to stroke Alec’s cheek. “Give me a chance to fix this. Give me something. Please!”

Alec closes his eyes and he leans his face into Magnus’ hand for a moment, gathering his strength. Then he whispers, “Okay, okay,” and starts talking.

And sometimes, a single word, a single turn of phrase can be enough to spark an idea that ultimately saves the world. Magnus’ world. Like now.
The Story of Endymion, Beloved of the Moon

Chapter Summary

Written for MalecWeek2017 Day 4: Greek Mythology. Alec’s the dark star to Jace’s supernova, silver to Jace’s gold. Or, Alec as Selene and Jace as Helios. And Magnus Bane as the mortal Endymion. (Unbeta'd)

They’re inseparable, Jace and Alec, Jonathan and Alexander, the Sun and the Moon, they drive their chariot carved from pure adamas and drawn by lustrous white horses across the sky, day after day, year after year, ever since the world was created.

And then Alec falls for a mortal, Magnus Bane, an alchemist, a philosopher, an observer of things that are, who first truly sees the Moon riding across the sky the way the Sun’s always been seen by all the people on earth.

And Magnus falls in love with the Moon’s silvery glow that seems so pure and warm and wonderful to him. And the god comes to him and they make love - and Alec starts spending more and more time away from his place in the sky.

And Jace grows jealous of Magnus - he feels that the mortal’s taking his other half away from him, his Alec - and he makes his displeasure known: he hides behind thunder clouds for days, stealing the Sun’s warmth from the earth.

And the Sun’s priests divine the reason for their god’s anger and they hunt the mortal Magnus Bane down and they kill him, at sunset when Jace’s powers are waning and Alec’s are not yet awake, when neither can do anything to stop the slaughter from happening.

And Alec cries for his lover, filling the night sky with shooting stars, and his despair is so great that his light starts fading, the chariot grows dimmer and dimmer, until it loses its glow entirely and the night turns black and cold and lifeless.

And Jace, plagued with guilt for his jealousy and aching for his grieving soulmate, uses his godly powers. He can’t bring Magnus Bane back as he was, no god can do that, but he can change the mortal’s fate.

Instead of death Jace bestows eternal sleep upon the man, he makes Magnus the harbinger of sleep who comes awake at sunset every day to bring sleep to all the creatures on earth and who takes his gift back again at dawn, falling asleep himself for the day.

Thus they all get what they desire the most, their greatest wishes are fulfilled: Alexander’s nights are spent with Magnus, his lover, the newly born God of Sleep, while his days he gives to Jonathan, the other half of his godly soul. Harmony reigns again.

And the Sun and the Moon continue riding across the sky together for eternity.
Beating Heart

Chapter Summary

MalecWeek2017, Day 5: Non-supernatural AU.

Magnus will never again take a thing as simple as a heartbeat for granted. (Unbeta'd)

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“How is he?” Jace asks and his voice is quiet, hesitant over the phone.

Magnus steps over to the French window and looks out into the sunlit backyard where Alec’s lying in a hammock in the shadow of a large tree, swinging gently back and forth in the light afternoon breeze.

“Resting,” Magnus answers with a little smile.

“Good,” Jace replies more brusquely now, clearing his throat. “Don’t let him do anything strenuous, you know he’s stubborn as a mule. And don’t let him come back to work, under any circumstances. I already threatened him with drastic measures should he do so but I’m not sure he believed me.”

Magnus’ smile widens. “What drastic measures?”

“I told him I would personally bankrupt the company, if need be, so that he would have no place to come back to and that would be it!”

Magnus laughs, easily imagining how that exchange must’ve gone. “I bet he had a heart attack –” He cuts himself off sharply, his laugh suddenly gone.

It’s not a joke. It’s not funny. It’s too soon. It’ll never be not too soon. Magnus wants to apologize for his stupid mouth running away from him but he doesn’t need to. Jace hears his “I’m sorry” in his silence, in his slightly hitching breath.

Because Jace was there when Alec collapsed in his office, he was the one who called 911, he was the one who administered CPR, he was the one who saved Alec’s life - while Magnus was in San Francisco, scolding an employee of his for… Magnus doesn’t even remember for what anymore. He found out about what happened only after it was all over, after his lover was in the hospital, stabilized, breathing and with his heart beating once more. Jesus...

“Just…” Jace starts, then falls silent again. “Make sure that he rests, alright? That he takes his meds and doesn’t think about anything but getting well again. Nothing else matters. We’ll take care of the company, me and Izzy, Clary and Simon and… and everyone, we should’ve done that a long time ago, taken on more responsibility. Then Alec wouldn’t have had to–” Now it’s Jace who cuts himself off.

No one should suffer a stress induced heart attack at 32. No one. They all feel responsible. They all think that they should’ve done something.
“I’ll take care of him,” Magnus promises, still watching Alec swinging gently in the hammock back and forth, back and forth. “I’ll make sure he rests. Even if I have to tie him down.”

Jace groans. “Oh my God, too much information. Keep your perverted fantasies to yourself!” he jokes, trying to lighten the mood.

It works. Magnus smiles.

Magnus walks out onto the veranda, then the three steps down and across the lush green lawn towards the large tree growing at the edge of the yard where it meets the beach, a smooth strip of pale, sun-warmed sand. Past it, there’s nothing but the ocean, blue and endless and whispering. It’s the perfect place for a much needed vacation.

Walking up to the hammock, Magnus stops in the cool shade of the tree and smiles down at his lover. Alec’s asleep, the book he planned on reading is lying open and forgotten in his lap. His head’s tilted slightly towards the sea and he’s snoring very quietly. It’s quite adorable. Magnus could stare at him forever.

Then Alec snuffles a little, blinking the sleep out of his eyes. He turns his head, and seeing Magnus standing there, he smiles lazily. “Hey,” he greets him.

“Hey,” Magnus responds.

“Came to check on me?” Alec asks.

Magnus nods. “Someone has to keep an eye on you.”

Alec lifts his arm in invitation. “Maybe you should come closer, then? Your eyesight isn’t what it used to be anymore, as we both know,” he remarks, eyes dancing with mischief.

“Rude!” Magnus grumbles as he climbs into the hammock and sets it swinging.

“But true,” Alec points out. He wraps his arm around Magnus’ shoulders and pulls him closer. “You do need glasses, you’re just too vain to admit it.”

Magnus harrumphs and doesn’t bother to answer such a ridiculous accusation. He and vain. Pah! Nonsense.

Settling down, Magnus snuggles in and rests his head against Alec’s chest. Alec’s chest hair tickles a little, but he doesn’t mind at all. It’s a familiar, cozy feeling, as familiar as Alec’s warmth, as the sound of his strong, regular heartbeat. Magnus has never heard anything more wonderful than the thu-thump, thu-thump, thu-thump under his ear now. So wonderful.

Magnus thinks he’s subtle. He’s not.

“I’m okay, Magnus,” Alec assures his lover tenderly, rubbing his back. “I won’t ever let it get so bad again. No more fourteen hour days. No more weekends at the office. No work at all in the foreseeable future, apparently.” Now he sounds a little sour.

Magnus smiles. “I heard that Jace threatened to bankrupt the company if you went back before you were fully recovered.”

“He would,” Alec mutters, but there’s true affection in his voice.

“You could always become a kept man, you know?” Magnus suggests, patting Alec’s flat stomach.
“My kept man. The restaurants are doing better than ever now that I let Raphael expand our
cuisine. I could afford being a sugar daddy. Don’t you think I would be a great sugar daddy?”

Alec laughs and Magnus’ head bounces a little on his lover’s chest. It makes him smile.

Then Alec stops laughing. He pauses for a moment and when he speaks again, there’s something in
his voice that makes Magnus pay close attention. “Or we could take it a step further. I could
become your househusband.”

Breath hitches in Magnus’ chest and he lifts his head to look Alec in the eyes. “You mean…”

Alec smiles and runs his fingers through Magnus’ hair. “Yeah. I wanted to ask you before… well,
before, and I bought you a beautiful ring - it’s in my bedside table at home - and I had all these
elaborate plans and–”

Magnus kisses him. He kisses Alec deeply and thoroughly, making love to his mouth. And when
they part for breath, he stares down at his lover whose eyes are now a little unfocused and whose
lips are beautifully swollen from kissing.

“Yes. If you’re actually asking me to marry you–”

“Well, that’s what I was trying to do, you interrupted me!” Alec protests.

“–then my answer is yes,” Magnus finishes, grinning.

Laughing, Alec pulls Magnus down and hugs him tight, setting the hammock swinging so hard that
Magnus squeaks and flails a little, even though he knows that Alec would never let him fall. He’s
perfectly safe in his lover’s - fiancé’s! - arms. Safe and loved.

And Alec’s heart’s going thu-thump, thu-thump, thu-thump, its rhythm strong and beautiful;
Magnus will never again take it for granted.

Chapter End Notes

Prequel written by only-1-a on Tumblr can be found here: He’s Safe.
They’re kissing, kissing, kissing, slowly headed towards the bed with their arms locked around each other, and Magnus is walking backwards and Alec has his eyes closed and–

They stumble, the rug gets in the way, and Magnus yelps and flails, and Alec’s eyes snap open and because he’s holding Magnus, he follows him down when Magnus finally loses his battle with gravity - and they bounce because they did make it to the bed and the mattress is thick enough to cushion their fall even though the bed frame groans a little.

Seeing Alec’s wide-eyed look, Magnus declares in a dramatic voice, “My, my, Alexander, we aren’t even naked yet and the bed’s structural soundness is already in peril. The untapped depths of your passion astound me!”

Alec blinks rapidly, then his panic fades and he looks down at Magnus with narrowed eyes and furrowed brows. “You’re making fun of me, aren’t you?”

Magnus grins, unabashed. “Yes,” he admits, then he lifts his hand to rub away the wrinkle between Alec’s eyebrows. “You take everything way too seriously. You should lighten up a little, have more fun in your life.”

“Well, I was very determined to have fun tonight - actually, right about now,” Alec points out. “Izzy told me that I tended to overthink things - which I do not, by the way, I’m just being cautious and that’s not…” He pauses and clears his throat. “Anyway, I decided to take her advice and not think but do.” He sighs and rolls off Magnus to stare at the ceiling morosely. “Maybe it was a mistake.”

Now it’s Magnus who frowns a little. He props himself up on his elbow and turns towards Alec. “No, it wasn’t a mistake. It most definitely wasn’t a mistake. I want this, too. Very much so - actually, I think you would be scandalized if you knew just how much I wanted this - but…”

Alec looks at him. “But what? I’m not trying to pressure you into anything, I just don’t get it. If you want this and I want this, too, and we have the means and opportunity–”

Magnus raises his eyebrows. “Well, aren’t you the romantic type!”

“–then I honestly don’t understand what the problem is,” he finishes, sounding a little frustrated. “I swear it won’t change anything between us. Well, it will,” he corrects himself immediately,
“obviously, but not in a bad way. What’s the mundane saying? ‘Scout’s honor’?”

“You’ve never been a scout,” Magnus reminds him dryly.

Alec rolls his eyes. “Fine, then as Raziel is my witness.”

Magnus grimaces a little. “Please, don’t bring your ancestor by proxy into this or we might end up struck by his mighty angelic powers mid-coitus!”

“Now you’re just being silly,” Alec chides.

Before Magnus can respond to his rebuke, Alec sighs and turns onto his side, towards Magnus, head pillowed on his bent arm. He reaches out to brush his fingertips across Magnus’ cheek featherlight. Magnus shivers a little.

“I really like you, Magnus,” Alec says softly. “A lot. And I would very much like to do… this” –he waves his hand, hoping Magnus would understand without words– “with you.”

Magnus takes Alec’s hand in his and brings it to his lips. “But why now? Why today? Why rush into it? That’s what I want to know. I fear that” –he grimaces a little again– “I fear I drove you to something you might not be truly ready for by mentioning the people I’ve… been with in the past one time too many. And I know you said you were fine with it, but I’m still kind of afraid that you’re doing this only because you think you, I don’t know, owe me or something. Because you don’t.”

Alec shakes his head. “That’s not it.” Then he twists his mouth a little. “But I would prefer to hear less about Casanova and his ilk, please. It could give a guy complexes, you know?”

Magnus snorts. “Believe me, he wasn’t all that he tried to make himself be.”

Alec lifts his eyebrows in surprise. “Really?” Then he clears his throat quickly and continues, “I mean. It really doesn’t matter because that’s not why I’m here.”

Rubbing his thumb across Alec’s knuckles, Magnus asks gently, “Then why?”

Alec turns his hand in Magnus’ and entwines their fingers. “Because I fear that, with everything that’s going on, our time’s limited and if we wait then we might never get to do it at all,” he admits very softly, looking down at their clasped hands. Shadowhunters die young, after all.

Magnus is staring at him with wide, glittering eyes and parted lips. Alec clears his throat again, studiously not looking at Magnus, because he feels all out of sorts, too… open and raw and exposed.

And then Magnus leans down to capture Alec’s mouth with his and it’s a slow kiss, deep and intimate, and he pushes Alec down onto his back and straddles him - and all that without releasing his lips. And when they come up for air, Magnus is cupping Alec’s face and Alec’s resting his hands on Magnus’ hips, and they gaze each other in the eyes for a long, long while.

“Promise me you won’t regret this, Alexander,” Magnus whispers, stroking Alec’s cheek.

“I promise,” Alec whispers back sincerely, drowning in Magnus’ eyes.

And Magnus smiles and says, “I believe you.”

They make love.
Alec suggests it’s time to celebrate. Jace wholeheartedly agrees. Because they made it. They passed the last test. Now nothing can stop them from becoming parabatai.

Laughing, Jace throws an arm around Alec’s shoulders and they start for the door when…

… there’s an ear-splitting screech and the sound of chitinous legs clicking on stone, and when Jace turns around, his eyes widen because there’s a demon there, a scorpion-like thing, scurrying down one of the pillars supporting the high ceiling. It’s terrifying and fast, and Jace doesn’t understand, the test’s over, so what–

The demon jumps, its mighty leap easily covers the distance between them, and Jace just reacts. He pushes Alec out of the way then twists aside himself, pulling out his Seraph Blade in the process. He lets the demon out of his sight only for a split second, not longer, just long enough to take up a defensive stance! And yet…

Jace freezes and his eyes widen. The barb at the end of the thing’s tail is buried in Alec’s chest, and Alec’s looking down at the place where it entered his body; he’s trying to draw breath into his starving lungs but he can’t. Slowly, Alec looks up, he looks at Jace, and then the demon tears the stinger out with a sick slurping sound and blood gushes out of the wound. And Alec falls.

Screaming in denial, Jace throws himself at the creature that turns and starts scurrying in his direction. He drops to his knees and slides across the polished floor, right under the demon’s black body, and slashing with his Seraph Blade horizontally to the right, he cuts the thing’s legs from underneath it.

As it stumbles and slumps to the side, Jace slides out and turns around, and still on his knees, he slashes up and cuts the creature’s tail off. Then he jumps to his feet and rushes forward, cutting off the legs on the demon’s other side. As it hits the floor, screeching loudly, Jace vaults onto the thing’s back, and turning the blade in his hand, he stabs down with all his strength, separating the demon’s spinal cord with one blow. It squeals and then… it stops.

Jace abandons the creature - he knows it’s dead, he knows his maneuver was textbook perfect - and he runs towards Alec, screaming Alec’s name. He drops to his knees next to his best friend - his parabatai in every way but the official - and he takes Alec in his arms, he pulls out his stele to–

Alec’s dead. Alec’s eyes are open, his mouth’s spattered with blood, his chest’s blood-stained and he’s not breathing. Alec’s not breathing. Alec’s… gone.

“No,” Jace whispers, rocking Alec. “No, no… no.”

This isn’t happening. This should’ve been a test, just another stupid test! Even if they had botched it, nobody should’ve gotten hurt. But something went wrong and now… Alec’s dead. No!
there’s an ear-splitting screech and the sound of chitinous legs clicking on stone, and when Alec turns around, his eyes widen because there’s a demon there, a scorpion-like thing, scurrying down one of the pillars supporting the high ceiling. It’s terrifying and fast, and Alec doesn’t understand, the test’s over, so what–

The demon jumps, its mighty leap easily covers the distance between them, and Alec just reacts. He steps in front of Jace, shielding him and raising his bow as a club because he has no blade on him, they were allowed only one weapon for the test and he chose his bow! He lets the demon out of his sight only for a split second, not longer, just long enough to take up a defensive stance! And yet…

Alec freezes and his eyes widen. The demon’s gone, it’s not there anymore, and when Alec turns… The barb at the end of the thing’s tail is buried in Jace’s chest, and Jace’s looking down at the place where it entered his body; he’s trying to draw breath into his starving lungs but he can’t. Slowly, Jace looks up, he looks at Alec, and then the demon tears the stinger out with a sick slurping sound and blood gushes out of the wound. And Jace falls.

Something snaps in Alec. It just ceases to be, turns off… dies. Pulling one arrow after another out of his magical quiver, he starts shooting, so fast his hand blurs and the bowstring never stops humming. He shoots and shoots as he and the demon circle each other, Alec’s keeping the demon at a distance, pushing it back with his volley, until the demon’s bristling with arrows because each and every one found a crevasse or a slit in the otherwise impenetrable chitin carapace.

And when the creature’s legs finally buckle, Alec shoots one last time, pinning its tail safely to the wooden door, then he drops his bow. He takes two arrows out of his quiver and he runs, gaining speed fast. Then he jumps, twisting in the air, and drops down onto the thing’s back. And there, he turns the arrows in his hands point down and he rams them into the thing’s spine, into the one spot where a direct blow can kill it. And the demon just… stops.

Alec rides it down to the floor and he stays there, straddling the creature for a long moment, because he doesn’t want to see Jace. He doesn’t want to have confirmed what he already knows in his heart. Jace’s dead. Alec knows it.

Slowly, feeling drained, damaged, Alec climbs down from the carcass and walks over to the body of the boy he loves… loved so much. He drops to his knees by Jace’s side and he reaches out to gently touch Jace’s face; it’s still warm and a little stubbled - Jace was so proud when first whiskers started growing on his too pretty face.

And now Jace’s gone. This should’ve been a test, but something went wrong, terribly wrong, and Jace’s dead. Alec lost him…

And then Alec’s body disappears.

And then Jace’s body disappears.

Jace’s head shoots up and looks around, wide-eyed. There’s no blood in the training hall, no slowly disintegrating demon’s carcass. Everything’s as it was before - and Alec, Alec’s kneeling on the other side of the hall, by the opposite door, frozen and pale, but alive.

Alec’s alive!

Jace jumps to his feet to run to his best friend when Hodge Starkweather steps in through the door
behind Jace and speak up - he sounds… almost apologetic when he explains what just happened.

“This was the final test, boys,” Hodge says, looking from Jace to Alec who still hasn’t moved yet. “You were forbidden to know. We needed objective results. The parabatai bond binds two souls together, but you have to remain your own person. You have to be able to function separately, even in a situation where” –he clears his throat and glances away– “where you lose your parabatai. The bond should help, not hinder. And a too close connection–”

Jace punches him. Hodge truly must’ve not expected this reaction because Jace doesn’t only land the blow, he lands it hard enough to split Hodge’s lip and knock him on his ass.

“Fuck you!” Jace snarls, and before Hodge can do more than wipe the blood off his lips, he turns around and runs to Alec. Who has yet to move and that worries Jace.

“Hey, hey, I’m here,” Jace whispers urgently as he crouches down in front of Alec, gripping his shoulders. “Did you see me die? I did, too. See you die, that is. It was a test, nothing more, just a stupid test.”

Alec’s staring at him, wide-eyed, for a moment, then he lifts his right hand to touch Jace’s cheek. “Is this real?” he asks in a small voice.

Snorting, Jace shows Alec his bloodied knuckles. “I managed to punch Hodge, so I sure hope so! But now my hand hurts like–”

Alec hugs him. Jace startles for a moment, but then he smiles and returns the hug, shutting his eyes tight. He breathes in Alec’s familiar scent - soap and leather - and his clenched chest relaxes.

“Don’t ever die on me,” Alec pleads in a whisper.

“I won’t if you won’t,” Jace replies just as softly because the words are meant for their ears and nobody else’s.

Alec pulls him even closer. “Deal.”

“Deal.”
Maryse’s small smile is tinged with pain when she says. “What happened back there, on the roof… Alec, that was–” She falls silent and shakes her head, and when she continues, her voice’s a little too unsteady for Alec’s liking, “That was a mother’s worst nightmare, to find out only after the fact that her child was in so much pain that he was driven to… this and she didn’t even notice, she was not there to help.”

“I’m fine, mother,” Alec assures her and gently squeezes her upper arm in comfort. “Really, it was the magic, just that. I would never do that to you - to any of you.” His voice sounds so firm and certain that he almost believes it himself. Almost. If Maryse noticed that he only talked about them and not about himself, she doesn’t let it show.

“Magic…” Maryse whispers, focusing on something else instead, and shakes her head.

Alec sighs, knowing exactly where this is headed. “Mother, I know that you don’t like Magnus–”

She lifts one hand to stop him. “My liking him or not has very little to do with it,” she says. “Yes, Magnus and I, we’ll always have… issues. We have a past that will always color the way we see each other, I think - a past I have no desire to discuss,” she adds when she sees his inquiring look, “but that’s not really the problem here.”

Alec want to ask what the problem is, then, but he already did that once and received a non-answer. So he waits.

Maryse looks up at him and her smile’s a little brittle around the edges when she reaches out and strokes his arm, mirroring his gesture of comfort from moments before. Like mother like son.

“You have to know, Alec, that I’ll always love you, whether you’re with a man or a Downworlder or, like in the case of Magnus Bane, both in one. Your choice of a partner, no matter how unfortunate, will not change that, you’ll always be my son.”

Then she sighs and a look of sadness passes over her face. “But I won’t deny that I would have preferred if you fell in love with and married Lydia Branwell. She’s from a well-respected family, she’s smart and driven, a career woman who will certainly go far. Your life would’ve been so much easier - and so much safer.”

Alec frowns. “Mother, a Shadowhunter’s life’s never safe. Look at what happened to Lydia’s first husband. And Magnus would never hurt me–”

“I’m not talking about Magnus, Alec,” she interrupts him pointedly and there’s something in her voice that makes him really pay attention. “The Clave’s an archaic, rusted organization, very set in its traditions. And it has a way of… eliminating disruptive elements. Especially since Valentine
“What are you saying, mother?” Alec asks carefully. Because she cannot really mean—

She smiles the same brittle smile again. “All I’m saying is, you should be very careful who you trust. And always watch your back. Always.”

She takes a deep breath. “And watch out for Jace and Isabelle, too, please. Valentine hurt Jace badly, and your sister”—she shakes her head—“something’s going on with her, I don’t know what, but I can feel it. She won’t talk to me about it but maybe she’ll talk to you.” She smiles again. “You’ve always been her favorite.”

Alec shifts a little and glances away. The topic of favoritism has always made him uncomfortable. All it ever leads to are hurt feelings all around.

“I wish you could stay, mother,” he says in a soft voice after a moment. “I know that we haven’t really seen eye to eye lately, but… I’ve always felt safe with you here. And I… miss you.” Why is it so hard for him to talk about feelings? Even with the people he loves the most?

Maryse hugs him. Standing on tiptoes, she wraps her arms around him and whispers in a voice thick with emotions, “I miss you, too. But I can’t stay. If I stayed, if I insisted on defying the Clave’s orders, I would only make it worse for you, all of you. And I can’t have that on my conscience, it’s heavy enough.”

Alec sighs and hugs her back, leaning into her for a moment. He knows exactly how she feels.

“Alright,” he whispers back. “But if it gets bad, if you can’t stand it over there anymore, with dad and the Clave and everything, then just come back, okay? Come back and we’ll deal with the consequences together. We will deal, we always do. We’re Lightwoods, after all.”

She laughs and pulls back, patting his cheek affectionately. “That we are, son, that we are.”
Footnotes in Someone Else’s Story

Chapter Summary

My Alec - and partially Izzy - character meta story. It’s been ten years since the war ended, and everyone’s living their own story. Everyone but Alec and Izzy, it seems… (Might not be everybody’s cuppa, fair warning!) (Unbeta’d)

“Getting drunk, big brother?” Isabelle asks as she steps out of the shadows.

Alec chuckles. “I thought it might be a good idea, considering, but I forgot just how vile this stuff is.” He holds up the almost full bottle of some hard liquor; the label’s unreadable in the moonless night’s darkness.

She sits down next to him on the wooden bench, and smiling, she bumps their shoulders together. “A bit maudlin, aren’t we?”

Shrugging, Alec sets the bottle carefully down on the ground, then he leans back and stretches out his legs. “What can I say, I’m not in the best of moods.”

Izzy frowns. “Why not?” She waves a hand at the brightly lit villa; there’s music and laughter and guests from all over Alicante are still dancing despite the late hour. “It’s been ten years since the war ended. Ten years, Alec, and we’re still here. We survived, we’re still surviving. It’s a good reason to celebrate!”

Crossing his arms over his chest, Alec stares at the house, at their friends and family milling around behind the French windows. “Surviving… “ he whispers.

“Alright, what’s up with you?” she huffs. Then she turns towards him, and bending one leg, she props her foot on the bench seat and nudges Alec in the hip. “Spill.”

One corner of Alec’s mouth quirks up. “You don’t want to know.”

“I do,” Izzy insists.

“You won’t like it,” he warns again.

She nudges him again. Her shoe is very pointy.

Tiredly, Alec takes a deep breath and waves his hand at the house. “We don’t really belong with them, do we, you and I?” he says.

Izzy glances at the villa. “With whom?”

“With them,” Alec says and points at one of the French windows on the ground floor behind which Jace, Clary, Simon and Magnus can be seen talking, joking and laughing easily.

Puzzled, she asks, “Why?”

“Look at them, Iz. Magnus Bane, the High Warlock of Brooklyn, centuries old and with yet more
centuries ahead of him,” Alec says and there’s… something in his voice. “Your Simon, a mundane turned vampire turned daylighter turned mundane turned Shadowhunter; there’s no one else like him in the whole wide world. And Jace and Clary, the true heroes of the war, with pure angel blood in their veins and powers beyond our imagination.”

He falls silent and when he continues, his voice is even softer, even more… off. “And then there’s us, you and me, the significant others.”

“I don’t understand,” Izzy admits slowly, watching her brother carefully.

He looks at her and his eyes are hidden in the shadows of the tree they’re sitting under. “They,” he says and he points at the house, at their family again, “they’re the stuff of legends and songs, and we’re just… us. A footnote in their history. Take us out of the picture, edit us out of the story - and what changes? Nothing. Nothing at all.” He shakes his head and this time, it’s a sad gesture. “But what’s our story, Izzy? Do we even have a story to tell?”

Isabelle snorts. “I didn’t know you wanted to be a legendary hero.”

He laughs and turns back to the villa; first guests are starting to leave the party and their laughter echoes through the night. “That’s not it. I don’t need a statue erected in my name or a tapestry depicting my deeds hanging in the Gard.” In a quieter voice he adds, “I just want to be remembered.”

Then he laughs again, a little harshly, and shakes his head. “It’s good that I’m dating a warlock, then, isn’t it? At least he might remember that I lived and that I wasn’t just his lover or just Jace’s parabatai. That I was a person in my own right.”

“Alec…” Izzy whispers. “What’s wrong? What brought this on?”

For a moment, he just stares at the house that’s slowly growing quiet. Then he replies, “Mother told me that the Clave reached a decision about who will be the next head of the New York Institute now that she decided to step back.” He pauses. “They chose Jace for the post.”

Izzy’s eyes widen a little. “What?” she breathes out.

Alec shrugs and his voice’s a little bitter when he explains, “Jace’s a war hero blessed with angelic powers and the last descendant of the Herondales, too. I’m just someone who’s ‘never truly distinguished himself in a meaningful way.’ And let’s not forget my ‘poor choice of life partners,’ of course.” He lets out a long breath. “Looking at it this way, no wonder they gave the Institute to him.”

“That’s bullshit!” Izzy snaps angrily. “If they think that Jace will accept this, that he’ll let them–”

“It’s not a matter of ‘letting them’ do anything, Iz,” Alec interrupts her quietly but firmly. “It’s the Clave’s Institute, not some private enterprise. They decided and their decision’s final. And if Jace doesn’t accept the position, who knows whom they’ll give it.”

She bites her lip anxiously. “Maybe mom or dad could–”

Alec shakes his head. “Mom tried, Izzy. She did. And dad… as the Inquisitor, he promised to stay unbiased; he doesn’t want to repeat his predecessor’s mistakes and let emotions cloud his judgment, so he’s keeping out of it.”

“That’s stupid!”
“That’s politics.”

Izzy looks at him and asks in a small voice, “So, what will you do?”

He rubs his face. “What I always do, I guess. Get over it and do my job. Jace will be a good leader and I’ll support him in any way I can. He’s my best friend, after all, my parabatai. What kind of a person would I be if I begrudged him this?”

A loyal friend standing in the shadow of the Chosen One. Hodge’s words echo through Alec’s head like a prophecy and he feels a pang of resentment - Will I always be just this and nothing more? - but he quickly squashes it, grimacing at his own pettiness.

Izzy shifts closer and leans her head against his shoulder, entwining their arms. “I’m sorry.”

Alec rests his cheek on the top of her head and whispers back, “Yeah, well, it is what it is.”

He falls silent for a moment, then he adds, “I’m sorry, Iz. for before. I didn’t mean to belittle what you’ve achieved. I felt sorry for myself and dragged you down with me.”

But Izzy makes a dismissive sound. “You were right. I had such big plans - and now look at me. I love Simon - I love him so much it hurts - but… when did my life become all about being his wife?”

As the last guests leave, silence settles over the villa. They watch as the lights inside grow dimmer. Soon, someone will come looking for them.

With a sigh, Izzy asks, “What happened to us, Alec?”

And Alec responds honestly, “I don’t know, Izzy. I don’t know.”
Chapter Summary

A teen parabatai story set in 203. Valentine makes a one-time offer, Hodge is tempted, the boys are oblivious. (Unbeta'd)

“Meet me at the side entrance in five minutes. Witherspoon.”

Hodge growls when he reads the message on his cellphone. Entitled bastard. All of them, the people coming in from Idris and looking down at him because of his past, treating him like their servant.

Still, he goes because refusing on principle isn’t worth the hassle. The word is that Witherspoon’s the Inquisitor’s favorite. Raziel save him from ass-kissers.

When Hodge arrives at the side entrance, nobody’s there, so he opens the door and steps as close to the barrier as possible, until he feels a slight tingle in his circle rune. He looks out into the darkness - yes, there, a silhouette of a man.

“I’m here, Witherspoon,” Hodge calls out, annoyed. “What do you want?”

“Many, many things, old friend,” the man says as he steps out of the shadows.

Hodge frowns. What the–? But then, when the man walks closer, when he nears the door, Hodge’s breath catches in his throat because the man might wear the face of Jack Witherspoon - glamored! - but it’s definitely not him.

“Valentine?” Hodge breathes out in shock.

The man chuckles as he stops just outside the barrier. “You know me so well. Long time no see. You look well,” Valentine says, looking Hodge up and down.

“Not thanks to you!” Hodge spits out.

He remained loyal to their leader until the end and what did he get for it? Nothing, Valentine abandoned him and ran. He ran, he did not die, of that Hodge was certain. Men like Valentine do not die in house-fires.

Valentine shrugs. “You could be dead. Or in prison,” he points out. “I made sure that you ended up here.”

“It was you?” Hodge says in disbelief. “I ended up here, in New York, because of you?”

“Thanks to me,” Valentine corrects him. “I still have friends in high places, you know.”

That Hodge can believe. “But why?” he asks, puzzled.

Valentine looks him straight in the eyes. “Because I needed someone to watch over my son once I was gone from his life.”
“Your–?” Hodge’s breath catches in his throat. “So Jace is your son?” Another suspicion that Hodge has had for years and kept silent about, still pathetically loyal to their once-leader.

“Of course,” Valentine confirms. “My son - and my masterpiece!”

**Raziel!**

“And he’s also the reason why I’m here now, in this” –he looks down at himself in disgust– “stupid disguise, hiding like a coward. Oh, our dear Mr Witherspoon had an unfortunate encounter with a demon, by the way.”

Hodge shrugs. He couldn’t care less about that pompous prick.

Valentine chuckles at his reaction. “That’s the Hodge I remember so fondly.”

Hodge doesn’t want to talk about his attitude towards unimportant people. “You were saying…?”

“Yes. I heard that my son plans on taking a *parabatai*,” Valentine says. “And I want you to stop him.”

Hodge blinks, surprised. “What…? But why?”

Valentine waves a hand scornfully. “A *parabatai* bond? I thought I taught him better! It’ll make him weak, *dependent*. I need him strong when I’m ready to make my move. Strong and ready to join me. A *parabatai* will only hold him back.”

Shaking his head, Hodge narrows his eyes. “And how do you suppose I do that? They’re determined to go through with it. They passed the last test today. And,” his voice softens a little, “they’re *good* together, Valentine. *Really* good.”

Valentine makes a cutting gesture with his hand. “I don’t want my son to be merely *good*. I want him to *excel* and he can’t do that if someone’s dragging him down constantly. He does not need this baggage!”

Hodge doesn’t like what he’s hearing, he doesn’t like it at all. He still believes in Valentine’s cause but… Jace and Alec, they are… they’ve become very special to him, *untouchable*. He loves them as if they were his own sons. But Valentine would never understand that. For him, everybody’s a pawn.

“If you help me, if you stop this bond from happening” –Valentine pauses for effect– “I’ll help you escape. You’ll have proven your loyalty to me beyond any doubt and I’ll take you back in, let you join me again. All you have to do for it is stop this idiocy.”

Hodge breathes in sharply. His heart starts hammering in his chest. *Freedom*. To be able to walk outside again, to fight for his cause again… Isn’t it maybe worth it? The boys don’t *need* to become *parabatai*, after all. Nothing will really change for them if they don’t bond.

“What do you want me to do?” Hodge asks reluctantly.

Valentine smirks; he might be wearing Witherspoon’s face but it’s his trademark smirk. “Here,” he says and throws something to Hodge.

The barrier zings and sparks a little as the thing passes through but that’s all, there’s no alarm, so it’s nothing magical. Hodge catches the thing deftly - it’s a little blue bottle, sealed with wax.
“What is it?” he asks, looking down at it.

Valentine shrugs. “Something I brewed. Just pour it into young Mr Lightwood’s drink at some point before the ceremony - tonight would be best, just to be on the safe side - and that’ll be it. Don’t worry, it’s untraceable.”

Hodge feels burning cold race up his spine. “Poison?” he whispers. “You want me to poison Alec? Kill him?” No way!

“Oh, don’t worry, it won’t kill the boy,” Valentine assures him. “I have no desire to murder a child.”

Hodge doesn’t understand. “So what?”

Valentine waves his hand. “It’ll simply make him… an undesirable prospect as a parabatai. Nobody wants to be bonded to a cripple, after all, not even a soft-hearted fool like my son.”

Breathing in harshly, Hodge looks down at the bottle in his hand. It’s his ticket to freedom, to everything he’s ever wanted. And it would be so easy, he can almost see it in his mind. Alec trusts him, so it would be easy to use it and--

And then what? Stand by and watch him suffer? Cause him irreparable harm? Destroy his life to get back his own? The boy he taught how to wield a blade and shoot arrows?

Never.

“No,” Hodge says and throws the bottle back. “I will not hurt them. Either of them. Ever.”

Valentine catches the bottle and looks at Hodge with narrowed eyes. “This is a one-time offer, Starkweather. Do this and you can once again fight by my side. Refuse - and suffer the consequences. Because I won’t forget.”

Hodge feels a pang of fear - he’s always admired Valentine, but he also knows how cruel and savage he can be in his hatred - but then he thinks of the kids again. He can’t do it. He simply can’t.

So he says it. “I can’t, Valentine. I’ll do anything else you ask, but I will not hurt the children!”

Valentine watches him as if measuring his determination. Then, after a long, tense moment, he nods and steps back. “Alright, Hodge, but remember, you had your chance and you didn’t take it. And you crossed my plans. This will have consequences for you.”

Before Hodge can say anything, Valentine disappears into the shadows.

“Hodge? You alright?” a voice asks behind him.

Hodge twists around fast, one arm raised to-- But it’s just Alec and the boy’s looking at him with wide, alarmed eyes, quickly taking a step back. Hodge lets his arm drop.

“Sorry,” Hodge says, rather shaken by being almost caught conspiring with an enemy, and closes the door fast, “you startled me.”

Alec smiles a little. “I’m sorry, I thought you heard me coming. I’m… erm.” He points with his thumb over his shoulder. “They’re looking for you in the Ops Center.” He pauses. “Are you really okay?”
Walking closer, Hodge forces himself to smile brightly. “Am I okay? What about you?” he changes the subject deftly, diverting Alec’s attention, and squeezes Alec’s neck in a familiar, comforting gesture. “It’s your big day tomorrow, isn’t it?”

Alec tenses a little and drops his eyes. “Yeah,” he whispers.

“Hey,” Hodge says, nudging the boy to look at him. “What’s wrong?”

“Do you—” Alec takes a deep breath. “Do you think that… that we will be good parabatai? Jace and I?”

Hodge stares Alec in the eyes for a long moment. And then, even though he can still hear Valentine’s words echo in his mind, he nods firmly and says, “The best, Alec. I would stake my life on it.”
Alec sits at his desk, staring blankly at the half-finished report on his laptop.

Raziel… They had one objective, one, to find out who’s been buying the blood the demons have been stealing. And not only did they fail to do that, they went on an unsanctioned mission that ended in a skirmish in a busy nightclub. And if that wasn’t bad enough, his parabatai brought an outsider to the Institute! How will Alec explain it to the Clave? How will he explain it to their mother?

Pushing his laptop away, Alec drops his head, squeezes his eyes shut and rubs his neck anxiously. What a disaster...

“You alright?” a quiet voice asks.

With his heart in his throat, Alec straightens sharply. There, in the doorway; Hodge’s standing there in his training clothes and with a steaming cup of tea in his hand. He’s watching Alec with a concerned look on his face.

“Yeah, yeah, I’m fine, everything’s… just fine,” Alec assures him quickly and pulls his laptop closer to better pretend that he’s been working all along. “I’m just finishing the report on tonight’s mission.”

Hodge walks up to the desk and sits down on its edge, still watching Alec closely. He takes a sip of his tea and inquires, “How did it go?”

“Uhm,” Alec mumbles, staring at the laptop screen hard. “It went… well. We discovered a group of demons that peddled mundane blood. We took care of them, so… we were quite, hm, quite successful.” He starts typing fast, though it’s complete gibberish. Anything just to look busy.

For a long while, Hodge keeps quiet, then he demands, “Alec, look at me.”

Alec pauses for a moment, then slowly, he looks up. He swallows when he notices the look on Hodge’s face. Sometimes, Hodge sees too much.

“Alec, don’t let them do this to you,” Hodge says softly.

Alec looks down again. “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

Hodge sighs. “I know that this mission was unsanctioned and I know that it went to hell even before you entered Pandemonium. And I heard about the redhead in our infirmary.”

Alec swallows and keeps quiet.

“So, I repeat,” Hodge continues, “don’t let them do this to you, Izzy and Jace. Don’t let them disregard your executive decisions and question your orders. They may be your family, but they’re
also your subordinates. You’re the acting head of the Institute. Don’t allow them to forget that.”

Alec still doesn’t say anything. He’s still staring at the nonsensical sequence of letters on the screen, studiously not looking up. The problem is that he knows that Hodge is right.

Sighing again, Hodge reaches out to squeeze the back of Alec’s neck in a gesture of comfort. “I’m simply worried about you, Alec,” he says even more quietly. “Sooner or later, it’ll blow up in all of your faces. And it’ll be you who’ll have to deal with the consequences. Not them - you. Because you are the leader, after all.”

Finally, Alec looks up.

Hodge smiles slightly and gives Alec a little shake. “I just don’t want to see you hurt.”

And with that and without waiting for Alec’s response - he knows Alec too well, he knows that Alec would still deny everything, that he would still cover for his sister and his parabatai - Hodge gets up and leaves.

Slowly, Alec deletes the gibberish on his laptop screen and stares blankly at the half-finished report.
Who Will Speak for the Guilty Ones?

Chapter Summary

Set in episode 205. Where did Alec disappeared to for a whole day, between the scene on the roof and his arrival at Magnus’? (Unbeta'd)

The dimly lit room in the City of Bones is very cold. Alec’s standing next to the large granite slab, looking down at Hodge’s dead body, covered with a simple white sheet. He wants to be angry - Hodge’s betrayed them, stole from them, he hurt Lydia, after all! - and yet, all Alec feels is sorrow. Because in the end, Hodge died saving his parabatai.

There’s a sound and Alec looks up. Brother Zachariah is standing in the doorway, regarding him curiously. Usually, Alec has a hard time keeping the Silent Brothers apart, they’re almost uniform in their scarred visage, Brother Zachariah’s the exception, though; he’s smaller, slighter, not as disfigured. He looks almost human.

“Brother Zachariah,” Alec greets him quietly, bowing his head in respect.

“Alec Lightwood.” The brother’s voice echoes in Alec’s mind as the monk walks up to the stone slab. “Did you come to say goodbye to Hodge Starkweather?”

Alec drops his eyes to the sheet covered body again, feeling a sharp pang in his chest. He clenches his hand, the one still torn from shooting his bow for hours on end, into a tight fist. Yes, physical pain is so much easier.

“Yes,” Alec answers. “What will happen with his body?”

“He forfeit his right to be buried here, among his brethren, when he joined the usurper’s force,” Brother Zachariah replies matter-of-factly. “He’ll be laid to rest in an unmarked grave and without any ceremony.”

Clenching his hand harder, Alec nods. He knew that. Still. “And his soul? Will it be released first? Or will it be left to rot together with his body? He was a traitor who caused a lot of harm, I’m not disputing that, but in the end, he repented and he died trying to do the right thing. That should count for something.”

Brother Zachariah tilts his head to the side. His intense regard is unsettling. “No one has spoken on his behalf yet, no one came to ask.”

Alec looks up. “Well, I am asking now.”

Silence settles over the room as the two men stare at each other. Alec looks away first; he can’t help but feel that he’s overstepping his boundaries here. He has no right to demand anything from anyone. Maybe it’s his own guilt talking.

“The Clave decided not to release his soul from his body as a part of his punishment,” Brother Zachariah says slowly.

Alec lowers his head and squeezes his eyes shut. Raziel, Hodge…
But Brother Zachariah isn’t finished yet. “But I don’t agree,” he says and when Alec looks up in surprise, he continues, “I’ve known many sinners in my long life, and not all of them were bad people. And not all of them deserved eternal damnation.” And he pulls out his stele, lighting up its crystalline tip. “Shall I?”

“Won’t that get you into trouble?” Alec asks carefully.

He could swear that Brother Zachariah smiles when he replies, “I’ve always been the rebel of the order, Alec Lightwood. It’s nothing I can’t handle.”

Alec blinks. He can’t imagine any of the Silent Brothers rebelling against anything, if he’s being honest. They just seem so... set in their ways, mildly put.

“What will it be, then?” Brother Zachariah asks, leaving the decision entirely to Alec.

And Alec nods. If he can do this for Hodge - not the traitor, but the man who taught him how to fight and saved his life - then he will.

Brother Zachariah touches his stele to Hodge’s sheet covered head, and says, “Ave atque vale.”

Blinking hard, Alec swallows and croaks out, “Hail and farewell, Hodge Starkweather.”

Golden mist rises from the body and swirls into a sparkling cloud. But instead of dispersing or floating away, for the briefest of moments it takes the shape of Hodge; he’s translucent and ethereal, but it’s definitely him. And he smiles at Alec and whispers, “Thank you.” Only then does the man’s soul move on.

As the room darkens again, Alec clenches his hurt hand so tightly that his scabbed over welts break open and start bleeding again. His throat’s thick and his eyes sting so badly he has to close them to keep the tears from spilling over.

“You’re a good man, Alec Lightwood,” Brother Zachariah says gently.

But Alec shakes his head firmly, and opening his eyes, he replies quietly, “I’m not, Brother Zachariah. I’m really not.”

Brother Zachariah’s face softens, but before he can say anything more, Alec bows his head to the monk reverently, and with one last look at the body of his mentor that’s now nothing more than an empty vessel and a silent thanks, he leaves.
The healers tell him that Izzy will be okay, that the stab wound isn’t as bad as it could’ve been, considering. They want to keep her in the infirmary for the time being, but she’ll be fine, she’ll live. The rush of relief is so strong that Alec feels light-headed for a moment.

And then, all of a sudden, everything just seems to catch up with him now that he doesn’t have to worry about his sister anymore, everything that happened, everything that he did. He remembers the stickiness of Jocelyn’s blood on his hand, the smell of it, and he feels sick, dirty. He wants to go back to his room and wash again, scrub and scrub and scrub, till his hands covered with blood again, but this time with his own.

But when Alec turns to leave the infirmary, something - someone - catches his attention and he stops. Lydia’s sitting on a bed on the other side of the room with his back to him. She’s dressed only in a thin undershirt and slacks so every vertebrae of her slumped back’s visible. She looks… morose.

Slowly, Alec heads through the room towards her. He walks around the bed that she’s sitting on and as he stops in front of her and she looks up at him, he asks quietly, “You okay?”

Lydia sighs and looks down at her arm, hanging a sling. “No, not really. Broken in two places. Bone’s misaligned. Too swollen to do anything about it right now. They’re sending me back to Idris to ‘recuperate’.” She snorts. “I can smell Aldertree’s hand in this. He was just waiting for his chance to get rid of me.”

Alec winces. He reaches out and gently touches her unhurt shoulder. “I’m sorry,” he says even more quietly.

She twists her mouth and blows out an annoyed breath, plucking at the sling in annoyance. “Yeah, well. It could’ve been much worse if you hadn’t stopped the thing possessing Raj.”

This feels wrong, everything feels so wrong, even he himself, as if he doesn’t fit in his skin anymore, as if he’s fraying at the edges. And seeing Lydia hurt because he didn’t do his job properly, because he was careless, because he made a mistake - again!

Alec shakes his head. “No, it’s not just that. I’m sorry about everything, Lydia,” he says in a voice that’s a little bit hoarse. “I’m sorry for the way I handled our engagement. I’m sorry that mother went to the Clave behind your back and it cost you the leadership of the Institute. I’m sorry that we weren’t more careful when we brought the dead body inside the Institute, that we let the demon in. I’m sorry—”

“Alec, stop!” Lydia cuts him off, and reaching out, she touches his arm.

When he falls silent, swallowing the words that seem to want to just spill out of him of their own volition, she continues in a gentler voice, “Look, regarding our engagement, you haven’t done
anything that I haven’t done in the past myself. True, I didn’t wait till I was actually standing at the altar, but the end result was the same: I broke off my engagement to a good man because I didn’t love him. It would be quite hypocritical of me if I were mad at you for something I did, too, don’t you think?

“And the rest” –Lydia shakes her head– “none of it was your fault, you have to know that! None of it,” she insists and when he doesn’t respond, when he looks away, she adds empathetically, “Alec, you know how demonic possession works. And this demon, it was something that Valentine cooked up in his lab, it passed through our wards without setting off alarms. It possessed our people regardless of our protection runes. You couldn’t have stopped the thing.” She pauses. “You couldn’t have saved Jocelyn.”

Alec’s heart skips a beat. He wishes he could believe her, he truly does. But what if… what if this demon went after people who its vessels held grudges against? Because Alec disliked Jocelyn. He disliked her so much that he wanted her gone from the Institute. And now she is gone.

But he can’t talk about it. Not now. Maybe not ever. And especially not with someone like Lydia who has enough trouble of her own to deal with; the last thing she needs is him piling his own issues on her shoulders, too.

So he shakes his head and smiles at her, or at least he tries. “I’m fine. I will be fine,” he corrects himself when he sees her doubtful look. “You don’t have to worry about me. Just get better.”

Lydia’s face softens. “Alec…”

But he doesn’t let her finish. Sliding his arm from underneath her hand, he catches her fingers in his own and squeezes gently. This time, when he bends down and kisses her gently on the cheek, his smile is more genuine. “You’re a good friend, Lydia Branwell, the best. I’ll miss you.”

And though it’s obvious that Lydia wants to say more, she also realizes that it would be futile; they’re too much alike in many ways. And so she squeezes his fingers back and smiles back at him affectionately. “I’ll miss you, too, Alec Lightwood. Good luck.”

When Alec leaves the infirmary, still sensing Lydia’s worried eyes on him, he feels hollow, cracked open along weakened fault lines. So many people dead, so many hurt, his friends, his family. How will he ever fix this? How will he ever make it right? To Lydia, to Clary… to Jace? How? He doesn’t know. He simply doesn’t know. And it’s slowly tearing him apart.
“Life appears to me too short to be spent in nursing animosity or registering wrongs.”
— Charlotte Brontë

A what-if story set in episode 112. What if Jace and Alec didn’t make up. What if Magnus didn’t interrupt Alec’s wedding. What if Hodge still betrayed them all. (Unbeta’d)

“Great. I guess I’ll go. I’ve got work to do anyway.”

And Jace goes, he stomps out of the club, annoyed with himself for having expected… something and annoyed with Alec because of… because…

He stops and stands there, outside the club, while the echo of the main door slamming shut still vibrates in the air. He hangs his head, his shoulders slump and his heart… his heart hurts. He doesn’t know how his relationship with Alec got so messed up but if one of them doesn’t do something…

Jace turns swiftly and strides back in, intent on fixing this…

But Alec’s already gone.

“You okay?” Clary asks in a gentle, worried tone of voice when she joins Jace in the choir loft of the festively decorated chapel.

Hidden in the shadow of a massive stone pillar, Jace shakes his head. “No. It should’ve been me down there,” he whispers and nods at the altar where his parabatai’s about to get married - with Hodge Starkweather as his suggenes.

Hesitantly, Clary reaches out to touch Jace’s back. For once, he doesn’t flinch away. “I’m sorry you two didn’t get the chance to make up before the wedding.”

With his chest clenched with regret, Jace watches as Alec and Lydia exchange wedding gifts. He doesn’t correct Clary, he doesn’t tell her about Izzy’s attempt at reconciling them.

“Yeah, well, it is what it is,” he replies, then he turns and leaves before Alec and Lydia can exchange wedding runes, too. He can’t witness it and not really be there, by Alec’s side. It would be too much.

Jace keeps himself busy in the Ops Center, he tries to ferret out any possible leads that could help them find the Book of White, the one thing that can wake Clary’s - their - mother.

He hasn’t spoken to Alec yet, he hasn’t even really seen him ever since he sneaked out of the chapel. He’s keeping himself scarce, nursing his wounded pride, but the Institute isn’t big enough for them to keep missing each other completely without a conscious effort on both of their sides,
When the intruder alarm starts blaring - not from the outside, nothing has breached the perimeter, it’s echoing from within the building! - Jace checks the main computer screen and sees that it’s coming from the main office, from the office of the head of the Institute.

He runs, passing confused people in the hallways, and his heart’s in his throat because he might not have spoken to Alec, he might not have seen him, but he still knows that that’s where Alec should be right now, both Alec and Lydia, because they’re headed back to Idris later this morning - with the Mortal Cup. They’re taking the relic back to the Clave under the cover of their honeymoon. No one but their closest family knows. No one!

No one should know!

Jace barges in recklessly but then he stops, he freezes only a step or two inside the room, because the office’s in shambles and there, by the fireplace opposite the door… Lydia, Lydia’s lying there in a crumpled heap and Raj’s kneeling at her side, touching her neck, and he’s looking pale, stunned.

“Raj…?” Jace asks quietly.

Raj looks up and shakes his head. “She’s dead,” he responds in a shocked voice and as he moves aside a little, Jace can see Lydia’s bloodied face, her wide-open, empty eyes.

Breath catches in Jace’s throat and he looks around quickly. “Alec…” he whispers. “Where is–?”

There, behind the couch, a hand. No!

Jace races forward, jumping over broken pieces of furniture to get there, to get to Alec, because, yes, it’s him, Jace recognizes his blue denim shirt. And then he rounds the couch and drops to his knees next to his parabatai who’s lying on his back, with his eyes closed and his face slack…

But alive! Jace knows that, he has known that the whole the time, their bond would’ve told him if it weren’t so, but he still makes sure, he searches for Alec’s pulse and it’s steady but very slow - and then he notices the sleep rune drawn on Alec’s neck. Someone put Alec to sleep. Someone killed Lydia but not Alec.

Jace rests one hand on Alec’s cheek and hangs his head, dizzy with relief. He wants to shake Alec awake, talk to him, but he knows it would be useless, the rune magic has to run its course which means that Alec will be asleep for at least several hours yet. Still Jace needs… he needs Alec awake, he needs to hear Alec’s voice.

There’s a sound in the doorway, an exclamation of shock and horror that can be heard even over the steadily blaring intruder alarm that Raj must have set off once he found Lydia and nobody has bothered to shut down yet, and when Jace looks up, he sees Maryse and Robert standing there, and Izzy and Clary, too.

And then they all rush forward, demanding to know if Alec and Lydia are alright and what happened and, “Who did this?!?”

It was Hodge, as it turns out. Something that Jace still can’t believe, thought he’s watching it all unfold on the main computer screen in the Ops Center with Maryse, Robert, Izzy and Clary at his side. Hodge did this…
Together, they watch as Alec enters the office with Hodge, they’re laughing together, and then Alec turns his back to Hodge - he trusts Hodge, Hodge’s his mentor, he gave him away at his wedding not even 24 hours ago! - and using his stele, he opens the safe holding the Cup.

And that’s when Hodge attacks. He renders Alec unconscious with a sleeper hold, then he lays Alec down on the carpeted floor - very gently, Jace notices - and draws the sleep rune on Alec’s neck to make sure that Alec doesn’t wake up and raise alarm…

But that’s when Lydia enters the room and sees them, that’s when she sees her husband unconscious on the floor, and she comes to the right conclusion. And they fight, she and Hodge, and Lydia’s good, really good, but Hodge’s a weapon’s master, he’s their martial arts expert, and he punches her hard, so hard that she flies back and hits the ground hard - hits her head against the stone rim of the fireplace…

Lydia’s not moving and Hodge… Hodge looks shocked, his face fills with horror, and he rushes forward to check on her, and his shoulders slump in regret, in grief. It’s obvious that this isn’t what he wanted.

It doesn’t stop him from stealing the Mortal Cup, though. He grabs the relic from the safe and with one last look at Alec, he runs.

The Mortal Cup’s gone - there’s little doubt where, to whom Hodge’s taking it - Alec’s lying still deeply asleep in his room and Lydia… Lydia is dead.

Raziel…

“What do you think you’re doing?” Izzy demands when she catches Jace in the weapon’s room, gearing up.

“I’m going after him,” Jace growls. “I’ll kill the traitor for what he did!”

Jace’s furious. The Mortal Cup be damned - the thing has never brought them anything but grief - but his parabatai’s wife is dead! Lydia’s dead! And despite their differences, Jace liked Lydia, he admired her conviction, her loyalty, her strength and courage! And now she’s gone.

And Alec knows now. Jace stood in the corridor outside his parabatai’s room while Maryse told Alec about what happened. Jace stood there and he wanted to go inside so badly because he could feel Alec’s pain, his grief through their bond…

But in the end, Jace didn’t go in. There’s so much they left to fester between them, so much unspoken hurt, and it shouldn’t matter in a moment like this, but the gulf between them has grown so wide and deep that Jace simply doesn’t know how to bridge it anymore.

And so Jace left. But if he can’t be there for Alec, then he’ll do something else for his parabatai - he’ll catch the man who did this!

“You think this is what Alec would want from you?” Izzy asks in disbelief. “You think this is what Alec needs from you right now? There are dozens of people out there, looking for Hodge already. One more person - even if it’s you - will not make a difference!”

“It might!” Jace snaps at her.

Izzy stares at him. Her eyes are red-rimmed and her face’s pale; she cried for her sister-in-law, mourning her death, and she cried for her brother’s pain. But now, she looks angry - angry with
In the end, Jace doesn’t go anywhere.

Knocking quietly on the door of his parabatai’s bedroom, Jace walks in without waiting for an invitation - he knows it might never come. Alec’s standing by the window with his arms crossed over his chest and he looks… small to Jace; a man as tall and solid as Alec should never look like that.

Closing the door softly, Jace takes a few steps deeper into the room, then he stops. Alec doesn’t turn around but Jace knows his parabatai’s aware that it’s him. So he stands there and waits there for Alec to tell him, show him what he needs. Because Jace doesn’t know. They’re so out of sync that now that it’s most needed Jace simply has no idea what to do.

After a long moment of silence, Alec says hoarsely, still staring blindly out of the window, “I didn’t love her as a husband should, but I promised her I would make her dream come true. And now she’s dead. I failed her, Jace. My wife’s dead because I failed her.”

And suddenly, Jace knows exactly what he needs to do. He walks up to Alec and turning him around - Alec looks so pale, so haggard that it breaks Jace’s heart - he hugs Alec hard, he simply pulls Alec into his arms and pours all he has into their embrace, into their bond.

And he starts whispering to his parabatai and he keeps whispering even when Alec slumps in his arms and hugs him back, clinging to Jace like he’s drowning and Jace’s his lifeline. Jace’s words are full of love and grief and apology. “You didn’t, you’ve never failed anyone, it wasn’t your fault, it wasn’t, Alec, it wasn’t, you couldn’t have known, I swear, I swear…”

Slowly, they sink down to the floor because their knees buckle and give out, and Jace’s still hugging Alec tight, refusing to let go, and all their fighting, all the bad blood between them suddenly feels so meaningless to him when he feels Alec shudder and start crying silently, without making a sound.

“I’m sorry,” Jace whispers in Alec’s ear, rocking him gently, “I’m sorry and I’m here, I’m here…”

Yes, he is. Hodge can wait. Revenge can wait. The Mortal Cup and Valentine himself can damn well wait. Jace’s exactly where he needs to be right now.
Aching Heart

Chapter Summary

This is a Robert Lightwood drabble. Just a little something to get the juices flowing again. I want to write but I’ve been so tired these last few days… (Unbeta'd)

Sometimes, when Robert can’t sleep, he lies in their bed, his and Maryse’s, and he stares at his wife, sleeping at his side. And his heart aches, but not for her.

His heart aches for laughing eyes the color of a summer sky and soft golden hair, for calloused, gentle hands and a soul so warm it brings tears to Robert’s eyes.

And his heart hurts because he knows that no matter how wonderful a woman, how steadfast a partner or how great a mother Maryse is, Robert will never love her.

Not like he loved his parabatai, Michael Wayland.
Chapter Summary

I don’t even know what this is. My muses are being contrary, I’m tired and swamped with work, and… well, SO THERE! *points* (Unbeta’d)

And Alec’s kisses are uninhibited, honest and full of passion. And trust. He gives himself over to Magnus fully, he leans in and lets his guard down, and Magnus… Magnus is so smitten that his heart aches.

Nestled between Magnus’ legs, Alec’s kissing Magnus hard. He’s leaning on his hands to keep his weight off his lover, but Magnus doesn’t want that, not at all, he wants to feel Alec! He’s running his hands up and down Alec’s muscular back, pulling him down, closer, tighter against his own body, come here…

But then Alec slides one arm under Magnus’ back and with a deft move that forces a muffled yelp of surprise out of Magnus, he flips them over so that he’s now the one lying on his back with Magnus perched on top and grinning wide, because, yes, that was certainly hot, being manhandled with such ease.

Now that Alec freed his hands - he really did not have to worry about crushing Magnus who relished in feeling his lover’s solid weight on top of him, the High Warlock of Brooklyn’s no wilting flower, after all, which he’ll tell Alec… later - he is the one pulling Magnus down with one hand on Magnus’ back and the other buried in Magnus’ hair, and their kisses turn hungrier, deeper.

And Magnus spreads his legs, and bending his knees, he straddles his lover’s hips without releasing his mouth, limber like a cat, and he strokes Alec’s torso, making tiny sounds of deep contentment, because he just can’t get enough of the sensation of Alec’s chest hair under his palms - it’s a little coarse and it tickles - and Magnus never wants to stop touching Alec, not ever, not ever…
“Don’t you think you were a little harsh?” Izzy asks Alec when she catches up with him in the hallway leading up to his room. “What Jocelyn did, it was not Clary’s fault!”

With his hand on the doorknob of his door, Alec rounds on her. “I’m sick and tired of hearing that. Nothing’s ever Clary’s fault. No matter what she does, no matter what rules or laws she breaks, no matter what, it’s never her fault.”

“You can’t blame her for not knowing our customs, our laws!” Izzy points out. “She wasn’t raised a Shadowhunter!”

“You’re right, she wasn’t,” Alec agrees. “But did she, at any point, even try to understand what rules she’s been overstepping? Or what consequences her actions will have for us? We helped her save her mother - and the first thing that woman does is try to murder my parabatai!”

“There… there has to be an explanation for that,” Izzy objects weakly, but when Alec just stares at her in disbelief, she adds, “Fine, I can’t think of any. But that doesn’t change the fact that you can’t blame Clary for her mother’s actions!”

But Alec just shakes his head. “If it weren’t this, it would be something else. It’s always the same song. We keep making allowances for her, for her mother, for her vampire friend… We let Camille Belcourt - a known murderer! - go just to save Jocelyn only for that woman to stab us in the back!”

Alec sighs, annoyed. “Maybe the Clave’s right, you know? At some point, we’ve completely lost our objectivity. We keep breaking the law because some girl we haven’t even known three weeks ago wants it so. And it’s us who keeps paying for it, us! I’ve had enough! I wish we’ve never heard of Clarissa Fairchild!”

And with that, Alec turns around and disappears into his bedroom, leaving Izzy standing in the hallway.
They join a routine patrol, he and Alec - Izzy’s a year too young for that and she makes her displeasure known very vocally - to see “how it’s done in the real world.” Demon killing, that is. They’re there strictly to observe and, “don’t you get in the way, boys!” Mundane kids do that too, apparently, go on “school trips” and stuff like that, but they go to museums and zoos and to other places like that. And they don’t usually carry weapons stashed all over their persons.

Jace could tell these people that he already knows how to kill a demon. In all the ways there are. His father made sure of that. But… then he would have to explain everything else that went with Michael Wayland’s teaching methods and, yes, Jace loved his father and he would defend him against anyone, but… he would rather not talk about him, period.

So off they go, into the nighttime streets of New York, to stalk their prey. Or, as it turns out, to become the prey. Their patrol namely turns into an ambush and where there should’ve been only one demon, there’s suddenly a whole brood of them, and also a lot of screaming, screeching and clanking of weapons, but the mundanes obviously don’t care because despite all of the noise, no one comes running. Jace can’t decide if mundanes are wise or stupid.

And then he stops caring and jumps in with a brazen self-assurance bordering on cockiness, determined to show them - not the monsters but his fellow Shadowhunters - that he might be young but he’s not a “kid”. He’s determined to prove himself in their eyes - and to prove to the Lightwoods that they will not regret taking him in, that he will make his new family proud. Not that he would ever admit that to anyone, not even to himself, not really.

Jace takes on one of the baby monsters, not the mother - father? - because cocky he might be, but he’s not stupid, and he’s jumping around, poking and prodding it with his Seraph Blade, driving it into a frenzy - and away from the main group. It’s an ugly beast, a cross between a spider and a snake, he’s not sure what kind of a monster it is but there’ll be time for library research later.

Once Jace drives the beast a safe distance away, he really lays into it, cutting bits and pieces off the thing, and he’s actually enjoying himself. What a rush to finally let go again and just slash and stab and kill with abandon! Well, until the monster wraps its tail around Jace’s ankle and pulls!

Yelping, Jace’s dragged along the ground and right under the beast that stab-stab-stabs down with its mandibles while Jace keeps rolling from side to side, avoiding being eaten alive. He’s trying to raise his blade and gut the beast but he has not a second to spare–

When suddenly, the monster rears up, screeching, and Jace looks up quickly to see an arrow sticking out of the beast’s ugly face. And then another joins it, and another, all of them red fletched and runed. Jace bends his head back and sees Alec standing there, only a few feet away - he looks all upside down from Jace’s position on the ground - taking aim and letting loose again.

A wide grin splits Jace’s face and he jumps at his chance. When yet another arrow buries itself in
the monster, hitting it in the throat this time, Jace lifts his blade and stabs upwards, sawing through the monster’s thick skin, gutting it. He’s splashed with its foul smelling body fluids, but he doesn’t really care. He has the thing now. **He has it!**

And then the beast’s legs buckle and it starts falling, and Jace has to scramble from underneath it fast because it might *not* die and disintegrate before it hits the ground and then Jace will be flattened like a a pancake. What an embarrassing end that would be!

So Jace rolls and jumps to his feet and bouncing on his toes he watches the monster slowly collapse and die and *whoosh* away in a cloud of hot embers and ash. And he yells and pumps his fist because that was *awesome*! The most fun he’s had since… well, since his dad died.

He turns around, grinning like a maniac, and he’s about to call out to Alec, to tell him what fun it was and what a great team they make - when Alec throws himself at Jace, heedless of the smelly, sticky demon ichor, and… *hugs* him. He clings to Jace tight, almost desperately so, and Jace can feel him *tremble*. Jace doesn’t understand. *What…?*

“Don’t you ever - *ever*! - do something so stupid again!” Alec croaks out into Jace’s ear. “You could’ve died, you idiot! You stupid fool! You… you *ass*!”

Jace blinks, startled, because Alec was afraid for him? For *him*? But *why*? It’s not like they are family or something. So… *why*?

“Promise me! Promise me, Jace, that you won’t pull such a dumb stunt ever again!” Alec demands, still hanging onto Jace. “*Promise!*”

And Jace can feel something unexpectedly warm and tender come alive in his chest. Alec… *cares*… about him, about *Jace*. He cares!

Smiling a little, Jace wraps his arms around his… around *Alec* and returns his hug, basking in that warmth. “I promise,” he whispers back.
Chapter Summary

For a friend who wanted a story where Alec becomes immortal. Well, it’s not exactly a happy story, sorry! It’s rather… melancholy, but Alec and Magnus are happy!
(Unbeta'd)

Alec’s granted immortality by the Seelie Queen. It’s not meant to be a gift, though, but a curse, a punishment for killing the most loyal and most beautiful of her knights, Meliorn.

And it is a curse because Alec’s never wanted to be immortal. He’s never wanted to watch his loved ones grow old, wither and die. He’s always believed he had a certain number of days allotted to him on this earth and once his time was up, he would meet all the people who’ve moved on before him again.

Now… not anymore, it seems.

“Alec,” Izzy tells him one day, smiling kindly; it hurts to see the silver in her hair and the crow’s feet at the corners of her beautiful eyes, “no one can know what the future will bring. But of one thing I’m certain, big brother: We’ll meet again one day, whether on this earth or beyond, because Raziel’s not so cruel as to separate us forever.”

And Alec hugs her and holds her and does his best to etch this moment into his memory.

Jace’s the last one to leave him. He dies an old, old man, in his bed, not on the battlefield like they’ve always thought. And Alec’s there and he’s holding Jace’s hand, crying quietly, soundlessly.

“I don’t want you to go…” Alec whispers, grasping for their bond, trying to stop it from unraveling. Because how shall he go on with a half of his soul gone?

“I wish I could stay,” Jace whispers back, not looking away from Alec because he knows that this is a goodbye for a very, very long time, maybe forever. “My parabatai.”

After Jace’s death, Alec just… stops. They’re all gone now, all the people he grew up with and even some of their children and their children’s children, such is the life of Shadowhunters. And he feels so alone, so bereft that he would find a way to end it, to join them - if it weren’t for Magnus.

Magnus is the one constant in Alec’s life. Always there, always patient, always kind. Loving. And every morning that Alec wakes up at his side fills Alec with joy because he loves this man so much. And in these moments, when they lie together in bed, arms and legs inextricably entangled, hearts beating in sync, Alec almost doesn’t feel it, the emptiness yawning inside him. Almost.

“I’m sorry,” Alec whispers one day into the pre-dawn light that made itself home in their bedroom. “I’m sorry I’ve been so… that I’m not dealing better with… this, with everything. I’m sorry.”

But Magnus just shakes his head and pulls Alec into his arms. “Alexander, I’ve had centuries to learn how to deal with the dark, sad sides of immortality. And I’m still not good at it. You can never be ‘good’ at losing people. It’ll never stop hurting. But,” he adds and kisses the top of Alec’s
tousled head, “every day I get to spend with you is a gift that I’ll be forever grateful for.”

Sighing, Alec snuggles closer and kisses Magnus’ chest and his throat and his lips and they make love while outside, a new dawn awakens.

Alec learns to be patient, to take on eternity one day at a time, and he serves his people as best as he can, because he’s still a Shadowhunter, just an immortal - *ageless*? - one, and he does it with his lover at his side, and though his soul’s still crying for its mate, his heart’s content, happy.

And then one day, unexpectedly, it turns out that Izzy was right, that Raziel’s merciful after all, because that morning, many years after Jace’s death, Alec wakes up to his bond alive and singing once more.

Somewhere out there, in the wide, wide world, his *parabatai* was reborn.
Soulbond

Chapter Summary

A parabatai drabble. (Unbeta'd)

Jace tried to explain to her once what it meant to have a parabatai…

“When I feel sad, he’ll make it better. When I’m happy, I want to share it with him. When I don’t know what to do, he’ll show me the way. When I’m cold, he’ll make me warm… I’ll never be alone, not in this life or beyond, because I have Alec and he’s a part of me, now and forever. That’s what having a parabatai means.”

But Clary still didn’t understand, not really - until she forged a soulbond with Simon.

And then she finally got it.
Born Unfinished

Chapter Summary

I’m trying to get back into my writing groove now that my family left and I have my peace and quiet back! So, drabbles it is. (Unbeta'd)

“No, I’ve never wanted a parabatai,” Izzy answers Clary’s question. “Raziel! I can’t even imagine giving myself over to anyone on such an intimate level.”

Then her face softens. “Alec and Jace are… different. Some people are born incomplete, unfinished, and they spend their whole life yearning for something undefinable. Parabatai fill that void in each other’s souls, they fit like puzzle pieces. And together they make up one whole.

“So yes, the bond’s beautiful - but it can also be terribly cruel,” Izzy continues, remembering her brother’s desperate words, I need him, “and that’s something I would rather do without.”
Meanwhile, in the Demon Realm

Chapter Summary

Coda to episode 212

“Back so soon?” Asmodeus chuckles from where he’s sprawled on a gilded settee.

Azazel stomps into the hall that’s so vast its walls are hidden in shadows and with a snarl, he points in Asmodeus’ direction, blasting the other Prince of Hell with his power. With an eye-roll, Asmodeus flicks one hand to deflect the blast, dispersing its energy in a cloud of madly fluttering moths.

“Temper, temper, my friend!” Asmodeus chides, still amused. “What killed you that it put you in such a heinous mood?”

Azazel sneers, rubbing his sternum. “An arrow,” he growls. “Your spawn’s lover shot me!”

That catches Asmodeus’ attention. “Oh really? Which one of my children chose their partner so wisely?”

“Magnus Bane,” Azazel spits out.

That forces Asmodeus to abandon his leisurely sprawl and sit up. “My, my, Magnus got himself a new lover? Do tell, who is it? A vampire? A werewolf?” He curls his lip. “A mundane?”

“A Shadowhunter!” Azazel snaps, pacing back and forth in front of the settee, one hand still pressed to his sternum as if he can still feel the arrow lodged in there.

Asmodeus’ eyes widen in surprise, then they glitter with glee as he sits forward eagerly. “Oh, how positively intriguing!” He waves a hand to summon Azazel a chair and then a decanter filled with a darkly glowing liquid and two glasses. “Sit down, my friend, sit. And tell me more…”
There’s a soft knock on the door and then Alec slips in without waiting for an invitation; privacy’s always been an illusion between them.

Jace looks up from where he’s been lying on the unmade bed, studying the Herondale ring in the soft glow of the bedside lamp. “You alright?” he asks.

Alec walks up to the bed and sits down on the edge. “I’ve got something for you,” he says, holding up a folded piece of paper.

Sitting up, Jace lets the ring drop down on its chain, then he scoots closer to take the paper. “What is it?” he inquires, looking down at the sheet without unfolding it.

“It’s a DNA test, yours and the Inquisitor’s,” Alec explains. “I asked Izzy to run it.”

Jace’s eyes widen and he looks up sharply. “Why? You didn’t believe I was–”

Alec lifts a hand to silence him. “It had nothing to do with what I believed in or not. I just thought–” he looks down at the paper in his parabatai’s hands and both his face and his voice soften– “after everything you’ve been through with Valentine, you deserved a tangible proof of your parentage.”

Looking down, too, Jace plays with the folded paper a little, unsure of what to do. He wants to open it - but at the same time he doesn’t. The damn “what if” is making him jittery, anxious.

Then something occurs to him and Jace looks up, frowning a little. “But how did you get the samples? I mean, my bathroom is your bathroom–”

Alec makes a face.

“–but the Inquisitor? Tell me you didn’t sneak into her room and steal her hairbrush or something?” Jace demands nervously.

Laughing silently, Alec shakes his head. “No, I actually went and asked her outright.”

Jace blinks, a little surprised. “And she agreed? So she must’ve had doubts that I was–”

“No!” Alec cuts him off firmly. “She did not. She was certain you were her grandson all along. But I explained to her why I wanted to run the test, what Valentine did to you, the games he played with your mind. Only then did she agree.”

“Oh,” Jace breathes out, dropping his eyes to the paper again. His voice is a little unsteady when he asks, “And… the results?”

Alec reaches out and touches Jace’s knee. “You are a Herondale, Jace,” he replies kindly. “And now you actually have it on paper.”
Something in Jace relaxes and his shoulders droop with relief. He knew it, of course he knew it, but there’s *knowing* and then there’s having the *lab results*.

“Does she–?” He leaves the question unfinished, looking up at Alec.

Alec nods. “I had to promise to show her the results first. When I told her, she smiled!”

Jace smirks. “Lies!”

Laughing again, Alec pats his *parabatai’s* knee. “It’s the honest truth. Your grandmother’s actually a nice lady when she tries.”

Breath hitches in Jace’s throat and his heart skips a beat. *Grandmother*… “I’ve never had a grandmother before,” he whispers, touched.

“And how does it feel?” Alec asks with a soft smile.

Jace grins brightly. “Awesome!”
It Comes With the Job Description

Chapter Summary

Another coda to 212. A parabatai scene. Magnus and Alec’s relationship is discussed. Might not be everybody’s cuppa. (Unbeta’d)

“How did it go with Magnus?” Jace asks softly when Alec walks out of his bathroom in nothing but a towel slung around his hips.

Alec pauses in mid-step having not expected to find anyone in his bedroom. Then he sighs and walks on towards his dresser. “It didn’t,” he replies just as softly as he pulls out clean underwear from the top drawer.

Perched on the edge of Alec’s bed, Jace whispers, “That bad, huh?”

Sighing again, Alec shakes his head and drops his towel to pull on his boxer shorts. “Worse. And no wonder, really,” he adds when he turns back to Jace and picks up the towel from the floor.

“Yes,” Jace agrees, “what Valentine did to him… and Azazel…”

“And us, too,” Alec points out.

Jace sits forward intently. “Alec, you can’t blame yourself for that—”

“But I do blame myself, Jace, I do,” Alec interrupts him and he squeezes the towel in his hands so hard that his knuckles turn white. “I still had my doubts, even after what you told me. And yet, I didn’t do anything. Worse… I helped!”

Furrowing his eyebrows a little, Jace shakes his head in confusion. “What do you mean?”

Alec closes his eyes for a long moment and swallows hard because even thinking of it makes him sick to his stomach. When he opens them again, he says haltingly, “The Inquisitor, she went against the Clave’s direct orders and… she decided to execute Valentine. Personally. She wanted revenge for her son. And I helped her, Jace. It was me! I strapped Magnus into that chair. I gagged him. I left him there with her, alone, even though he was begging me not to do it, he was… he was begging, Jace. When you and Valentine appeared, she was about to cut his throat.” He lets out a shaky breath. “And I would’ve let her.”

Jace stares at him for a moment. “I… didn’t know,” he whispers.

Laughing bitterly, Alec throws the towel across the room; it hits the open bathroom door with a wet slap. “There are many things you don’t know about, Jace. Things I’ve done as the acting head of this Institute, following orders. It comes with the job description. You just never knew.”

He falls silent and when he continues, his voice’s wistful, “And I hoped that Magnus would never know either. And now he does. He experienced it first hand! Raziel” –Alec rubs his face with his hands– “I wouldn’t blame him if he never wanted to see me again. Not only didn’t I trust him, not only did I just stand by while he was tortured, I almost got him killed! How can you forgive that?”
“Alec,” Jace whispers as he gets up and slowly walks up to Alec, “hey, I won’t pretend that it’s not messed up, but that guy loves you. He loves you. Just give him time, give him space, follow his lead. You two will make it, trust me on this.”

Alec looks at him with all the anxiety and unhappiness and guilt that’s been weighing down on him ever since he realized what happened reflected in his eyes. “I’m not so sure about that, Jace. Sometimes, even love’s not enough.”

To that, Jace has no response. So he just pulls Alec into his arms, lending him his strength and comforting him the best he can. And Alec leans in, closing his eyes, wishing that he could take it all back, make it all better for his lover. But he can’t.
Alec needs to know. He’s aware that it’s not a good idea, that it’s not smart to do this, to go there, but he still needs to know. He just… he has to.

And so he locks the door of his bedroom and draws the silence rune on it - no sound will pass through the door or the walls, in or out - then he walks over to the bed, pulling off his jacket, and as he sits down, he takes out his stele - and before he can change his mind, with quick, firm strokes he draws the agony rune on the bare skin of his forearm.

Then there’s nothing but pain - painpainpain - and screaming.

And memories, suppressed, forgotten, erased…

... he hates he hates her so much he wants her gone she tried to kill jace his parabatai gone jace went back to valentine because of her he hates her now she’ll be gone he’ll make it so he’ll make sure of it throw her against the wall yes yes yes reach in rip her heart out still beating bloody warm dripping in his hand - Alec! - drop her to the floor look up see see see what i can do what i’ve done look at it - Raziel, Alec, what did you do?! - at her all dead now gone by my hand my doing my work gone yes yes yes - Alec!

Alec gasps, arching his back off the floor, and his eyes snap open. There, a silhouette bending over him with a glowing stele in his - his? - hand. His iratze’s buzzing with power, someone - Jace, it’s Jace, worried, pale, wide-eyed Jace! - activated it to… heal him?

The pain’s gone now and Alec lifts his left hand to check his forearm; all gone, the agony rune. He drops his arm to the floor and closes his eyes in relief. By the Angel, that was stupid!

“You-you idiot!” Jace yells at him, and when Alec opens his eyes, bone-tired, he sees that Jace’s still sickly pale, almost gray and his hands are shaking so hard he almost drops his stele. “What were you even thinking? I thought something happened to you! I could feel your pain and I thought you were—”

Breaking off, Jace reaches down and pulls Alec up, into a sitting position - into his arms. He wraps them around Alec desperately, kneeling by his side, and he rocks his parabatai almost imperceptibly from side to side, comforting Alec and himself both.

“What possessed you do to this?” Jace whispers into Alec’s shoulder, his voice barely there.

Slowly, Alec raises his arms and returns the hug, fisting his trembling hands into the back of Jace’s shirt. He’s sweaty and shaken and everything feels so distant and faraway, unreal, everything but his parabatai, so he clings to him, afraid he’ll float away otherwise.

“I had to know,” Alec croaks out, eyes on the flung open door of his bedroom, splintered around the lock where Jace kicked them in in his rush to get to Alec. He stares at his door but he doesn’t really see it. “I had to know what I put him through. I had to…”
At that Jace stifles a curse and pulls Alec even closer, buries his hand in Alec’s hair. “Idiot! You’re such an… I should kick your ass for this! I should–” His voice breaks. “Don’t do it ever again. Don’t, Alec, just don’t.”

Alec lets out a shuddery breath and closes his eyes, leaning into Jace. “I won’t, I promise,” he swears and he means it.

Because there’s no need. He knows everything he needed to know. And more.
His Right!

Chapter Summary

Yet another 212 coda. This time a Sebastian piece! (Unbeta'd)

Sebastian doesn’t understand why Alec Lightwood doesn’t like him. Wasn’t he helpful enough? Charming enough? No, Sebastian knows he played his part perfectly, he practiced, after all, on living, breathing people. So, either Alec is too dumb or...

… too perceptive for his own good. And Sebastian can’t have that. All his meticulously laid-out plans could be brought down by a single dissenting voice, he knows that, because everything’s balanced way too precariously. So, either he changes Alec’s mind or…

… he kills him. But that would be rather unfortunate. It would make Jace very unhappy, Sebastian suspects without truly understanding why. But he saw the way Jace looked at his parabatai, as if the guy hung up the moon…

Or… maybe he should do it, maybe he should kill Alec Lightwood. Nobody’s namely allowed to be looked at that way by Jace Herondale, nobody - but him, Sebastian. It’s his right, his destiny! And Alec Lightwood’s been stealing it away from him. How dare he!

Yes, Alec Lightwood will have to die.
**Chapter Summary**

I finally watched the TMI movie and this is a death story written for it. What if Hodge never called Magnus Bane? (Unbeta'd)

Based on this scene:

Jace: We agreed to do this together. We’re a team.
Isabelle: Since Clary got here, we haven’t been a team.

“He’s dead,” Isabelle says when she hears the footsteps echoing through the infirmary come closer and then stop at the foot of Alec’s bed.

She doesn’t turn around. She doesn’t take her eyes off her brother’s pale face; it’s scratched and bruised, and now it will never heal again. She’s sitting on the edge of the bed, holding Alec’s hand in hers and she doesn’t turn around. She doesn’t want to see anyone right now.

“Isabelle–” Jace. There’s so much pain, so much regret in his voice.

If he says one more word, she’ll kill him.

So she interrupts him sharply. “When the demons attacked, I had to do something, we had to do something, Simon and me. There was no one else. And so we went. And we did something. And when I came back, he was dead.”

She’s running her thumb across Alec’s knuckles, back and forth, back and forth. Alec’s hand is still warm, somehow, but it’s already growing cold, growing stiff. Soon, she won’t be able to pretend that he’s just asleep. Soon, she’ll have to go and inform the Silent Brothers; they’ll come and take Alec away and then it’ll be all over. But not yet, just a moment longer.

“I knew it was bad, his wound, but I hoped I had more time, to take care of him, to call somebody. Turns out I had not. And he died, alone,” Isabelle adds and she reaches out with her free hand to smooth Alec’s bangs off his forehead.

Gripping the bed frame at the foot of the bed, Jace bends over, breathing harshly. Isabelle still hasn’t turned around to look at him yet but she can feel the bed shaking a little now. *Too little too late.*

“I’m sorry,” Jace croaks out. “Valentine was there and he told me he was my father, he–”

Isabelle doesn’t care. Her brother’s dead and she really doesn’t care about Jace’s family issues right now. She tells him so. Jace falls silent. But it’s not enough. She wants him to go and she tells him that, too.

“Isabelle…” So much pain.

But she doesn’t care about that either, about his problems or his pain or his grief. It’s not important. *He* isn’t important. How much can change in twenty-four hours, in twelve… in one. Something broke inside her when she found Alec dead. This shouldn’t have happened. This
wouldn't have happened, if Jace listened, just once.

“Go, Jace,” Isabelle says firmly; Alec’s hand’s gone cold and strangely, that gives her the strength to do this, to finally draw a line. Consequences... “I don’t need or want you here - and he doesn’t care anymore. So, go. I’m sure Clary’s waiting.”

In the end, Jace complies. “I’ll see you later, then,” he whispers and he goes.

“No, you won’t,” Isabelle whispers back when the door closes behind him and she’s once again alone with her brother. All alone.

And he doesn’t. Jace doesn’t see her again. After the Silent Brothers take Alec’s body away, she leaves for Idris where she asks for a reassignment, effective immediately.

Where?

“Anywhere but New York.”
“Hey, Alec, wait up,” Jace calls out after his parabatai. When he catches up, he looks around to make sure they can’t be overheard, and lowering his voice, he asks, “Did you know about this? About Izzy’s addiction?”

Instinctively, Alec looks around, too, then he nods and admits, “Yes, I did.”

Jace shakes his head, looking a little hurt. “Why didn’t you tell me?”

“Because it wasn’t my place to tell,” Alec points out reasonably. “Izzy’s secrets are safe with me - as are yours, Jace, you know that.” He points his finger at his parabatai’s chest.

Jace’s shoulders slump a little because, yeah, he knows that. Still. “Maybe I could’ve done something, helped her somehow—”

“You couldn’t have,” Alec interrupts him firmly but not unkindly. “Believe me, I tried. Izzy was right: this is her fight. We can be there for her, we can support her, but we can’t fight her battles for her.”

Blowing out a breath, Jace grumbles, “Well, that just sucks!”

Alec smiles a little, though it’s a rather unhappy, slightly bitter smile, then he reaches out to pat his parabatai on the shoulder and says, “Don’t I know it.”
Unwavering Support

Chapter Summary

A Malec coda to 213. (Unbeta'd)

“I’m sorry I wasn’t there for you as much as you needed me these last few days,” Alec says softly, lying on his stomach in their bed with his head pillowed on Magnus’ chest. “It feels like I haven’t stopped to take a breath ever since this whole thing began.”

“That’s okay,” Magnus replies just as softly, carding his fingers through Alec’s unruly hair.

But Alec shakes his head, rubbing his stubbled cheek against Magnus’ naked skin in the process. “It’s really not. This, us, we should be partners, in good things and bad. I feel like I let you down. So… I’m sorry. I’ll try to do better in the future.”

Magnus smiles. “Alright.” Then he pauses and when he continues, his voice sounds almost reluctant. “And I promise I’ll ask for an explanation next time I don’t like something you’re doing, I won’t just throw you out. That’s not a way to deal with issues.”

Sighing, Alec lifts himself up on his elbows and looks down at Magnus. “About that: I honestly believed that the DNA test was a good idea. Luke suggested it, he said that mundane cops use it all the time, not just to convict people, but to clear them of wrongdoings, too.

“And I knew you didn’t do anything,” he rushes to add when Magnus frowns and opens his mouth to say something, ”I knew that. But I needed the Clave to know that, too. I needed to make sure that they would have no reason to come after you, that you would be safe.”

Magnus’ frown clears and the corners of his mouth curl up in a slight smile. “As you said, I’m the High Warlock of Brooklyn, Alexander. I’m quite used to the Clave’s madness. I doubt they could do anything that would surprise me.”

Alec winces. “Actually…” He tells his lover about the Inquisitor’s plan.

Magnus stares at him in disbelief. “I was wrong. The Clave’s blind prejudice seems to have reached a whole new level.” Then he narrows his eyes at Alec. “And you agreed with this?” He sounds guarded.

Shaking his head, Alec says, “No, I did not. Actually, the Inquisitor and me, we had quite a row about this right there, in the middle of the Ops Center. It was quite… awkward for everybody around.” He looks rather uncomfortable.

Laughing quietly, Magnus strokes Alec’s cheek. “Good for you! I’m proud!”

Alec blushes a little. “Well, much good it did. The decision was out of my hands anyway. The Inquisitor named Jace the Head of the Institute,” Alec explains. It still smarts a little, even now.

Magnus’ eyes widen. “But you worked so hard for it your whole life! There’s no one better suited for that position! Why—” Then it dawns on him and he answers his own question, “Because Jace’s her grandson, of course.”
“And I’m gay and dating you”—Alec taps him on the chest with his finger—“which could be considered a conflict of interest - at best.”

“Damn that old prune!” Magnus curses.

Alec chokes back a laugh and hides his face in Magnus’ chest for a moment. It feels good, this. To have this unwavering support despite their differences. For a while there, Alec thought he did irreparable harm to their relationship.

Magnus sighs and rubs Alec’s back. “So, now the killers are on the loose, the Downworlders will definitely not take being chipped like pets sitting down and you lost your position… to use a modern euphemism, that just blows!”

This time, Alec can’t stop the burst of laughter. Raziel, it feels good to be able to do that, to just laugh.

“Actually,” he says when he looks up; it’s hard not to laugh again, seeing Magnus’ confused look, “we caught the killer, the plan with the chipping is now definitely off the table and - you’re looking at the new Head of the New York Institute,” he adds with a pleased grin.

And he proceeds to explain to a very perplexed Magnus what happened since they last saw each other.

“One day,” Magnus says, shaking his head, “we don’t see each other one day and it’s like the whole world turned upside down and sideways too, for good measure. Incredible.”

Alec can’t stop smiling; he can’t remember the last time he felt this happy. “I know.”

Slowly, Magnus’ lips spread in a mischievous grin. “So… I’m in bed with the Head of the New York Institute, you say?” he asks, running his hands up Alec back.

Alec arches into the touch and his eyes grow hazy. “Yes…?”

“That’s really hot,” Magnus murmurs, staring at Alec’s lips.

Alec licks them unconsciously. “Is it?”

Coaxing Alec to move up, Magnus buries his hand in Alec’s hair and pulls his head down. “Oh yeah,” he whispers, “let me show you just how hot!”

And then he claims Alec’s mouth in a searing, breath-stealing kiss. The sex that follows is simply… magical. A fitting celebration.
I don’t even know what this is. I just wanted to write something! Based on the photos/promos from 214. Luke and his parabatai. (Unbeta’d)

(This was written before 214 aired, when we still didn’t know HOW Luke got into Valentine’s cell.)

“Luke, you okay?” Alec asks, coming up to the older man from behind and stopping by his side.

Luke, who’s been standing there, in the hallway leading up to Valentine’s cell, for what seems like eternity, shakes his head, and without taking his eyes off Valentine, he asks, “Have you ever doubted your parabatai?”

Alec frowns. “Jace? Never,” he responds without hesitation. “I mean, if you’re asking about his loyalty. I’ve never doubted that, not for a second. The actual existence of his higher brain functions? That’s another matter entirely, especially since Clary entered our lives.”

That makes Luke smile a little, despite everything. But when he speaks again, his voice’s somber. “I’d never doubted Valentine, either. I trusted him with my life, with Jocelyn’s life… with the future of our world. He always claimed he was doing the right thing. And I believed him. Yet here we are…”

Alec looks at him, then at Valentine who’s now glaring at them through the bulletproof glass. “What are you saying, that you’re a cautionary tale?”

Luke sighs and shakes his head again. “I don’t know. If you’d told me twenty years ago that we would end up here, with Valentine a traitor and a prisoner, and me a Downworlder, I would’ve laughed in your face and called you crazy. That’s all I’m saying.” He turns to Alec and shrugs.

Alec thinks about it, then he says, “I’m sorry, Luke. I’m really sorry about what Valentine did to you. But Jace’s not Valentine. He’s good, I can feel it.” He rubs his chest. “Raziel knows we’ve had our fair share of fights and we’ve both done and said things that we later regretted but Jace’ll never be… him.” He waves his hand at the holding cell.

Luke stares at him for a moment searchingly, then he nods, and smiling, he reaches out to pat Alec on the chest. “Alright,” he allows, “that’s good enough for me.”

And Alec smiles back…

… not having noticed that Luke swiped his master keycard, the one allowing access to every room in the building, cells included. His parabatai, his problem. Luke will deal with Valentine the way he should have twenty years ago.
Chapter Summary

Just a Malec coda to ep 214. My muses seem to have taken for the hills, the beasts. Pah! :( (Unbeta'd)

“You headed home?” Alec asks as he and Magnus walk out of the Institute’s main door.

“Yes,” Magnus responds, then he takes a deep breath; the night air is crisp and clean. “I thought I might walk.”

“Care for a company?”

Magnus eyes him warily. “Are you offering as the Head of the Institute?”

Alec reaches for his hand. “How about as your boyfriend?”

Magnus stares up at him searchingly a moment longer, then he smiles and squeezes Alec’s fingers gently. “In that case, I graciously accept, Alexander.”

Smiling back, Alec tugs at his hand playfully. “Alright then, let’s go.”
“You look nervous, big brother,” Isabelle points out, smiling, when Alec approaches her in the hallway outside her room.

Alec smiles back, fleetingly, nervously. “Can I ask you a favor?”

“That depends,” she answers a little suspiciously.

“This cabinet meeting tonight, it’s really important to me and…” Alec trails off. Then he clears his throat and soldiers on, “Would you, please, come and help me welcome the Downworlder representatives? You being there might make things run more… smoothly.”

Izzy raises her eyebrows. “You want me to play hostess?”

“Mediator.”

“Nanny.”

“My personal bodyguard!”

That makes her laugh.

Alec waves his hand. “I can handle Magnus—”

Izzy snickers.

“—and Luke,” Alec continues, glaring at her chidingly, “but Meliorn and Raphael, well, that might be… awkward.”

“That’s putting it mildly,” she mutters, darkly amused.

Alec sighs, exasperated. “Izzy…”

Stepping closer, Izzy straightens her brother’s jacket and smiles up at him. “Alec, you know I’ll do anything to support you and your plan. You’re doing a good thing here and not just for the Downworlders, for all of us,” she tells him kindly.

Sighing, Alec shakes his head. “It doesn’t feel like enough…”

“Baby steps, big brother, baby steps,” she advises, patting him on the chest. “You can’t overthrow centuries of prejudice - on both sides! - in a week. Build solid foundations first, then move on to bigger things.”

Alec blows out a long breath. “Right, right. It will work out.”

Izzy nods. “Yes, it will.” But then she grins cheekily and adds, “Well, if we don’t murder each
other first, that is.”

“Not helping!”
“Hey, what…?” Jace protests when Alec pulls him away from his computer and starts pushing him towards the hallway leading out of the Ops Center.

“We,” Alec says firmly, “are going to spar now.”

Jace glances at him over his shoulder, confused. “Why?”

“Because your skills are getting rusty,” Alec deadpans, his face expressionless.

“Excuse me?!” Jace sputters and almost trips.

Alec nods sagely. “You’re excused. Now, we’re going to do something about it.”

“I don’t need to do anything about it. I train every day,” Jace objects as he’s being prodded down the hallway towards his room.

“With whom?”

“With myself!” When Alec snorts, Jace corrects himself, “By myself.”

“Jace, I know that you can dazzle even yourself with your amazing skills but sparring’s usually done between two people. And no, your ego doesn’t count,” Alec adds when Jace opens his mouth to protest some more.

“Hey!” Jace exclaims, vaguely insulted.

In that moment, they stop in front of Jace’s bedroom and Alec pushes Jace towards the door. “Off you go. Get changed and I’ll see you in five minutes in the backyard.” Then he turns to go.

“Hey,” Jace calls out after him, his voice quiet and slightly worried, and when Alec stops and looks at him, he asks, “why are we doing this, really?”

Sighing, Alec walks back and reaches out to squeeze Jace’s shoulder gently. “Because I can feel how sad you are—”

Jace’s eyes soften. “Alec…”

“–and I’m sure that some rolling in the dirt will improve your mood immensely,” Alec finishes with a cheeky glint in his eyes.

Jace grins and his eyes crinkle at the corners. “That sounds vaguely dirty.”

“Oh, shush!” Alec grumbles with an amused chuckle and as he starts walking away again, he calls over his shoulder, “Five minutes!”
Jace salutes sharply. “Sir, yes sir!”
Chapter Summary

What might’ve happened before the 215 Malec sneak peek? (Unbeta'd)
This is as far as I’ll go writing sex these days, I guess, so… Not for minors!

They don’t make love every night, sometimes they just lie in each other’s arms, taking pleasure in each other’s company, but that night, that night they do.

They make love and it’s a passionate, breathless act, almost desperate in its intensity. Magnus holds Alec down and drives into him, he kisses him hungrily and soaks up his love like a starving man, and he needs… he needs something, something that would allow him to forget, just for a moment, for that one sweet moment when Alec, his Alexander, gives himself over to him fully.

And Alec senses it and he lets Magnus have everything, anything he wants - may i, alexander, may i…? and anything, magnus, anything you need, take it… - and though Magnus feels selfish and greedy, he takes and takes and takes, and when it’s over and they lie blissed out in their rumpled bed, Alec all boneless and pliant in Magnus’ arms, it’s enough, for a moment, it’s enough and Magnus’ mind grows quiet.

Still, he doesn’t sleep, he just lies there, hugging Alec tight, the big spoon to Alec’s little one, and when the sun comes up and its rays find their way into their bedroom, Magnus sees it, he sees the bruises on Alec’s skin where he held him too tight, where he bit too hard the night before…

And the feelings of despair and anger rush back like a flood, now even stronger than before, because he left fingerprints of his ugliness on his lover’s skin and he never wanted that, ever, ever.

Slowly, carefully, unhappily Magnus pulls back, away from Alec who makes a soft discontent sound in his throat and a frown creases his brow, and with a gentle touch of his power he heals all the marks on Alexander’s body, he erases all the traces of his own inadequacy, a silent, never-heard apology.

Then, after pressing a loving kiss to Alec’s naked shoulder, Magnus slides out of their bed and leaves the room, his mind already in turmoil again, the day already a loss, though the sun’s barely up.

Cursed memories…
“Do you want to play, little Shadowhunter?”

Alec needed to forget, at least for a while, he needed to forget Jace and his own feelings for his parabatai. That’s why he went to the bar, thinking he might drink himself into oblivion, or… maybe find someone to… well, he saw Jace do it, find girl after girl, and have fun, so why couldn’t he, right? Right? But in the end, he just couldn’t do it, he couldn’t stand the idea of some stranger even touching him, let alone… that.

And then, they came along, the vampires.

“What is it?”

“It’s called yin fen. It’ll allow you to forget.”

“How do you—”

“It’s written all over your face, little Shadowhunter.”

“Is it a drug?”

“Well…”

“Then no!”

But suddenly, they were on him, one grabbed him and the other slathered the paste all over his neck, and his senses went haywire and he couldn’t breathe and everything went hazy and his knees buckled and he felt hot, so hot, like his skin was on fire, like his skin didn’t belong to him, and he needed to get out, out of there, out of the bar, away from them, away, but they wouldn’t let him, they were laughing and stalking him out, grabbing at him…

Please.

“So you want to play, little Shadowhunter?”

So, he killed them, right there, in the back alley, among the dumpsters and heaps of thrash, with rats scuttling around, he hacked them to pieces, turned them into ash, killed them, killed them, killed them… stopped them!

And now, now he’s hiding, under a rusty fire escape, in the shadows, in the dark, shh, shh, please, be quiet, he just needs to wait it out, till the drug’s effects wear off, he tried to rub it off his skin but it was already too late, it was already in his veins, working itself through his system, stupid, stupid, stupid.
His phone’s ringing.

_Shh, shh, too loud, it’s too loud! Keep quiet!_

He pulls it out of his pocket and it’s shining so bright his eyes hurt, a name’s flashing on the display: _Jace_.

He wants to turn it off, he should - he shouldn’t! Jace would keep calling, _he will, he will_, Alec must tell him something, deflect, lie, cover the whole disaster up, he won’t know, he won’t suspect if only Alec can string two words together.

He picks up.

“Where are you?”

So hard and serious, Jace’s voice, he’s never ever _ever_ heard him talk like that. What happened? What’s going on? _Why?_

“Alec! Where. Are. You? Tell me, or I swear to Raziel, I’ll sic mom on you!”

Not mother, not _Maryse Lightwood_. She can’t know, not this.

He tells Jace.

Then everything grows muddled.

The next thing Alec knows, he’s in the shower - _his shower?_ - sitting on the cold, hard tiles, naked and with lukewarm water beating down on him, and someone’s there with him. Who? _Jace_, in nothing but his boxer shorts and he’s holding Alec up, rubbing his neck and face hard with a sponge. He’s washing Alec. _Why…?_

Alec blinks at him dazedly. “Jace?”

Relief floods Jace’s face, deep, glorious, knee-weakening relief. The sponge drops from Jace’s limp hand as he rests his forehead against Alec’s soaked, water flattened hair. “Raziel, you’re back. _You’re back, _” he mutters silently.

“What happened?” Alec rasps, still not understanding. His mouth feels cottony and his mind’s blank. And all the muscles and bones in his body _hurt_!

Jace straightens and shuts off the water. “When I found you, you were completely out of it. You just kept mumbling something about vampires and yin fen. Raziel, _Alec_! You had the stuff smeared all over your neck and hands, your _face_.” He shudders. “I was afraid it would kill you.”

Shards of memories flash through Alec’s aching head. _Damn… “Sorry.”_

Angrily, Jace grabs a towel and kneeling down in front of Alec, he starts rubbing Alec’s hair roughly; it’s making Alec’s headache worse. “By the Angel, what were you _thinking_?”

“Wasn’t my fault,” Alec protests into the towel. “I told them no! I told them I didn’t want it. I _did_, Jace, really. They wouldn’t listen.” His voice breaks.

Jace pauses, then his hands become gentler, softer. “Did they… _do_ something?”

Alec grimaces. “They smeared that shit all over my neck!”
“That’s not what I’m asking, Alec,” Jace says and his voice’s impossibly kind all of a sudden.

_Oh._

“No,” Alec assures him. “I killed them.”

“Good.” That’s all Jace says about it. Alec’s glad.

When Jace deems Alec’s hair and neck and face dry enough, he lowers the towel and looks Alec in the eyes for a long time. It feels… too _intimate_, exactly what Alec tried to escape from.

“I could feel it, you know? What happened, the drug, through our bond,” Jace confesses quietly. “It scared the shit out of me, Alec. Never in my life, never was I so terrified.”

_Damn._ Alec didn’t even think about that. Damn, damn, damn. Now that Jace mentioned it, Alec can feel their bond vibrate like a string drawn too tight: Jace’s panicking, still. _Damn_!

“Sorry,” Alec whispers. “I didn’t mean to worry you.”

Jace smiles crookedly and reaches out to smooth down Alec’s ruffled hair. “I know. Just… if anything like that happens ever again, if you ever get into trouble, call me, okay? Call me and I’ll come.”

Alec swallows hard. “Jace…”

Jace isn’t looking him in the eyes anymore, he’s staring at the dark mop of Alec’s hair, avoiding Alec’s gaze. “You’re my _parabatai_, Alec! You’re… _everything_, don’t you get it?”

_Oh._

He reaches up and takes Jace’s hand in his. “I’m here, Jace. I will always be here.”

Jace looks down, he looks Alec in the eyes again. “You can’t promise that.”

Alec shrugs. “I can at least try.” Then he adds, “If you do, too.”

Jace smirks a little, but his eyes are still way too emotional for his expression to come off as cocky. He shakes Alec’s hand and his voice sounds rough when he says, “Deal.”

“Deal.”
Safe Blood

Chapter Summary

A parabatai story. A Vampire Academy AU, sequel to my story His Guardian (Chapter 488). Jace’s a Moroi, Alec’s his guardian. And someone tries to kill Jace. (Unbeta’d)

Jace first realizes that something’s wrong when he sinks his teeth into Kaelie’s soft flesh - Kaelie’s his favorite donor, she’s beautiful and smart and her blood tastes like honey - and the girl’s blood tingles on his tongue, burning his throat on its way down, and when it hits his stomach… it hurts! It’s pure agony.

He screams and jerks back, Kaelie’s blood’s running from his mouth, over his lips and down his chin, staining his pristine white shirt. He tries to spit it out, to rub it off with his hands, and jumping to his feet, he backs away and stumbles over his chair. He falls… and it still hurts, his stomach hurts, and the agony’s spreading through his body!

What’s happening? He doesn’t understand! Jace doesn’t understand! Help!

There’s a commotion, shouts and loud noises, things falling over, smashing on the floor, but Jace’s curled on his side, trying to throw up, get the blood out, but he can’t. Still, something registers, after all: through tears he sees Alec there, his guardian who always accompanies him everywhere - “I don’t care if you’re going ‘just’ to feed, Jace, I’m going with you, end of discussion!” - and he’s… fighting someone? Who?

Jace’s whole body seizes and he’s starting to shake uncontrollably, his sight’s turning hazy, then dark… he can’t see anything, he can’t hear, he can’t breathe and his heart’s hammering hard against his ribs and everything hurts, it hurts so bad!

Someone’s prying his mouth open, sticking fingers down his throat, and Jace’s stomach rebels, he throws up and he keeps retching, even though it burns, the blood burns as badly going up as it burned going down, and he moans. Stop, stop it! But no, someone’s holding him up, forcing him to retch and retch until there’s nothing left in his stomach, nothing at all, and Jace sobs in pain. Please, stop!

“That’s it, Jace, that’s it, it’s all out, it’s out now, the poison’s out, it’s out, shh…”

Poison? What?

“Now drink, you have to drink, Jace. Now…”

Drink? No! Never again. No…

“You have to, Jace, please! You need blood to heal or you’ll die. Please, please, Jace!”

No, he won’t. He won’t. No! It hurts!

But that person - Jace doesn’t see who, he has no strength left, not even to open his eyes, he wants to sleep, to die, to cease existing, just… - that person doesn’t listen to him and he’s lifted higher and then he feels something hot and wet on his lips and his lips are on someone’s skin and it’s cut
open, bleeding... hot, fragrant droplets slide into his mouth - and despite everything, despite the agony and the sense of betrayal, he can’t help himself.

Jace bites down hard, uncaring, hungry, hurt, and he drinks, sucking at the punctured skin, lapping at it with his tongue, and the blood is hot and sweet and so good, so good that he can’t get enough, he has to have every last drop of it, it’s all his, so good, so wonderful...

There’s a moan.

It’s soft, barely there, barely loud enough to be heard. But Jace does hear it. And he recognizes it. The sound slices through his bloodlust, through the red tinged mist in his mind.

Stop... Stop now!

Jace jerks back forcefully, his fangs tearing his donor’s skin, leaving deep, jagged holes behind that still bleed, little red streams running down the pale, pale skin, soaking into the collar of a navy blue shirt...

Everything’s quiet. Jace looks up and sees the personnel hovering in the door, not daring to come in. He sees the room in shambles and Kaelie, his donor, on the ground, dead and with a knife rammed into her chest hilt deep. He sees...

He’s sitting on the floor, in a puddle of blood that he threw up, holding Alec in his lap. Alec, who’s barely conscious and whose blood he can still taste on his lips, on his tongue. Alec, who has one hand fisted in Jace’s previously pristine white shirt. Alec, who’s lying limp in Jace’s arms with his head thrown back, offering Jace his neck, his blood.

“Alec?” Jace whispers, shaking his guardian, his friend, a little. “Alec, wake up?”

No response.

Wide-eyed and panicking, Jace turns to the door, to the people there, and pleads, “Help! Help him! Please!”

They do.

“It was an assassination attempt,” his grandmother, Queen Imogen, tells him hours later.

She flew in the moment she heard, and now she’s there with him, in Alec’s hospital room, standing in the back while he sits by Alec’s bed, holding his hand, waiting for him to wake up.

Because Alec will wake up. He will. Alec won’t die on him. Not because Jace fears he could turn into a Strigoi - if that was his concern, he would just cut his own throat. No, Alec won’t die because Alec’s his friend, his best friend, his... only friend, the only person Jace trusts. Alec won’t leave him here alone!

“Someone, we still don’t know who but we’re looking into it, got to that girl, that donor girl... what was her name?” Imogen frowns.

“Kaelie,” Jace croaks out without looking away from Alec’s pale face.

Imogen nods. “Yes, her. She took some drug, some poison that got through her blood into your system. Apparently, she didn’t care if she died, too, as long as she killed you. When you stopped feeding in time, she decided to use an old-fashioned method: a knife.”
“Alec saved me,” Jace whispers numbly.

“Yes,” Imogen replies. “He heard you scream, he rushed in and killed her.”

“And then he fed me his blood,” Jace adds, rubbing his thumb across Alec’s knuckles. Alec’s hand is too cold. Alec’s neck is swaddled in bandages. Alec’s face is paper white. All this because of him.

Imogen clears her throat uncomfortably. “Well… yes. I’m sure nobody will hold it against him, considering the circumstances.”

Nobody will… What the…?!

Jace turns around, slowly, very slowly, because he’s seething with rage so profound he can barely breathe. “Alec saved my life! He got the poison out of me and then fed me the only safe blood around - his own!”

Imogen shifts awkwardly, looking away, looking anywhere but at Alec, at the man who saved her grandson. Because Alec fed Jace his blood….

Because Alec turned himself into a blood whore, that’s all that the Queen sees, that’s all that she thinks, Jace realizes with horror and disgust. Even she can’t see past her prejudice to appreciate what Alec did for her own grandson.

“Maybe we could discuss it later, child, when–”

Jace cuts her off sharply. “There’s nothing to discuss, grandmother. Alec saved my life. He didn’t think about his reputation or his life, only about saving me! And if anyone - anyone,” he repeats more forcefully, “tries to hold that against him, I swear I’ll make them suffer!”

Imogen opens her mouth to respond, maybe to protest, but there must be something in his eyes, in his expression, that makes her think twice about it. In the end, she just nods.

Jace doesn’t pay much attention to her or to anyone else after that. She’s telling him something about additional security, about the investigation into that Kaelie girl, about…

He just wishes she would go away and leave him alone. With Alec.

Jace turns back to his guardian and runs his thumb across Alec’s knuckles, back and forth, back and forth, willing him to wake up.
Chapter Summary

A parabatai/soulmate AU, only slightly canon divergent: Whatever the person destined to be your parabatai writes on their skin, it appears on yours. (Unbeta’d)

Jace’s father hates the idea of soulmates, of the parabatai bond.

“Becoming parabatai with someone makes you dependent, weak! I want you to be strong, my son. And I will make you strong. When I’m finished with you, you won’t need anyone!”

And Jace tries, he tries very hard to make his father proud - but deep down, he yearns for another, for someone to fill the void inside him, to complete him in a way that only a parabatai can - and he feels broken, deficient, lacking.

Then one day, as he lies in his bed, curled up and with his aching hand - many times broken and healed again as a punishment for being a failure - cradled to his chest, as he lies there sniffing quietly and wishes to be gone, to just cease existing, his forearm tingles and when he looks down, startled, his breath catches in his throat - because there’re words appearing on his skin…

I am here.

Just that and nothing more. But it’s enough, more than enough. Because in that moment, Jace’s whole life changes.

Somewhere out there, his soulmate, his parabatai is waiting for him.
The Most Beautiful Place in the World

Chapter Summary

Malec. The last paragraph of this thing made me bawl. Sorry. It's a VERY SAD STORY, you've been warned! (Unbeta'd)

“Do you miss it?” Magnus asks softly while carding his fingers through Alec’s hair affectionately.

“Miss what?” Alec mumbles into his lover’s chest, already half-asleep.

“Idris, Alicante, your home…” Magnus explains.

There’s a long pause - so long, actually, that Magnus starts thinking that Alec did fall asleep - but then Alec replies after all, “I do, every day. Alicante’s never been my home, not really, even though my family has a mansion there–”

“A mansion, huh?” Magnus chuckles.

Alec slaps him on the stomach with a smile. “Oh, hush. Mansion or not, it’s not home, New York is. But… it’s the most beautiful place in the world, Magnus,” he whispers wistfully. “The air’s crisp, the rivers are clean and everything’s so lush and green and pure, I guess. At night, you can see all the stars in the sky, and during the day, you can hear birds singing…”

He falls silent for a moment, then he props himself up on his elbows and looks down at Magnus. “Have you ever been there?”

Magnus thinks about it, letting his hand slide out of Alec’s hair and drop to his shoulder. “I’ve been to Idris - I visited Ragnor there a few times - but never in Alicante.”

Alec smiles, eyes sparkling. “Then I’ll take you there one day. We’ll visit Alicante together.”

Smiling a little sadly, Magnus tweaks Alec’s nose. “Oh, love, the Demon Towers, the wards will never let someone like me in, you know that.”

But Alec shakes his head firmly. “That’ll change one day, you’ll see,” he replies with absolute conviction. “We will change it.”

Magnus laughs, stroking Alec’s cheek with his knuckles. “The two of us?”

“Yes. You” –he taps Magnus’ chest with his finger– “and me. The two of us, together.”

Still smiling, Magnus pulls Alec down for a kiss, and whispers, “You romantic, you…”

They never go to Alicante together and Magnus never gets to appreciate the beauty of the place. He visits it only once, on a special dispensation from the Clave - to attend his husband’s funeral.
“Jace, you can’t do this! It’s madness, it’s *suicide*!” Alec exclaims as he barges into Jace’s room, the note that Jace left for him in his bedroom clenched tightly in his fist: a *goodbye* note!

“I have to do it!” Jace replies, looking down, as he straps on his thigh holster. “I have to go after Valentine. And this time, I won’t hesitate. I’ll *kill* him!”

Alec stares at him in sheer disbelief. “You can’t be *serious*! Yes, he has to be punished, he has to die but not like this - not by your hand, Jace,” he protests emphatically.

Jace takes a step closer, eyes ablaze. “Yes, by *my* hand! It *has* to be me. Or we’ll never be free of him. *I* will never be free of him,” he adds more softly.

All the anger leaves Alec and his voice sounds pained when he says, “Jace… don’t do this, please! You’ll get yourself killed–”

“I don’t care!” Jace snaps, throwing his hands up, and takes a step back.

“But I do!” Alec yells back.

Jace’s expression softens. “Alec…”

But Alec shakes his head. “If you have to do it, then let me at least come with you! Together we can–”

“No!” Jace cuts him off, his face hard again. “No way! I’m going alone. I know exactly where to look and I’ll have a better chance to catch him unaware if I go by myself.” And with that, he turns around to head for the door.

But Alec grabs his upper arm quickly and says, “I won’t let you–”

In that moment, Jace snaps around, though, twisting Alec’s arm sharply to get behind him. Then he kicks the legs from under his *parabatai* to force him to his knees, and before Alec can do anything more than grunt in pain, Jace has his stele in his hand and with quick, precise strokes he draws the sleeping rune on the bare side of Alec’s neck. It glows for a second, then it takes effect.

With a soft, desperate, “*Jace*…” Alec slumps into Jace’s arms.

Slowly, Jace sinks to his knees, too, holding onto his sleeping *parabatai*, and he rests one cheek against the top of Alec’s head. For a moment, he allows himself to feel it all, all the pain and despair and never-ending heartbreak.

“Oh…” Jace whispers, eyes tightly shut, arms wrapped around Alec, gently rocking him. “I’m sorry,” he adds softly, his voice husky and raw. “I’m…”

But Alec cuts him off, his hands tight around Jace’s wrists. “*No*!” he exclaims, his voice thick with emotion. “I won’t let you!”

Jace shakes his head, his expression set. “I have to do this!” he says firmly. “I have to go after Valentine. And this time, I won’t hesitate.”

But Alec holds him tight, his grip firmly on Jace’s wrists. “*No*!” he protests, his voice rising. “I won’t let you!”

Jace’s face softens. “Alec…”

But Alec shakes his head again. “If you have to do it, then let me at least come with you! Together we can–”

“No!” Jace snaps, a Determination in his eyes. “I won’t let you!”

Alec stares at him in disbelief. “You can’t be serious! Yes, he has to be punished, he has to die but not like this - not by your hand, Jace,” he protests emphatically.

Jace takes a step closer, eyes ablaze. “Yes, by *my* hand! It *has* to be me. Or we’ll never be free of him. *I* will never be free of him,” he adds more softly.

All the anger leaves Alec and his voice sounds pained when he says, “Jace… don’t do this, please! You’ll get yourself killed–”

“I don’t care!” Jace snaps, throwing his hands up, and takes a step back.

“But I do!” Alec yells back.

Jace’s expression softens. “Alec…”

But Alec shakes his head. “If you have to do it, then let me at least come with you! Together we can–”

“No!” Jace cuts him off, his face hard again. “No way! I’m going alone. I know exactly where to look and I’ll have a better chance to catch him unaware if I go by myself.” And with that, he turns around to head for the door.

But Alec grabs his upper arm quickly and says, “I won’t let you–”

In that moment, Jace snaps around, though, twisting Alec’s arm sharply to get behind him. Then he kicks the legs from under his *parabatai* to force him to his knees, and before Alec can do anything more than grunt in pain, Jace has his stele in his hand and with quick, precise strokes he draws the sleeping rune on the bare side of Alec’s neck. It glows for a second, then it takes effect.

With a soft, desperate, “*Jace*…” Alec slumps into Jace’s arms.

Slowly, Jace sinks to his knees, too, holding onto his sleeping *parabatai*, and he rests one cheek against the top of Alec’s head. For a moment, he allows himself to feel it all, all the pain and despair and never-ending heartbreak.

“Oh…” Jace whispers, eyes tightly shut, arms wrapped around Alec, gently rocking him. “I’m sorry,” he adds softly, his voice husky and raw. “I’m…”
sorry. But I need *you* to live.”

Then, with a resigned sigh, Jace settles Alec carefully on the floor, arranging his limbs as comfortably as possible; Alec will sleep for hours unless someone finds him and breaks the rune’s effect.

Touching Alec’s ruffled hair one last time, Jace gets up, feeling exhausted and so *alone*, and with a quiet, “Goodbye,” he leaves the room, locking the door.

He doesn’t look back.
Out of Harm's Way

Chapter Summary

What I want to see happen following episode 217. Basically, Malec mush. (Unbeta'd)

It’s after midnight already and they’re in bed together, but they’re not sleeping, they’re not making love, no. Alec’s naked, lying on his stomach with his head pillowed on his arms, and Magnus… Magnus is healing his wounds, cuts and scrapes that hurt him more than if they were his own.

“I wanted to thank you,” Alec mumbles into his elbow, eyes closed tiredly.

Magnus, kneeling by Alec’s side in his purple silk pajama bottoms, bends down to kiss a particularly large bruise on Alec’s shoulder. “For what?” he whispers.

“For helping us, for coming to our rescue when Valentine’s people attacked the Institute,” Alec replies. “You didn’t have to do it. You didn’t owe us anything, not after the way you were treated. A lesser man would’ve taken satisfaction from seeing us fall.”

Running his hand over Alec’s shoulder blade, Magnus pushes his healing magic into a gaping, blood crusted cut there; he doesn’t even want to think of close that one came to killing Alec.

“Alexander,” he says gently, “I might not be fond of Shadowhunters in general, but I like several of them in particular very much - and you, my dear, you I love. I’ll never let anything happen to you - or your loved ones - if I can help it.”

Alec opens his eyes and turns his head just so he can see his lover. “I love you, too. Still, I wanted to thank you because I’m sure that nobody else will. And you deserve better than being taken for granted.”

Smiling, Magnus runs his fingers through Alec’s ruffled hair, scratching his scalp as if he were a giant cat. “Well, then you’re welcome.”

But then Magnus pauses, still petting Alec’s hair, and a faraway look settles in his eyes. With a sigh, he says, “And here I thought that becoming the Head of the Institute would not just fulfill your dream, but keep you safe, too, out of harm’s way.”

Alec uncrosses his arms and turns onto his side, wincing a little, and takes one of Magnus’ hands in his. “Nobody will be safe, anywhere, until Valentine and his son are brought to justice,” he says.

Sighing again, Magnus leans down and kisses Alec’s cheek. “I know. But I can’t help but wish you safe. I want to keep you for a very, very long time, I’m selfish like that.”

Alec grins mischievously. “And insatiable!”

Laughing, Magnus tweaks Alec’s nose. “That too. Now,” he adds more firmly, “stop squirming so that I can finish healing you. Your back looks like minced meat!”

Alec snorts, turning back onto his stomach. “Harsh!”
“But true,” Magnus points out and slaps his lover’s naked butt. “Now hush and let me work…”
What Kind of a Parabatai

Chapter Summary

Alec feels everything - Jace nothing at all. A teen parabatai story. (Unbeta'd)

He didn’t feel it happen. He didn’t feel anything at all.

Alec feels every one of his injuries, every time Jace stubs his toe or cuts himself shaving, he senses all these things on some deeper level, but Jace, Jace didn’t feel anything when that demon gutted Alec and left him for dead in a back alley, there was no sense of impending doom, nothing at all. For Jace it was a regular Tuesday.

Raziel...

“What’s wrong with me, Hodge?” Jace croaks out.

His lips are cracked, his eyes burn and he’s pale, almost gray in the face. He hasn’t left the infirmary ever since they brought Alec in, the patrol that he went out with. He’s been sitting there for hours holding Alec’s hand, anchoring him, keeping him here!

Hodge steps closer and rest one hand on Jace’s shoulder, squeezing firmly. “It wasn’t your fault.”

Jace snorts. “You mean, Alec’s injury? Well, of course not! But” –he rubs his face with his free hand– “I didn’t feel it happen, Hodge. I wasn’t even aware he was injured till they called me! What kind of a parabatai am I?”

“Jace…”

Shaking his head fiercely, Jace points at Alec - who’s still out of it, who still hasn’t woken up yet, who still hasn’t told Jace that it would be alright, and that’s just wrong, plain wrong! - and he says harshly, “He feels everything. Not just my moods but everything! All I get are bits and pieces, impressions. I should be… I should be” –his voice cracks– “more.”

“Jace,” Hodge says, crouching down by Jace’s side. “Hey. Hey, look at me,” he prompts and waits till Jace obeys; Hodge’s eyes are kind, his face sympathetic. “Everyone’s different. Every bond’s different. And every parabatai experiences it differently. It’s not one-size-fits-all situation.”

Jace blinks hard. “But why am I so much… less than him? What am I doing wrong?” he whispers.

Hodge grips his knee hard. “Nothing, Jace!” he replies firmly. “You aren’t doing anything wrong. Trust me, I’ve seen many parabatai pairs in my life. You and Alec, you two are just different. Alec’s more sensitive, true. But I’ve also seen what the bond allows you to do, the strength it gives you, the control. Maybe he simply got the emotional part of the deal and you the physical, that’s all.”

Jace rubs his itching nose with the back of his right hand, the left one he still has wrapped around Alec’s cold fingers. “But what can I do? I should be… I need to be able to sense when he’s in danger, Hodge. I need to!”
Hodge sighs. “Then pay closer attention to what your bond’s telling you next time. Don’t ignore the warning signs, no matter how slight. Listen to your gut, Jace. Your instincts rarely steer you wrong in a fight. Listen to them when it comes to your parabatai, too, then.”

Jace takes a shuddery breath. “Okay, okay. I can do that. I can try that.”

And he does. He tries hard. He’s always probing their bond like an aching tooth, just be sure… but nothing really bad happens to Alec all those years - Raziel be blessed! - scrapes and bruises and the occasional headache, that’s all that his parabatai suffers from.

And over time, Jace starts slipping again, he stops paying as much attention, he stops listening to his gut…

And now, now he’s here, in Magnus Bane’s apartment, kneeling on the floor on aching knees, beaten, bloody and bruised, and he’s clutching Alec to his chest - because Alec’s dying on him, his heartbeat’s growing fainter and fainter, his breathing…

I didn’t feel it happen, I wasn’t even aware…

“Please, don’t leave me, Alec.”
A mashup of TV and book spoilers. Jace gets dead. Clary asks Raziel to bring him back - too bad she doesn’t specify when exactly should this miracle take place. Or, Raziel is a petty bastard. A parabatai fic with hints of Malec/Clace. (Unbeta’d)

Jace doesn’t know what he expected when he knocked on the door of the Herondale mansion, but this definitely wasn’t it.

When Raziel finally fulfills his promise and brings him back, Jace snaps back into existence in the middle of Central Park. Not the most holy of places, certainly, but considering that just moments ago, he was dead, he’s not about to complain about where his resurrection took place. The timing, though, that could’ve been better.

Six months. That’s how long it took Raziel to move his angelic ass and fulfill Clary’s wish. To say that Raziel was not happy about being disturbed by mere mortals would be putting it mildly, and since Clary didn’t actually specify when she wanted Jace to be brought back, Raziel took his celestial time in a petty revenge. Angels and Seelies, not much difference between them, as Jace’s learned.

The first place he goes to is the New York Institute, of course, his home. And if he’s ever had doubts about people loving and missing him there? Not anymore. Their welcome’s almost overwhelming in its warmth and relief. Clary did tell them about Raziel and her wish and the angel’s promise but with each passing day and week and month the chances of Jace actually coming back became slimmer and slimmer, so his resurrection… yeah, a real miracle for his family and friends.

But it soon becomes apparent to Jace that he’s returned to a world much changed, to a world that has moved on without him while still waiting for him to come back. And he understands it, he really does, his loved ones couldn’t have just frozen their lives in place like flies trapped in amber. It still feels… odd, uncomfortable, that there are so many things now that he doesn’t know about.

Like the fact that Maryse got her position as the Head of the Insitute back. And that she divorced Robert. And that she’s now dating - do people of her age still date? - well, seeing Luke Garroway. Luke. Garroway. Not that they aren’t a good fit, mind you… it’s just, well, weird.

And Robert’s now the Inquisitor! The news of Imogen’s passing hit Jace really hard - she was his only living relative left, but it’s true that he didn’t know her all that well, though he hoped to change that - but he’s glad that it was Robert who was named in her place. His cheating aside, Robert’s a good man. And he’s living with his lover now, David Whatshisface. A guy! The Inquisitor’s bedding a man. Huh, the times really a-changing. And Jace was only gone for six months!

Izzy and Simon are now an item, too. And they’re just the oddest couple that Jace could imagine. But what the heck does he know, right? And because Simon’s apparently become the new leader of the New York vampire clan, everyone’s suddenly seeing Izzy’s dating a Downworlder as a “wise
political choice.” Right. Angel’s foot!

Clary… Seeing Clary again is a like a punch in the gut. Still the prettiest girl he’s ever seen, her smile sets his heart all aflutter. She’s waited for him. And she tells him she would’ve waited for his return till her dying breath. He might’ve cried a little, not that he would ever admit that to anyone. But yeah, he did. Not even six months of death could make him stop loving her. He’s glad she feels the same.

She returned back to school, studying art. She apparently convinced the Clave it would help her with her rune making. Bull, really, but it got the Clave to back off and let her do her thing. She’s become entirely too proud of her ability to lie with a straight face to get what she wants. That’s his Clary!

And then there’s Alec… who’s not where he should be: not with Magnus, not at the Institute… not in Jace’s soul. Their bond’s gone, broken, torn. But Jace’ll get it back, if he has to pluck Raziel’s feathery appendages bald to force the bastard to make them whole again!

Jace knocks on the door of the Herondale mansion and waits, shifting from foot to foot impatiently. It takes almost a full minute for the door to open, and when it does, Jace’s breath catches in his throat. Alec...

Yes, Alec. After Imogen’s death, there were no more Herondales - Jace’s waiting-to-be-resurrected status didn’t count - so it was Alec who inherited the Herondale estate as Jace’s parabatai. And that’s where he retreated to when everything went to hell.

“Alec…” Jace whispers, seeing his parabatai for the first time in six months.

Alec stands there and just stares at Jace in utter incomprehension. And Jace’s heart aches for him. Six months has passed but Alec looks haggard, drained… damaged. He’s pale and unshaven - there’s silver in his hair; Angel, he’s twenty-three! - his shoulders are stooped and he’s dressed in sensible shoes and pants and a worn sweater that’s seen better days; no more combat boots and gear for him. He looks, well, nothing like Jace’s Alec. And yet, it’s him.

Blinking dazedly, Alec licks his lips several times before finally finding his voice. “Jace?” he croaks out with disbelief and despair and hope.

And Jace hugs him. He pulls Alec into his arms and he hangs onto him and he rocks him gently from side to side, till Alec’s frozen stance relaxes and his tense body becomes pliant and he melts into Jace’s embrace, gripping the back of his leather jacket tight in his fists. Yes, yes, Jace’s here, he’s truly here and they’re back together again.

But their bond’s still dead, the connection’s gone. And Jace wants to rage because he thought… he hoped that… he put everything on this one card, that once they get back together, once they touch… but no. There’s still only silence.

Jace wants to rage and scream - instead, he lets Alec make him coffee.

“So, what went wrong?” Jace asks quietly, stirring his coffee, entirely too black and too strong for anyone’s liking but his. Alec remembered.

Alec looks up from his own cup, cradled in his hands. They’re sitting in the kitchen of the Herondale mansion, a rustic affair. There’s no one but them in the house. Apparently, there hasn’t been anyone but Alec residing here ever since he moved in. Jace’s liking the state of things less
and less by the minute.

“Is that a trick question?” Alec asks with narrowed eyes. “You died, Jace.”

Waving a hand, Jace responds. “Well, apart from that. You were the Head of the Institute, it was your dream. And you and Magnus were on your way to become the stuff of romantic legends. Now I find you here, hermitting away like a monk in the Middle Ages.” Jace rests his elbows on the table and leans closer. “Come on, Alec. Talk to me.”

Alec, who’s sitting on the other side of the table, turns his head to look out of the window; the sun’s setting outside. “Even before you… died, everything wasn’t perfect. Not remotely so and you know it.” He turns back. “Everything I’ve done since I became the Head of the Institute went wrong. Jonathan, Valentine, the Cabinet…” He shakes his head and smiles ruefully. “By the Angel, I had so many plans. It just shows how naive I was.”

Jace frowns. “Alec–”

But Alec interrupts him. “And then Max died. And the war began in earnest. And then y-you died. You were just gone, Jace,” he says, his face is full of desolation. “I’ve never known such a pain. And it went on and on and on. I couldn’t breathe, I couldn’t think. Magnus tried, Raziel knows he did. But it wasn’t just that - he’s the leader of his people, just like I was of mine, and that was putting even more stress on our relationship…”

He sighs and turns the cup in his hands. And then again. And again. “It became too much. I wasn’t handling your death - and Max’s death and all my failures - well and everyone was suffering because of it: Magnus, our family, our people. So I just” –he shrugs– “left.”

“You gave up,” Jace points out and he doesn’t like it, he doesn’t like it at all. Impossible just means try again, that’s been always Alec’s motto.

Alec shrugs again. “Call it as you like. I was of no use to anyone in that state. I was making your death - and the fact that Raziel seemingly broke his word to bring you back - harder on everyone. I needed to put myself back together first, before I could even begin to be there for others. And since someone had to take care of Imogen’s estate” –he waves a hand around– “I thought it was as good a reason as any to take a break.”

Jace lifts his eyebrows. “Take a break? So, this” –now it’s his turn to wave a hand around– “is not a permanent thing?”

Alec lifts one corner of his mouth. “Well, luckily, the new Head of the New York Institute is our mother, so I have a standing invitation to come back - even the Clave couldn’t say a thing against someone mourning the loss of his parabatai, especially since that person, that means me, inherited the Herondale estate!

“And Magnus…” This time, his smile’s more genuine but also much sadder. “He agreed that a break might do us some good. He’d seen in the past, what the loss of a parabatai could do to a Shadowhunter. He was very… understanding. Probably much more than I deserved.”

“Nonsense,” Jace dismisses his words. “You deserve the world.”

Alec’s smile widens and a little color returns to his pale face. He clears his throat. “And what about you?” he changes the subject. “We keep talking about me, but you were the one who died! Raziel. You were dead, Jace!”

Jace grimaces. “Tell me about it.” He blows out a breath and stares deeply into his cup for a while;
the coffee’s gone cold. “I don’t remember much. I remember being stabbed and then waking up - in Central Park, of all places, would you believe that? Those are the two things I remember clearly. But the time in-between…”

“Yeah?” Alec prompts Jace when he falls silent again.

Thinking it over, Jace tries to explain, “I remember impressions. Warmth, love, safety… I think-I think I was with my mom and dad, Alec,” he says in a hushed tone, looking up at his parabatai. “My real mom and dad. And I was happy. I think… I wanted to stay. Over there. With them,” he admits reluctantly.

“Oh,” Alec whispers, dropping his eyes. His shoulders slump again.

“No!” Jace rushes to say and reaches out across the table to grip Alec’s wrist. “It’s not like that, Alec. I would never leave you, you’re my parabatai, I would never - you have to believe me!” he implores.

Alec warily looks up. His eyes are hooded. “Then why? Why wouldn’t you want to come back to us? To me?”

“Because I couldn’t - no. I didn’t think I could,” Jace corrects himself. “I thought that was it. I was dead. All there was left for me, was what comes after. Where I would wait for you. Where I met them. I was as happy as I could be - while you and Clary and all the others were over here and I was over there. Do you get that?”

"Please, tell me you do, he thinks.


Jace grips Alec’s wrist even tighter. “Bull! You are my parabatai, bond or not! And I will figure out what went wrong. Raziel healed me, he healed everything, he brought me back as good as new. I will find out what went wrong with our bond and I will fix it, I swear, Alec!” He shakes Alec’s wrists to emphasize his words.

Alec stares at him searchingly for a long time, then he lets go of his cup with the hand that Jace’s gripping, and turns it palm up. They clasp hands and hold on tight.

“Alright,” Alec says softly. “Alright. I’m just glad you’re back. Even if we never get our bond back, I’m happy you’re here, with me. I just hope that–” He falls silent, then he swallows painfully. “I just hope you don’t regret coming back.”

Jace thinks about it, really thinks about it, hard. He wants to be perfectly sure of his answer, he doesn’t want his words to sound like empty platitudes. Does he regret coming back? Well, he misses his parents, true, the feeling of safety they gave him, but… No, he doesn’t regret coming back, returning to life, to Clary and his family - and his parabatai. Without Alec, he would forever be incomplete.

He smiles. “No, I don’t regret it. I’m exactly where I should be.”

And in that moment, just like that, their bond snaps back in place, flooding them both with the other’s emotions. The sensation’s so overwhelming that they gasp out loud, their eyes flying wide open, and they cling to each other so tightly their knuckles turn white.

Oh, Jace thinks in wonder, feeling the familiar throbbing in his chest, the most beautiful sensation
in the world. So that’s all it took? This realization?

“Alec,” Alec whispers, amazed.

Jace grins wide. “Yeah,” he breathes out, lacing their fingers together. “Yeah…”

Now, now everything’s perfect, Jace thinks, before getting up to walk around the table and hug his parabatai, not letting go of him even for a second.

Thank you, Raziel.

You’re still a petty bastard, though!
This Is It

Chapter Summary

A Luke & Magnus coda to 217. Spoilers for the episode. (Unbeta'd)

“Magnus, don’t do this,” Luke implores, grabbing his friend’s arm. They’re about to enter the
Seelie Court and if Magnus truly does what he set out to do… Luke doesn’t even want to
contemplate the consequences!

Magnus jerks his arm out of Luke’s grasp; he’s still furious. “The Queen has the right to know!”

Luke shakes his head. “This is not about who does or does not have the right to know about the
Soul Sword’s whereabouts! This is about inciting or preventing a war!”

Magnus looks away.


“This has nothing to do with Alec!” Magnus snaps, glaring daggers at him.

“Doesn’t it?” Luke shoots back. “Because if this really isn’t about Alec, if you thought this
through, if the well-being of the Shadow World is all this is about, then fine. Let’s go and tell the
Queen!”

Magnus looks away.


“This has nothing to do with Alec!” Magnus snaps, glaring daggers at him.

“Doesn’t it?” Luke shoots back. “Because if this really isn’t about Alec, if you thought this
through, if the well-being of the Shadow World is all this is about, then fine. Let’s go and tell the
Queen!”

Magnus doesn’t respond. A muscle twitches in his jaw.

“But if you are doing this to get back at him, or you’re not sure about your motivations, then go
home and yell at him, rip him a new one - but don’t do this,” Luke adds quietly and points at the
overgrown entrance into the Court. “Because you can’t take this back. If you tell the Seelie Queen
about the Soul Sword, there will be war, Downworlders against Shadowhunters. Are you so angry
at Alec that you would face him on a battlefield? Because that’s how this will
end, us against them. You” –he pokes Magnus in the chest with his finger– “against him.”

Magnus swallows and looks away again. The muscle keeps twitching in his jaw. He clenches his
hands into fists.

“Think about it, Magnus, think! Because this, this is it, there won’t be a way back, ever,” Luke
warns.

Slowly, Magnus turns back to him and looks him straight in the eyes. Luke can see how torn his
friend is. Magnus opens his mouth to answer–

“The queen will see you now,” a voice says behind them; a young seelie boy with flowers in the
hair. He lifts a hand in invitation. “This way, please.”

Magnus closes his mouth, his forehead creases in a frown and he follows the boy. Luke sighs and
joins him, praying to any deity that’s listening that Magnus makes the right choice. Or they’re all
doomed.
Wrong-Bad

Chapter Summary

For @shadowandbones who wanted to see Jace and Sebastian (Jonathan) sparring. Sorry it took me so long. And sorry it’s probably not what you wanted but my muses ran with the idea…

A show and City of Lost Souls mash-up. Show!Jonathan does to Show!Jace what Book!Jonathan did to Book!Jace… (Unbeta’d)

They’re sparring, Jonathan and he, razor sharp blades clashing together with loud clangs, cutting skin and drawing blood. And it’s… it’s good so, it is - it is! - because they need to be ready for… for…

- Jace’s head hurts -

… for something, he’s sure that Jonathan told him for what and he agreed - of course he did because Jonathan knows what he’s doing. They just need to be ready. For when the time comes.

Still, he can’t help but feel that it’s… not-right-wrong-bad… strange. They train and spar the way their father taught them, hard and fast, till exhaustion claims them, till they can’t no more, demon blood against angel blood, black eyes against gold, and yet…

- Jace remembers laughter and happiness and warmth in his chest and “Wanna go hand-to-hand?” and “Oh, I thought you’d never ask” and rolling on the ground and fun and no blood and no pain -

Pain! Jonathan cuts him, the deep, dripping wound dangerously close to the… to the… rune… that one… the one that must be protected at all costs. What…?

“Pay attention!” Jonathan roars furiously. “Next time, it’ll be your throat!”

Jace doesn’t reply, he doesn’t say a word. Because Jonathan’s right. Jonathan’s always right. Still…

“Again!” Jonathan snaps and goes on the offensive without giving Jace any time to heal or regroup - and Jace grits his teeth and fights back, his Seraph Blades a a blur.

Still, there’s something he needs to remember. Something. Someone…

Who…?
“We can stop him,” Clary says urgently, “we can stop Valentine, but we have to go now!”

There’s a loud screech that echoes through the narrow streets, through the deep canyons between tall buildings, and there, on the impossibly blue sky, a demon’s circling on leathery wings. If they go now, if they leave unaware mundanes at the mercy of this thing…

“Go,” Alec tells them, Clary and Jace. “Find Valentine. Izzy and I, we’ll hold this thing back till you break Valentine’s hold on it.”

Jace shoots the dragon demon a worried look, then he takes a step closer to his parabatai, and his face’s full of anxiety when he says, “Alec…”

But Alec just nods, a firm and unwavering gesture. “Go, we’ll be fine.”

“But–”

“I already called Magnus,” Alec interrupts him. “He’ll be here any minute now. He’ll help. We’ll be fine. Go!”

Izzy shoots her brother a look but keeps quiet. She realizes what he’s trying to do - and she understands and accepts the consequences.

Seeing both Jace and Clary still hesitating, Izzy says, “Alec’s right. All we have to do is distract the demon and keep it occupied until you get back the Mortal Cup from Valentine, that’s all. Don’t worry about us! Go!”

After one last worried glance at Alec and Isabelle, Jace and Clary leave. The portal that Clary created whooshes into life and then dies again, taking them away. Silence settles over the litter strewn street.

“You didn’t call Magnus,” Izzy says, looking at her brother. It’s a not a question.

Alec doesn’t reply. His eyes are still locked on the place where the portal swirled and glowed just moments ago and only his grip on his bow tightens minutely. He didn’t call because he wasn’t sure if Magnus would come, if he would even pick up, their relationship, their love sacrificed on the altar of duty to their people.

There’s that screech again - and then another, two beasts are now circling high above them, one larger than the other. And then there are the demons on the ground, spider-like things, many-legged beasts with fangs and claws. And they’re all converging on them, smelling their angelic blood.

“We’re not gonna make it, are we?” Izzy says and this time, it is a question. She doesn’t expect an
answer, though, the answer is obvious in the numbers they’re facing.

Finally, Alec looks at her; his eyes are dark and bleak. “I’m sorry,” he whispers in a voice that’s a little too hoarse.

It’s strange. Ever since Izzy found her little brother hurt and bleeding, she’s been on edge, expecting something even more terrible to happen. And now it did. The waiting’s over. And her anxiety’s gone. There’s only determination left, duty and honor.

She smiles up at Alec and shakes her head. “Don’t be,” she replies, squeezing his arm lightly. “I’m exactly where I want and need to be.”

Alec smiles back, just a little. It’s a pained, strained expression but it’s enough. They understand each other.

Then the flying demons scream and dive in.

“Sometimes, there are no happy endings, Isabelle. Sometimes, Shadowhunters face unbeatable odds no matter how hard they try.”

“But what do they do then, mommy?”

“They fight anyway, child. They fight - and they die well.”
The Road Leads Only Forward

Chapter Summary

A little Alec centric piece. What could happen in 219. Featuring our fearless foursome, Catarina Loss and little Madzie. Magnus is mentioned and felt. (Unbeta’d)

Alec doesn’t tell anyone that Magnus broke up with him. He hand-waves Izzy’s questions and ignores Jace’s concerned looks, and then - then they go to war.

They fight on all fronts, against Valentine’s men, against the Seelies, against demons in the streets, they fight and they bleed - until they can’t anymore, they just can’t. They need to rest and heal and… think.

He rejects the idea to go to Magnus’, arguing that Catarina Loss’ place is much closer - it is, that’s true, but distance’s never stopped him from reaching out to Magnus before; once again he can feel Izzy’s and Jace’s worried looks on him and once again he ignores them.

Catarina’s surprised to see them - she must know what’s happening by now, that there’s a war raging out there, a war in which their people are enemies - still, she opens the door for them and lets them in quickly, hiding them from curious eyes.

Madzie’s overjoyed to see Alec. He drops to his knees and allows himself to be hugged and when the little girl notices that Alec’s hurt, she uses her magic to take care of his wounds, helping him once again. Alec thanks her, pressing a kiss to her forehead, and his heart aches.

Catarina heals them and feeds them and allows them to rest, and while Izzy, Jace and Clary discuss how to proceed, Alec and Catarina talk. With Madzie asleep in his lap, Alec tells Catarina everything about him and Magnus, things he couldn’t tell to his family. Catarina listens - she’s a good listener - and it’s enough for now. Nothing more can be done…

In the end, they have to run; the protective net that Catarina spread across the block warns them that demons are coming, hot on their trail that they thought covered. If they stay any longer, they’ll put Catarina and the little one in danger and that’s the last thing they want; their friends are so few these days.

Wearily and warily they slip out of the door and into the street, Jace and Izzy first, letting Clary and Alec say goodbye to Madzie. When Alec hugs Catarina on the doorstep, she whispers a question into his ear: Does he have any message for Magnus?

Alec takes a step back and with a pained smile he squeezes her shoulder gently and shakes his head. No message. Everything’s been said, the lines have been drawn. There’s no going back, the road leads only forward, where ever it might take them.

Jogging down the front steps, Alec joins the others and together they start running down the street, away from the residential area and towards the waterfront, drawing the horde of demons away. Alec doesn’t look back.
There’s a loud buzzing in Alec’s ears and it’s getting louder and louder, ever since Magnus uttered those damning words…

“I agree with the Seelie Queen.”

Magnus wouldn’t. He wouldn’t join the Seelies. He wouldn’t call on his people to break the Accords. He wouldn’t deliberately provoke a war like that, not after everything they tried to achieve together!

“… difficult decisions… the only thing holding me back… is you….”

Alec’s staring straight ahead, past the other Cabinet members. The buzzing’s getting louder and louder and he can’t… he can’t breathe!

Magnus wouldn’t…!

“I agree with the Seelie Queen.”

He did.
Magnus should’ve known that something was up when Alec wasn’t there to meet them, him and the other Cabinet members, at their arrival; broken up or not, Alec would’ve never let his personal issues intrude upon his duties. But Magnus was too preoccupied with his own thoughts and worries to pay much attention.

That is, until instead of Alec, Imogen Herondale walks into the meeting room, flanked by her personal guard. Magnus feels a cold shiver creep up his spine, though he couldn’t explain why. Something’s wrong, he just knows it.

“Good morning,” Imogen welcomes them while everyone but the Seelie Queen stands to greet her. When they all sit down again, she adds, “I’ll be overseeing this Cabinet meeting today.”

Magnus exchanges an uneasy look with Luke. *Overseeing?* Magnus thinks. They’re no children on a playground. They don’t need *supervision*. At these meetings, they’re all equals. That’s been Alec’s plan from the beginning. And where is Alec?

As if reading his mind, Luke asks, “Where is Alec?”

Imogen turns to the werewolf alpha with a hard expression on her face. “Mr Lightwood is of no concern to you, Lucian Graymark.”

But if she thought she could force Luke to back down, she was sorely mistaken. “Alec *is my concern, Imogen,*” Luke replies in a voice that’s just as sharp and unforgiving as hers. There’s a history between them and no love lost. “It was he who invited us here today. *Him,* I trust. *You,* I do not.”

Magnus notices the way Imogen’s expression sours a little. “Well, if you do have to know, Mr Lightwood is no longer the Head of this Institute. As of this morning, he’s been relieved of his position and taken back to Idris to face trial.”

With his heart hammering, Magnus forces out a question. “What for?”

Imogen turns and her eyes bore into him. “*High treason,* Warlock Bane.”

Those words feel almost like a physical blow to Magnus. *High treason?* Why? Why would she—

The *Soul Sword.* Of course, Imogen must think that it was Alec who told them about the Sword, that the Clave never recovered it. That must be it. There’s no other reason why she would do this, regardless of how much she dislikes Alec for his… *proclivities.* Hell!

Luke must’ve come to the same conclusion because he leans forward and asks, “Is this about the Soul Sword? About the fact that you lied to us about its recovery? Because if it is, then you’re barking up the wrong tree here, Imogen. It wasn’t Alec who told us, it was my sister, Cleophas,
whom Valentine’s holding prisoner. She broke free and sent us a fire message to warn us.”

Imogen waves a hand dismissively. “That might be, but Mr Lightwood confirmed this, despite having strict orders not to tell anyone about what he found out. He should’ve neither confirmed, nor denied any information regarding the Sword. By revealing confidential information, he committed treason of the highest order and he needs to carry to consequences.”

Heavy silence settles over the room. Luke’s furious, Raphael’s wary while the Seelie Queen looks amused by all the drama. Magnus… Magnus does his best to hide his anxiety but his breath still quickens. He knows that this time, Imogen won’t let it slide. Unlike in Isabelle’s case, this time, they have nothing to trade Alec’s freedom for. She wants to see Alec punished, demoted, humiliated. Alec tried to explain to Magnus how tenuous his position was…

“We had every right to know that you’ve never recovered the weapon that could wipe us all out,” Raphael remarks quietly, finally breaking his silence.

Imogen shoots him a look that borders on disgust. “Well, now you know – does it make you feel better, vampire? All that information did was spread mistrust and fear among you people. Valentine’s still out there, determined to destroy us all. The last thing we need right now” –she looks directly at Magnus– “is war.”

Magnus freezes under her meaningful glare. He’s getting a terrible suspicion.

“Because that’s what you’re planning to do, isn’t it?” Imogen continues, her back ramrod straight, her head held high while disdain rolls off her in waves. “You’re planning to break the Accords and go to war against us, aren’t you? That’s what this meeting’s actually about, isn’t it so? It’s a declaration of war!”

“Nobody wants a war,” Luke says firmly. “Only together can we defeat Valentine!”

The Seelie Queen laughs. She doesn’t say a word, she just… laughs. It’s a very clear statement.

The werewolves will throw their lot with the Shadowhunters. The Seelies plan on breaking away. The vampires…?

“We do want to uphold the Accords,” Raphael states quietly, looking around, at the other members of the Cabinet. “But we’re not about to go into battle against Valentine and his armies. We can help you track him down, but nothing more. I won’t risk my people getting caught out in the sun.”

The vampires will remain neutral.

Magnus grits his teeth. He knows where this is headed. He knows it.

Imogen’s still staring at Magnus, she hasn’t looked away from him for the last few minutes. Her eyes are hard and calculating and vengeful when she says, “And what about you, Warlock Bane? Where do your loyalties lie? I’m certain that Mr Lightwood would like to know,” she adds pointedly, a message and a warning hidden in a throwaway remark.

And here it is, as Magnus suspected. His heart’s thumping against his ribcage so hard it hurts. He once told Alec that the key to having no fear was having nothing to lose. And right now, Magnus is terrified because he could lose everything. He could lose Alec.

Imogen’s still staring at him and Magnus has never hated anyone as much as he hates this woman in this very moment - because she’s turned Alec into a pawn, into a leverage against Magnus.
If Magnus sides with the Seelie Queen, he has no doubt that Alec will be found guilty of high treason and at the very least sentenced to a lifetime in prison. If Magnus does anything but throw his full support behind the Clave, Alec will pay the price. Under any other circumstances, he would admire the Inquisitor for her deviousness. As it is, he hates her so much he can feel his glamour drop and his cat eyes burn like hot coals.

“Warlock Bane?” Imogen asks again.

His warlocks or Alec.

The good of his people or Alexander’s life.

Damn her. Damn her to hell.

“I agree with Luke,” Magnus grits out through clenched teeth, hands closed into fists so hard that his rings dig painfully into his skin. “Only together can we defeat Valentine. The warlocks will stand with the Shadowhunters.”

There’s a slight smirk on Imogen’s lips and when she replies, satisfaction and glee permeate her words, “I’m certain that Mr Lightwood will be very happy to hear that.”
“I’m sorry about you and Magnus,” Izzy whispers, rubbing Alec’s back gently.

Alec who’s leaning over the computer table in the Ops Center just looks at her, then away.

“Maybe… maybe if you went to him, talked to him–” she tries suggesting, but Alec interrupts her.

“No,” he says firmly, standing up straight. “No. I’m done talking. I’m done apologizing.”

Izzy’s eyes soften and turn sad.

Alec sighs, and lowering his voice, he continues, “I’ve made mistakes. I’ve done things I would take back in a heartbeat if I could. But I can’t. And if Magnus can’t live with that” –he shakes his head– “then I have to respect that.”

“But you love him, Alec,” Izzy objects. “And he loves you, I know that.”

For a moment, Alec’s quiet, looking down at the computer table glowing an eerie blue. Then, with another head shake, he replies, “It doesn’t matter, Izzy. Magnus himself taught me that. Sometimes, there’s no compromise, there’s no room for personal feelings. It was a valuable lesson and I’m nothing if not a fast learner.”

“So… What will you do now?” Izzy asks.

“Now?” Alec turns to her. There’s only hard determination in his face, not a hint of the pain that permeated his words only moments ago. “Now, I’ll do whatever I have to to stop this war that everybody’s so damn keen on starting. I won’t let Valentine or the Seelie Queen - or even Magnus, for that matter - to destroy everything. Over my dead body!”

It sounds like a prophecy.
The Only Way to Survive

Chapter Summary

A parabatai ficlet following 219. Or, Alec turns cynical. (Unbeta'd)

It’s the early hours of the morning and the Institute’s eerily quiet; even Shadowhunters succumb to exhaustion and head for bed at some point. Or at least most of them.

“Couldn’t sleep?” Jace asks quietly as he walks into Alec’s office and finds his parabatai standing in the doorway leading out onto the balcony, leaning against the door frame with his arms crossed over his chest.

“Didn’t even try,” Alec replies just as softly without turning around. He’s looking out over the city, at the sky that’s very slowly turning lighter in the east.

Jace stops by his parabatai’s side. “What are you looking at?”

Alec nods at the sky. “The shield the warlocks raised, it’s still up.”

Pulling out his stele, Jace activates his sight rune, and yes, there’s a light, almost imperceptive shimmer in the sky. “Well, yeah. Jonathan might be dead but Valentine’s still out there, alive. They won’t take it down till he’s brought to justice.”

With his eyes still trained on the sky, Alec hmms.

Jace frowns. “Alec, what–” he starts asking but his parabatai interrupts him.

“What will Valentine do now, what do you think?” Alec inquires. “Will he hide out in the city? Will he drop his plan to reach Lake Lyn and summon Raziel?”

“No,” Jace replies without hesitation. “No, he won’t give up. And he won’t push his plans back. If it were just us involved, us Shadowhunters, he could wait us out. But the warlocks? They’re immortal. They can keep the shield going for decades, if need be.”

Alec finally looks at him. “So, what will he do?”

“He’ll find someone who will bring the shield down for him,” Jace says with conviction. “Destroy it or just punch a hole into it.”

“And who could do that?” Alec asks and Jace has the feeling he’s being led somewhere, pushed towards an answer he won’t like.

“Well, it would have to be a–” Jace’s eyes widen and he turns towards Alec fully. “No. No way, Alec. The Downworlders won’t help Valentine. There’s no way.”

“Really?” Alec says mildly.

Jace takes a step closer. “Alec, come on. Now you’re being paranoid. He plans to wipe them all out! Why would they help him? That warlock friend of Jocelyn’s, Elliot, he sacrificed his life to
stop Jonathan from getting the Mirror. They want him stopped just as much as we do, maybe more!”

Then he adds more softly. “Besides, you know these people. Magnus, Luke, Raphael… even the Seelie Queen isn’t that vicious. You have to have a little faith, a little trust.”

But Alec shakes his head. “No, actually I don’t. I trusted Imogen, after all.”

Jace frowns again. “So?”

Alec raises his eyebrows. “How do you think Valentine found out about the Mortal Mirror?”

Jace’s eyes widen in disbelief. “You suspect Imogen? The Inquisitor herself? My grandmother? You can’t be serious, Alec!” he blurts out, almost angry.

“No, maybe not her. But someone close to her is a traitor, Jace. Someone told Valentine because he did not know before. Before we contacted Imogen, he still thought we had the Mirror,” Alec points out. “Now he doesn’t anymore. And only us four knew - and Imogen.”

“And the people she told,” Jace says slowly. “We must warn her.”

Alec nods, looking up at the sky again. “I sent her a fire message. It’s not as easily intercepted.”

Jace mulls the thing over for a while, then he shakes his head. “That still doesn’t mean that someone from the Downworlder community - a warlock or a Seelie - would collaborate with Valentine. There’s no way!” he adds firmly.

Alec hmms again, twisting his lips slightly.

“What?” Jace asks, his voice wary.

Alec nods at the sky. “The shield’s down.”

Jace whips around, looking up, and his breath catches in his throat: the shimmer in the sky’s gone! The wards are gone!

“By the Angel,” he whispers. “Maybe… maybe the Downworlders got him, Valentine, I mean. Maybe that’s why they dropped the shield.”

Pushing away from the door frame, Alec uncrosses his arms. “Do you really believe that?” he asks with a hint of sarcasm in his voice.

“You knew this would happen,” Jace comments, still shocked by the turn of events.

Alec glances up at the sky one last time, then he turns and heads inside. “No,” he says, “I didn’t. But as I said, I don’t trust anyone anymore. It seems like the only way to survive.”
Between Our Peoples

Chapter Summary

What I want to see happen at the end of 220. (Unbeta'd)

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

And there it is, the chance to go back to the way it was before, he and Magnus in love, nights spent laughing and making love and waking up by his lover’s side every morning. The dream come true.

But…

“Over the last few days I realized something, Magnus,” Alec says in a voice that’s confident yet soft, there are no sharp edges in it. “I realized you were right: we can’t have both, be leaders and in a relationship, too. I saw what it could lead to, how many people could get hurt.”

He shakes his head. “Tell me, Magnus, what will happen the next time I make a mistake? Because I will make mistakes, probably a lot of them. I’m half human and not infallible, after all. How badly will the relations between our peoples suffer because of a thing that in any other relationship would remain private?”

Alec sighs and looks around Magnus’ apartment, remembering the good times they’ve had here; they were short but good, really good. Then he laughs sadly.

“I really thought we could have it all. But now I know better. If you’re still willing to work with me, the Institute will always be open to you. If not, I can only hope that you’ll send an emissary in your stead to the next Cabinet meeting - Luke and Raphael already agreed to attend and I’m convinced that we can still make this work, even now.”

And then Alec leaves.

And Magnus doesn’t call him back.

Chapter End Notes

Fair warning. Depending on how the S2B finale goes, this might the last ficlet for some time. The writing on the show, especially regarding Malec and Magnus, has seemingly completely lost me in the past few weeks. This is not MY Malec or MY Magnus and my desire to continue writing is dropping by the ep, so... Sorry.
Live For Me

Chapter Summary

A teen parabatai ficlet! I haven’t written one in ages. So there! (Unbeta'd)

“When I die, promise not to follow me?”

It’s the eve of their parabatai ceremony and they’re sitting on the roof, sipping grape juice from crystal glasses stolen from Maryse’s office, and they pretend it to be wine and they pretend to like wine, still young enough to enjoy pretending.

Alec almost chokes on his next swallow. “I beg your pardon?”

Jace shrugs. “That’s what parabatai do, from what I read, they follow each other into death. Well, the good ones, at least - and we’ll be the best, I can feel it in my bones.” He clinks his glass against Alec’s with a big grin.

Alec just gapes at him. Death’s not a joking matter to him. Death, Jace’s death, is the worst thing he can think of! And if - if! - it ever came to that, if Jace died before him, then he would–

As if reading his mind, as if their parabatai bond were already in place, Jace sobers up, all his humor’s gone now, and he says in a low, hard voice, “Don’t! When I die, I don’t want to see your face in the beyond for years to come, is that understood? When I die, I want you to live. For the both of us.”

Alec’s mind’s still reeling - where did this topic actually come from, they’re not really drunk to be this maudlin, after all? - but he manages to find his voice. But instead of promising Jace anything, he goes on the offensive.

“Well, and what if I die first, before you? What then? Will you give me the same promise?” he asks challengingly.

Jace snorts and takes another sip from his glass; the grape juice stains his lips purple for a moment before he licks them clean. “Not gonna happen.”

“It could,” Alec objects.

“It won’t,” Jace assures him.

“Why not?” Alec asks, a little angry now, though he’s not sure why. Why should he be angry about his parabatai-to-be’s conviction that Alec will survive him?

Jace looks at him and his mismatched eyes look mesmerizing in the moonlight. “Because I’ll die first before I let anything happen to you. That I’ll promise.”

Oh. Alec swallows. Oh…

Before Alec can say anything, Jace clears his throat and looks away, breaking his intense gaze. “So,” he says and his voice’s a little awkward now, “no dying. I forbid it. You’ll live and you’ll be
happy or…” He falls silent.

“Or?” Alec prompts.

“Or I’ll come back and haunt your ass!” Jace states smugly, lifting his glass in a toast.

“That doesn’t make any sense. You can’t haunt me if I’m dead, too!” Alec points out and bumps their shoulders together. Then his eyes twinkle. “You sure it’s just grape juice in those glasses?”

Jace shoves back a little harder. “Oh, shut up,” he grumbles.

But Alec’s laughing now, glad that the tension between them broke, that the talk about death and dying is forgotten.

And Jace can’t let it go unpunished, of course, and he throws himself at Alec and soon they’re rolling on the ground and their glasses are lying toppled over on the gravel and they’re trying to pin each other down, tickle each other into submission and…

Jace never receives his promise.
Walking inside the Hunters’ Moon, Alec nods and smiles at Maia who’s polishing glasses behind the bar, then he heads to the back where Luke’s sitting in one of the booths.

“Hey,” Alec says quietly, touching Luke’s shoulder in greeting as he stops at the alpha’s table.

Luke looks up from some file he’s been reading - police business, Alec notices - and smiles up at him. “Hey, Alec,” he says, waving a hand at him, inviting him to sit down. “What brings you here?”

Alec slides into the booth and clasps his hands together on the table. Then he takes a deep breath and says, “I’m here because of the Seelie Queen.”

Luke closes the file and pushes it aside. “What about her?” he asks guardedly. “I realize that it turned out to be a really bad idea to join forces with her but–”

Alec raises his hand to stop him. “That’s not why I’m here.”

He pauses, then he takes another breath and leans forward a little, lowering his voice. “Look, I can’t say that I was happy about it, that you and the others sided with the Queen, or that I considered it to be a wise choice, especially in the light of what Kaelie did - considering the Queen’s all-knowing nature, she must have known about the Shadowhunter murders and at least silently condoned them.

“But,” he continues while Luke still watches him warily, “I also can’t say that I don’t understand why you did it or that I wouldn’t have done exactly the same thing if I were in your place. I will never know that. I can only try to understand your position.” Then he adds, “But, as I said, that’s not why I’m here.”

Some of the wariness in Luke’s face is replaced with a slightly puzzled expression. He raises his eyebrows questioningly.

“I just wanted to remind you that, according to the Accords, you have the right to file a complaint against the Seelie Queen for kidnapping a member of your pack and the Clave will have to act on it,” Alec says.

Luke barks out a harsh laugh. “Really? And who would do that, huh? Imogen Herondale, the Inquisitor who wanted us all chipped? Or maybe the as of yet still not appointed new Consul, Malachi’s replacement?” His voice sounds bitter.

“I would,” Alec replies quietly but firmly, looking Luke straight in the eyes.

Pausing for a long moment, Luke narrows his eyes a little. “You would do that, wouldn’t you?” he says a little incredulously. “You would really march into the Seelie Queen’s court and accuse her of kidnapping, wouldn’t you?”
“Yes,” Alec answers simply. “I was ordered by the Clave to take no steps against her for her collaboration with Valentine; they’re just happy that the man’s dead and that the threat of war with the Downworld is over. But that doesn’t mean that all her crimes need to be forgotten. She has to realize that times are changing and that no one, no one, is above the law.”


Alec continues, “But since this case would have a direct impact on you and your pack, I didn’t want to proceed without your consent - yours and Maia’s,” he adds, nodding at the girl behind the bar who, as he knows, has been listening in on to their conversation from the start.

Luke turns to look at his beta. Maia sets down the glass that’s been polished to perfection and walks around the bar to join them.

As she stops at their table, Luke tells her kindly, “It’s your call.”

“Look,” Maia says, “it’s not that I don’t appreciate what you’re trying to do but I would rather not go poking the shark with a stick. It’s done, it’s over. All I want is for that Seelie bitch to leave us alone, that would be more than enough for me.”

Alec sighs a little, but nods. “Fair enough.”

“Besides,” Maia adds, “what could you even do to her? Would you lock her up in some supernatural prison?” She snorts. “I would love to see you try!”

Quirking his lips a little because he knows that Maia’s right, Alec says, “After the recent disgrace, after Valentine’s fall, the last thing the Seelies need is lose face even more, especially so publicly. She could be forced to pay you some kind of reparations. It wouldn’t make up for what she did to you but it would make your life considerably easier.” Then he remembers something. “Clary mentioned that Simon told her you wanted to go to school full time?”


“To pay for my education with her money?” Maia asks incredulously. “Thanks but no! I would never take anything from someone who betrayed us all. I do have a spine, you know, and I would prefer to keep my conscience clear.”

Alec nods again. He wishes Maia would reconsider but he can’t say he blames her for refusing. He would probably feel the same way.

“All right,” Alec says, getting up slowly. “Whatever you decide, I’ll respect that and back you up. I just thought you should know you have options.”

“We appreciate that,” Luke says, getting up, too, and offers Alec his hand.

Maia nods.

“Will I see you at the next Cabinet meeting?” Alec asks.

“I’ll be there,” Luke promises.

“But what if one of the Seelies turns up? What will you do?” Maia inquires, raising her eyebrows.

Alec lets out another long breath, suddenly feeling very tired and very done with the whole thing. “Honestly? I don’t have a goddamn clue.”
They go home, they kiss, they make love - and it’s *glorious*, it’s everything that Alec’s missed over the last few days, and when Magnus then falls asleep in his arms, still exhausted from closing the portal to Edom, Alec’s running his knuckles up and down his back, basking in this almost perfect moment.

*Almost.*

Because he can’t help but think and think - and *think*. Because his unshakable faith that they can never be broken, that they can overcome anything, *handle* anything together, has been… *shaken.* Because the tiny voice in the back of his mind keeps whispering insidiously, *What if...*
Izzy Knows

Chapter Summary

This is an Izzy and Alec ficlet set after 220. If you liked Ma'lec’s reconciliation, you won’t like this fic. Chock full of Unpopular Opinions™️. (Unbeta'd)

“So,” Izzy says, grinning widely, as she leans against Alec’s desk, “I heard you and Magnus made up.”

Alec, who’s been reading a report on the still missing demons, blushes a little and without looking up, he answers, “You heard correctly.”

She claps excitedly. “Spill! How did Magnus apologize? Did he take you to Paris? Did he buy you jewelry? That always works on me.”

Alec keeps silent for a moment, eyes still glued to the glowing screen, then he clears his throat and says, “Magnus didn’t apologize. I did.”

Slowly, the grin fades from Izzy’s face. “Wait a minute. He didn’t? Not at all? For anything? And you apologized again why exactly?” she asks incredulously.

Finally, Alec looks up. “I did lie about the Soul Sword,” he reminds her.

“Yeah, and he joined the Seelie Queen who then sided with Valentine,” she points out.

“He couldn’t have known that!” Alec protests.

“And you didn’t know that the Clave lied about the Soul Sword.”

“But I could’ve told him the truth the moment I found out!”

“And he could’ve denounced the Seelie Queen the moment he found out about her pact with Valentine!”

“I’m sure he would’ve done it,” Alec states with conviction.

“Like he helped Luke and Simon save Maia?” Izzy retorts and when Alec looks at her, she explains, “Luke talks when he’s drunk. And he was very drunk and very talkative last night. And he’s also very protective of his pack, so Magnus’ refusal to defy the Queen for Maia’s sake rankled him a lot, as you can imagine.”

“I’m sure that, if Magnus could have, he would’ve saved her. He just had other things on his mind in that moment,” Alec replies.

“‘Other things,’ huh? You mean that, as the leader of his people, he needed to consider the bigger picture because any steps taken against the Seelie Queen could’ve lost his warlocks the promised sanctuary? You mean that he had to make some hard decisions? Doesn’t that sound kind of familiar, big brother?” Izzy asks pointedly.
“It’s not the same,” Alec denies.

“Isn’t it?”

Alec looks away.

Izzy lowers her voice. “What I’m trying to say, Alec” —she rests her hand on his shoulder— “at this point, when it comes to the big issues of the Shadow World, you both made mistakes while trying to do the right thing. But - you did not deserve the treatment you got from him.”

Alec still keeps quiet.

Izzy frowns. “You do realize that, don’t you?”

Alec sighs. “Look, I’m just glad we’re back together, alright?” he says, glancing up at her and then away again. “We’re happy.”

“And I want you to be happy,” Izzy says empathetically, “but to always shoulder the blame for everything, that’s not healthy, Alec. And in the long run, it’ll only get you hurt more.”

Once again, Alec doesn’t reply.

Now it’s Izzy’s turn to sigh. She pushes away from the desk and leans down to kiss Alec on the top of his head. “Just think about it, big brother, alright?” she whispers, and squeezing his shoulder, she leaves.

And Alec? Alec forces his sister’s words out of his mind. He and Magnus finally reconciled, their fight’s over, everything’s as it should be.

*What does Izzy know anyway?*
Chapter Summary

A parabatai/Malec/Clace story set after 220. Open-ended because I don’t know how the show plans to take on this particular issue, so… (Unbeta'd)

The first time it happens, they’re walking home from the Hunter’s Moon, he and Magnus, hand in hand, just enjoying each other’s company. And that’s when…

… that’s when the world turns white, like the negative of a photograph, darkness becomes light and light becomes darkness and there’re… things floating around, like wisps of smoke, things with glowing eyes and sharp teeth and they see him, they notice him looking and they turn towards him with mouths gaping wide open and they screech…

It’s gone and Alec stumbles blindly, gasping, as his knees turn weak and a wave of exhaustion crashes over him.

“Whoops!” Magnus yelps and grabs Alec’s hand to stop him from falling over. “Hey! Hey! Are you okay?” he asks, concerned, and touches Alec’s face gently. “You’ve gone awfully pale on me.”

Alec blinks rapidly and looks around, but everything’s as it should be again: it’s a warm night in Brooklyn and he’s here, with Magnus, feeling his gentle hands on his face. The eerie image’s gone. What was that?

“Alexander?” Magnus asks softly, turning Alec’s face towards him. “You okay?”

Swallowing hard, Alec nods. “Yeah, yeah, I… yeah. I guess I better stay away from alcohol altogether next time, huh?” he tries for a lame joke.

Magnus watches him a moment longer, then he smiles and pecks him on the lips. “Who would’ve thought you were such a lightweight! Ah,” he adds with mischief dancing in his eyes, “Alexander Lightweight!”

Alec groans, but then he laughs, too, the incident already forgotten.

But it keeps happening, randomly and sometimes in the most unfortunate moments, like when he’s in a briefing with his people or during a Cabinet meeting with the Downworld representatives. For long moments, he loses track of time, then, as the world around him becomes inverted and all the real, living, breathing people disappear, replaced with wraiths ready to pounce the moment they see him looking. And Alec keeps quiet about it, even though he knows he should not, but how do you explain something like this without sounding crazy?

But then, one day, this… thing that’s been happening to him just goes on and on and on, this strange force holds him tight in this twilight world instead of letting him snap back into his own reality, and the wraiths get too close, they get to him and their rake their claws down his chest, reaching for his heart…
... and Alec screams and when he returns to his own world of light and warmth - the wound's still there, four long slashes running down his chest and oozing dark red blood.

And that's how Magnus finds him as he rushes into the kitchen, dressed only in his purple silk pajama bottoms, he finds Alec kneeling on the floor in a puddle of steaming hot coffee, among sharp shards that Magnus cleans away with a wave of his hand, and he gasps a shocked, "Alexander!" as he sees the blood oozing through the fingers of the hand that Alec has pressed against his chest.

"Magnus," Alec gasps, looking up at him, "I think... I think I need help."

"Why didn’t you tell us about this?" Izzy’s voice is angry when she barks out the question. Angry and no little hurt that her big brother didn’t trust them.

Alec’s lying on the couch, staring up at the ceiling. Magnus, who’s sitting by his side, trying to heal his injury, hasn’t said a word since the others arrived, but Alec can feel his disapproval. Yeah, his lover agrees with his sister. All he needs is for Jace to gang up on him, too!

Sighing, Alec admits quietly, "I was afraid, alright? I was afraid that I was going mad because there’s no reason why this, any of this, should be happening to me. I wasn’t in touch with any strange magic or any demons or anything like that. And if the explanation wasn’t magical, then…" He shakes his head.

"But this" –he points at his chest, at the cuts that’s been resisting any attempts at healing so far, both rune magic and Magnus’– “no hallucination did this. But I still have no idea why this is happening!"

Jace and Clary who have been uncharacteristically quiet ever since they arrived, look at each other. It’s a very loud look, speaking volumes. Everyone in the room notices.

"What?" Izzy says.

"Look," Clary says slowly, “there’s something we haven’t told you.”

Magnus snorts.

Jace walks up to the couch and looks down at his parabatai. There’s pain in his eyes when he takes in the deep, still sluggishly bleeding slashes on his chest. “I think I know what’s happening to you,” he says softly. “Well, not what exactly, but why.”

Alec frowns up at him. “Jace?”

Jace closes his eyes and clenches his hands into fists on the back of the couch. He seems to shrink in on himself. He opens his mouth and then closes it again.

Clary steps closer and lays her hand on his shoulder in sympathy. “He died,” she explains in a whisper. “Jace died there, at Lake Lyn. Valentine stabbed him in the heart.”

“What?” Izzy breathes out.

Magnus lets his magic peter out and looks up at Jace and Clary.

And Alec, hearing Clary’s confession, he freezes and his eyes widen because he remembers the terrible agony of their bond breaking. He didn’t just imagine it. It really happened. Jace died on
him. His *parabatai* died on him!

He struggles to sit up - Magnus helps him with a chiding, “Hey, hey!” - and asks hoarsely, “How?”

“Raziel granted me a wish,” Clary says in a pained voice. “One wish. And so I asked him to bring Jace back.”

Finally, Jace opens his eyes and looks straight at Alec. “Bringing people back from the dead has always consequences,” he whispers. Then he takes a deep breath and admits, “Ever since then, I’ve been having these... *spells.*”

“What?” Clary asks, eyes wide with shock. She obviously didn’t know. Nobody did.

Jace goes on as if he didn’t hear her. “It’s just pain, pain and agony and this... *weakness.* Every time, it’s like dying again. It goes on and on - and then it stops. And I think that, whenever one of those spell hits me, it somehow spills over to you through our bond.”

Clary shakes his shoulder. “Why didn’t you tell me? Jace?” She reaches out to turn his head towards her. “Why didn’t you tell me that?”

His eyes soften. “You were so happy, Clary. It was all over, the war, everything. And you were *so happy.* I didn’t want to ruin it for you.” He looks back at Alec. “And I didn’t think it would affect anyone else, I swear.”

Alec just stares at him, at a loss for words. He can’t truly be angry at Jace for keeping this from him when Alec kept his own issues from him, so... He’s just glad that his *parabatai*’s back. And if this thing that’s been happening to him, is the side-effect of Jace’s resurrection, then he’ll gladly take it on, just to have Jace with him, just so he won’t lose him again.

“Magnus, do you know what’s happening here?” Izzy asks anxiously. Only she noticed the dawning expression on his face.

Frowning a little, Magnus nods slowly, looking from Jace to Alec and down at the bleeding wounds on Alec’s chest. Chanting a short incantation, he runs his hand over the wounds - and they disappear. Everyone gapes.

Staring down at his unmarked chest, Alec whispers, “Magnus?”

“Jace’s right,” Magnus says quietly and there’s something... *pained* in his face when he glances at Jace, then he turns to Alec, looking sad. “You should never bring the dead back. Jace died and not even a miracle granted by an angel can change that. His body remembers and it’s trying to return to its natural state - and that’s death.”

Clary shakes her head and there’re tears in her eyes. “No...”

Jace stares at Magnus. “Then how come I’m still here? Why don’t I just... just keel over and be done with it?”

Looking at Jace, then at Magnus, Alec asks, “It’s our bond, isn’t it, Magnus? That’s what’s holding him here.”

Magnus nods and his face turns even sadder. “Whenever Jace’s body starts shutting down, it begins siphoning *life force* or... *energy* or whatever you want to call it through your bond - from you, Alexander,” he explains and takes Alec’s hand in his. “It pulls and pulls until it has enough to go on for a little while longer. But the more it pulls from you, the closer it
pushes you towards death - that’s what you’ve been seeing, the realm of the dead, the wraiths and ghosts and all that resides beyond the veil where no living person has any place to be, that’s why they attacked you.”

“Then how can we stop it from happening again?” Izzy asks, her fear evident in the tremor in her voice.

Magnus shakes his head. “I don’t know. I can heal injuries caused by the dead by severing their connection to the other realm but I don’t know how to stop this from happening in the first place.”

Jace and Alec stare at each other. They just stare, their eyes full of horror and grief and pain and so much more. And only because Alec’s looking Jace straight in the eyes does he have the time to react when Jace grabs his knife turns it against himself.

Alec leaps from the couch - dropping Magnus down onto the carpet with a yelp in the process - and throws himself at Jace. They hit the floor hard and slide across its polished surface, wrestling for the knife that’s already left a shallow, bleeding cut on Jace’s throat. Neither holds back - this is no sparring session for fun - and they punch and kick and fight dirty - but one’s fighting for his death and the other for his parabatai’s life, and in the end, the latter wins.

Throwing a punch, Alec manages to catch Jace right in the mouth so hard that Jace slams his head against the hardwood floor with a loud thump which leaves him dazed for a moment and his grip on the knife loosens. Alec twists it out of his grasp and rams it hilt deep into Magnus’ floor.

Then he straddles Jace, and grabbing him by the front of his leather jacket, he lifts him up and snarls in his face, “Don’t you ever, ever do something like that again!”

When Jace just blinks at him, lips stained red with his own blood, Alec bashes him against the floor once, twice for good measure, before lifting him up again. “Do you understand? You will not just check out in some… some chivalrous attempt at protecting me. You will not die on me again. You will not do that. We will find a way to deal with this without anyone dying.” He shakes Jace hard and roars, “Is that understood?”

Jace stares at him defiantly a moment longer - but when he notices the tears in Alec’s eyes. His expression softens and he goes limp in Alec’s hands. “Understood,” he whispers, and when Alec hugs him tight, rocking him gently from side to side, he wraps his arms around him just as tightly, clinging for dear life.

“Well,” Magnus states, getting up from the carpet, and dusts off his hands. “Look at that, all my healing magic wasted on you lot!” He tries to appear nonchalant but his voice sounds a little shaken, a little afraid for his lover.

“Izzy says in a measured voice. “Can you think of anything, anything at all, that could help them?”

Magnus lifts a hand to rub his forehead; his fingers tremble a little. “Off the top of my head? No,” he admits truthfully. Seeing their faces fall, he adds, though, “But that doesn’t mean there is no way to help them. I’ll have to hit the books. Someone, somewhere must’ve gone through something similar. Resurrection is not a common thing, I’ll grant you that, but it’s also not unheard of.”

Izzy nods, now determined. “And we’ll check our books. The library in Alicante goes back centuries. If there’s anything to find, it’ll be there.”
Alec helps Jace stand and with a last gentle squeeze of his arm, he gives him over to Clary who rushes over, already pulling out her stele to activate Jace’s iratze and help him heal. Alec himself then turns to Magnus.

“Sorry about messing up your work,” Alec whispers as Magnus runs his fingers, sparkling blue with magic, over the small cut over his right eye.

Magnus smiles. “I’ve always known you were a handful, Alexander. Not that it stopped me from falling in love with you.”

Alec smiles back a little.

Resting his hand on Alec’s face, Magnus runs his thumb across Alec’s cheekbone lightly. “I promise you, I’ll do all I can to help you. I’m not going to lose you. I refuse to lose you.”

Nodding, Alec leans his face into Magnus’ hand and closes his eyes, letting Jace and Clary’s soft voices wash over him.

They’ll find a way. They have to. The war’s over. The villain’s dead. And they’ve earned their happy ending. They will find a way.

And at the edge of his hearing, the wraiths howl.
Alec grumbles silently, rubbing his temples. His eyes burn and his head aches fiercely and he’s still no closer to finding his answer.

Something tweaks his nose and when his eyes fly open, he jerks back, startled, because there’s a glowing purple dust mote hovering in front of him. It explodes in a shower of sparks - and Alec sneezes.

“Gesundheit!”

Alec twists around and there, in the doorway of his office, Magnus is standing, grinning wide.

“Magnus!” Alec exclaims.

Magnus enters the office and waves a hand. “Sorry about that, I just couldn’t help myself. I did try to knock, though. It looked as if you were in a different universe.”

Standing up, Alec walks around his desk and kisses Magnus on the lips. And then again, for good measure. Magnus tastes like old wine and fresh grapes.

“I didn’t miss lunch - dinner,” Alec corrects himself, noticing the time, “again, did I?”

Magnus laughs. “No, don’t worry. Izzy called me,” he explains. “She was afraid you would keel over from lack of nourishment.”

Alec frowns. “What?”

“She tried to get you to eat something but, apparently, you just hmm’d at her.”

Alec blinks. “She did?”

Magnus nods. “She was quite exasperated.”

“She was?”

“So, she at least left you a sandwich.” Magnus points and whispers, “Don’t worry, she didn’t prepare it herself.”

Alec looks to where Magnus is pointing and blinks. On the corner of his desk a quite… tired looking thing sits on a plate, lettuce all wilted and bacon rather dry around the edges. Huh. Alec didn’t even notice.

With a wave of his hand Magnus replaces the sad excuse for a refreshment with a real hamburger, smelling so heavenly that Alec’s stomach gives an embarrassing gurgle.

“Thanks,” Alec mutters sheepishly and takes a large bite. Raziel, just as he likes it.
“I wouldn’t want to have you on my conscience,” Magnus says, winking.

Then he turns and looks around the office. There’re papers everywhere, but the most interesting are arranged on a glass board that Alec had brought in, aerial shots with red dots, a lot of them, converging on a circle drawn with a blue marker, getting closer and closer in each print.

“What is this?” Magnus asks, stepping closer and studying the pictures.

Alec takes his plate and his half-eaten burger to the board. “It’s a time-lapse of the flying patterns of the Edomei. We’re still trying to figure out where they disappeared to. I had the patterns analyzed, and it seems that they were all headed for this spot.” He taps on the blue circle.

Magnus glances at him. “What’s there?”

Alec sighs in frustration. “Nothing, that’s the problem. At least not above ground. Underground, that’s a different matter entirely. There are layers and layers of tunnels down there, sewers and abandoned train stations, natural caves…” He shakes his head. “Hundreds of places where the demons could be hiding. I sent my people to the City archives to search for some comprehensive maps of that place.”

“You think they’re down there, then?” Magnus asks, leaning closer to the board and squinting at the shots, one after the other.

“Well,” Alec says, stuffing the last of his hamburger into his mouth, “they’re not above ground - they are kinda hard to miss, what with them flying around! - and we know that they didn’t return back to Edom or leave the City premises before they disappeared since the shield was still up. And we didn’t kill them. So they can be either down there or…” His voice trails off.

Magnus straightens up and looks at him. “Or?”

“Or they can be in the Seelie Realm,” Alec says reluctantly. “But since there’s no way to actually confirm that, we’re concentrating on the underground.”

“You could ask the Seelie Queen directly,” Magnus suggests reluctantly but not even he looks convinced that it could work.

Sighing, Alec sets his plate down. “Mother always says that people who can’t lie find more… creative ways to hide the truth from you.”

Magnus grimaces. “She has a point.”

“Besides,” Alec adds, “the concept of the Seelie Queen using the Edomei for Raziel-knows-what is honestly too frightening to contemplate, so… I would rather not, at least till we exhaust all other options.”

“Quite a scary thought that searching for demons in the City sewers is less frightening than the idea that the Seelie Queen could be behind this, isn’t it?” Magnus comments, wrinkling his nose.

“Yeah…” Alec whispers.

Then Magnus catches a sight of something behind Alec, a book lying open on Alec’s desk, and his face brightens. “Oh, I know this one! The Ancient Lore of Edom,” he exclaims and walks past Alec to the desk. Seeing the other books there, he raises his eyebrows. “Demons and Other Ancient Creatures? The Encyclopaedia of…? What is this, Alexander?”
Alec joins him at the desk, sighing again. “I thought that if I knew more about Edomei, I could maybe figure out what they’re after.”

Magnus glances at him. “You could’ve just asked me, you know?”

Leaning closer, Alec kisses him on the temple. “I know. But I wanted to do some research first before I ran my theories by you because…” He hesitates. “You see, I had this thought that, well, it sounded really dumb even in my head at first, so I wanted to find some evidence that would support it.”

Turning around, Magnus plants his butt on the edge of the desk. “Do tell! What theories?” He sounds intrigued.

“Well, you saw how the flying demons broke apart when shot or hit by magic? They splintered into these smaller demons,” Alec explains.

“Yes,” Magnus says, nodding.

“And since we can’t seem to find the flying monsters–”

“You think they broke apart and slithered down into the sewers to hide?” Magnus guesses.

Alec hesitates. “Actually, no. Just the opposite. We tried looking for the smaller beasts and haven’t found any. But! If the Edomei are made of smaller creatures then what if… could they also be just the smaller parts of something bigger? A monster we haven’t seen yet?”

Magnus blinks. “That’s… quite a terrifying thought.”

“But is it possible?” Alec asks.

Tilting his head to the side, Magnus thinks about it for a moment. “Knowing the Edomei, it’s certainly not impossible, if you know what I mean? But wouldn’t a bigger monster be much more easier to find?”

“Well, that’s where my other theory comes in - to fit down there, into the tunnels, comfortably, the creature would have to be rather small, definitely smaller than the flying things we saw. So… could it be smaller in stature but stronger in power?”

Magnus turns very quiet. Then he whispers, “Like a nuclear bomb of a demon?”

Nodding slowly, Alec whispers back, “Yeah. Could it be possible?”

“It… could. But out of the combination of so many Edomei, only something truly powerful could be born. We’re talking a Greater Demon here at the very least, Alexander,” Magnus says, still talking very quietly. He’s clearly unnerved, maybe even a little afraid.

“I know.”

Magnus shudders. “Suddenly, the prospect of the Seelie Queen herding the Edomei doesn’t sound as terrible anymore.”

Alec leans against the table next to him. Their shoulders touch as he seeks comfort - and offers it back. “Yeah. I sent Jace and the others out there, to find me some evidence that I’m on the right track here - or totally wrong. I really do hope I am wrong!”

Resting his head against Alec’s shoulder, Magnus slips his arm around Alec’s waist and pulls him
closer. “Me too, Alexander. Me too. Because if it’s one of the ancient, powerful ones, loose in our world… “

Nodding again, Alec hugs Magnus around the shoulders. “It could mean war with Edom, a war like we have never seen before.”
“What do you mean he said no?” Izzy asks in disbelief.

Alec leans against the computer table. “Exactly that, Magnus said no.”

She stares at him for a moment. “Did you tell him about the Seelie Queen’s betrayal? That she joined forces with Valentine?”

Alec sighs. “He already knew.”

“Did you tell him about the demons? About the rifts?” Izzy’s voice is full of emotion and rising slightly.

“He already knew, Iz,” Alec replies quietly.

Izzy takes a step closer. “Did you tell him—”

Alec lifts a hand to cut her off. “Izzy! He slammed the door in my face before I could say anything more. Magnus is not coming. He won’t help us close the rift. Accept that. Move on. We’ll have to deal with it on our own.”

Throwing her hands up, Izzy exclaims, “How? Rune magic isn’t strong enough to close a rift of this size, you know that.”

“Yes, I know!” Alec snaps, finally losing his patience. “I know that, you don’t have to remind me. We’ll just have to think of something.”

Gritting her teeth, Izzy leans against the table, too. “Alright, alright,” she mutters, taking a deep breath and letting it out again. “The shield’s up, so we can’t get in reinforcements. The warlocks won’t help us, so we’re on our own. What do we have that we can use?”

After a lengthy pause, Alec says, thinking out loud, “Demons react badly to pure adamas, right?”

“Yes,” Izzy nods. “But the only piece of raw adamas that we have is the stone you used to track down Jace. And you could barely smash a fly with that one. We have our weapons, of course, those are made of adamas, too, but I very much doubt that dumping them into the rift would help.”

Alec freezes as his mind stumbles across an idea so insane… that it might actually work. “Izzy…”

“I was joking, Alec!” she protests, rolling her eyes.

Straightening up, Alec points at her. “No, no, you were actually onto something there. Since we can’t use warlock magic that would close the rift from our side, we need something that would close it from the other side, from Edom. We need something so powerful that, when dropped into
the hole, the following explosion would collapse the rift.”

She straightens up, too. “And do we have something like that?”

With a pointed look, Alec waves his hand, index finger still outstretched, around.

Izzy’s eyes widen. “You can’t be serious.”

Alec tilts his head and raises his eyebrows challengingly.

“You want to drop the angelic power core down the rift?” she asks in utter disbelief.

“It will certainly do the job,” Alec replies.

“Yes,” Izzy drawls sarcastically, “and take out half the city with it! It’s the angelic core, Alec. It has the power of a small nuclear weapon!”

He nods. “And that’s exactly what we need to close the rift.”

She shakes her head. “You can’t be serious.”

“I am. Perfectly.”

Izzy closes her eyes, still shaking her head. Then she says, “Even if we decided to do this - and that’s a big if! - how would you want to set it off? With a remote detonator? I very much doubt it would cover the distance to another realm! With a timer? We don’t know how deep the rift is. It could fall for a whole minute and still not drop deep enough to seal it when it explodes!”

“That won’t be a problem,” Alec says with not a hint of doubt in his voice, “the core won’t explode till it reaches Edom. It’s made of blessed adamas. It’ll simply burn through anything less substantial than the demon realm itself. But once it gets there, it’ll be like lighting a match in a room full of gas.”

“Right. So, if that won’t be the problem, what will?” Izzy asks, her voice full of sarcasm again.

“We’ll have to make sure that it actually reaches its destination,” Alec explains. “Because demons are dumb creatures but they’re not that dumb. They’ll soon realize what we’re up to and they’ll try to stop us at any cost.”

Izzy raises her eyebrows. “Like how? Carry it out of the rift? You said it yourself, the moment they touch it, they’ll disintegrate!” she points out.

Alec raises his eyebrows, too. “You think they’ll care? Driven into the frenzy by their masters, they’ll die by the dozens to stop us, if need be. Because once that core explodes, it won’t just seal the rift, it might take out a part of Edom, too, for all we know. It does have the power of a small nuke, after all.”

Izzy rubs her forehead. “Raziel, I can’t believe we’re even contemplating doing this!”

Alec throws his hands up. “If you have a better idea, I’m all ears.”

“Alec,” she says, looking up at him, “if we disengage the core, we’ll lose the wards, all the protections here, at the Institute, everything! If we do this and we fail, we might lose the whole city!”

“And if we don’t seal the rift, we will lose the city. There’s simply not enough of us to kill all the
demons pouring out of the rift and without the warlocks’s help, we can’t close it. If we don’t do something, we will fail for sure,” he replies.

They stare at each other for a long moment, then Izzy mutters in resignation, “What the hell. Let’s nuke Edom!”

Everyone’s there, on the beach, every single Shadowhunter who’s able to lift a weapon, from the common foot soldier to computer geeks, armed to the teeth. And in their midst, the angelic core, strapped to a stretcher.

Several yards away, the rift into Edom yawns, spitting out howling demons and emanating an eerie red glow. It looks like the gates of hell.

“Aight,” Alec calls out. “Half of you archers stays with me, the rest goes with Izzy. We’ll make sure the core’s delivered to where it’s supposed to go. You’ll cover our backs. Once the creatures figure out what we’re up to, they’ll try to stop us. You need to give us enough time to do our job. The rift needs to be closed or we’re all dead. Is that understood?”

They all nod grimly, determination, apprehension and downright fear are written all over their faces. But they’ll do their job. Or die trying.

Izzy looks up at her brother, then she lifts herself up on her tiptoes and kisses him on the cheek. “Be careful, big brother,” she whispers in his ear.

He hugs her quickly around the shoulders and whispers back, “You too!”

Then they separate and with one last nod, they head out to fulfill their duty.

The moment the angelic core’s dropped into the rift, falling down and down and down the hole, resembling a bright white-blue star headed for the gaping reddish mouth of Edom, it seems as if they kicked the hornet’s nest. Demons start crawling and flying and slithering up the rift, trying to catch the shining spec of blessed power, but it keeps dropping and dropping, burning through limbs and wings and even bodies, still aiming for Edom.

And the archers at the lip of the hole keep firing runed arrows down at the larger demons that could, maybe, with a lot of determination, slow down their angelic bomb. They keep firing and killing everything that tries to crawl out of the hole in a desperate attempt to save itself, too, not letting anything get past. And on the beach, Izzy’s soldiers fight the beasts rushing in from the city to try and stop them...

Then, the angelic core explodes and a wave of white-blue energy shoots up the rift, burning all the demons in its way and pouring out of the hole and across the beach, too, balling over the Shadowhunters fighting there and turning the demons into dust before petering out and dissipating altogether, while the rift itself implodes with a silent, barely audible pop.

When it’s all over and the demons are gone and the rift is sealed, Izzy picks herself up, spitting out sand and wiping away blood from her eyes. Her first thought is for her brother, who was right there, at the edge of the rift when it collapsed on itself.

“Alec!” she screams, turning around and around, trying to find him.

But there’s nothing there, not even a slight indentation in the sand where the rift used to be. The gate to Edom’s gone - and everyone who was in the vicinity of it when it went disappeared
together with it.

“Alec!” Izzy screams again, tears flooding her burning eyes.

But no one answers, the beach is eerily quiet, all of the people around her, her soldiers, seem dazed, but her brother’s not among them, her brother’s nowhere to be seen.

“Alec!”

Alec’s lying on a dust covered pavement, blanketed by darkness pierced with dim red glow. He can barely see in the gloom but he doesn’t need to. He has a terrible suspicion he knows where he is.

He hurts. He hurts so much. He doesn’t want to move because every twitch sends agony flaring through his body. He remembers standing at the edge of the rift, shooting arrows down the hole, picking off demons trying to escape. And then… then the angelic core exploded and its energy shot upwards and out, before reversing its course and pulling everything back in - and everyone. Him included.

Alec fell. He fell through the rift before it closed. Raziel, he thinks, staring up at the swirling, bruised looking sky, at the boiling, red-streaked clouds. Raziel…

There’s a sound, a scuttling sound, first to one side, then the other. All around him. A whisper of a growl, chittering.

For a second, Alec freezes, then slowly, biting his lip to stop himself from crying out in agony, he pulls out his Seraph Blade and as its runes flare up white-blue, more brightly than ever before in reaction to the strong demonic presence, he can see that he’s in the courtyard of a palace - or what used to be one. Now it’s just a smoking ruin, demolished by the angelic core’s explosion.

“My, my,” echoes an amused voice from the deep red shadows. “Lilith will be most displeased. She really liked her fortress. After centuries, it was finally tailored to her needs. And now, all in shambles.”

Alec tries to roll over and despite all his efforts, a pained groaned escapes him as his broken bones grind against each other. Still, he manages to prop himself up and lift his blade - and in its light, he can see monstrous beasts crawling closer, led by a man with glowing eyes.

“Who are you?” Alec croaks out, his broken ribs preventing him from drawing in a deep breath of the noxious air.

There’s a chuckle and then the man steps closer. He’s tall and stunning, elegantly dressed and poised. “My name’s Asmodeus and I’m one of the Seven Princes of Hell. Welcome to Edom, Shadowhunter. Welcome to hell.”
Alone in My Head

Chapter Summary

What if Jace truly died at Lake Lyn? What if Clary did not bring him back? How would Alec react? Basically, just an excuse to write about sad Alec. (Unbeta’d)

He went to the roof, to the place where they’ve always gone to be alone with their sorrow. And now he’s standing there, among the statues of the angels, holding a ratty old t-shirt in his hands…

“This is my shirt.”

“Yes.”

“I found it in your room.”

“No.”

“Yes.”

“You didn’t do my laundry while you were in there, did you?”

“No!”

“Because I have to tell you, leather doesn’t do well in the washing machine.”

“I’m not doing your laundry for you, you lazy ass!”

“I don’t need you to do my laundry for me.”

“Then why are you stealing my shirts?”

“Maybe I just like to cuddle with them?”

“Yeah. No. You’re just lazy!”

… a t-shirt that he found in Jace’s room. Again. For the last time. Cleaning out Jace’s belongings.

Alec shudders, breathing in harshly, and he presses the shirt against his aching chest. How can the absence of something… someone hurt so much?

“Here you are,” a soft voice says behind him.

Izzy. Alec doesn’t turn around, his eyes are still squeezed shut against the pain.

Slowly, she walks up to him, her high-heeled boots crunching on the gravel. “I would ask you if you’re okay but, well…”

Alec still doesn’t say anything, just opens his eyes and looks out at the cityscape glowing in the darkness under a starless sky.
“The party was nice,” Izzy continues quietly, staring out over the city, too.

“Thank you,” Alec croaks out, “for doing this. For going instead of me. Someone needed to be there, representing the Institute, and celebrate Valentine’s defeat with the Downworlders, but I couldn’t. I just– I couldn’t.” His voice falters.

Izzy nods. “They understood, don’t worry. Luke explained it to them. He knows what it feels like to lose your parabatai.”

Yes. He would. But Luke lost his parabatai long, long before Valentine actually died. Alec can’t even imagine it, such a soul deep betrayal. He honestly doesn’t understand how Luke could’ve kept going after something like that. Whatever his and Jace’s difference were - and over the years there were a lot of them - Alec never doubted Jace’s loyalty, regardless of what they said in anger. If it came down to that, they would’ve breathed for each other.

Izzy glances at him, then away. “Magnus asked about you,” she comments.

Alec smiles fleetingly, a there and gone again smile. The thought of Magnus warms him up for a moment before the chill of loss once again settles deep in his bones. “Is he alright? Does he have his strength back yet? Closing the rift on the beach, it exhausted him more than he wanted to let on, I could see that.”

She smiles a little, too. “Yes, yes, he’s alright. Or, that’s what he told me, at least.” Now she turns to Alec and rests her hand on his forearm. “He’s worried about you. And so am I,” she adds, looking at the t-shirt clutched in his fist.

He wants to tell her that he’s alright. He wants to lie. But he can’t. He doesn’t have anyone else to talk to anymore, only her. And if he can’t be honest with someone… he’ll go mad!

Alec looks at her with all the misery he feels reflected in his eyes. “I don’t know how dad did it, Iz.”

She frowns. “Did what?” she asks gently.

“Survived losing his parabatai, Michael Wayland,” Alec explains. His shoulders droop and he seems to collapse in on himself. “How can anyone live with such pain? A part of me is gone, Izzy, simply gone. There’s a hole inside me and… I can’t seem to think or even breathe around it.” He shakes his head. “I would do anything to have Jace back, to be with him again.”

Izzy’s eyes widen and she squeezes his arm anxiously. “But you won’t– you wouldn’t– I already lost one brother, Alec. I can’t lose you, too!”

Alec sighs and pats her hand. “No. I wouldn’t– I wouldn’t do that to you. Or to mom and dad… Max. I’m not– I wouldn’t. Besides” –he sighs again– “I have the Institute to run, people depend on me. I mean, I know I’m not irreplaceable but–”

“You are!” she interrupts him.

He smiles at her painfully. “I’m not, Izzy. Leaders come and go.”

“Alec–”

“But that doesn’t mean I’ll just give up,” he adds, shaking his head. “Too many people want to see me fail. I will not give them the satisfaction, Jace would kick my ass if I ever–” His voice falters as pain flares in his chest once again and the patch of unblemished skin where
his *parabatai* rune used to be is seized with phantom pain.

“But it’s so *hard* without him,” he continues in a whisper. “He’s been my anchor for so many years. And now I’m all alone in my head. How can anyone *bear* this silence?”

With tears in her eyes, Izzy steps closer and hugs her big brother tight and then tighter still, propping him up and holding him together as he shatters. And Alec *loves* her for it, he loves her so much…

But she’s not Jace and Alec’s soul’s screaming for his *parabatai* - but his only response is a deafening silence.
This Slight Matter of Treason

Chapter Summary

A Malec story. Alec’s recalled back to Idris to answer for a decision he made. It doesn’t look good. (Unbeta'd)

Alec stays over that night. They have a fantastic dinner - delivered directly from Paris, courtesy of Magnus’ portal - and then they make love, passionate, loving and sweet, lingering kisses and roaming hands… tinged with desperation, as Magnus notices.

“Everything okay?” he asks with brows slightly furrowed.

They’re lying side by side, foreheads almost touching, and Alec’s staring at him, his fingers gently running across Magnus’ nose and his lips and his chin down to his collarbone and then lower and they stop over his heart where Alec presses his hand against Magnus’ skin to feel his heart beating.

“Alexander?” Magnus asks again, gentler this time.

“I’m being recalled back to Alicante,” Alec whispers, dropping his eyes to his hand, still pressed against Magnus’ chest. “I’m leaving tomorrow morning.”

Magnus freezes. “Why?” he asks guardedly because something’s obviously wrong, based on Alec’s behavior throughout the evening. If Magnus didn’t know better, he would say that Alec’s been trying to make good memories, etch them into this mind.

“Remember what I told you about what would happen if the Clave ever found out that I lied to them about Luke and his attempted murder of Valentine?” Alec says quietly, still not looking Magnus in the eyes.

Magnus… is not sure. Though he isn’t proud of it, he has to admit, at least to himself, that he didn’t exactly listen to what Alec was saying that day. He does remember that Alec wasn’t sure what he should do about Luke and that he was talking about… something but it was mostly white noise to Magnus because his mind was elsewhere at the time.

Still, he responds, “Yes,” though he cringes a little inwardly.

Alec sighs and curls his hand into a fist, thumping it gently against Magnus’ chest. “Well, the Clave did find out. I don’t know how. It must’ve been one of my people, one of the Shadowhunters at the Institute, who told on me. And here I thought I was actually getting somewhere with them,” he adds in a voice full of hurt and betrayal.

Magnus’ heart breaks a little. “Oh, Alexander,” he whispers smoothing Alec’s hair off his forehead.

When he lets his palm rest against Alec’s cheek, Alec closes his eyes and leans into the touch for a moment. Then he sighs again and when he opens his eyes, he finally looks straight at Magnus - who doesn’t like the bleakness in his expression.

“After the discovery of Malachi’s betrayal, Inquisitor Herondale imposed a zero tolerance policy.
No more secrets, no more missteps will be tolerated. And I got caught up in the net.” He shakes his head, his stubble rasping against the pillow. “There were a lot of people who were just waiting for me to fail - Imogen the first among them - and now they’ll get their chance to get rid of me.”

Magnus scoots a little closer. “No,” he states firmly. “They can’t take the Institute away from you for trying to maintain peace!”

Alec blinks at him. “Magnus, I’ll be lucky if they just demote me! As I told you, I could be exiled, de-runed for what I did! It’s treason,” he points out harshly.

Breath catches in Magnus’ throat. Alec told him that? Magnus’ thoughts were so scattered back then, his mind slipping and sliding back into the past at the most inopportune times. Did he really miss that? He remembers telling Alec that he would support any decision that Alec made but before that… blank.

Fortunately, Alec doesn’t notice Magnus’ shock because he curls up against Magnus who turns onto his back, allowing Alec to rest against his chest. Alec throws an arm across Magnus’ stomach and pulls him close.

“What can I do?” Magnus asks, carding his fingers through Alec’s unruly hair.

“Nothing,” Alec whispers, lips sliding across Magnus’ skin as he speaks. “I’ll have to see what the Clave knows and how far they want to take it. Maybe I’ll find a way to get out of it since we did gain Luke’s support against the Seelie Queen in the end, after what she did to Maia.”

Magnus is mulling it over, his mind working feverishly. “You could always use what she tried to do to Valentine against her,” he suggests, though he would rather not think about that, ever, considering it was him sitting in that chair and not Valentine.

Alec rubs his stubbled cheek against Magnus’ chest; it tickles a little. “I would rather not do that if I can avoid it. It’s dangerous to remind those in charge that you know their secrets. I could end up exonerated but ‘accidentally’ drop into limbo portalling back home.”

Magnus pauses. He has no illusions about high-ranking Clave representatives, but surely Imogen Herondale wouldn’t go that far. Would she? He states it out loud.

Lifting his head from Magnus chest, Alec looks at him and raises his eyebrows. “She is the longest serving Inquisitor we’ve ever had, Magnus. Scrupulous, that woman is not.”

Frowning, Magnus says, “Well, in that case, once you’ve successfully beaten her, I’ll personally portal you back home. Just to be sure.”

With a small smile, Alec rests his head back against Magnus’ chest. “You’re awfully certain that I’ll beat her.”

“I saw you stand up against the Seelie Queen, Alexander,” Magnus points out, petting his lover.

“Yeah, well, and how did that turn out?” Alec reminds him and Magnus winces inwardly.

With a deep sigh, Alec admits heavily, “Sometimes I think I’m just not made for this. Maybe it would be better if someone else were put in charge because so far, I’ve only managed to make a big mess of things.”

Magnus frowns and pulls on Alec’s hair a little. “That’s not true and you know it. If you go in with this attitude tomorrow, you’ve already half-lost the battle!”
Alec just *hmms* softly.

“Do the others know?” Magnus asks quietly after a moment.

“Just Izzy,” Alec responds. “I didn’t want Jace to know, he would’ve insisted on going with me and talking to Imogen but I don’t want him there. If it goes south, I need him far away, untouched by this, so that Imogen can return the Institute to him without going back on her own policy. Now that Valentine’s gone and Jace’s truly free, I think he’ll become an excellent leader.”

Magnus swallows hard. He doesn’t even want to think about this “going south,” about Alec being tried for treason. If it came to that, if Alec were exiled, Magnus wouldn’t hesitate to take him in, to care for him and protect him but… Magnus was present at a de-running once and it’s the very last thing he would want his lover to go through, that agony.

“When’s the hearing?” Magnus asks quietly, running his knuckles up and down Alec’s naked spine.

Alec takes a deep breath. “Tomorrow at ten in the Hall of Accords in Alicante. If everything goes well, I should be home for dinner. If not…” He lets his voice trail off.

“It will,” Magnus states firmly and he pulls Alec up, lifting his chin with a finger to make him look Magnus straight in the eyes. “You did the right thing when you let Luke go, Alexander. You did the right thing. You knew the political repercussions Luke’s arrest would have better than anyone else. It’s not something that can be decided from a country away, without the knowledge of the local politics. And you can and will make them understand that!”

Alec stares at him for a long moment, then a soft smile spreads across his lips and he leans down to kiss Magnus with all the love he has for him.

And the next morning, when Magnus kisses Alec goodbye and whispers “I love you” and “good luck” and “I’ll be waiting for your message to bring you home” in his ear and watches him go, he does it with all the conviction that his lover will be back that night and they’ll celebrate and make love again and they’ll be happy.

But if not, if the Clave rules *against* Alexander… well, then Magnus will have to go and get him. He’s sure that Jace and Isabelle will gladly help. It doesn’t hurt to have a back-up plan. Just in case.
With his eyes lingering on the setting sun that’s slowly disappearing behind the New York skyline, Alec says, “The last time Inquisitor Herondale was here, she did… something. Or tried to, to be precise, something she shouldn’t have.”

Maryse takes a sip of her coffee, keeping her face carefully neutral. When Alec fell silent a moment ago, she could feel that there was something bothering him, and though she hoped he would open up to her, she didn’t want to pry. “Oh?”

Alec pauses as if contemplating if he should or should not say more. He closes his eyes and turns his face into the warm wind blowing across the balcony of his office where he and his mother decided to take their coffee. Then he sighs and looks straight at Maryse, obviously having come to a decision.

“Inquisitor Herondale tried to kill Valentine,” Alec explains, “even though the Clave ordered her to stand down because they needed him, his knowledge about the Cup’s whereabouts and other things. But she tried to kill him anyway.”

Maryse’s eyes widen a little. She knew that the Inquisitor’s hatred for Valentine ran deep, but this… “And how do you know that?” she asks.

He looks down, turning his empty coffee cup around and around in his hands. “Because I helped her. I found her sneaking into the cells downstairs and she ordered me to either help or get out of her way. I stayed. And I helped her.”

“But she - you - didn’t go through with it in the end.” It’s not a question. Valentine’s still alive, locked away in the basement like some mad uncle the family’s embarrassed of.

Alec shakes his head, eyes still on his cup. “But it wasn’t her conscience that stopped her - or mine, for that matter. The whole thing became complicated when Jace got involved and…” He shakes his head again. “It doesn’t change the fact that she tried to murder someone. And that I almost became her accomplice.”

Slowly, Maryse nods, trying to not let her apprehension show. “And what exactly bothers you about it? Her actions - or yours?” she inquires, looking at him over the rim of her cup.

Alec moves his head to stare out over the city again. “As it turns out, my actions had a much greater and much more disturbing impact than I could’ve anticipated because of… other things that happened, things involving Valentine and Magnus and…” He shakes his head again. “And I’ll have to learn how to deal with that, somehow, how to live with it.”

Maryse has no idea what her son means by that but she doesn’t want to push. She sits there quietly, waiting for him to continue. After a moment he does.
“But it’s the act itself that truly bothers me, what the Inquisitor tried to do,“ Alec says in a pensive voice. “Or better said, the fact that it does not bother me as much as it should, or as it would have at one point. I’m getting disturbingly used to… to the ‘nuances’ of right and wrong where there should be none.”

Maryse feels a pang, hearing that.

Alec looks at her. “How did you do it, mom? How did you deal with things like that while you were still the Head of this Institute? How did you decide what was the right thing to do? Because before, it all seemed so… simple. But now…” He lets his voice trail off.

She sets her cup down, her coffee has gone cold anyway, and replies gently, “You’re right, it’s never simple from this side of the table. Just the opposite, it’s hard and it’s complicated because the issues you have to deal with on a daily basis are very complex. They’re never black and white.”

He sighs. “Then how do I know what to do?”

Maryse understands his frustration. She felt the same way when she was his age - and she still feels the same way even today. It never gets easier, making decisions that impact other people’s lives.

“Unfortunately, there’s no handbook that would tell you what to do in any given situation. And no, the Clave’s not always right, don’t ever let them convince you of that,” she adds and smiles a little when he blinks at her in surprise.

Reaching across the glass top table, she squeezes his arm warmly. “My advice is, always be sure of what you want to achieve, what your ultimate goal is, and always consider the consequences of your actions in a broader context. And” –she sighs– “be prepared to be misunderstood by those who lack the necessary insight. That comes with the territory, I’m afraid.”

Alec’s expression is a little pained when he covers her hand with his. “Yeah, I’m starting to get that. And I’m sorry we made your life so much harder. We didn’t really understand what you were dealing with.”

Maryse smiles. Before, she was a little worried about him, she feared that he was thrust into this position at too young an age - but now she isn’t anymore. He’ll make mistakes, certainly, that can’t be helped, all inexperienced leaders do at first, but she knows that ultimately, he’ll be alright.

She tells him, “I’m so proud of you, Alec.”

Blushing a little, Alec looks away. “Yeah, well. Wait till after the new Cabinet meeting with the Downworlders tonight, please. Maybe it’ll all go up in flames and I’ll become the shortest-serving Head this Institute has ever had,” he mutters.

With a laugh, Maryse squeezes his arm again. “I’m sure everything will be just fine.”

Alec glances at her and he looks entirely too young in that moment, uncertain and a little shy. “How do you know?” he asks softly.

Still smiling, Maryse replies, “Because I have complete faith in you.”
Sweat Soaked and Messy

Chapter Summary

Coda to 220. As always, when I don’t know what to write, behold them feels! (Unbeta'd)

And they giggle all the way home, holding hands, their fingers laced together, unwilling, unable to let go of each other, and the moment the door closes, they start kissing, tearing clothes off each other, trailing them behind all the way to the bedroom where they tip over and hit the thick, luxuriously soft mattress, bouncing…

And when they make love, they run their hands over each other’s naked skin, mapping all the secret places, every scar and birthmark again, anew, as if their time apart spanned weeks, months or even years, not just days, as if enough time has passed for them to forget, though they didn’t, it just felt like they maybe, possibly, God forbid lost something precious and irreplaceable and now they got it back…

And Magnus is kissing the soft, oh so very soft skin on the inside of Alec’s thigh, and Alec’s nuzzling Magnus’ neck, laughing at the rasp of Magnus’ barely there bristle of a day old facial hair, and Magnus is holding Alec tight, pressed against his back as they lie side by side, and Alec’s moaning gently, one arm raised and hand buried in Magnus’ hair, pulling his lover closer and closer still…

And when they’re finally too exhausted to move, the sky’s already growing light in the east as the sun’s waking up while their eyes are only now falling shut, they snuggle close, all sweat soaked and messy, but they don’t care, though they’ll regret it when they wake up, they know, but what the hell…

And Magnus whispers, “I love you.”

And Alec whispers, “I love you, too.”

And they sleep.
I recycled my bunny Poisonous (Chapter 346) from before S2 aired and changed it so it would fit the current canon setting. Can we finally, FINALLY, get something like that on the show? *crickets* Yeah, I thought so… Hence, behold the recycled bunny! (Unbeta'd)

There it is again, that pain, that agony, radiating from his heart and stealing his breath away, his strength, driving him down to his knees with muscles locked in a bone-snapping cramp. He whimpers, swallowing a scream, and it hurts and hurts and hurts…

Something’s wrong, so terribly wrong, but he doesn’t know what, what’s going on, why is this happening. It’s not pain, it’s just pressure, building and building, filling every cell of his body, until he feels like he’ll explode, any second now, if he doesn’t release it, this terrible, crushing force…

He whips around and with a cry he rams his fist through the glass pane of the bedroom window, breaking it, shattering it, destroying it, letting go of everything pent up inside him - and it rushes out of him in a huge soul-cleansing wave that leaves him weak and trembling.

“Huh?” a confused, sleepy voice mumbles behind him and he can hear his lover sit up in bed, the silk bed sheets whispering down his naked torso to pool in his lap. “Alexander? What…?”

But he can’t answer, all he can do is breathe, in and out, in and out, while he stares down at his hand, at his forearm, cut and torn, shards dug deep into his flesh, blood welling from his wounds and dripping down to the hardwood floor with soft plops.

Ow…

What the hell?

… and the agony’s gone, as suddenly as it came it disappeared again, leaving him shaken and shaking on the carpeted floor of his bedroom, curled up and crying, because he can’t take it any longer, he can’t, he just can’t. He should have never come back. He should’ve stayed dead!

*Bringing people back, there’s always a consequence.*
Chapter Summary

This is a death story, a what-if ficlet set in 219. What if it went down differently? What if they were less lucky, fighting the Forsaken in the cemetery? (Unbeta'd)

They kill all the Forsaken in the cemetery, down there, in the shadowy tomb. And when the last one falls… so does Alec.

First his bow clutters to the ground, dropped from numb fingers, and then slowly, he sinks to his knees and falls over, hitting the dirty floor with a pained groan.

“Alec!” Clary exclaims and she’s right there, by his side, immediately. “Alec! Alec, what’s wrong?” she asks anxiously, and setting her Seraph Blade aside, she turns him onto his back gently - and her hands come away red, covered with his blood.

Alec gasps for breath and his face’s pale, his chin splattered with blood now trickling from his mouth. “Did we… did we get them all? Are they–” he croaks out, then his voice falters. He coughs and more blood stains his lips.

“Where are you hurt?” Clary demands desperately, ignoring his questions. She pushes his leather jacket aside and his t-shirt up - she notices it’s soaked with blood, though the stains don’t show on the dark material - and when she uncovers his stomach, she gasps.

His flesh is sliced open and blackened around the torn edges, his skin’s already turning gray and cold and the blood welling from his wounds is turning from red to black ichor.

“It’s-it’s alright, it’s alright, I’ll fix this, you’ll be just-just fine, I’ll fix this,” Clary keeps stammering, fumbling for her stele, as tears start burning in her eyes and then spilling over. She tries to wipe them away, leaving bloody streaks on her cheeks.

“Alec!” he orders harshly and grabs her hand when she finally pulls out her stele and tries to activate his iratze rune.

Clary tries to pull away but his grip is surprisingly strong. “Alec, let go. I have heal you! The wounds are bad but you can heal, you’ll be fine, just let me–”

“No!” He shakes his head firmly, his eyes locked on hers. When he continues, his voice’s softer. “No. It’s For-Forsaken poison. Either the c-cuts kill me - or I get turned, there’s no th-third option. And I don’t, I don’t want to turn… into that” –his free hand flops in the direction where the Forsaken have fallen– “turn on y-you. I would rather die, as m-me, as who I am.”

Clary shakes her head adamantly. “No. That’s not… no, Alec, No!”

“Yes,” he breathes out as more blood bubbles up on his lips, this time stained with black as the poison spreads through his body.

She keeps shaking her head. “You can’t die, not here, not like that. You can’t! Why didn’t you tell Izzy that you were hurt?” Because he did not get hurt while fighting by her side, she would’ve
known, she wouldn’t have… she wouldn’t have let that happen. She had his back, damn it, she did! She did!

A small smile flashes across his lips. “Because then she wouldn’t ha-have gone. And Jace… Jace needed help.”

“Oh God,” she whispers, “Jace. He’s your parabatai. He–”

“–will need someone,” Alec interrupts her, his breath stuttering. “Someone to love, to love him. Uncondi-tionally. Always. Someone like y-you.”

Clary leans closer and rests her free hand gently on the top of his head. “Don’t think about this right now, okay? Don’t talk like this! We need to figure out how to help you! Then Jace will have you and it’ll be alright!”

But he refuses to listen. “Promise me, Clary,” he rasps out. “Promis-se me that you’ll love him. He needs-s you. He’ll need you s-so badly. Please, Clary.” He shakes her wrist though his strength is waning. “Please.”

“Alright, alright,” she rushes to say to calm him down. “I promise, Alec, I promise. But now we have to take care of you! You have to let me take care of you. There has to be something, some… some rune to stop this.”

Clary’s now crying openly as she looks up at the cracked vaulted ceiling above their heads. “Come on! Give me a sign! Show me a rune that will help him! Show me! Ithuriel! Angels! Come on!”

“Clary,” Alec says gently, letting go of her, letting his hand drop to the cold floor, “it w-won’t work. There’s no… no cure for Fors-saken poison.”

She looks down at him, desperate but still unwilling to give up. “Maybe not an angelic one, but there has to be something! There has to be–” Then she gets an idea. “I’ll call Magnus! He’ll know what to do, he always knows what to do! He’ll help you, you’ll see!” she blurts out and her face brightens as she pulls her cellphone out of her pocket and dials Magnus’ number.

Alec voice turns even quieter. “He won’t pick… up.”

“No, no, he will,” she states with conviction. “He’s our friend! He loves you! He’ll pick up.”

“Clary…”

“Come on, come on,” she mutters as the the phone keeps ringing–

“… thank you for trying.”

–and then there’s a beep and Clary freezes. Call rejected. No.

Pulling her phone away from her ear, she tries again. And again. The number you have called is currently…

“No, it’s… it’s a mistake, it must be a mistake,” Clary says as she quickly scrolls through her phone list. “I’ll just call Luke and he’ll get in touch with Magnus and–”

She stops. Because Alec isn’t listening anymore. His eyes are wide-open and unblinking and his chest doesn’t move. The black ichor that stopped flowing from his wounds as his heart ceased beating is now just trickling sluggishly down his gray skin.
Alec’s dead. He died and she didn’t even notice.

“No, no,” Clary whispers and her phone clutters to the floor as it falls from her numb hands. “No, Alec, no. Please.”

She leans over him and she cries for him. He was her friend. Their start was rocky, true, but then he became her friend, their love for Jace the bridge that spanned all their differences. And now he’s dead. Just like her mother.

“I’m sorry, I’m so sorry,” Clary whispers to him. “I’ll tell them, Izzy and Jace, that you thought about them before you died and that you loved them. I’ll tell them.” And then she adds, even more quietly, “And I’ll keep my promise, I swear. I’ll love Jace as much as you wanted me to. I’ll watch out for him.”

And then she closes Alec’s eyes and sits there, by his side, holding his hand, waiting for the others to find them.
“I’m so sorry to hear that, Clary. Give the others my condolences.”

“I will, Luke, thank you.”

“Does Magnus know?”

“No. We tried to contact him but he’s not answering his phone, and with the demons all over the city and the rifts… we just can’t spare anyone to go to him, everyone’s out there, fighting even-even Jace, though he would rather be left alone with… with Alec’s body. I’m so worried about him, Luke!”

“I understand, kiddo. You take care of him. I’ll go and tell Magnus.”

“Thanks.”

“It’s the least I can do.”

When Magnus opens his door and sees Luke standing there, he rolls his eyes and huffs. “What new crisis has befallen us now, my friend? If you’re here about the demons, I know about them, they’re kind of hard to miss.”

Luke steps inside and closes the door softly. “No, I’m here about Alec,” he says gently.

Magnus, who was headed into the living room, freezes in mid-step and turns around, clearly annoyed. “We’ve talked about this and I told you, I can’t just forget that he–”


Magnus just… stops.

After a long moment, during which the silence that settled over the room grows heavier and heavier, Luke continues, “He was killed last night. Valentine created a bunch of Forsaken to distract the Shadowhunters from searching for him, and with the shield up, they couldn’t call for reinforcements, so everybody was out there, in the streets - even the Head of the Institute himself. Apparently, they ran into a group of Forsaken down in the cemetery and…” Luke shakes his head sadly. “I guess he ran out of luck.”

Magnus’ eyes are wide and his face’s completely blank. Just like his mind. He feels… disconnected from reality, muffled, unreal. “I… see,” he replies numbly.

Luke steps forward and lays one hand on his friend’s shoulder in a gesture of comfort. “I’m truly sorry, Magnus. I know that despite what happened between you two, you–”
“I would like to be alone now, please,” Magnus cuts him off and takes a step back, out of reach. He doesn’t look at Luke, his eyes rove around the room almost blindly.

Profound sorrow appears in Luke’s warm brown eyes. He lets his hand drop to his side. “I understand,” he says kindly and turns to go. He opens the front door but before he steps out, he turns back to Magnus and adds, “If you need anything, I’m here, Magnus.” And then he leaves.

And Magnus just… stands there. He doesn’t cry, he doesn’t rage, he doesn’t… do anything, he just stands there, his eyes flitting from one thing to another all around the room while his mind barely touches any of the thoughts that try to intrude upon him.

It takes a long, long while before he’s even able to move. Slowly, Magnus turns around and steps into the living room. His mind is frozen, his emotions, stormier and stormier by the second, are walled up behind a thick sheet of icy numbness.

It’s not true. It’s not happening. It’s not true. Someone got something wrong. It’s just not true. No.

With heavy steps, he crosses the living room and heads for the bedroom, still feeling as not-real as if he were just a ghost, passing through the world of the living, untouched by their troubles.

And then it happens.

It’s a sock. Alec’s sock, peeking out from underneath the bed, lost days ago and only now found…

“Have you seen my sock?”

“You have it on your foot.”

“The other sock, Magnus! I can’t leave here with just one sock on! Having just one sock on is like having a pebble in your shoe - it’s damn annoying!”

“I have no idea where your sock wandered off to, love. But I can get you another pair, if you want?”

“I don’t need you to magic me another pair! I just need my own sock back!”

“A nice, soft pair. Quality wool…”

“I don’t - well, that’s quite a nice pair.”

“See, I told you so!”

“Don’t look so smug. And don’t think that your magic will make me forget that your apartment is a sock eating monster!”

“Now you’re just being paranoid!”

“Maybe, but that doesn’t mean your apartment isn’t out to get me!”

…and it’s this thing, this small, unimportant thing - a stray sock! - that finally shatters the ice that covered Magnus’ mind, that shatters him.

He heaves loudly because suddenly, he can’t get enough breath into his lungs, and he has to blink hard because his eyes are burning and full of tears and he can’t see out of them, and then his knees buckle and he reaches out to catch himself, leaning against the doorframe, sliding down the smooth, painted wood slowly, inch by inch, until his knees hit the floor hard, and he hugs himself
tight, folding in on himself helplessly.

And then Magnus cries and he sobs and he falls apart, pieces of him scattered all around, sharp and cutting and drawing blood.

And that damn sock is still there, just a couple of strides away, *Alec's sock*, the one last thing that remains of his lover in this apartment, after their break-up, namely, Magnus packed all of Alec’s possessions and sent them back, every single thing - but this single sock. *What a ridiculous keepsake!*

“Tell me how to fix this, Alexander?” Magnus croaks out, rocking back and forth. “Please, *please*, tell me how to fix this…”

But there’s no answer, no word of comfort, no gentle touch. Nothing. Because Alexander is dead.

“*We can figure this out!*”

No, they won’t.
Alec’s lying curled up on Magnus’ couch, reading a book - running his fingers lightly over the dot-dot-dots on pages that are otherwise blank, or so he was told - when it happens, when a light breeze touches his face, in a room where all the windows and doors are closed, and a whiff of sulfur tickles his nose. Hell!

He freezes, all of his senses suddenly on alert, because he knows that something changed. He knows that he is not alone in the living room anymore. He suppresses his automatic reaction to call out and ask who’s there. It would be rather silly. If it were a friend, they would’ve identified themselves by now, and an enemy… well, they would hardly give away their position to the blind guy by replying.

Besides, he already knows who’s there. True, maybe not specifically who but what. The faint smell of sulfur means it’s a demon. And the crackling of ozone that’s making the hair on his forearms stand up means it’s a greater demon at the very least. And considering this thing crossed Magnus’ wards… Raziel. Alec’s in a world of trouble.

There’s the faintest of sounds, a shuffle of feet on the hardwood floor, somewhere to Alec’s left, by the windows - and Alec reacts. He rolls off the couch - his book falls to the floor with a dull thump - and as he comes up in a crouch, he grabs his cane - always in his reach - and twists it in the middle to release the Seraph Blades hidden in both ends; they fall into place with a silent snick.

He knows that there’s a low coffee table on his left now in addition to the couch on his right and that at least some of the furniture pieces around are antique and Magnus would be unhappy if they were damaged - but Alec also knows that any harm done to his lover would make Magnus much unhappier, probably downright furious, so damn the furniture.

“I’m impressed,” says a low voice right in front of him; Alec was right, the demon’s by the window, “that you noticed me despite your handicap.”

Alec runs his left hand down the cane to grip it more firmly. “I’m blind, not incompetent. And I am a Shadowhunter,” he replies.

“Yes, I can see that,” the man - it is a man or at least the demon’s wearing a male disguise - says, rather amused.

Slowly, Alec starts turning around as he follows the demon’s movements, the whisper of his steps on the bare floor; once Alec started coming over regularly, Magnus got rid of all his rugs to make sure that Alec wouldn’t stumble over one on accident. Now it allows Alec to track the enemy’s progress across the room.

“Who are you and what do you want?” Alec asks in a firm voice, though his heart’s hammering
hard. He can fight off a demon attack in his home territory, he even managed to vanquish Abaddon when the monster attacked the Institute… but if this guy is as powerful as Alec suspects, then Alec has little to no chance to stop him if he decides to kill Alec.

Another amused huff, almost a chuckle. “Didn’t Magnus mention me? How… odd. I would’ve thought he did, considering your intimate relationship. Maybe you are not as close as one might think, seeing you all cozied up in here.”

“Oh, I am important to Magnus Bane, little Shadowhunter. You could say that without me, he wouldn’t be here. And I think it’s high time I reminded him of that.”

Before Alec can do anything, react in any way, a heavy, breath-stealing weight drops onto his shoulders, driving him to the ground. But he tries to resist, leaning against his cane, but even that can’t seem to stop the pressure for the tip of the Seraph Blade at its end starts burying itself into the polished wood, sinking into it. Alec groans.

And then there’s a hand on his face, fingers under his chin lifting his head up, though he can’t see the demon in front of him. And this time, the voice whispers directly into his ear, “Ask him who I am, little Shadowhunter. Ask your lover who came for a visit and could’ve stolen the most precious thing from him. Ask him that! I wonder - will he answer?”

The moment Magnus enters his building, he senses that something’s wrong. Bypassing the elevator, he charges up the stairs, breathless and with his heart pounding, and when he reaches the top floor, his floor, he stops short because the wards around his apartment are damaged, flickering where they should be invisible, torn to shreds. No!

Not thinking of his own safety even for a second, Magnus throws the front door open and barges in, calling Alec’s name, because Alec was here when Magnus left to run an errand, he should still be here, and if he was here when… when…

“Here, in the living room!” Alec calls back, and though he sounds rather shaken, he also sounds more than a little annoyed.

Magnus runs into the living room and once again he stops in mid-stride and his heart leaps into his throat. All the furniture in the room is shoved aside, lying in broken piles by the walls. And there, in the middle of the room, Alec’s standing perfectly still in the center of a glowing pentagram. Seeing the symbols burned into its edge, Magnus shivers, suddenly cold to the bone.

“Don’t move!” he snaps out a warning.

Alec glares in his direction. “Duh!” he snaps back.

Right. “Sorry,” Magnus apologizes.

Considering that Alec hasn’t moved a muscle so far, he must know perfectly well what’s happening - that if he moves an inch, he’ll burn. Because that’s what the pentagram’s purpose is, to keep things - demons, people, anyone and anything - in and make sure they stay in. But this one is so small, so tight that the tiniest of movements would be enough to kill Alec.
Slowly, Magnus steps forward, towards the pentagram. “I’ll break the spell now. It’s a powerful one so you might feel it go,” he warns.

Alec just breathes in deeply. And Magnus allows himself a second to ponder just how long Alec’s been standing there, unmoving, because he’s visibly trembling now and sweats pouring down his face from the exertion. Then Magnus pushes this thought out of his mind and focuses on the spell.

Lifting his arms in front of him, Magnus reaches out to grab the power of the spell - and then he pulls, draining it from the pentagram and gathering it in a ball between the palms of his hands. The energy’s furiously red and overly bright, almost blinding, but Magnus refuses to let go, he pulls and pulls, siphoning the power, until all of it is collected in his hands.

And then he squeezes it, turning the ball smaller and smaller with the strength of his will alone, until he slams his hands together with a loud boom and the energy soaks up into his arms, his veins glowing for a moment. The power floods all the cells in his body until he feels like he’s floating. He knows he’ll have to release it soon or it’ll fry him from the inside but for the moment, it’ll keep - and then, he’ll use it to renew and reinforce the wards around his home. And this time, they will be impenetrable!

“Magnus?” Alec asks uncertainly when he hears his lover gasp sharply.

“Give me a moment,” Magnus rasps, hands clasped together tightly and eyes squeezed shut as he tries to contain the power coursing through him now. It takes a while but in the end, he gets it under control and finally breathes out easily again.

“Okay, okay. Only a moment now, love,” Magnus assures Alec, then he waves his hand and two of the floorboards crack, the fissures running directly through the pentagram, breaking its spell with a barely heard pop. “Done. It’s over.”

The moment Magnus says those words, Alec’s knees buckle and he starts to reel. Magnus rushes forward and catches him before he can fall. Alec’s breath is shallow and the shivers running through his body are almost overwhelming now.

“Ow, ow, ow,” Alec mutters as Magnus props him up. “Cramps!”

Magnus throws Alec’s arm across his shoulders and wraps his own arm around Alec’s waist. He looks around but there’s no furniture left intact in the living room. With an irritated sound, he waves a hand and a couch - a new one with the price tag still attached - pops into existence only a step or two away.

“Couch, three feet behind you,” Magnus tells Alec and gently guides him to it. When he lowers Alec down carefully, he drops down to his knees in front of him and starts running his hands up and down Alec’s legs, massaging the knotted, cramped muscles there.

“Thanks,” Alec groans, then he grits his teeth when Magnus’ deft fingers hit a particularly hard knot.

“What happened?” Magnus asks anxiously. “How long have you been standing there?”

Alec rests his head against the back of the couch with a sigh. “What time is it?”

Magnus looks down at his watch. “Four am.”

“Then I stood there for at least three hours,” Alec croaks out. “The longest three hours of my life, I have to tell you.”
Magnus winces.

“And as to what happened,” Alec continues, “I was told to ask you that.”

Magnus stills, staring down at Alec’s knee.

After a moment of heavy silence, Alec sits up. He reaches out carefully so as not to smack Magnus in the face and touches his cheek gently. “Magnus? Who was that demon? He said he was important to you and I should ask you who he was. I mean, I gathered that he was a powerful one, a greater demon at the very least if he broke through your wards but–”

“It was my father,” Magnus whispers, still looking down, and shudders a little. “It was Asmodeus, one of the Seven Princes of Hell.”

Alec drops his hand to Magnus’ shoulder and leaves it there. For a long while, he doesn’t say anything.

In the end, Magnus cannot stand it any longer and he looks up. Alec has a peculiar expression on his face. It’s not fear or disgust or anything like that. His eyebrows are simply raised, his eyes half-closed as usual - when Alec stopped wearing his wraparound sunglasses around Magnus’ home, this show of trust filled Magnus with a warm sense of happiness - and he seems curious more than anything else.

“Huh. I guess I now understand why he wanted to remind you that he was still there,” Alec replies simply.

Magnus grimaces. “That’s what this was about?”

Alec nods.

Magnus’ grimace deepens. “I’m sorry about that.”

Damn that monster to hell. Or, to a deeper hell. One that he could never again crawl out of. Magnus hasn’t crossed paths with Asmodeus or even heard of him for several human lifetimes now and he hoped that it would remain so for at least as long as Alec lived. Apparently, that was a vain hope.

Magnus sighs. “I guess we have to talk, huh?”

Alec runs his hand up Magnus’ shoulder and his neck to rest it against his cheek again, then he leans forward carefully and kisses Magnus on the forehead. “Yes, that we do. But first” –he starts scrambling to his feet urgently– “I need to pee!”

Girl, you really did it this time, Isabelle groans silently as she tries to ignore all the aches and pains in her bruised and battered body. Not even iratzes could heal all of her injuries at once. Broken bones first, the medic said.

And all that just because she wanted to have fun at a Downworlder rave. Shadowhunters welcome, just without weapons. And she was stupid, stupid, stupid enough to actually follow the rules for once because she didn’t want to cause trouble. She just wanted to have fun. Next time, she’ll put on armored underwear, at least!

The door of her bedroom opens without knocking - Alec and Jace, of course. They - all of them! - really need to learn how to knock now that they’re of an age when barging in on someone unannounced might lead to rather embarrassing situations. And not just of the sexual nature. Embarrassing situations like this one, for example.

“Wow, Iz! Is that a map of New York on your back?” Jace comments on her beaten state. “Because that blue spot around your kidneys sure looks like Manhattan!”

“Oh, shut up!” she snaps, annoyed. She’s tired, hurt - and stuck in that stupid t-shirt that caught around her ears and she just can’t lift her arms any higher.

“Here, let me,” Alec says softly and hurries over to help her pull the t-shirt down.

Muttering a thanks - her words are still a bit slurred because of that damn broken jaw! - Izzy blushes a little. She feels so awkward. And not because her brothers caught her in her undies; they are all soldiers, they’ve seen each other naked - and more often than not covered in bodily fluids - more times than she cares to count. She feels awkward because she let two dumb weres pummel her black and blue. She’ll never live it down.

“So,” Jace starts, stepping forward with something in his hands, a box, neatly wrapped, “we heard about what happened–”

“I get it! I was an idiot!” Izzy cuts him off, pulling the hem of her t-shirt down sharply and jerking away from Alec. “I didn’t mind my business, I waded into a fight unarmed and I got my ass handed to me. But I couldn’t just stand by and watch those two jerks hurt that girl,” she insists, lifting her chin defiantly - which she immediately regrets because her jaw starts hurting again!

Alec takes a step back and raises his hands in a placating gesture. “Hey, Iz! Nobody’s saying otherwise!”

She looks from one to another and sees that they mean it. There’s no mocking glee in their faces, only concern. It takes the wind out of her righteous anger and she slumps. Sighing, she carefully
sits down on the edge of her bed. She’s only sixteen but right now, she feels eighty.

“Well, it was stupid,” Isabelle mutters. “I left all my blades at home because it was a ‘no weapons’ event. I forgot that ‘no weapons’ didn’t mean no claws or lycanthropy, obviously. Next time, I’m taking a knife with me, even if I have to hide it in my butt crack!”

Alec chokes, wide-eyed and horrified at the prospect.

Jace grins. “Ha! I would love to see that. But,” he adds and steps forward once again, “it’s actually why we are here. This” –he lifts the box– “was supposed to be a birthday present from us but considering what happened last night, Alec and I, we thought we better give it to you now, before someone knocks your teeth out and you turn all ugly.”

Alec elbows him in the ribs. He grabs the box from Jace’s hands, then he turns to Izzy and with a soft smile, he hands her the box. “Happy early birthday.”

Isabelle stares at them in surprise. Slowly, she accepts the box and carefully unwraps it. When she lifts the lid, she gasps. On a bed of red velvet, a bracelet is lying, a beautiful silvery thing in the shape of a snake. Carefully, she takes it out, then sets the box aside.

“It’s beautiful,” she whispers.

“And cool, too!” Jace adds, almost bouncing on his toes. “Try it on - and use your right arm!”

Isabelle complies. And her eyes widen because the thing feels alive.

“Right,” Jace says, “and now focus on it and think ‘whip’ - and don’t freak out!”

Once again, Izzy complies - and when the jewelry starts moving, slithering down her wrist and into her hand, turning from a silvery snake into a silvery whip, she gasps and jumps to her feet.

“Didn’t I say it was cool?” Jace grins.

Smiling, Alec explains. “It’s made from electrum. It can turn into a whip or a staff–”

“Or it can simply be a really cool piece of jewelry!” Jace jumps in.

“–that depends on what you want it to be,” Alec finishes not paying attention to his parabatai.

Enchanted, Izzy lets the whip dance on the floor, swinging it from side to side, causing it to undulate like a real snake. Then she jerks her wrist, thinking “staff”, and the whip turns into a very long stick with a snake head at the end - and she knocks over her bedside lamp with it, shattering it.

“Oops!” she utters but she’s grinning widely, not caring about the broken lamp or her hurting jaw. Because this is way too–

“Cool, huh?” Jace explodes, excitedly.

“Say ‘cool’ one more time and I swear I’ll strangle you!” Alec warns, irritated.

But Jace’s right, it really is cool. Amazing. Beautiful. And certainly expensive.

Izzy looks at them. “Guys, this must’ve cost a fortune,” she whispers, touched. She knows very well just how much electrum costs, how precious it is.

Jace shrugs nonchalantly, sticking his hands into his pockets. “Don’t worry about it. Sure, for the
foreseeable future, we’ll live on nothing but stale bread and water, but—”

Alec slaps him upside the head, glaring. Then he turns to Izzy. “Don’t listen to him. Yeah, it wasn’t cheap but, Izzy, nothing is more important to us than your safety. If you had it on you last night, the whole situation might’ve gone down differently.”

Izzy looks down at her new weapon and turns it from a staff into a whip and back into a bracelet with nothing but a thought. And then she blinks hard because this was so nice of them!

And so she throws herself at them and pulls them both into a big hug, damn her aching body. She loves them with all her heart!

“Thank you,” she murmurs, her voice thick. “Thank you so much.”

They hug her back and Jace even kisses the top of her head, the softie. “You’re welcome. We’re just glad you’re okay, Izzy,” he whispers. “You really gave us a scare there.”

“Sorry,” she whispers back.

“Yeah,” Alec says, patting her on the back, “just don’t do it again, deal?”

Grinning into his shoulder, Izzy replies softly, “Deal.”
When Valentine gets his wish, when the shimmering wave of destructive angelic power starts spreading outwards, headed in all directions from Lake Lyn, Alec’s only concern is for Magnus, he doesn’t think either Izzy or he are in any danger.

So when Isabelle, who’s walking five steps ahead of them, screams, Alec’s heart is seized with horror - but it’s all over before he can do anything: Izzy barely has the time to turn around and look him in the eyes before she turns into ash and is blown away by the wind.

Magnus twists around too, wide-eyed and with Alec’s name on his lips. They reach for each other and they almost, almost make it, they almost touch, their fingers barely brush before Magnus’ skin turns charcoal gray and he shatters…

And Alec? Alec has only a split of a second left, but in that shortest of moments, the realization hits him with agony so profound that it steals the last of his breath away from his lungs: his parabatai’s gone, his sister too… and Magnus…

When the wave hits Alec and he burns too, it’s almost a relief.
They’re in one of the rarely used stairwells, sitting on carpeted steps that desperately need vacuuming, hiding from responsibilities in their secret hidey hole. Alec’s rolling his cane between his palms, tapping it against a lower step from time to time, and Jace’s sitting next to him, arms crossed and resting on bent knees. He’s watching his *parabatai* with a strange look in his eyes, with softness that most people would say he was incapable of.

Bumping their shoulders together, Jace whispers, “You really like this guy, don’t you?”

The cane goes *tap-tap-tap*. Alec’s nervousness is showing as he blushes a little. “Yeah, I kind of do. A lot, Jace. I like Magnus a *lot*.”

Jace stares at him silently. He’s happy for Alec - ever since he realized that his *parabatai* was gay, Jace feared that Alec would never find true happiness in their rigid society - and yet, he can’t help but feel like he’s losing something. But maybe it’s not really a loss but simply a change. Besides, he would never begrudge Alec love.

“Well then!” Jace says more loudly, his voice exceedingly and forcefully cheerful, and straightens up, slapping his knees. “That means we need to take some very drastic measures, my dear *parabatai*!”

The cane stills and Alec turns to him suspiciously; Jace can see his own too bright a face reflected in Alec’s sunglasses. “What drastic measures?” Alec asks.

“Remember when we realized that not even our bond could give you back your sight permanently? We agreed to use our ability to share *my* sight only as a last resort, only when there would be no other choice, since for you to see, *I* have to be blind. Remember that?”

“Yes,” Alec says slowly, face still suspicious.

“But!” Jace continues, one finger raised even though Alec can’t see him. “*We also* agreed that there would be *one* exception to this rule, that when you met someone you became smitten with—”

“I’m not smitten!” Alec protests.

“Infatuated, then?” Jace corrects himself cheekily.

Alec hits him with his cane.

“Alright, alright!” Jace laughs. “Stop hitting me! We agreed that once you met *The One,*” he says and waits for another thump with the cane - but this time, it doesn’t come, so his voice softens a little as he continues, “that when you found him, I would share my sight with you so that you could take a look at him.”
Alec’s breath catches in his throat and he has to fumble for his cane because it falls out of his hands. “I… you don’t… it’s not necessary, Jace,” Alec stutters.

“I think it is,” Jace says, his voice still soft. Then he clears his throat to cover up his emotions and adds, “I mean, what if he’s ugly? What if Magnus looks like a toad?”

Alec frowns at him. “He doesn’t.”

“He might.”

“He doesn’t.”

“But he might!”

“Then I won’t care because I’m not shallow. I did become your parabatai, after all,” Alec replies archly.

“Ouch, harsh!” Jace protests, dramatically grabbing his heart.

For a moment, they both just sit there, the offer hanging in the air between them. Alec’s cane goes tap-tap-tap again while Jace’s waiting him out. He knows that Alec’s made his peace with his blindness a long time ago - but he also knows just how much Alec wants it, to see Magnus at least once! And Jace can give him this. It’ll never be enough, but it’s something.

“You really don’t have to do this, Jace,” Alec murmurs.

Jace bumps their shoulders together. “I know. But I want to.”

Alec smiles in Jace’s direction and reaches out to squeeze his arm in a silent thanks. “Alright, then. Let’s do it.”

Jace feels his heart swell. And so, to lighten up the mood as he’s wont to do, he leans in and whispers, “Just in case Magnus does look like a toad?”

For a blind guy, Alec’s aim with his cane is impeccable.
There’s a knock on the door of his study and when Robert looks up, he’s startled to see Alec there, in Alicante, in their family mansion.


Walking in, Alec reassures him, “Everything’s fine. I was… the Clave called me in to tie up some loose ends connected to Malachi and Valentine and the havoc they caused in New York.” He pauses, then he steps closer and continues more quietly, “But that’s not why I came…”

“Oh,” Robert says, trying to hide his nervousness. And just how badly did he let their relationship deteriorate if he’s nervous to talk to his own son?

Alec stops in front of his father’s desk. He drops his eyes to the papers spread there and clasps his hands tightly behind his back. Oddly, he seems nervous too. “I came here to… apologize.”


“For being so hard on you when you were reluctant to tell me about the Soul Sword. I didn’t get your reasons, before, but now” –Alec takes a deep breath– “now I do. I get it. And I’m sorry for the way I acted. You were right. When you have to keep secrets from the people you love, it poisons everything.”

Slowly, Robert walks around the desk, and when his son turns to him, Robert reaches out to squeeze his arm. “You don’t need to apologize, Alec. You had every right to know that the Soul Sword was missing. It had a direct impact on your position as the Head of the New York Institute, and it was wrong that you weren’t told. I should’ve done so the moment I found out, I’m sorry.”

Alec winces a little. “Yeah, well. Considering that I did exactly the same thing, that I also tried to keep it a secret from those who should’ve been informed of the Sword’s disappearance immediately, it would be rather hypocritical of me to hold it against you.”

Robert grimaces a little. “That bad, when it came out, huh?”

Alec smiles painfully, a there and gone expression. “Bad is an understatement. But I handled it.”

“I never doubted it,” Robert says kindly and pats Alec’s arm again.

And he truly didn’t. He just wanted to spare his son this painful dilemma. Robert himself has gotten used to playing the bad guy, he has had years of practice in that department, in lying and cover-ups, but Alec’s a good man, an honest one, and Robert doesn’t want him to lose that.

This time when Alec smiles, it lasts longer and his expression’s softer. “Thanks, dad,” he replies quietly.
And to Robert, this feels like a first step, like a new beginning… a truce. Maybe their relationship can be saved after all.
Alec grunts a little when he picks up Magnus off the couch; the High Warlock of Brooklyn is all solid weight and hard muscles underneath his - more often than not - extravagant clothes.

“Wha…?” Magnus rouses, looking around blearily.

Smiling down at him, Alec turns and heads for the bedroom. “Off with you to bed.”

Magnus grins dopily and in a very bedroom-y voice he whispers, “Nice!”

“To sleep!” Alec specifies when Magnus wraps his arms around his neck.

“No!” Magnus protests.

“Yes!” Alec replies, turning sideways to carry Magnus through the doorway without bumping his head or his legs. “Your ‘cocktail cure’ for exhaustion seems to have gotten the better of you.”

Magnus frowns. “I’m not drunk!” he protests with dignity.

“Alright,” Alec allows indulgently as he stops by the bed.

Frowning some more, Magnus thinks it over. “Am I drunk?”

Alec’s smile widens. “Very much so, I’m afraid.”

Magnus blinks, startled. “Wow. That hasn’t happened to me since… since…”

“Well, you don’t close the gateway to Edom every day, after all,” Alec reminds him.

Magnus nods sagely. “True. I’m awesome.”

Now Alec grins, amused. “That you are.” And he sets Magnus down on the bed.

But Magnus refuses to let go and with his arms still tightly wrapped around Alec’s neck, he pulls his lover down onto the bed too. They end up in a tangled heap on the blankets.

“Magnus!” Alec yelps, flailing.

“But I wanted to celebrate!” Magnus almost - almost! - whines. Then he adds in a stage whisper, “With sex!”

Alec chokes. “We can do that once you’re sober.”

Magnus frowns again and lets go of Alec with one arm. “I can get sober right now. Just like that!”

He tries snapping his fingers - in vain. “Like… that. Like - why isn’t it working? Oh no, Alexander! My magic’s gone!”
Stifling a laugh, Alec extricates himself from Magnus’ grip - he only manages to do so because Magnus is staring in horror at his fingers that fail to produce even a spark - and gets up. Then, with a soft smile he undresses Magnus who’s still trying and failing to do magic.

“I’ve become impotent!” Magnus exclaims in despair.

Alec chokes again. The need to laugh makes his eyes water. Pushing Magnus down onto the soft pillows, he covers his lover up to his chest, then he sits down on the edge of mattress and catches Magnus’ flying hands in his.

“Magnus,” Alec says firmly to get his words across through the thick veil of drunkenness that’s blanketing Magnus’ senses. “You’re not impotent, I promise you that, magically or… in any other way. It’s just the exhaustion and alcohol, a lot of it! Everything will be just fine in the morning.”

Magnus looks at him hopefully. “You promise?”

Alec lifts Magnus’ hands to kiss them. “I promise.”

“Will you be there to check?” Magnus asks, all wide eyes and earnest voice.

“That you’re not impotent?” Alec says, the corners of his mouth twitching.

Magnus nods. “It’s important to check!”

“That it is,” Alec agrees. “And yes, I’ll be here.”

Relaxing, Magnus sinks into the pillows and his eyes flutter close. “Then I’m safe.”

Alec’s smile softens and he reaches out to stroke Magnus’ hair. “Yes, you are.”

Before Alec can wish him goodnight, Magnus is asleep.
Alec Fray #1

Chapter Summary

A set-up for my new AU where Alec’s been de-runed at 15 and he spends the next few years living with Jocelyn Fray and Clary. (The show never specified if Alec was 21 or 23, IIRC, so I decided to make the age-gap between Alec and Clary 3 years.)

(Unbeta'd)

(ETA: Apparently, Imogen said to Valentine that her son died 23 years ago. Which means that Jace’s 22 and Alec’s 23, 5 years older than Clary. Ficlet adjusted accordingly!)

This time, the Clave went too far!

Maryse did everything they asked of her to pay for her crimes against the Clave, for years she toed the line, kept her head down and followed the rules. She did everything they wanted…

But now they took her baby boy away from her, her eldest, the reason she and Robert betrayed Valentine and repented in the first place. Everything they did, they did for him - and then for Isabelle and Max and later on for Jace, too - but it all started with Alec. And now the Clave took him away, de-runed him, exiled him for… for loving the “wrong” way.

No, enough, Maryse thinks as she slips past her guards and sneaks up onto the Institute’s roof. This time, she won’t bow her head and take it. This time, she will rebel.

Maryse activates her rune - and jumps.

She finds Alec in one of the dirty, litter strewn alleys in the vicinity of the City of Bones, lying in a crumpled heap behind a trash can, wheezing and burning with fever - and for a moment, she’s so furious she sees red.

They just dropped him here, a boy of barely fifteen, knowing full well that he was in no shape to take care of himself, being too young and too sick, helpless in a world he didn’t know. And they didn’t care, the Inquisitor’s lapdogs. To hell with Imogen and her vengeful streak, to hell with her!

“Alec, honey?” Maryse whispers and she drops to her knees to help him sit up. “I’m here. Can you hear me?”

His eyes flutter open but they’re hazy, unfocused. His head lolls a little and her heart clenches, seeing the burned mark on his neck where the most distinct of his runes used to be. She knows that there will be similar wounds all over his body, hurting, bleeding, maybe even infected, hidden by the shapeless dark clothes he was given by the Silent Brothers on his way out. Just the clothes on his back and nothing more. Live or die, they don’t care anymore.

“Mom?” Alec rasps, dropping his head against her shoulder. “Mommy?”

Maryse has to blink back tears. Alec hasn’t called her that in years. Ever since their relationship started to sour when she decided that strict rules were the best way how to shape him into a better
person than she ever was. She thought she would protect him that way. Instead, all she managed was to destroy the bond of trust between them, and when Alec then desperately needed someone to talk to after realizing he was gay, he didn’t come to her. And then it was way too late because the Clave had ears everywhere and an example needed to be set.

“I’m here, Alec,” Maryse whispers and she hugs him for a moment, rocking him gently.

Alec reaches out and grips the hem of her leather jacket, anchoring himself. “What’s… happening? Where… where are we?” he asks, his fever muddling his thoughts. “Can we… can we go home now, please?”

Her heart breaks. “No. No, we can’t,” she croaks out. “I’m sorry, honey, I’m so sorry, but you can never go home again.”

His shoulders start shaking.

“But you’ll be okay,” Maryse says fiercely, kissing the top of his head. “I’ll take you somewhere safe. You’ll be safe, I promise. I promise!”

And then, she gently helps her son to his feet.

There’s a loud knock on the door. And another. And another.

With a knife in her hand, Jocelyn pads up on silent feet to the main door, and when she looks out through the peep hole, her breath catches in her throat.

Maryse Lightwood.

Slowly, carefully, warily, Jocelyn opens the door a bare few inches, no more. She knows she can’t afford not to open. She’s managed to stay hidden here, in New York, both from the Clave and her enemies all these years only because Maryse allowed it.

“Maryse?” Jocelyn whispers.

Her ten-year-old daughter, Clary, is asleep and the last thing Jocelyn wants is to wake her. She wants her child to stay far away from the dangerous world of Shadowhunters.

Maryse looks as fierce as ever, determined but… a little desperate. “Jocelyn,” she greets her, nodding curtly. “I need your help.”

Jocelyn frowns. She doesn’t want to have anything to do with the Clave - or with the Downworld in general. Or even with her old friends from before. She left that life behind. She opens her mouth to say it, but Maryse cuts her off before she can do so.

“You owe me, Jocelyn,” Maryse reminds her sharply. “You owe me! I helped you escape from Valentine. I kept you hidden from the Clave. I gave you the address of Magnus Bane when you needed a warlock. I did that for you! You owe me - and I came to collect!”

Narrowing her eyes, Jocelyn tightens her grip on the knife that she keeps hidden behind the barely open door. If Maryse tries to force her to do something that will put Clary at risk, if she tries to ruin the life Jocelyn’s built for herself—

“What do you want?” Jocelyn mutters in an unfriendly voice.

Maryse slumps a little in relief. Her reaction startles Jocelyn so much that she opens the door a little
wider - and that’s when she sees him, the boy, pale and shaking and dressed in ratty clothes, huddled against the wall by the door, just out of sight.

Stepping closer to the boy, Maryse pulls him gently into her arms, letting him lean against her. Jocelyn opens her mouth in shock because the boy cannot be more than fifteen, and yet there’s a large burn mark on his neck. She knows this type of a wound: he’s been *de-runed*!

Looking straight at Jocelyn, Maryse holds her head high and her back straight, yet the glint of tears in her eyes betrays her pain, her despair, when she says, “I need you to take care of my son, Jocelyn. I need you to keep Alec safe!”
Clary finds out. She's 10, after all, she's no child! (Unbeta'd)

By popular demand, I separated the Alec Fray collection of ficlets from this main collection of... well, pretty much everything else. The first part will remain here, but all the follow-ups will be posted only in the Alec Fray fic that can be found HERE, on AO3. So far, the first two parts are available over there. Have fun! (And sorry for the complications but this collection has already turned out to be a bigger monster than I thought it would ever become O.O)
**King Kong's Pet**

Chapter Summary

Set in my The Widowers from 12B Jalec AU (Chapters 172 & 502). Jace and Alec get a pony, err, a dog together!

Another series that I decided to separate from this collection. It really is getting hard to follow the various series, isn't it? Sorry... You can now find all three chapters written in this AU so far here: [The Widowers from 12B](#). Happy reading!
Gossamer-Thin

Chapter Summary

A “what-if” set in ep 220. Alec reacts to Jace’s death. Or, how it could’ve happened.

Hey, I was full of… feels, sue me! A parabatai & Malec ficlet. (Unbeta’d)

When Alec’s side’s seized with sharp, stabbing, breath-stealing agony, he immediately knows what’s happening. There’s no doubt, not a moment of confusion, just a terrible certainty. Jace.

As the pain starts spreading through his body, as their parabatai bond begins unraveling, one strand at a time, everything he’s ever been through with Jace flashes in front of his eyes, a fast-forward through their time spent together, and at the end of it… Jace, walking away with a small smile on his lips and regret in his eyes.

Alec’s not aware of anything else, he doesn’t realize that he fell, that he’s been screaming, he doesn’t feel anything but that horrible, profound loss. And when the last hair-thin thread of their bond snaps, Alec lunges forward instinctively, straining against the limitations of his mortal body. He reaches out as far as he can, and grabbing the thread, he hangs tight on it and refuses to let go.

Stay!

Then everything goes dark.

For a moment, for one crucial moment, all Magnus can do is stare, frozen in shock, because Alec is… he is… Magnus’ mind is blank. Just when he needs his wits, his powers most, he can’t move, he can’t even breathe.

And then Isabelle yells his name and snaps him out of his stupor and Magnus starts forward, skidding across the floor, and drops to his knees by Alec’s side, he reaches out, magic already gathering in the palms of his hands, and he–

Alec stops. He just… stops, white as a sheet and with bright red blood trickling from his nostrils. Magnus touches Alec’s throat fearfully, his dexterous fingers searching for a pulse - and finding none.

No, no, no, not again. This can’t be happening again. Magnus won’t allow it, he will not let Alec slip away, not now, not when they’re talking again, not ever. He has to do something, now, right now, because if Alec’s parabatai bond truly broke, if Jace’s truly dead, then this time, there won’t be anyone to pull Alec back!

“Don’t you dare, Alexander!” Magnus whispers, grabbing Alec’s t-shirt and tearing it to shreds, exposing Alec’s chest. “Don’t you dare leave me. Don’t you dare! Don’t you dare!”

Magnus keeps repeating those words, over and over again, without realizing it as he presses his hand against Alec’s warm but too still chest, and he pushes his magic in, making Alec’s heart jump. And again. And again. Please!

He’s dimly aware of Isabelle sobbing, whispering her brother’s name, begging him not to leave
them, but he can’t pay any attention to her, he has to focus, he has to–

Magnus rests his free hand on Alec’s forehead and he pours his magic into his lover - yes, his lover, his boyfriend, they can fix it, their relationship, everything, if only Alec comes back! - he gives Alexander everything he has, even though he has very little to give after closing the gate to Edom, but that doesn’t matter, Magnus will drain himself dry if need be–

Then, for a split of a second, there and gone again, Magnus catches a glimpse of something wondrous: he sees Alec’s and Jace’s souls tied together still, their bond gossamer-thin but there, and Alec’s soul wrapped in Magnus’ blue healing magic, anchored with it in this world, and there, in the distance, a blinding light, an impression of immense power and love and… wings.

And suddenly, Jace is again and the strand becomes a rope and Alec’s awake, alive, there, gasping and shuddering and opening his eyes wide - and staring up at Magnus. Alive.

Magnus could cry.

A miracle.
Jace doesn’t know what’s happening. Just moments ago, he was in Idris, training with his father, now he’s - he looks around, wide-eyed and scared - in the sewers somewhere, scrambling out of clothes that are too big for him, now naked but for the t-shirt hanging off his shoulders and past his knees.

What’s going on? What’s going on?!

There’s a skittering sound and a chattering so vile and unnatural it’s like nails on a chalkboard. And then, suddenly, something lunges out of the darkness. Jace reacts on instinct, throwing himself forward and rolling on the dirty, slimy floor, grabbing the hilt of a Seraph Blade peaking out of the pile of discarded clothes. He activates it but it’s too big for him, too heavy, he can’t swing it, so he just twists around and holds it up in front of him - and the demon, a shax demon, impales itself on the blade, its mandibles snapping close just inches away from Jace’s face, then it bursts into flames and dissipates.

What is going on here? Jace asks himself, looking around wildly but careful not to make a sound, because that’s important, to not make any noise, to be quiet as a mouse, not to draw attention to himself until he knows what’s happening! Is this another of his father’s tests? Please, let it be another test, because in that case, even if he failed and then got punished for incompetence, his father would come for him, eventually. But if it’s not, if it’s some… some kind of… magic, then Jace doesn’t know what he’ll do!

There’s a silent groan to his right and a rustle of fabric, and Jace whips around, the disgusting sludge squishing between his bare toes. There’s something there, in the dark, on the ground, a mound of something moving. He tries to raise the Seraph Blade higher but it’s too heavy and his arms are starting to tremble so the point dips instead.

“Ow,” a soft voice whispers and in the shaft of yellow light - a street light, its glow filtering down through a manhole? - Jace sees a pale hand, too small to belong to an adult, slide out of… another pile of clothes?

Carefully, Jace takes a step closer - and pokes the mound of fabric, black linen and buttery soft leather, with his big toe. When the pile makes a startled sound, Jace jumps back, his heart hammering.

There’s a person, a small person, buried underneath the clothes. And now that person shoots up, sitting up straight and looking around just as wildly as Jace a moment before. Somehow, that’s reassuring - Jace’s not alone in this, whatever this is - but also not really - the other one obviously has no idea what’s going on either.

“Izzy?” the other one - a boy, probably Jace’s age but much slighter, dark-haired and dark-eyed and way too pale, in Jace’s opinion - whispers loudly.
“No,” Jace replies just as quietly, lowering the Seraph Blade in his hands; its point clangs against the wet floor.

The other boy scrambles to his feet, too, or at least he tries to, because he trips over his t-shirt – it’s way too big on him, reaching to his shins and sliding off one thin shoulder - and falls back down. “Ow!” he utters again.

Jace decides to go on the offensive. *When in doubt, attack,* that’s his father’s motto. “Who are you?” he asks belligerently.

Looking up, all big-eyed, the boy rubs his nose with the back of his hand, leaving a muddy smear on his face. “Alec? Lightwood?” he replies, making it sound like a question.

*Lightwood, Lightwood,* Jace’s mind’s working hard. He knows of the Lightwoods, they’re an old Shadowhunter family, stationed in New York. Which *could* mean… He looks up again; sounds of heavy traffic echo down the manhole. *Could they be in New York? But how?*

“And you?” the boy - Alec - asks uncertainly.

Jace’s eyes snap back to him. “What about me?”

“Your name?” Alec’s brows furrow in annoyance. Annoyance’s good, better than fear. They can’t be too afraid if they’re to survive this, whatever *this* is.

“Jace Wayland,” Jace replies. “Do you know what happened? Where we are? Why we are here?”

Alec shakes his head and tries to get up again, but he falls for the second time, slipping on the foul smelling muck. Jace rolls his eyes. He lets go of the Seraph Blade with one hand and reaches down to help the boy up. Alec accepts gratefully, extracting himself from the too big clothes.

*Too big…* Jace looks at the pile of fabric he crawled out of, then at the other one. There’s a bow lying in a pool of liquid better left unasked about, right at Alec’s feet. The weapon’s also too big. Jace blinks, then he looks down at the Seraph Blade in his hand. *No way. Absolutely not!*

He sets the Seraph Blade aside - it’s useless to him anyway - and drops to his knees by “his” pile of clothes to search it. Immediately, he discovers his stele, *his own stele,* the one his father gave to him, and a pair of smaller Seraph Blades, daggers much better suited for his small hands. He activates both and hands one over to Alec.

“Here,” Jace says. “Be careful, there’re shax demons around. I think we must’ve stumbled across some trap and it did this” –he waves his stele up and down his body– “to us.”

“And ‘this’ is what exactly?” Alec asks, accepting the blade.

Jace’s very aware of how stupid this will sound. “I think it… *de-aged* us? Some spell? Or something?”

Alec eyes him for a moment. Then carefully, he takes a step away from Jace as if Jace were crazy. “Right.”

Scowling, Jace snaps, “Do you have a better explanation? I was *just* with my father, in Idris!”

Frowning again, Alec admits reluctantly, “Well, I was with my *sister* a moment ago, studying in the library.”
Jace lifts his hands in a “there you have it” gesture, annoyed with this-this child. Yeah, it sounds dumb but magic is dumb. And dangerous. Which reminds him…

Alec’s eyes turn round when he sees Jace activate his sight rune. “You have runes! And so many of them already!” he whispers, awed.

Duh. “Well, yeah. You don’t?” Jace asks, irritated, and he turns to look at Alec now that he can actually see in the dark. And for the first time he realizes that Alec truly does not have any runes at all, his skin’s completely unmarred, Jace can’t even see his angelic rune anywhere.

Seriously? Alec’s what, seven? Eight? He’s definitely as old as Jace. How can he have no runes at all at this age? How irresponsible of Alec’s parents to leave their son so unprotected! Did Alec actually ever see a real demon up close? Jace’s seized with horror: He isn’t stuck with a complete amateur here, is he? Raziel forbid.

Alec shakes his head. “I haven’t had my first rune ceremony yet. It usually doesn’t happen till you’re ten, you know?”

Idiocy! “Then how do you protect yourself in a fight?” Jace asks in disbelief.

Alec blinks at him. “I… don’t fight? Kids don’t fight demons, we just train and study.” He’s looking at Jace like Jace’s being stupid again.

**By the Angel!** Jace is stuck with an amateur. They’re both going to die.

There’s the skittering sound again and Jace whips around. Now that his sight rune’s activated, he can actually see the demons, and his heart skips a beat because the tunnels are crawling with them! No. No, no, no!

“We have to go, now!” Jace hisses, backing away towards the wall. There’s a side-tunnel up there, three feet or so of the ground, a drainage pipe of some kind. Maybe it’s narrow enough that the things won’t be able to pass through?

“Why?” Alec asks, turning and looking around fearfully. He can hear the scuttling of chitinous legs on brick but without the sight rune, he can’t see anything.

“Shax demons!” Jace whispers. “They’re everywhere! We have to get out of here. There’s a drainage pipe in the wall behind me, up there. I’ll hoist you up.”

Alec looks at him uncertainly. “But…”

Jace grabs Alec’s hand and pulls him to the wall as the shax demons slither closer. Alec’s staring at him and Jace can feel him trembling a little. If this turns out to be one of Michael Wayland’s test after all, then Jace’s about to blow it by helping this kid - **everyone for himself**; that’s another of his father’s mottos - but Jace can’t leave Alec here, he just can’t. When he looks into the other boy’s eyes, there’s **something**, some strange feeling, a twinge in his chest, a certainty that if he leaves Alec to die here, he will regret it for the rest of his life.

“Trust me!” Jace says imploringly, squeezing Alec’s hand.

All of a sudden, as if flipping a switch, as if he came to a decision of some kind, Alec relaxes. His trembling stops and he nods. “Alright,” he whispers, squeezing Jace’s hand back. And something pleasant and warm flutters deep inside Jace’s chest. **How odd.**

“Then up you go,” Jace says.
He clenches his stele in his teeth and deactivates the Seraph Blade so that he doesn’t cut Alec by accident. Then he grabs the other boy and hoists him up to the drainage pipe. Alec climbs in - Jace can hear rats running away, squealing - and Jace follows quickly, just as the shax demons rush in, realizing that their prey’s about to escape. Their mandibles snap together a bare inch away from Jace’s foot, making his heart jump.

“Go, go, go!” Jace yells at Alec as the demons try to squeeze in after them, reaching in with their sharp, barbed legs, and he hisses as they cut his skin, making him bleed.

Alec crawls forward as fast as he can with Jace at his heels but he keeps hitting his head, bruising his arms and scratching his skin because he can’t see where he’s going. Still, he doesn’t utter a word of complain, he just goes.

And then the pipe ends without warning and Alec falls out, head first. Luckily, he tucks himself into a ball, the way he was taught, and though he hits the ground hard, he rolls with it until he splashes into the stinking sewer water where he stops, lying on his back and gasping, waiting for Jace to catch up.

Jace climbs down the wall; here the pipe opens almost five feet off the floor and he realizes just how lucky Alec was that he didn’t break his neck. Next time Jace’ll go first and lead the way. He helps Alec back to his feet, then he grabs his hand again so that they don’t get separated in the dark and they run, the shrieking shax demons still behind them.

They run and they stumble, bruised and bleeding, with no direction in mind just to get away, get away, get away, as far as they can from the monsters pursuing them. They run and they hide in tiny crawl spaces, just barely big enough for two children to pass through, and it seems that hours must’ve passed, a small eternity, it feels that way, at least. And whenever they rest, they huddle together for warmth, holding onto each other, and despite all the horrors, it feels good, this closeness.

But then it happens, in a crossroads of several tunnels, Jace’s looking ahead and behind them, watching out for demons, but he can’t have eyes everywhere at once, and Alec must’ve noticed something, a movement in the shadows, or something, because suddenly, he pushes Jace out of the way and Jace flies across the crossroads and hits the slimy wall hard. And when he turns…

Alec’s down, stabbed through his right shoulder, pinned to the floor by a shax demon’s leg, but before Jace can do anything to help him, Alec lifts his Seraph Blade and activates it, and though it’s a simple dagger rather than a sword, he does it directly below the thing’s belly and the blade slices through the carapace easily. The monster screeches and turns into dust.

“Alec!” Jace yells and scrambles towards the other boy, skidding across the dirty floor and falling to his knees by his side. He’s afraid to touch Alec who curled up into a ball, holding his torn and bleeding shoulder. “Alec, please!”

And then the demons are everywhere, simply everywhere, crawling out of every tunnel - they must’ve stumbled right into their nest by accident - and Jace realizes that they can’t fight them all off, that they won’t survive this! And he tried so hard! He did! And he failed!

Jace throws himself onto Alec, covering him with his body, and he whispers into Alec’s ear, “I’m sorry!”

But then there’s a blinding flash of light and the roar of fire and the crack of a whip and the demons are shrieking and whining and scuttling directly over the boys - but not to get to them, to get away!
It goes on and on and on and Jace’s holding Alec tight, having dropped both his Seraph Blade and his stele to protect the other boy, but finally it’s all over and they’re both scratched, torn and bleeding even more than before - but they’re alive.

Slowly, Jace lifts his head. His sight’s blurry - he was kicked in the head and one of his eyes is already starting to swell - but in one of the tunnels, in the one to his right, he can see three people running towards them, two women and a man…

Darkness claims him.

When Jace next opens his eyes, he realizes two things: he’s in the Infirmary of the New York Institute and he’s himself again, a twenty-something adult, thank you very much!

He tries to shift and groans because, though he was re-aged - is that even a word? - during the time he was unconscious, he’s still as battered and bruised as before. He guesses he should be grateful for small miracles. Miracles…

Jace’s eyes widen and he looks around fast, searching for… He sighs in relief. Alec’s in the bed next to him, an adult again, too. He’s lying on his side, facing Jace, naked to the waist and Magnus is at his side, healing his torn shoulder. The wound looks ugly, blackened with poison, but since Magnus is here, Jace knows that his parabatai’s in good hands.

“What happened?” Jace croaks out, staring at Alec, who’s still unconscious or maybe asleep.

Magnus glances up at him, but someone else answers Jace’s question, a voice on the other side of his bed. Clary. “You fell into a trap,” she whispers and when he turns to her, she lifts his hand - she’s been holding it the whole time, it seems - and kisses his knuckles. “We thought we lost you.”

Izzy’s standing behind Clary with one hand on Clary’s shoulder and she’s smiling at Jace. “We’re so glad you’re okay. When we found your weapons and clothes–” She swallows hard and shakes her head. “We suspected the worst. But then we noticed the footprints leading away, children’s footprints, and we realized that something must’ve happened, that magic was involved. So we called Magnus.”

“The warlock who set the trap miscalculated, used the wrong sigils,” Magnus comments quietly.

This time when Jace turns his head towards the other bed, he notices blue magic sparkling; Magnus keeps running his fingertips over Alec’s shoulder again and again, across the skin and towards the wound, pushing the poison out of the jagged hole in Alec’s flesh, and wiping the black ichor away with a towel with his free hand.

“He or she planned on wiping out their pursuers but instead, the spell de-aged you,” Magnus continues with his explanation. “It turned you into kids again. You could’ve still died, killed by that…” –he makes a face– “amateur’s pet demons, but instead, you handled your self remarkably well.”

Jace nods. They were truly lucky, he knows that.

And then Alec opens his eyes and for a long moment, while the others rejoice, he and Jace just stare at each other.

“Hey,” Jace croaks out quietly.

“Back at you.”

They smile. Everything’s okay.
In the Alley

Chapter Summary

How I wish the Malec reconciliation in 220 had gone. Alas. (Unbeta'd)

“It’s in the past,” Magnus says, waving away his apology.

But Alec shakes his head. “No, I should’ve told you about the sword. You had every right to know about its disappearance, it could’ve had a direct impact on the safety of your people.” He sighs and takes a step closer. “I’m sorry I didn’t tell you.”

Magnus takes a step closer, too; there’s a small smile on his lips, a little painful and full of regret. “And I’m sorry that I didn’t trust you, Alexander. I know you - I know you,” he enunciates, shaking his head, “I know what kind of a person you are and what you’ve worked so hard to achieve. I shouldn’t have jumped to conclusions without listening to your reasons. And for that I apologize.”

Another step closer and Alec grimaces a little. “This past few days, we really weren’t on top of our game, were we?”

Magnus’ smile turns a little amused and a little relieved as he also takes another step closer. “Let’s chalk it all up to a learning experience. A wise man once told me that relationships took effort.”

Yet another step closer, a small one; they’re so close now that Alec could bend down and kiss Magnus. “Yeah. Well, that was an understatement,” he mutters, smiling, too.

“You know what’s not an understatement?” Magnus whispers and then he leans up to capture Alec’s lips with his own.

It’s a slow kiss, a sweet hello, a loving welcome back. They made it.

And when the kiss ends, mouths parting reluctantly, Magnus rests one hand on Alec’s chest, over Alec’s heart, the other he fists in Alec’s jacket for reassurance. He looks his lover straight in the eyes and it feels like coming home.

“Let’s never do that again,” Magnus says in a hushed voice.

Alec settles his hands on Magnus’ shoulders and rubs them lovingly. “Agreed. I promise that next time I come across information concerning your people, I’ll tell you immediately.”

Magnus smiles and taps Alec on the chest with his finger. “And I promise that if it ever comes to a disagreement between us again, I’ll ask for an explanation first, I won’t just walk out on you.”

Alec kisses Magnus on the forehead and whispers, “Deal.”

There’s a burst of laughter behind them and a group of giggling, clearly drunk people staggers out into the alley.

Stepping out of Alec’s arms, Magnus glances over his shoulder and rolls his eyes in exasperation. Then he looks back at his lover and reaches out with a grin, saying, “I’m all into parties, but what
do you say we get out of here?”

Alec takes Magnus’ hand and with a wide smile of his own, he replies, “Yes.”
Off-Kilter

Chapter Summary

A Malec coda to the movie City of Bones. (Unbeta'd)

There’s a quiet, almost hesitant knock on the front door and Magnus Bane, the High Warlock of Brooklyn, dressed in nothing but his golden silk dressing gown and black slippers, throws the door open and sprawls against it seductively - he likes to live dangerously.

But when he realizes who came a-knocking, he straightens up immediately and blinks, startled and not a little confused. “It’s you!” he exclaims.

There on the threshold, namely, stands the eldest son of the Lightworm family. Magnus would’ve been less surprised if he found Asmodeus himself standing there!

The boy - who still looks a little pale, despite all the magic Magnus poured into him to save him from the demon poisoning - drops his eyes to Magnus’ naked legs; yes, the dressing gown barely reaches past Magnus’ knees. What can he say, he likes it… airy.

“Do you even own any pants?” the boy asks, bewildered.

Magnus quickly regains his composure and waves his hand haughtily. “Pants are for people with calves less shapely than mine,” he states, voice perfectly serious.

The boy’s eyes zero in on Magnus’ calves automatically. When he realizes what he’s doing, he looks away and blushes so hard Magnus fears he might actually faint. It’s adorable!

Turning, Magnus beckons over his shoulder. “Come on in and do close the door, will you, young Nephilim?”

The door shuts with a click and the boy says, “Alec.”

Magnus, who was about to sit down on the couch, pauses. “I beg your pardon?”

The boy clears his throat once more and takes another step closer. “It’s Alec, Alec Lightwood? And I’m not that young, I am eighteen.”

Magnus feels slightly amused - and very old. True, in this time and age, eighteen-year-olds might be considered adults, at least legally, but to him who’s several centuries old even Alec’s parents seem young. Or better said, immature. Not that he thinks about Alec’s parents. Ever. God forbid!

Sitting down and crossing his legs, Magnus smiles indulgently and allows, “Of course you are. Alec.”

Alec clears his throat once more and takes another step closer. “I came here to thank you, Mr Bane.”

And yet again, Magnus is startled. What is it about this Nephilim that makes Magnus Bane - Magnus Bane! - lose composure so quickly? What kind of a hidden talent is it? Is there a special
rune for that?

“Thank… me?” Magnus asks, uncertainly.

Alec nods. “Yes. I don’t remember much from the night of the attack on the Institute - or from the week that followed, actually - but Izzy told me that I’m only alive because you arrived in time to help me. And to warn her about the attack.”

He drops his eyes to his hands. “I think-I think it was very brave of you. That you came. Even though the Institute was under attack by demons. You didn’t have to do that. You didn’t owe us - or me - anything. And yet you came.” He looks up again. “So, I wanted to thank you.”

Magnus could drown in those blue eyes. He’s always been particular to this exact shade. And Alec’s eyes seem to hide unimaginable depths. Magnus is mesmerized.

And so, instead of responding with a quip of some kind, Magnus replies in earnest, “You’re welcome… Alexander.” He hazarded a guess - Alec, Alexander - and from the redness that touches the boy’s - young man’s, he’s eighteen after all! - cheeks, he guessed right. He’s awesome like that.

Alec clears his throat again; he seems to do that a lot. Just like he seems unable to look Magnus in the eyes for long, always glancing away and then back again, as if daring himself to look.

“Don’t-don’t take this the wrong way, Mr Bane–”

“Magnus,” Magnus interrupts him.

Alec blinks. “Magnus,” he corrects himself. “But do we owe you anything? Some payment, I mean. It’s always been Hodge or my parents who handled these things and I don’t know–”

If anyone else asked him that - or if Alec used a different tone of voice, put-upon rather than uncertain - Magnus would feel insulted. And he would charged them through the roof. But it obviously wasn’t meant to be an insult, just the opposite.

Magnus decides that, pretty face aside, he really likes Alexander Lightwood.

“You don’t owe me anything, Alec,” Magnus says gently. “Yes, usually, I get paid for my services - and very handsomely! - but that night…” He pauses, waiting till Alec actually looks him straight in the eyes. He wants to be sure he got his point across. “I helped you because I didn’t want you to die, not for the money.”

“Oh,” Alec whispers and licks his lips. “Uhm, well, thank you again for not letting me die, then.” He smiles a little.

Magnus smiles back. “My pleasure.”

They stare at each other for long moment, neither of them saying anything. To Magnus it seems like Alec’s contemplating something, he can almost see the gears turning in the Nephilim’s head. A small wrinkle appears between Alec’s eyebrows and now Magnus is certain that the boy’s thinking about something really hard.

It’s fun to watch Alec; his face’s so expressive that Magnus can pinpoint the exact moment when Alec arrives at some decision.

Well, this should be interesting.
Alec nods to himself and squares his shoulders. His face turns a deep shade of red and he says in a tight, strained voice, “Magnus, will you have sex with me?”

*By all that’s holy!* Magnus thinks as he chokes and starts coughing, dropping both feet to the floor and bending forward a little to catch his breath again.

“Well your pardon?” Magnus wheezes as he finally gets himself under control.

Alec’s face turns even redder - soon, he’ll turn downright purple! - but he doesn’t budge and with the same bravado he repeats his request, “Will you have sex with me?”

Magnus blinks at him. And then some more. “Why? And why *me*? Not that I’m not gorgeous and completely irresistible,” he can’t help but add, even though he still sounds rather confused.

Alec’s shoulders slump a little and some of the color disappears from his face as he looks away. “Because I almost died and I’ve never had sex. With anyone. Ever. And I don’t—” He takes a deep breath. “I don’t want to die without *knowing*.”

Then he looks at Magnus again; his eyes are earnest, honest and frank when he continues, “And I trust you. I haven’t even told anyone yet that I… that I’m not—” His voice trails off and he drops his eyes again, whispering, “But I trust you.”

Magnus’ heart goes out to him. He knows all about secrets and Alec’s sincerity, his misery touches something deep inside him, a place he thought dead, frozen for over a century now. The place that wants… that wants… *something more*.

Magnus stands up and walks over to the Nephilim. He touches Alec’s chin and makes him look up. Alec seems so open and guileless, this is no trick. He looks down at Magnus’ mouth and licks his lips, once, twice, pink tongue running over pink lips. And Magnus, who only wanted to… he only wanted…

He doesn’t remember what exactly he “only” wanted before because now he’s overcome by a pull so strong he simply can’t fight it - and he kisses Alexander Lightwood, deeply, passionately and fiercely… lovingly, gently and sweetly… knowing full well he’ll never be able to go back from this.

Nor will he ever want to.
I was asked to write a sequel to my City of Bones movie Malec ficlet Off-Kilter (Chapter 580). Alec and Magnus make love. (Yes, I actually wrote sex. Huzzah for me!)

They make love.

The golden light of the setting sun’s making the bedroom look downright magical as they step in, Magnus walking backwards, pulling Alec after him while nibbling on his lips and making him smile. And when they come to a stop, just a foot or so away from the bed, Magnus pulls away and lets his dressing gown drop to the floor, unashamed of his nudity.

Alec’s breath catches in his throat and hesitantly, he lifts his hand, his need to touch reflected in his eyes as he lowers them to Magnus’ smooth, unblemished chest. He lets his fingers hover over Magnus’ skin and looks up, asking for permission - which he’s given.

And so he runs his fingertips down Magnus’ chest and leaves them resting on Magnus’ stomach, making Magnus shiver with anticipation and want. By all that’s holy, Magnus hasn’t wanted anyone like this for years now! The feeling makes his toes curl.

Magnus lifts Alec’s chin and looks into his eyes; into those beautiful, gorgeous blue eyes. He asks, “Are you absolutely sure about this?” Because if Alec’s not, if there’s even a shadow of a doubt in his mind–

But Alec just smiles at him and nods. “Yes,” he says with complete certainty. And then he starts pulling off his own clothes which stubbornly refuse to cooperate, forcing a frustrated sound out of Alec’s throat.

Magnus laughs softly and reaches out. “Let me,” he offers, unzipping the rebellious gray hoodie with a flick of his fingers and a tiny spark of magic that makes Alec blink.

A moment later, the hoodie’s on the floor and Magnus grabs Alec by the buckle on his belt and pulls him close, and as he proceeds to divest Alec of his jeans, he bends his head down to kiss Alec’s throat, making Alec’s breath hitch. Alec grabs Magnus by his naked hips to stop himself from falling.

And then the jeans are gone and the t-shirt follows and Magnus wraps his arms around Alec and with a mischievous grin he drops back and twists them around in mid-fall so that when they hit the bed together, bouncing on the thick, soft mattress, Alec is on his back with Magnus leaning over him.

“Still sure about it?” Magnus whispers. “Because we can sto–”

Alec pulls him down and kisses him.

They move up the bed, rolling and twisting and still kissing, and they end up on their sides, facing the window, Magnus the big spoon to Alec’s little one, and at some point, Alec lost his boxers, too,
and now they’re both naked and Magnus lifts one of Alec’s legs and bends it a little to gain access and he prepares Alec, making him sigh and gasp a little, making him shiver as he runs his lips over Alec’s shoulder, tickling him with his stubble.

And then they join, holding onto each other, moving together, rocking against each other, so close they’re almost one person and Magnus is kissing the back of Alec’s neck and Alec bends his head forward, giving in, giving himself over, letting Magnus in fully with a soft moan...

Magnus makes sure that Alec reaches climax first. He wants to make this really good for Alec, he needs to make sure that Alec knows just how good it can be… and when Alec falls apart in Magnus’ arms, Magnus soon follows, drowning in his lover’s - his lover’s! - bliss.

Once it’s all over, they lie there like that, still joined so intimately, a moment or two or three longer, with Alec in Magnus’ arms, with Alec’s back pressed tightly against Magnus’ chest, breathing together in and out, in and out.

Then Magnus kisses the back of Alec’s neck again and gently, lovingly runs his lips over the still healing wound there. So close, Magnus thinks. Alec could’ve been gone and this would’ve never happened. So close...

When they disengage and Magnus cleans them up, summoning a wet washcloth from the bathroom with a flicker of his fingers - Alec shivers as Magnus runs the terrycloth across his oversensitive skin - Magnus drops onto his back with a sigh... and Alec rolls over, back into his arms, surprising Magnus because, well, Magnus is not sure what exactly he expected but this is a pleasant surprise. He hugs Alec around the shoulders and pulls him closer. He feels... content.

They’re silent for a moment and then Alec asks in a quiet voice, “Are you, hm, are you seeing anyone?”

Magnus raises his eyebrows. “Shouldn’t you have asked that before?” he replies teasingly. He’s sure that Alec’s smiling, even though he can’t see his face what with Alec’s head tucked so close. “Alright. Then would you be interested in seeing - dating! - a Nephilim?”

Magnus decides to tease Alec some more. “A Nephilim? Any Nephilim? Oh, I don’t know–”

Alec raises his head and looks Magnus straight in the eyes from only a few inches away. “This Nephilim!” Alec specifies firmly. “Me. I would really like to see you again. And not just because of the amazing sex!” he rushes to add before Magnus can say anything, apparently already learning to recognize the sparkle of mischief in Magnus’ own eyes.

“I want to see you, you” –he taps Magnus on the chest with his finger– “I want to talk to you, get to know you. If you let me, that is.” Alec ends his speech on a soft, uncertain note, almost shy.

Magnus stares at him for a moment, searching for something in Alec’s face and finding it there: naked honesty. He smiles.

“It would make me very happy, Alexander,” Magnus whispers, and he means it. Just the thought of seeing Alec again makes him happy, so happy.

Dangerously happy. Because Magnus could get used to this, he thinks as he lifts his head to capture Alec’s lips in a soft, slow kiss, he could grow dependent on it, and so easily, too. Will the pain of future loss - inevitable loss - be worth it?

Alec pulls back a little and smiles down at him, hair falling into his bright eyes and lips a little
swollen, and Magnus’ heart skips a beat. Yes, it’ll be worth it.
That Spellbook, Almost Forgotten

Chapter Summary

Alec returns Magnus’ spellbook to him. A silly Malec ficlet. (Unbeta'd)

When Magnus finally throws his door open, he’s wearing nothing but his pajama pants and a very put-upon expression - which brightens only very slightly when he sees who’s standing there.

“Alexander!” Magnus - almost - whines. “My favorite among the Shadowhunters, I do love you dearly, I truly do, but unless the gates of Edom broke open and an army of demons is rampaging in the streets, I’m sure that whatever it was that brought you to my doorstep, can wait until the clock strikes a less unholy hour than five in the morning!”

Alec grins and his heart does a little shimmy in his chest when he hears Magnus say, I love you dearly. “I’ve got something for you!” he says, almost bouncing on his toes because this truly couldn’t wait.

“Whaaaaaa–?” Magnus yawns, rubbing one eye sleepily - and then he freezes and chokes, making a sort of snorting sound, when he sees what Alec’s holding.

“That’s my spellbook!” he exclaims, sleep immediately forgotten, as he grabs the book out of his boyfriend’s hands.

Alec’s grin widens. “That it is.”

Leafing through the thing, checking that all the pages are really there, Magnus asks, “Where did you find it?”

“Among Valentine’s things,” Alec explains, still smiling as he watches Magnus pet the thing as if it were his favorite cat.

Magnus looks up at him in disbelief. “And Aldertree just let you take it?”

Alec clears his throat. “Well, I might have… kind of… taken it? Without letting him know?” he admits, still more than a little uncomfortable with the prospect because, Raziel, it’s against the rules! It’s so against the rules that it’s making Alec downright twitchy!

Magnus’ eyes widen. “Alexander, did you just steal from the Clave? For me?” he breathes out, one hand pressed against his bare chest in the overly dramatic gesture of the truly stunned.

Flushing a little, Alec looks away. “I wouldn’t call it stealing, the book was your-hey!” he yelps, arms flailing, as Magnus grabs him by the front of his t-shirt and drags him inside, lips attached to lips - and slams the door shut behind them.
Chapter Summary

Raziel grants Valentine his wish. A Malec death story. (Unbeta’d)

They take refuge in the Seelie realm, the Downworlders, and when Raziel grants Valentine his wish, the wave of angelic energy shatters on its boundaries. They survive and they rejoice and they celebrate long into the night.

But the next morning brings a sobering discovery: the world as they knew it is gone and nothing will ever be as it was before.

Because when they return home, the Downworlders, they find the mundanes living their lives as they’ve always done, unaware of the supernatural in their midst. But all the Shadowhunters, all the hated, reviled, scorned… honored, respected, loved Shadowhunters are gone, and in their place, Circle members patrol in the streets.

Luke asks Magnus to find Clary for him, to find the child of his heart using magic. And Magnus does, he finds Clarissa… or at least the charred pieces that are all that’s left of her, a little more than shards of bones at the banks of Lake Lyn. And just a few steps away, another set of remains, almost unrecognizable if not for the Herondale ring buried in its ashes.

And then Magnus needs to know - he didn’t want to know before, he refused to look in fear of what he might find - but now he needs to know, he needs to… he needs–

He finds Alec on a beach, in a place that one could call beautiful - if not for the dark stains of ash on the golden sand, if not for the charnel smell hanging in the air. There he finds him, just one pile among many, recognizable only by the bow with its string snapped, its magic spent. And next to it, an electrum whip. Isabelle.

Slowly, Magnus approaches all that remains of his lover. He sinks to his knees and reaches out, the blackened bones so brittle they crumble at the slightest of touches. And Magnus can’t breathe, his throat’s so thick, his eyes burn and his lips tremble. Because he doesn’t understand. He doesn’t understand!

Why?

He pulls the damaged bow out of the ashes of its owner and closes his eyes, whispering an incantation of seeing, reaching out and pulling knowledge from the past. And then he sees…

... he sees demons crawl out of the gateway to Edom... he sees Shadowhunters battle the creatures on the beach... he sees Alec and Izzy fight back to back... he sees Alec drop to his knees with a scream as his bond with his parabatai breaks... he sees Izzy hug him on the ground while all around them the battle rages on... he sees them look to the east where a bright light explodes in the distance... he sees the wave of angelic energy race across the city and the river and the beach... he sees both demons and Shadowhunters burn and scream and die... he sees Isabelle try to shield her brother with her own body - in vain.
Magnus snaps back to the present with a cry of agony. They burned. They all burned, annihilated by angelic fire, because Valentine willed it so. He didn’t want just them, the Downworlders, gone but everyone whom he considered impure, unfaithful. His own people. His own family.

Magnus’ Alexander.

And as he kneels there, cradling Alec’s broken bow in his arms, he stares at the pile of his lover’s ashes - such a remarkably small pile for someone so large! - and he wonders: had he stayed and fought by Alec’s side, would that have changed anything? Magnus doesn’t know. He’ll never know. All he does know is that past can’t ever be changed, no matter how much grief and sorrow it causes.

Gently, he lays his hand on the sand and with a little prod of magic, he makes all the ash and bones and angelic weapons sink deep, deep into the earth where no one will ever find them, disturb them, desecrate them. The broken bow he lets go as last.

This beach, it is a beautiful place. A fitting place to lay your lover to rest.

“Goodnight, my love. Sleep well.”
The Length of a Man's Weapon (the Meaning of It)

Chapter Summary

Alec does have a very, very long weapon on the show. It’s huge! And thus, a parabatai ficlet was born. (Unbeta'd)

“Hey, I heard your new blade arrived from Idris,” Jace calls after Alec, hurrying down the hallway to catch up with his parabatai. “Don’t you feel so special they had to have one fitted specifically to your needs?”

“No, I don’t,” Alec grumbles. “It’s just more bother. And Raziel forbid I lose this one. I would very much prefer a standard weapon so that I could just go to the weapons room, grab one at random and be ready to go.”

Walking sideways, hop-skipping to keep up with Alec, Jace asks, waggling his eyebrows, “So, what’s the new blade like?”

Alec glares at him out of the corner of his eye. “It’s a blade like any other. Just longer, is all.”

Jace makes grabby hands. “Show me!”

And Alec slaps at them in annoyance. “No! Let it– Jace, would you just…! Hey!”

But Jace snakes his arms around Alec’s waist and while Alec pushes, Jace pulls and with a triumphant “A-ha!” he draws the newly forged Seraph Blade out of his parabatai’s holster and activates it - punching a hole in the hallway’s wooden paneling with a loud crack.

“Woah!” Jace breathes in awe as he extricates the blade from its wooden prison and twirls it around; the blade swishes through the still air. “That’s one long-ass weapon. It’s not a Seraph Blade, it’s a damn longsword!”

Glarin again, Alec grabs for his weapon and yanks it out of Jace’s hands. “Give me that before you poke someone’s eye out with it,” he snaps. Unceremoniously, he deactivates the weapon and slams it back into its holster with a “So there!” huff.

Jace grins and sidles up to Alec, prodding him in the ribs with his elbow. “You know what they say about men and the length of their weapons, right?” he murmurs, giving Alec a look.

Grimacing, Alec groans, “Please, spare me.”

“You wanna tell me it’s not true, oh parabatai o-mine?” Jace asks, poking him once more.

Alec just smirks and raises his eyebrows, very pointedly. And then, without a word, he starts walking again.

Jace’s eyes widen and he stands there and gapes after him for a while, before recovering. “Really?” he exclaims, stunned, and sets after his parabatai at a hasty pace. “I mean, really? Hey, Alec! Alec!
Wait a minute…! You can’t just-hey!”
It’s almost 3am and all’s dark and quiet and they’re both stuck in the infirmary, Alec and Jace, age thirteen and twelve, respectively, because between them, they have enough broken bones, cuts and bruises to make an army proud.

With a little pained noise, Alec turns onto his side, towards Jace, and whispers, “Why did you do that?” Because he really needs to know and he hasn’t gotten a chance to ask yet, what with everyone swarming around them like anxious bees ever since it happened.

Jace turns onto his side, too, confirming that he wasn’t asleep, just as Alec suspected. For a moment, he just stares at Alec, his eyes glittering in the low light falling in through the open door at the end of the room from where the healer’s keeping watch over them.


Alec huffs and rolls his eyes impatiently. “Not that! I know why you did that!” And he does. And he’s not angry with Jace, just the opposite: he’s grateful. Because if Jace hadn’t done that, everything would’ve been much, much worse now. “Why did you risk your life to save me?”

And Jace did. He risked more than that. Because when the rabid werewolf the Shadowhunters brought in for trial got loose and started running rampant through the Institute, the boys had the bad luck to get caught in a blind hallway. And when the beast with matted fur and glowing eyes chose Alec as its next victim and pounced - Jace didn’t hesitate a second!

He pushed himself off the wall hard to gain momentum then he grabbed Alec by the waist, and without looking, without even checking, he jumped through one of the stained glass windows, pulling Alec with him - and the wolf’s jaws snapped together barely an inch away from Alec’s face, missing him.

They hit a tree and then every branch on their way down while brightly colored shards rained down all around them and they hit the ground - luckily, it was just grass, not the pavement in the back! - with a loud, sickening crack of breaking bones.

But bones can heal. Cuts and bruises can heal. A werewolf bite - lycanthropy! -that is incurable. And even before their people - mom and dad and everybody else - came running, having tracked and killed the beast first, of course, Jace crawled over and kept asking, over and over again, “Were you bitten? Alec? Alec, did he bite you? Did he?” until Alec croaked out a painful, “No…”

Why did he do it, though? Why did Jace save him? Because, yes, they’re friends - for Alec, well, for him Jace means more than that, though he hasn’t even dared to give his feelings a name yet - but this… this went beyond friendship. Could it be that Jace… does Jace have feelings for Alec, too? Or is it something else?
Jace’s quiet for so long that Alec prods again, “Well? Why did you do it?”

“I had my reasons,” Jace replies simply, still staring at Alec, and he would’ve probably shrugged had he not dislocated his shoulder.

Alec twists his lips impatiently. “And will you explain them to me?”

Another pause. Then, “Yes.”

“When?” Alec asks, irritated, when Jace falls quiet again.

“Soon,” Jace says. And with that, he turns onto his back and closes his eyes, effectively ending their conversation.

Alec glares at him in the dark, feeling the overwhelming urge to climb out of his bed, despite all his aches and pains, and pummel Jace with a pillow. What an insufferable idiot!

Several months later, Alec finally gets his answer. And it’s less and at the same time more than he hoped for.

No, Jace doesn’t feel the same way about him, apparently - Alec’s heart breaks at that - but... but he wants Alec to become his parabatai! Jace wants to bind his soul to Alec’s! Alec had never thought that anyone would ever want him as their parabatai. Him!

He doesn’t know what to say, what to do, how to answer that request because he feels elated to have been chosen and by someone like Jace no less - but he also feels bruised and hurt, his hopes and dreams shattered...

But in the end... in the end, he says yes and he buries his feelings deep, deep inside where they’ll stay safe, hidden, and nobody will ever know.
“Let me go, Shadowhunter,” the Seelie Queen whispers, head a little bent, eyes large and glittering, lips turned up in a seductive smile. “Let me go and I’ll grant you what your heart desires the most.”

They caught her and they brought her in, Alec’s people, his parabatai, his sister and Clary Fairchild, and now the Queen’s stuck here, in the Institute’s prison, locked inside a fairy ring that not even the ruler of all Seelies can break.

Walking slowly along the edge of the ring, circling his captive, Alec raises his eyebrows. “Oh, will you? Then tell me, Your Majesty, what do you think my heart desires the most? You seem to know a lot about me.”

Slowly, she turns with him, following him with her eyes. “Your lover is a warlock, the High Warlock of Brooklyn, Alexander Lightwood,” she says softly, her voice as sweet as honey. “An immortal… which you’re not. I can change that.”

Alec’s lips quirk up a little. He doesn’t stop; they have turned a full circle now and start another one. “You can, huh?” he says.

The Seelie Queen nods. “Yes. Let me go and I’ll prove it to you. A fair bargain. Seelies cannot lie.”

Alec walks on. “And you think this is what my heart desires the most? To live forever?”

Now she frowns a little. “You love Magnus Bane, I can see that. Everybody can see that. Of course you would want to be with him till the end of days, till the end of everything. And I can grant you that. Just let me go!”

Finally, Alec stops. He stands there for a long moment, staring at the Seelie Queen who stares back, lips parted and cheeks a little flushed with anticipation. He stares at her and stares… and then he smiles. And his expression is full of pity.

“As you said, Seelies cannot lie, so I believe you believe that what you just said is the truth,” Alec says. And then he sighs and shakes his head. “Which just proves that wisdom does not come with age.”

The Queen narrows her eyes and bares her pointy teeth in a sneer. “Did you just call me stupid?”

Alec shrugs. “Unwise, I would say. But take it as you want. My lover might be immortal, true, but I’ve never wanted to be immortal myself. Does it fill me with sadness that our ways will part one day? Certainly. But we are what we are. We knew it from the very start.”

He shakes his head again. “Becoming immortal would mean changing a fundamental part of myself, my very nature. Maybe the very thing Magnus loves about me. Who I am as a person. And then what? Would he still want me? The new, changed me? Would we still be together ten, twenty,
a hundred years from now? Who knows? I don’t. But I don’t plan to find out, to exchange everything I have now - friends, family and, yes, love - for the unknown. It’s not in my nature. I have everything I need now and a whole lifetime with the people I love ahead of me. To demand more would be foolish, selfish… even preposterous.”

The Queen takes a belligerent step forward, upper lip wrinkled in a snarl. “He’ll leave you. Once you’re old and gray and ugly, he’ll leave you! He’ll move on to younger, prettier things! And then you’ll remember this moment and weep!”

Alec gives her a hard, cold look. And then he nods once. “So be it,” he replies with a terrible finality. “But I’ll never sell out justice for personal gain. You will be send to Alicante and you will stand trial for breaking the Accords and joining forces with Valentine Morgenstern. I’ll make sure of that.”

“And I’ll kill you for it!” the Seelie Queen hisses, stepping so close to the edge of the fairy ring that it starts to fizz and crackle.

“Maybe,” Alec responds, unafraid. “But not today.”

And with that, he leaves the cell, head held high and heart steady, unafraid.
It’s the middle of the night and Alec’s lying there, on his side in their bed, with his left arm bent under his head, using it as a pillow, and his right hand outstretched and resting lightly on Magnus’ naked chest. He can’t sleep, so he’s watching Magnus and thinking. Always thinking…

He loves Magnus. He loves him so much his heart aches with it. And he knows that Magnus loves him back. Love has never been an issue between them. It’s everything else, it seems, that’s tearing them apart, endless obstacles thrown in their way, tripping them, exhausting them…

Like the box now. Not the box per se but what it represents: Magnus’ immortality, memories of his loved ones tucked safely away for when he starts to forget. One day, maybe, something of Alec’s will be in there, too. Or maybe not, who knows. The future remains a mystery even to beings as powerful as the warlocks…

And does Alec actually want to end up in that box, just another memory among so many? “A brave soldier, like someone else I know.” That’s what Magnus said about George. Alec wonders if Magnus realizes just how much his comment hurt. He meant it well, Alec knows that, but those words made Alec feel even less significant, less unique than he already felt, faced with all those mementos of people his lover loved before him…

That moment made him realize - truly, deeply, profoundly - that one day, there will be someone else. It’s not a possibility, but a certainty. And he doesn’t want Magnus to suffer and be alone, of course he doesn’t, he wants Magnus to be happy and smile because the world’s a better place with a happy, smiling Magnus in it but…

Alec can’t help but ache inside. Because for him, there’ll never be anyone else but Magnus. Until his dying breath, Alec’s heart will belong to Magnus Bane. That’s the way of the Shadowhunters, they only love once. Even if Magnus died tomorrow - Raziel forbid! - Alec would never love another…

But it’ll never be so for Magnus. The box made that very clear to Alec. He tried to ignore this reality but it won’t be ignored any longer, not with reminders as tangible as those pieces of other people’s lives in that box. And he can’t help but wonder if one day, when Alec’s long gone, dead and buried, Magnus will pick up one of Alec’s arrowheads, run his fingers gently over its sharp edges and smile wistfully, and if he’ll say to someone new in his life, “Alexander was special. A brave Shadowhunter, like someone else I know…”

Long gone, grown old and feeble, or maybe killed on the battlefield, fighting a fight that no one will even remember ten years later. Alec thought he knew what he preferred - a long and happy life with Magnus - but after having seen the box, he doesn’t know anymore…

And as he lies there, thinking about growing old, he stares down at his hand, resting lightly on Magnus’ chest, over his lover’s steadily beating heart - and he sees his skin sag and turn paper thin,
sallow and dotted with liver spots, he sees himself age in a time lapse. He can’t seem to move or turn away or even blink as his hand turns ancient and skeletal, as it shrinks and shrivels until only the bones remain, ugly and repulsive on Magnus’ young-looking, glowing skin. And then even the bones turn to dust, blown away by a sudden gust of wind, and there’s nothing left of Alec at all…

And Magnus sleeps on, unaware…

Alec wakes up with a gasp, lying there, on his side in their bed, with his left arm bent under his head, using it as a pillow, and his right hand outstretched and resting lightly on Magnus’ naked chest. At some point he fell asleep and a dream of rumination turned into a nightmare. He stares down at his hand, whole and hale and young, and he shivers, suddenly chilled to the bone…

He knows he won’t be able to fall asleep again, not tonight, so he gets up and gathers his things, moving around on silent feet so as not to wake his lover, and when he leaves, closing the door behind him with a soft click, he heads back to the Institute, instinctively seeking out the company of his own people, short-lived and prone to untimely death…

And Magnus sleeps on, unaware…
No Fairytale Ending, No Happy End

Chapter Summary

A Malec ficlet set after 310. Catarina saves Alec’s life. And yet. (Unbeta’d)

In the end, it’s Catarina who saves Alec.

When Magnus calls her from Alec’s cell phone, she’s reluctant to come, Lorenzo’s warning still fresh in her mind, but there’s something in Magnus’ voice, something that tells her that the situation’s truly dire, her dear friend wouldn’t call her otherwise. And so she comes and she almost weeps at what she finds: Magnus without his powers and Alec dying.

She teleports them all to Magnus’ loft and there she heals Alec, removing the arrow from his chest while Magnus holds his lover’s hand, his heart breaking at not being able to take Alec’s pain away. So Alec lives, but as with all Shadowhunter tales, this one doesn’t have a fairy tale ending, there’s no happy end.

Catarina holds the arrow so that they can see it, Alec sitting up in his and Magnus’ bed, propped up on a small mountain of pillows, an ugly scar on his chest, and Magnus right there, beside him, still holding his left hand tight, like a lifeline. And Catarina shows them where the problem lies: the arrow’s broken off tip, the tiny sliver of adamas that’s gone - still stuck in Alec’s chest, shifting, shifting, shifting ever closer to his heart with each breath he takes.

“Why can’t you just remove it?” Magnus asks and he’s not accusing, there’s no blame, just dread and the fear of loss yet to come.

Sighing, Catarina sets the arrow aside. “When Jace used his stele on Alec, to stop his bleeding, he saved his life, he closed the worst of the wound and gave him a fighting chance - but Alec’s tissue, it grew around the broken of piece, it enclosed it tight. And if I tried to remove it now…” She shakes her head. “It would kill him, instantly, because it’s too close to his heart.”

“But-but what you’re saying is that it’ll kill Alec anyway,” Magnus points out, now desperate and despairing. “Maybe not today or tomorrow, but eventually, it’ll reach his heart and it’ll kill him. Isn’t that so?” He squeezes Alec’s hand so hard his knuckles turn white and his eyes, no longer cat-like, turn wide and pleading.

This will never be something Catarina will get used to, not even after decades of working in hospitals, giving bad news to the loved ones of people in her care. “Yes,” she replies quietly and honestly, she’s never been one for lying. “Eventually, it will kill Alec.”

Silence settles over the room and the both of them, Magnus and Catarina, they turn to Alec who has yet to say a word. He sits there, his face unreadable, eyes down. Then, as he takes a deep breath, a slight grimace flickers over his features and he lifts his right hand to rub at the fresh scar: the adamas sliver shifted, sending a sharp, stabbing pain through his chest.

“Alexander,” Magnus whisper in a voice thick with emotions.

And Alec turns to him and smiles, lifting their linked hands to his lips and kissing the back of
Magnus’ hand. “I’m alright, nothing I can’t take. I’ve had worse than that,” he assures Magnus but the lie doesn’t make Magnus feel any better.

So Alec drops the brave face and lets them see just how exhausted he is and how much it hurts and he says in a low voice, looking from Magnus to Catarina and back, “We keep this a secret, alright? They don’t need to know, my family. They have enough problems to deal with. And I especially don’t want Jace to know, he would blame himself when there was nothing he could’ve done differently, it was a no-win situation.”

He shakes his head. “Like Catarina said, there’s nothing that can be done. One day this” –he rubs at his chest again– “will kill me. Or tomorrow I might die at the hands of a demon. I was taught my whole life long that a Shadowhunter’s life was about sacrifice. Well, I guess this will be mine.”

“No,” Magnus says, shaking his head. “No, we’ll find a way to fix this. There’s always a way. As long as there’s life, there’s hope, Alexander,” he insists, face set, and then he pulls their linked hands closer and presses his cheek against the back of Alec’s hand, closing his eyes.

Alec pauses for a moment, then smiling again, he says, “Alright.”

But when he glances Catarina’s way, she knows the truth, she can see it in his eyes. Alec doesn’t believe it. He doesn’t believe he can be saved. But for his lover, for Magnus, he will pretend.