Malec's Point of View of the Mortal Instruments

by Writesalott

Summary

I scoured the whole series (Infernal Devices, Mortal Instruments, Magnus Bane Chronicles, Shadowhunter Academy Series etc) to find every hint about Magnus's and Alec's relationship. I have pieced it together in order, following the plot from the books and written all the missing parts. If there is no Malec POV for the scene then I wrote it in Magnus's POV. If there is a Magnus POV for the scene I wrote it in Alec's POV. There are so many places in the books where Alec and Magnus are forgotten so I wanted to write them as the focus. It is as canon as I could get it so be warned lots of SPOILERS for whoever hasn't read the books.

Just so you know:
All the chapters that have the book title in them eg. (CoB) (CoA), (CoG), (CoFA), (CoLS), (CoHF) all take place during those books and have direct dialogue in them written by Cassandra Clare mixed with dialogue I wrote. Some other chapters still have direct dialogue from the series just not the main books. I will explain where that dialogue came from in each chapter summary as it applies.

This story has been translated into Russian: https://ficbook.net/readfic/4766980
Meeting Alec (CoB)

Chapter Summary

This chapter is Mangus's point of view of the scene in City of Bones where Magnus meets Alec. It has direct dialogue from City of Bones in it but I tried to gloss over some of it so I don't bore people who have already ready the books.

Edited (Beta read) by 'The Dork Lord' from Fanfiction.net. Thanks!

Magnus wasn't really sure why he was having this particular party. He had told himself it was for his cat's birthday, but Chairman Meow had long since been hiding under his bed.

There wasn't anyone at this party he wanted to see. His life had become a strangely dull thing as of late. Most of its contents bored him—each apathetic day bleeding into the next.

He was starting to worry about Clary, though. When called Jocelyn she said Clary and her had fought and Clary had run off. Magnus hadn't heard anything since then. They were a month overdue for renewing her memory spell.
Magnus had become rather fond of the girl. It was odd. She shouldn't be anything to him, and yet he had watched her grow. Once every two years was the most frequently he had ever seen a child before.

Magnus heard his buzzer go off once, twice. He moved to the door and flung it open wide for the dramatic effect.
He saw a girl standing there; a shadowhunter with long black hair and dark eyes. He couldn't quite place her surname on just those features, but if he had to guess, he would have said she was a Lightwood.

"Magnus? Magnus Bane?" the girl asked.

"That would be me," Magnus said.

There were three others with the girl, all Nephilim like her: A smug blond, a dark-haired figure standing behind him—and Clary! What the hell was she doing here surrounded by shadowhunters?
Where was her mother? He just managed to keep the total shock off his face as he addressed them.
To his great surprise, they had an invitation to his party.

"I must have been drunk," he said, to explain their invitation. He threw the door open. "Come in. And try not to murder any of my guests."

Invitation or no invitation, he would have let them in. He wanted to know why Clary was here. How she had even known to come here? How much did she remember? Jocelyn would never have let her come alone if she knew. Magnus suspected she didn't.

Magnus enjoyed the looks of wonder on their young faces as they took in his humble abode. Or rather not so humble, magically-enhanced loft when it was set up for a party. All the furniture was moved aside, the windows blocked for his undead guests and, of course, to make the disco ball stand out more over the dance floor. Clary's gaze, in particular, was fixed on his bartender's second set of
"You like the party?" Magnus said just catching himself in time before he called her Biscuit. It was the nickname he had given her at some point over the years. He couldn’t quite remember the names origin but somehow it suited Clary weather her mother liked it or not. Magnus thought Jocelyn may not yet have totally forgiven him for calling her daughter a banshee. Clary had been very young at the time. Just a toddler who had screamed after pulling on his cat’s tail. Biscuit was at least better than banshee. Jocelyn needed to learn to relax.

"Is it in honor of anything?" Clary asked him.

"My cat's birthday," Magnus said, then feigned surprise that Chairman Meow wasn't partaking in the festivities.

The blonde reappeared again followed closely by the dark figure that seemed to be the blonde's shadow.

"MAGNUS BANE!" The voice had come from across the room. Magnus turned to see a vampire. Magnus couldn't quite recall his name, maybe it was Gregor. Apparently someone had ruined his bike with holy water. Magnus bet it was his rather unexpected Nephilim guests. The blonde, probably.

This vampire was getting on Magnus's nerves. He twitched his finger and closed off the man's windpipe—not that he needed air, but it would shut him up for a while. Magnus then went one step farther and magically removed the man from his apartment.

"That was impressive," the blonde said.

"You mean that little hissy fit?" Magnus said. Why did he have these parties anyway? They just made him grumpy. I guess it was slightly better than spending the whole day alone with his cat.

"We put the holy water in his gas tank, you know," the blonde's shadow said, laughing. Magnus was surprised to hear the shadowhunter’s laugh. He had the most glorious laugh. So infectious.

"Alec," the blonde said. "Shut up."

So that was his name. Alec.

"I assumed that," Magnus said, amused. "So is that why you wanted to crash my party? Just to wreck some bloodsucker bikes?"

"No," the blonde said. "We need to talk to you. Preferably somewhere private."

Magnus tried to act like a warlock would if randomly approached by shadowhunters he didn't know. And since Clary didn't know him, what else could he do? He did, however, notice the not-so-subtle threat the blonde made. This blonde was officially not in his good books.

Magnus led them into his bedroom, which was the only room in the house he hadn't magically shifted into a dance floor. The only room left with a door that closed.

Magnus listened to Clary, keeping up the pretence of not knowing her. It would be best if Clary asked her mother about her memory, and not Magnus.

Magnus wasn't sure where he fit in this situation. Sure he had known Clary all her life but he wasn't her uncle, or anything. He was a stranger. Would Jocelyn have wanted him to tell Clary? Jocelyn had never told Clary anything: who her father was, who her mother had been, who she was.
"We went to the Silent City to see what the Brothers could pull out of her head," the blonde said. "They got two words. I think you can guess what they were."

Ah, so it was no use pretending after all. He knew exactly what the Silent Brothers found there. His signature. He really shouldn't have left it here, but he had been so proud. Such a unique spell; so expertly done. He had no choice now but to tell them.

"So you recognized Clary when we walked in," the blonde said, once Magnus was done explaining. "You must have."

"Of course, I did," Magnus said, exasperated. "And it was a shock, too."

Clary wanted her memories back, and Magnus tried to explain that they would return gradually. The blonde was still bugging him through, making demands. Magnus really didn't like him. What was Clary doing with this untrustworthy Nephilim?

"I didn't damage you," Magnus's couldn't help but snarl. He didn't like being accused of such a thing. Accused of harming the first child he had ever cared for.

Suddenly words were pouring out of him. He hadn't made her feel wrong her whole life. Every teenager felt different. And it was no picnic being different, he should know. He was telling them about his parents next, admitting things he had never told anyone. He wasn't sure what had come over him. It had been so long since such powerful emotions had gripped him that he found he couldn't stop the speaking. It was as if a tsunami had broken through some invisible barrier and consumed him.

"It wasn't your fault," the blonde's shadow said. "You can't help how you're born."

What an unusual thing for a Nephilim to say, Magnus thought. Opposite of the superiority complex that seemed to be part of their basic genetic makeup. The complex that let them judge and punish warlocks and fairies for what they were born, and werewolves and vampires for what had been done to them.

Magnus composed himself. Clary wouldn't listen, and Magnus, giving up, showed her his copy of the Grey Book to help unlock her memories.

Magnus locked eyes with the dark-haired boy who shadowed the blonde and noticed the boy's eyes for the first time. Blue. Beautiful blue eyes. Magnus couldn't help admiring the features of his face. His gaze was fixed as if a magnet held him.

The boy flushed bright red under Magnus's gaze. The boy's response thrilled him. But those blue eyes were looking down at his hands now. Magnus wished the boy would look up. It seemed a shame to hide such a beauty.

"Now if we're done here," Magnus said. "I'd like to get back to my party before any of the guests eat each other."

The blonde looked furious, but the blue-eyed boy put a hand on his shoulder.

"Is that likely?" Blue Eyes asked.

His name was Alec, right? Alec was looking at him now, Magnus couldn't help but be amused by the expression on Alec's face. Such open, honest curiosity. So unlike most Nephilim.

"It's happened before," Magnus said, still looking at Alec, staring transfixed at his eyes.
Magnus came back to his senses and shooed the teenagers out of his room, but he kept an eye on Alec. So the dark haired girl was the blue-eyed boy's sister. If she was a Lightwood then Alec was too… but a Lightwood with blue eyes? Magnus remembered generations of rude and superior green-eyed Lightwoods, but he couldn't recall blue.

"Over here," Alec called as he spotted his sister. "And watch out for the phouka."

"Watch out for the phouka?" the blonde said.

"He pinched me when I passed him earlier," Alec said stiffly, "In a highly personal area."

The blue-eyed boy was so affronted by this, being touched so by a stranger. He was innocent. Magnus had a sudden desire to cure him of his virtue. His mind went through all the things he wanted to do to that boy, all the ways he could make the boy blush. That delicious boy. It was a nasty thought. It made him feel a bit like a dirty old man, but he couldn't help it. The boy was gorgeous!

Alec's sister appeared to be quite drunk, saying the mundane they had brought was a rat. Alec, misinterpreting his sister's words as metaphorical, became very defensive. Alec's protectiveness over his sister was rather adorable, Magnus mused.

Magnus watched the teenagers squabble. His gaze kept drifting back to blue eyes. He shook his head. What the heck was going on? Sure, the boy was a knockout, but really.

Magnus, from where he stood in the shadows watching them, heard them use his name several times, in regards to un-ratting the mundane.

Resigned, he went over to explain to Clary that her friend would turn back into a human on his own in a few hours. Trying to undo the spell would be more dangerous than helpful. Clary did not take this well, but that couldn't be helped. She had always been fiery.

Magnus heard a commotion at his door. It sounded like those crazy vampires again. He was getting thoroughly sick of this party. He excused himself from the bickering teenagers.

Magnus gave the stupid bloodsuckers until sunrise to repair their bikes and called it quits on his whole party. He was so done with it anyway.

His guests left, knowing better than to stick around after one of his parties ended. He did not like stragglers, at least conscious stragglers. It was all well and good if you passed out, he would send you home in the morning, but if you can walk you left when Magnus told you to. Or else, "I'd say it was a pleasure to meet you, but it wasn't," Magnus said as his Nephilim guests left. "Not that you aren't all fairly charming, and as for you—" He looked right at those blue eyes and winked. "Call me?"

The High Warlock of Brooklyn's number was on file at the Institute, after all. Blue Eyes could call. It was possible but unlikely. Flirting with him was too much fun to resist, either way.

The boy's look of astonishment was adorable. His blush was even better somehow. His stuttering was so flustered, like the attention was astounding to him. Had the boy never looked in a mirror? Poor blue eyes didn't actually get a single word out before his blonde friend pulled him away. Watching them leave, Magnus felt like his dull life had been hit with a jolt of electricity.
Alec hadn't known what to make of being flirted with—or hit on, or whatever that was—by Magnus Bane. He was trying very hard not to think about it.

"Didn't you have any fun at the party, Alec?" his sister asked.

"No."

"I thought you might like Magnus. He's nice, isn't he?"

"Nice?" Alec said, incredulously. "Kittens are nice. Warlocks are—" He paused. "Not."

"I thought you might hit it off," Izzy said. "Get to be friends."

"I have friends," Alec said, looking at Jace. Friends he couldn't have he reminded himself. It had been nice to be noticed though. Shocking, but nice.

Magnus had just gotten his place back in order. The furniture magically returned to their proper place, making the loft look like it had rooms again. The dance floor and lights were gone and his cat was happily sleeping on the sofa. Chairman Meow didn't much like his parties, it was true.

He had just changed into his pajamas, a rather fetching kimono today, and gotten into bed when his buzzer went off again. He decided to do his usual bit this time. He pressed the intercom and spoke in a loud, threatening voice.

"WHO DARES DISTURB MY REST?"

"I'm from the Clave."

"Oh, yes," Magnus said, eagerly. "Are you the one with the blue eyes?"

"No. My eyes are usually described as golden. And luminous."

"Oh, you're that one," Magnus said, his happy feeling fizzing out. The stupid blonde was back. "I suppose you'd better come up."

"I was sleeping," Magnus said, to explain his attire. Clary and the blonde were standing in his entrance way.

The blonde, he could tell, was going to say something very rude about his choice in sleeping clothes, but thankfully Biscuit interrupted before the blonde could speak his--no doubt--hideous thoughts.

Magnus felt his cat brush up against his legs. Clary was such a sweet girl. She even remembered his cat's name. If he didn't know who her father was, he would never have guessed she came from such dark roots.

Clary's rat, or rather her friend, was missing.

Magnus, somewhat reluctantly, helped them as best he could. He told them which vampire was most likely to have taken the rat, where the vampire's lair was, and where the nearest church was. He drew the line at making a portal for them. For good measure he slammed the door in their face. He didn't want them thinking he enjoyed helping them or they may start coming to him for every little thing.

Magnus remembered, over a hundred years ago, when he had first gotten mixed up with Shadowhunters. Will Herondale had shown up drenched from the rain, pain written on every line his face as he begged for help. Will eventually become Magnus's friend but being mortal he had long
since died. That was the trouble with shadowhunters, Magnus thought. They made you care with their bright life force and the fierce way they loved. Then they up and died on you. Magnus was determined not to get involved with shadowhunters again. It was painful to think of Charlotte, Henry, Will and even Jessamine now. Jem was still around but as Brother Zachariah he wasn't quite the same. Tessa was his last link to those people but she was in the Spiral Labyrinth.

Nope, Magnus vowed, not even if the boy with those beautiful blue eyes came back would Magnus Bane get emotionally involved with shadowhunters again.
Healing Alec

Chapter Summary

At the end of City of Bones Alec is known to have been healed by Magnus behind the scenes. I wrote that scene based off what was said at the end of City of Bones and what Alec is thinking during the short scene published on Cassandra Clare's website where Alec asks Magnus out for the first time.
Edited (Beta read) by The Dork Lord on fanfiction.net

Magnus was trying not to think about the boy with blue eyes, but he wasn't having any luck. Remarkable beauty was always worth an ideal thought or two he knew, and black hair and blue eyes had always been his favorite combination. That shadowhunter from the other night had worn it well. He didn't have much to distract himself with since he had no clients and was alone in his loft with his cat.

Magnus sighed. They boy probably wouldn't call. Shadowhunters weren't much for dating downworlder's, and they were even less fond of men dating men. Magnus wasn't sure what had come over him—besides the fact that boy was terribly attractive that is.

Just then, a fire message appeared in front of Magnus, and he reflexively snatched it up and read. Within the next minute, he was out the door and on his way to the Institute.

At the Institute, Alec was lying semi-conscious on a bed. He could feel the poison running through his veins, and he somehow knew that there was nothing anyone could do. He didn't have enough brainpower to come to terms with that. He was just floating, waiting to sink under. Alec was vaguely aware that he was trying to speak, calling for Jace, Izzy, and his parents. But the noises coming from him were small. He would have been screaming if he'd had the energy. Everything hurt.

Alec thought he heard raised voices and people leaving the room, then cool, gentle hands on him. He wasn't sure what was going on and found he didn't care. His reality was just the poison running through him. Nothing else was strong enough to break through to his mind.

It wasn't until the pain started to leave him that he realized what was happening. He saw bright lights of blue and red that lit up the room—bright, brilliant lights that seemed to be chasing the pain away. Alec could felt his body come back to him, felt his mind clear. He grabbed the wrist of the one who stood over him and held on as if his life depended on it.

As his mind and vision cleared more, he realize who his savior was. Magnus's face was all he could see. All his focus was on his hand holding tight to the warlock's wrist. He wasn't sure if he stayed like that for an hour or a day, but Magnus never left.

Magnus watched the shadowhunter sleep. He was surprised at the look on Alec's face and the way he was gripping his wrist, even in sleep. No shadowhunter he had healed before, actually no—nothing he had ever healed before, was so unwilling to let go of him. Magnus couldn't help it. He found he didn't want to leave. The boy was in no danger now, but Magnus stayed, letting Alec hold his wrist while he slept.

Alec awoke, unaware he had fallen asleep. He was surprised to see Magnus still there. The sun was
rising now, which meant Magnus had stayed all night. Alec, staring at Magnus's face, noticed how the gold in his eyes lit up with the sun. He found himself thinking about how oddly beautiful this man was. There was grace in those cat-like eyes.

Magnus didn't stay long enough for Alec to get up the courage to say anything. Alec had thought about it while admiring the sun reflecting off the warlock's eyes, thought about why this warlock had bothered to save him. Alec was so grateful to be alive, but he wasn't sure how to make the words 'thank you for saving my life even though you didn't have to oh, and by the way, you're kinda beautiful' pass through from his mind into spoken word.

Magnus left in silence once the sun was full in the sky.
Magnus was back in his loft. Healing the Shadowhunter boy hadn't been too draining, and he almost didn't regret not charging the Institute for that particular service. After all, it would have been a shame to lose such a beauty. He wasn't sure why he hadn't sent them a bill, now that he thought about it. There had been something there, in the boy's eyes and the way he had clung to his wrist so tightly.

He would probably never see the Lightwood boy again, it was true. That is unless he came to the high warlock to purchase magic or something. Though he had to admit; he liked the boy. Flirting with him had been the highlight of Magnus's week. Magnus thought about that for a moment and realized he needed to get out more.

Just then the buzzer rang. Magnus loved this bit. If it was someone he didn't know, he would scare them to death.

"WHO CALLS UPON THE HIGH WARLOCK?" Magnus bellowed in his most intimidating voice.


Magnus froze, shocked. Alec was here. Why? And why was Magnus so delighted about it?

Before Alec came up his stairs, Magnus made sure to compose himself. He never showed his hand first. Best to find out what the boy wanted before he revealed too much of himself.

Alec appeared in his doorway. He was wearing jeans and an old sweater. The sweater had a hole in it, Magnus realized. This boy needed serious fashion help. Magnus grinned a little inside when he noticed the boy's eyes move over Magnus's body until it reached his low-hung jeans and then instantly stared at his shoes. It was such an innocent gesture.

"Alexander Lightwood," said Magnus. "To what do I owe the pleasure?"

Alec seemed to look around Magnus to the apartment. "Do you have… company?" he asked, tentatively.

Magnus wasn't sure why Alec would come all the way here to ask that question. He folded his arms across his chest in a somewhat defensive way.

"Why do you want to know?" Magnus said.
"I was hoping I could come in and talk to you."

"Hmmm," Magnus said. He none-too-subtly ran his eyes over the Shadowhunter's body. He could tell that under the sweater and loose jeans were some truly beautiful muscles. He was intrigued.

"Well, all right then," Magnus said, turning around he let Alec in.

"Would you like some tea?" Magnus sat on his ottoman while Alec seemed to be taking in Magnus's apartment.

"Sure."

Magnus snapped his fingers and a chai tea from Joe, the Art of Coffee appeared in Alec's hand. Magnus enjoyed Alec's jump of surprise.

"By the Angel —" Alec said.

"I LOVE that expression," said Magnus. "It's so quaint."

Alec stared at him. "Did you steal this tea?"

Magnus ignored the question. The Shadowhunter had not come to ask him if he stole tea either.

"So," Magnus said. "Why are you here?"

Alec sipped his tea. Apparently the fact that the tea was stolen didn't seem to bother him so much after all.

"I wanted to thank you," Alec said, "for saving my life."

Magnus was shocked. A Shadowhunter coming back days after a healing when there wasn't even a bill to quibble over, to thank Magnus, a Downworlder, for saving his life? Magnus wasn't even sure this had ever happened to him before.

He leaned back on his hands exposing more of his middle and was pleased to see Alec's eyes switch focus. It thrilled him somehow, his ability to distract the boy.

"You wanted to thank me," Magnus said.

"You saved my life," Alec said, this eyes returning to look at Magnus's face now. "But I was delirious, and I don't think I really thanked you. I know you didn't have to do it. So thank you."

Magnus was aware his eyes were wide in surprise. He was fairly sure his eyebrows had disappeared up into his hairline. "You're... welcome?"

"Maybe I should go," Alec said, setting his tea down.

"After you came so far?" Magnus said sitting up. "All the way to Brooklyn? Just to thank me?"

Magnus couldn't help it; his internal grin was now external. This boy had not come all the way down here just to thank him either.

"Now that would be a wasted effort," Magnus said. Magnus reached out and put his hand on Alec's cheek. He brushed along Alec's cheekbones and was thrilled by the reaction this simple touch had on Alec. He could see the surprise in Alec's face, yes, but also the fire in his eyes.

"Huh," Magnus said to himself dropping his hand. This boy was attracted to Magnus. The way his touch had been received told Magnus that much. But he was a Lightwood and Magnus knew Lightwoods.
"What?" Alec said. Magnus thought he saw worry in the boy's face. "What is it?"

"You're just," Magnus started, but didn't know how to finish. He didn't like that he didn't' have a snappy comeback and, seeing Chairman Meow behind him, quickly scooped up his cat as a way to stall for time. "Not what I expected," Magnus said.

"From a Shadowhunter?"

"From a Lightwood."

"I didn't realize you knew my family that well."

"I've known your family for hundreds of years," Magnus said. He was searching Alec's face for some sign, signs of all the Lightwoods Magnus had known. What was different about this one? "Now your sister, she's a Lightwood. You—"

"She said you liked me," Alec said bluntly.

"What?" Magnus said.

"Izzy. My sister. She told me you liked me.Liked me, liked me."

"Liked you, liked you?" Magnus said, burying his face in his cat's fur. "Sorry, are we twelve now? I don't recall saying anything to Isabelle..."

"Jace said it too," Alec continued bluntly. "That you liked me. That when he buzzed up here, you thought he was me, and you were disappointed that it was him. That never happens."

"Doesn't it?" Magnus said. Sure, Jace was pretty in an obvious way, but he was all too well aware of it. This, in Magnus's, opinion decreased his attractiveness by about a thousand. Alec was the beauty of the two; it was obvious. "Well, it should."

"No — I mean Jace, he's... Jace."

"He's trouble," said Magnus. "But you are totally without guile. Which, in a Lightwood, is a conundrum. You've always been a plotting sort of family, like low-rent Borgias. But there isn't a lie in your face. I get the feeling everything you say is straightforward."

"Do you want to go out with me?" Alec said leaning forward.

Magnus blinked. Again his boy had him stunned. It was rare for Magnus to feel surprised. It was a fantastic feeling.


Alec was chewing his lip. He was obviously nervous about Magnus's answer—but why? Had Magnus's light flirting been the first attention his boy had ever gotten? Maybe he didn't know what he wanted.

"Why do you want to go out with me?" Magnus inquired, rubbing Chairman Meow's head. "Not that I'm not highly desirable, but the way you asked, it seemed as if you were having some sort of fit—"

"I just do," Alec said. "And I thought you liked me, so you'd say yes, and I could try — I mean, we could try—" Alec put his face in his hands. "Maybe this was a mistake."
Magnus realized what was going on.

"Does anyone know you're gay?" Magnus asked.

Magnus got his answer in the way Alec's head jerked up, and his breathing quickened. Flight or fight response.
"Clary," Alec said, hoarsely. "Which is . . . Which was an accident. And Izzy, but she'd never say anything."

"Not your parents. Not Jace?" Magnus said. Magnus was fairly sure now that Jace was Alec's Parabatai. It seemed strange that Alec would hide so much of himself from such a close friend.

"No. No, and I don't want them to know, especially Jace."
"I think you could tell him," Magnus said. He remembered Alec's sister Isabelle talking about Jace when he arrived to heal Alec. "He went to pieces like a jigsaw puzzle when he thought you were going to die. He cares —"

"I'd rather not," Alec said a little too fast; his breathing was still coming quickly. Magnus thought there must be more to this. Some other reason Alec didn't want Jace to know.
"I've never had a date," Alec said in a low voice. "Never kissed anyone. Not ever. Izzy said you liked me, and I thought —"

"I'm not unsympathetic," Magnus said, and it was true, but he didn't do pity dates either. "But do you like me? Because this being gay business doesn't mean you can just throw yourself at any guy and it'll be fine because he's not a girl. There are still people you like and people you don't."

"Yes," Alec said after a moment. "I like you."

Magnus once again found himself taken aback but this boy. Alec was so blunt. He was curious too about this Alec Lightwood, so different from any other Lightwood he had met previously. The puzzle intrigued him, and so did the affection he felt for those blue eyes. A Lightwood with blue eyes—a rarity indeed.

"It's so odd," Magnus said. "Genetics. Your eyes, that color —" Magnus shook his head to clear it of the Lightwoods filling his memories.

"The Lightwoods you knew didn't have blue eyes?"

"Green-eyed monsters," Magnus said, grinning. Magnus dropped Chairman Meow on the ground. The cat moved over to Alec and rubbed against his leg.

"The Chairman likes you," Magnus said, and he decided that would be his excuse. His excuse to date a Shadowhunter who was in the closet, as the mundanes would say, who might be in love with his straight friend, and who clearly didn't know what the hell he was doing. His cat liked him. Great excuse! Catarina will totally buy that one.

"Is that good?"

"I never date anyone my cat doesn't like," Magnus said easily and stood up. This was, of course, a lie. He had dated centuries before his cat was born.

"So let's say Friday night?" What was he doing? This was probably his worst idea ever! Ragnar could never know. The teasing would be intolerable.

But he couldn't help but say yes. Alec had his attention in every way.
"Really?" Alec said obviously relieved. All of this boy's emotions were plain on his face. "You want to go out with me?"

"You have to stop playing hard to get, Alexander. It makes things difficult," Magnus said. He was grinning again.

"Come on; I'll walk you out." Magnus headed for the door, Alec right behind him. Alec seemed rather distracted though since he almost banged into the front door.

Magnus looked at the slightly disconcerted Alec as he tried to recover from his klutziness, and felt a sudden desire to kiss the boy. He didn't remember how long it had been since he had wanted to kiss someone just for the sake of kissing them. A romantic kiss. This would be Alec's first kiss Magnus thought, and he liked that somehow.

"What is it?" Alec said, noticing the way Magnus was looking at him.

"Never kissed anyone?" Magnus said. "No one at all?"

"No," said Alec, "Not a real kiss —"

"Come here," Magnus said and took Alec by the elbows pulling him close. Magnus put his hands under Alec's chin and tilted his face up to Magnus's. He kissed the boy softly, sweetly and was rewarded by the hitching gasp that escaped Alec. Alec didn't know how to kiss really, but he was enthusiastic and welcomed Magnus's tongue. Magnus could almost feel the thrills running through Alec now. He liked that he could get this reaction out of the Shadowhunter. Somehow it made him a little smug.

Magnus jerked, taken by surprise again. Alec's hands had found Magnus's waist and moved up into his shirt. He relaxed instantly his hand moving down Alec's perfectly muscled arms, then his sculpted chest, finally finding the belt loops in Alec's jeans and using them to pull him closer. Now Magnus released Alec's mouth and moved to Alec's throat. He was thrilled to find Alec slide a little down the wall like his legs had been turned to jelly. Before Alec could fall all the way down the wall, Magnus pulled away.

Alec was red in the face and looked like he had melted a little. Alec's heart was beating so fast that Magnus almost thought he could hear it.

"Now you've been kissed," Magnus said. He reached behind Alec and yanked the door open. "See you Friday?"

Alec cleared his throat. He looked almost dizzy. Suddenly Alec reached forward and grabbed the front of Magnus's shirt, pulling Magnus toward him. Magnus stumbled, and then Alec kissed him. It was hard and fast; messy and unskilled but so enthusiastic Magnus had to give the boy points.

Magnus felt his heart skip a beat while the Shadowhunter's hands were pressed against his chest. What was happening to him?

Alec broke off the kiss and drew back, letting go of Magnus's shirt.

"Friday," he said. Alec backed away down the landing.

Magnus stared as he walked away, only to find himself staring at Alec's blue eyes when he turned around. Magnus crossed his arms again still grinning.

"Lightwoods," Magnus said. "They always have to have the last word."

Magnus shut the door, then heard Alec leaping down his stairs. He was definitely a Lightwood, Magnus thought, but a very strange one.
A very strange Lightwood, who is shy, insecure, into blondes, in the closet and had a date with Magnus. Oh dear. He needed help. This date could be a disaster. What he needed was a backup plan.

Magnus was halfway through dialing Catarina's number before he had finished deciding to call her.

"I need you to swear to keep a secret," Magnus said as soon as she picked up the phone. "And you definitely can't tell Ragnor!"

"Hello to you too, Magnus," Catarina said. "What is so important?"

"First, you have to swear," Magnus said. "I mean it, Catarina."

"Alright, alright," Catarina said wearily. "I swear to keep your silly secret, whatever it is."

"Alec Lightwood asked me on a date," Magnus said.
"A Shadowhunter?" Catarina said, recognizing the surname.

"Yes," Magnus said. "He came here with Clary when I had that party, and I couldn't stop myself from flirting with him."
"Well Magnus, you do flirt with most things, so I am not surprised. I don't see what the big deal is, though."

"I said yes," Magnus said.

"I see," Catarina said. "Did you agree to go out with him because you think the Lightwoods are jerks, and you want to show them you can corrupt their baby boy?"

"I do think the Lightwoods are jerks," Magnus said. "And that does sound like something I'd do. Damn it."

"No, it doesn't really," Catarina said. "You're sarcastic twelve hours a day, but you're almost never spiteful. You have a good heart under all the glitter."

Magnus knew this wasn't technically true. Catarina was the one with the good heart, but he didn't bother contradicting her. They had had this conversation before.

"Even if it was spite, no one could blame you," Catarina continued. "Not after the Circle, after all that happened."
"No," Magnus said. He remembered Alec's innocent gaze moving over Magnus's body, Alec's trembling hands while he asked what he had come to say, Alec's beautiful blush.

"It's probably a bad idea—it's probably my worst idea this decade—but it had nothing to do with his parents at all. I said yes because of him."

"Good luck on your date, then," She said, after a moment of thought.

"Much appreciated," Magnus said. "But I don't need good luck; I need assistance. Just because I'm going on this date does not mean it will actually go well. I'm very charming, but it does take two to tango."

"Magnus, remember what happened the last time you tried to tango. Your shoe flew off and nearly killed someone."

"It was a metaphor. He's a Shadowhunter, he's a Lightwood, and he's into blondes. He's a dating
hazard. I need an escape strategy. If the date is a complete disaster, I'll text you, 'Abort.' Then you call me, and you tell me that there is a terrible emergency that requires my expert warlock assistance. Will you help me?"

"I will help you," she promised after a long pause. Magnus could picture her face just from hearing her voice. That look of exasperation. "But you've called in all your dating favors for this century, and you owe me."

"It's a bargain," Magnus said.

"And if it all works out," Catarina said, cackling, "I want to be best woman at your wedding."

"I'm hanging up now." Magnus was not going to get in that deep with a Shadowhunter. He was just going to have a fun date. His life had been so dull lately. This would be good for him.

Now, what to do on his date with Alec? Alec was new to this, so Magnus decided dinner was best. Nice and basic. His favorite restaurant would work. Magnus knew the werewolf that ran it quite well, and they had excellent food.

The most important thing was, of course, selecting his outfit. Magnus couldn't believe how much fun he was having going through his wardrobe. He finally settled on a pair of red Ferragamo pants, matching shoes, and a black silk waistcoat that he wore without a shirt because it did amazing things for his arms and shoulders.

He was gleeful at the thought of what Alec's eyes would do when they saw his waistcoat. Magnus wondered what Alec would do for the date. Would he just wear that same old sweater? Did the boy own anything else besides fighting gear? He hoped Alec would put an effort in at least. If Alec looked this good in old sweaters...

Magnus found himself quite looking forward to Friday.
Alec was running. He couldn’t remember ever running so fast. How late was he? Would Magnus have given up on him by now?

Why had Jace wanted to train today of all days? And why did Alec have to be such a lousy liar that he couldn’t come up with a way out of it?

Alec ran up Magnus’s steps and hit the buzzer. The door opened, and Alec run up to Magnus’s apartment.

He was sweating. He probably looked horrible too. The small attempts he had made to improve his appearance didn’t seem to matter when he saw Magnus. Magnus looked fabulous, as always. His posture casual and unconcerned. Maybe Magnus had changed his mind and was going to send Alec home?

Magnus was holding his cat. He sat gracefully on the sofa like he didn’t have a care in the world.

“I’m sorry I’m late,” Alec panted. “Jace wanted to do some weapons training, and I didn’t know how to get away—I mean, I couldn’t tell him—”

“Oh, Jace, that’s it,” said Magnus. Alec blinked.

“What?” Alec said. Had Magnus been expecting Jace?

“I briefly forgot the blonde one’s name,” Magnus explained, with a dismissive flick of his fingers.

Alec couldn't understand what Magnus could mean. If Magnus had forgotten Jace, JACE, of all people then what hope did Alec have at being memorable to the warlock?

“Oh. I’m—I’m Alec.” Magnus' hand paused halfway through his dismissive flick when Alec spoke.

Magnus was looking at Alec. He seemed to be taking in Alec’s sad attempts to dress for a date. Alec was wearing cologne which he had never before worn. He had stolen it from Jace, but he wasn’t about to tell Magnus that. Alec had picked out one of his two nice blue shirts and put on a pair of jeans that didn’t have holes in them. It turned out he only owned one pair of jeans without holes. This, compared to Magnus in all his glory, seemed like very little indeed.

“Yes,” Magnus said slowly. “Your name I remember.” Alec was relieved, and a little stunned. Magnus had forgotten Jace, but remembered him? “Don’t worry about it. Have a drink.”
Magnus then pushed his own drink into Alec’s hands. Alec hadn’t been prepared for this. He had been so busy worrying about being late, worrying Magnus would call the whole thing off as a bad plan, worrying about so many things, everything except actually being on a date. He hadn’t had time to worry about being on a date, a date with Magnus Bane of all people! He was suddenly so nervous he was shaking all over and spilled the red drink all over himself and Magnus’s floor.

He was a Shadowhunter! He had good reflexes. What was wrong with him? Alec was so embarrassed, he didn’t say a word. He wished the ground would come up and swallow him whole.

“Wow,” said Magnus dryly. “You people are really overselling your elite Nephilim reflexes.”

“Oh, by the Angel. I am so—I am so sorry.” And he was. He couldn’t remember, at his very moment, ever being more sorry about anything in his life. Although, he thought that might have been his nerves talking.

Magnus shook his head and gestured, leaving a trail of blue sparks in the air, and the puddle of crimson liquid and broken glass vanished.

“Don’t be sorry,” he said. “I’m a warlock. There’s no mess I can’t clean up. Why do you think I throw so many parties? Let me tell you, I wouldn’t do it if I had to scrub toilets myself. Have you ever seen a vampire throw up? Nasty.”

“I don’t really, uh, know any vampires socially,” Alec said. Alec didn’t know what to say. He couldn’t help picturing Vampires throwing up blood, and it horrified him. How was he supposed to come up with things to say to Magnus if he didn’t know anything about Magnus’ world. Maybe this had been a terrible idea. Maybe Magnus was just taking pity on him by going out with him at all.

“I’ll get you a new shirt,” Magnus said breaking the silence.

“You don’t have to do that,” Alec said weakly. “I’ll just—” But the warlock had already left the living room into what was probably his bedroom.

Alec stood covered in red liquid in Magnus’s living room. He didn't like just standing there, and the drink was starting to feel sticky against his skin. He took the shirt off and stood even more awkwardly—if that was possible—holding his stained shirt in Magnus’s living room.

Magnus returned a moment later holding a shirt that looked suspiciously to Alec like it had sequins on it.

Magnus stopped dead staring at Alec. Alec couldn’t figure out why. He almost spoke but realized he didn’t know what to say. Why was Magnus staring at him like that?

Magnus offered Alec the shirt suddenly coming out of his daze.

“I’m—sorry about being a lousy date,” Alec muttered. He was sure now that he was a lousy date. He mean really he showed up late, he spilled a drink and he didn’t even know what to say.

“What are you talking about?” Magnus asked. “You’re a fantastic date. You’ve only been here ten minutes, and I already got half of your clothes off.”

This made Alec realize why Magnus had been staring at him, which made Alec suddenly more embarrassed. He wasn’t used to being stared at for that reason. Jace was always the one people liked.

“Come on,” said Magnus. “We’re going to dinner.” Magnus led the way out of his apartment and Alec followed. Alec didn’t say anything. He was racking his brains trying to think of something to
Being visible around mundanes was making Alec uncomfortable, which wasn’t helping Alec’s ability to speak either. Magnus had led him to a crowded subway. Crowds made Alec jumpy. And on top of that, he was wearing a shirt that had sequins on it! He wanted nothing more than he use a glamour rune and hide.

“Can’t I use a glamour rune?” Alec asked Magnus, as they boarded the F train.

“No,” Magnus said. “I’m not looking like I’m alone on a Friday night just because you don’t want mundanes staring at you.”

Sitting on the subway didn’t improve Alec’s mood. There were too many people around him who could see him. He had seraph blades on him, his stele and his Witchlight of course. He never left the institute without them. They were well hidden in his clothes but still he felt them there more than usual in the crowd.

Alec still had no idea what to say which wasn’t making him feel better about being a good date.

There were purple and blue posters staring down at them, showing elderly couples looking sadly at one another. The posters bore the words ‘With the passing years comes impotence’.

Alec couldn’t help but look at the posters. Time meant something different to Magnus than it did to him. Magnus would never get weak and old. He could never age. Just one more thing Alec didn’t know how to relate to. How was he supposed to have a conversation with Magnus? Anything he said would surely seem stupid and childish.

Two guys came onto the train at the next stop and cleared a space right in front of Magnus and Alec.

It wasn’t until one of them began to swing himself dramatically around a pole that Alec really took notice of them. The other sat cross-legged and started beating time on a drum.

“Hello, ladies and gentlemen and whatever else you got!” the dude with the drum called out. “We’re gonna perform now for your entertainment. I hope you’ll enjoy it. We call it . . . the Butt Song.”

Alec suppressed a laugh. Anything called the Butt Song couldn’t be good. Together they began to rap and Alec had been right. It was a ridiculous song.

Alec had never heard anything quite like that song before. And he could probably go his whole life never hearing it again just fine. Magnus seemed to have enjoyed it though so Alec was still doing his best not to laugh. He wasn’t very good at this however and was worried his face was giving him away.

If he had been with Jace and Izzy, they would have been glamoured and laughing together in private at the song. Alec felt like an exposed nerve.

Alec did see Magnus put some money in the performer's pocket which just confirmed his suspicion that Magnus had enjoyed the music. If they didn’t even like the same music, how was he supposed to find a conversation topic? All he could come up with was was the weather which would have gone something like ‘Nice day we’re having huh?’ ‘Yes it is.’ The end.

Why did he have to like someone he didn’t know how to talk to?

They were off the train and waiting on the platform when Alec suddenly saw someone approaching Magnus. Alec reacted on reflex. The guy’s body language had screamed ill intent, and Alec had
moved instantly. All that Nephilim training. There was a howl and a scream and Alec had the attacker by the arm and flung him into the air. Alec’s boot was at the attacker’s throat when he landed.

Then Alec realized the attacker was just a kid. Just a mundane. A skinny freckled redhead mundane with braces.

“Dude!” The mundane said flapping his hands about. “I’m sorry! Seriously! I didn’t know you were a ninja!”

Alec removed his boot from the mundanes throat, feeling stupid. How many people had seen him? Again he wished he was wearing a glamour rune.

“I’m not a ninja,” Alec muttered. He wasn’t even sure what a ninja was, but he was sure he wasn’t one.

“You were amazing,” Alec turned. It was a girl who spoke. “You have the reflexes of a striking snake. You should be a stuntman. Really, with your cheekbones, you should be an actor. A lot of people are looking for someone as pretty as you who’d do his own stunts.”

Oh god! Alec thought. What was this? The mundane world made no sense. He looked at Magnus, every emotion plain on his face, he knew. Magnus put a hand on the small of Alec’s back and leaned closer to him. Magnus seemed to communicate something to the girl with a look because she backed off.

“No offense,” said the girl, digging in her bag. “Let me give you my card. I work in a talent agency. You could be a star.”

“He’s foreign,” Magnus told the girl. “He doesn’t have a social security number. You can’t hire him.”

The girl was looking at Alec in a strange way. Like Alec was a really great bow and arrow that she was sad to lose. Or her favorite Witchlight stone had been broken before she could use it.

“That’s a shame,” the girl said. “He could be huge. Those eyes!”

“I realize he’s a knockout,” Magnus said. “But I am afraid I have to whisk him away. He is wanted by Interpol.”

“Interpol?” Alec said. Magnus just shrugged. What the hell was an Interpol? Wait what else had Magnus said.

“Knockout?” Alec said. Magnus thought he was a knockout! This floored Alec for a moment.

“You had to know I thought so. Why else would I agree to go on a date with you?”

Oh, lots of reasons Alec thought like pity! But this was a much better reason. Magus thought he was hot. Alec grinned.

“I thought maybe—you know you said you weren’t unsympathetic—” Alec said. Alec’s pathetic thinking about why Magnus was here just spilled from his mouth. Why couldn’t he just keep his mouth shut?

“I don’t do charity,” said Magnus. “In any area of my life.” Alec felt better. He was glad he had asked the question. Magnus wanted to be here at least at the start. Then Alec remembered that if he
messed this up, he would only have himself to blame.

“I’ll give the wallet back,” piped up the mundane Alec had attacked. He wanted a glamour rune!

The mundane dropped Magnus’ wallet when he tried to hand it back.

“That wallet bit me!”

“This just isn’t your lucky night, is it?” Magnus said to the boy.

“Your wallet bites people?” Alec asked. Why would Magnus need a wallet that bit people? Did he often have his wallet stolen?

“This one bites people,” said Magnus, pocketing it. “The John Varvatos wallet bursts into flames.”

“Who?” said Alec. Magnus gave him a sad look, and Alec realized again this was something he didn’t have in common with Magnus.

“Totally cool designer,” said the girl. “You know, they give you designer stuff free when you’re a movie star.”

“I can always flog a Varvatos wallet,” said the mundane mugger. “Not that I’d steal and sell anything belonging to anyone on this platform. Specially, not you guys.”

He was giving Alec a weird look. The kind of look Alec only usually saw on Max’s face when he looked at Jace.

“I didn’t know gay dudes could fight like that. Like, no offense,” the mundane said. “It was badass.”

Alec blinked. The boy had said gay like it wasn’t a curse. He had said it like a description. The mundane world it seemed was more forgiving to people like Alec than the Shadowhunter world.

“You have been taught two important lessons about tolerance and honesty,” Magnus informed him severely. “And you still have all your fingers after trying to mug me on a first date, so this was the best outcome you could expect.”

Alec was really truly uncomfortable now. He didn’t like being in the spotlight. Magnus seemed to be good at it, though. Another thing they didn’t have in common.

“Aw, man, I’m really sorry,” said the mugger. “I wouldn’t want to mess up anybody’s first date with a ninja.”

Alec wasn’t sure what a ninja was, but he was going to find out. And would everyone please please stop staring at him. He didn’t think he had ever had so many mundane eyes staring at him before in his life!

“WE ARE LEAVING NOW,” said Magnus, in his best High Warlock voice.

Thank the Angel Alec thought.

“Have fun on your date, boys,” said the girl. Alec jumped and fought the instinct to turn and hold the girl’s arms behind her back. Alec felt her put her hand into his pocket. “Call me if you change your mind about wanting fame and fortune!”

“Sorry again!” said the mundane. Too many people! He felt again the desire for the earth to swallow him whole. He wanted to be almost anywhere else but surrounded by strangers who wished him well
They finally got the restaurant and Alec tried to relax. The subway was behind him. He needed to focus on not screwing up what was left of his date.

There was a large graffitied dinosaur obscuring the sign above the restaurant door. Alec squinted at it. Why wouldn’t they have cleared it off? He followed Magnus inside.

Alec heard the door close behind him. Alec saw many tables with guests eating and talking but before he registered more than that silence fell over the whole room.

Alec saw some guests hide under their tables. Shadowhunters were obviously not common guests here but still Alec thought this was a little extreme. Alec was hardly going to start just killing people randomly during his date.

“Magnus Bane!” hissed a man who had just scurried over. “You brought a Shadowhunter here! Is this a raid? Magnus, I thought we were friends! You could, at least, have given me a heads-up!”

“We’re here socially,” said Magnus. He held his hands up, palms out. “I swear. Just to talk and eat.”

The man who Alec noticed was a werewolf shook his head. “For you, Magnus. But if he makes any moves toward my other customers . . .” He gestured at Alec.

“I won’t,” Alec said. Unless they start killing people of course but then I’d have to call the Institute anyway, so why are you so freaked out? “I’m . . . off-duty,” was all he could think to say.

“Shadowhunters are never off-duty,” said the werewolf darkly but he led them to a table in the remotest part of the restaurant. They were right next to the swinging doors that led to the kitchen.

The waiter appeared at their table. Alec noticed he was a werewolf as well.

“Hello, my name is Erik and I will be your server this eve— Oh my God, you’re a Shadowhunter!” Erik’s voice had sounded bored until he had seen Alec. Alec had never thought about what Downworlders thought of Nephilim much before now. He hadn’t realized they were all so scared of him.

Alec looked at Magnus, who had a pained expression on his face.

“We can leave,” Magnus said. “This may have been a mistake.”

Alec refused to think of this as a mistake. So it wasn’t going perfect, but then again Alec was totally new to this. Maybe all dates were this bad? He was staying. He was staying with Magnus and finishing this date even if he sucked at being on a date.

“No, that’s fine,” Alec said. “This seems . . . fine.”

“You’re making me feel very threatened,” said Erik the waiter. And again Alec thought why? Is everyone that afraid of us?

“He’s not doing anything,” Magnus snapped. Alec was happily surprised for a moment. Magnus had defended him to a fellow Downworlder. Magnus had defended him in public to a room of people who hated him on site.

“It’s not about what he’s doing, it’s about how he’s making me feel,” sniffed Erik. He slammed down the menus on their table. “I get stress ulcers.”
“The myth that ulcers are caused by stress was debunked years ago,” said Magnus. “It’s actually some kind of bacteria.”

“Um, what are the specials?” Alec asked. He was determined just to be on a date and forget about the politics and prejudices in the room.

“I can’t remember them while my emotions are under this kind of strain,” said Erik. “A Shadowhunter killed my uncle.”

“I’ve never killed anyone’s uncle,” said Alec. And he knew it was true. In fact, he hadn’t killed that many demons either. He was usually defense while Izzy and Jace took offense.

“How would you know?” demanded Erik. “When you’re about to kill someone, do you stop and ask them if they have nephews?”

“I kill demons,” Alec said deciding not to add that he barely does that. “Demons don’t have nephews.”

“Maybe I should just order for both of us,” Magnus said, clearing his throat loudly. “And we can share?”

“Sure,” said Alec, throwing his menu down. That would make everything simpler.

“Do you want a drink?” the waiter asked Alec pointedly. “Or do you want to stab someone? If you absolutely have to, maybe you could stab the guy in the corner wearing the red shirt. He tips terribly.”

Alec didn’t know how to respond to that. He thought of explaining how he didn’t stab people. And if this werewolf ever encountered a demon he would be happy to have a Shadowhunter along. He thought of saying some less polite things as well but didn’t.

“Is this a trick question?” was all he said.

“Please go,” said Magnus to Erik.

Alec was now sitting alone with Magnus and at a lost for what to say. What had he learned about Magnus so far? He took the subway and Alec didn’t. He liked strange music, and Alec didn’t. He understood Downworld and mundane society and Alec didn’t. What could he say?

When the food did arrive, he saw Magnus had ordered kitfo raw. There were also luscious tibs, doro wat, a spicy red onion stew dish, mashed lentils and collards, and all of it laid out atop the thick spongy Ethiopian bread known as injera. There was also penne.

Alec then realized how hungry he was and since talking seemed to be beyond him eating was the next best thing.

“This is the best Ethiopian I’ve ever had,” Alec said and he meant it. He would have to tell Jace about this place. Though they probably wouldn’t want Jace here. If they thought Alec was scary, Jace walking in would have started a riot.

“Do you know a lot about food?” Alec asked and then realized that was the stupidest thing anyone had ever said. Magnus had been eating for hundreds of years before Alec was born. Magnus had probably eaten foods from faraway lands Alec didn’t know enough to dream about. “I mean, obviously you do. Never mind. That was a dumb thing to say.”
“No, it wasn’t,” Magnus said, frowning. And for a second Alec hoped they might actually talk about something, even if it was just food. Then Alec took a bite of the penne and suddenly his mouth was on fire. He was coughing and tears were streaming from his eyes.

“Alexander!” said Magnus.

“I’m fine!” Alec gasped. He didn’t want to appear weak in from of Magnus who was the least weak person Alec knew.

Alec snatched for his napkin to dab at his eyes, but once he got the napkin close to his face, he realized it was bread. He dropped the bread feeling stupider and grabbed the napkin for real this time. He hid his scarlet face and streaming eyes from Magnus behind the napkin. He was so embarrassed again. Why Magnus hadn’t ditched him yet was a mystery to Alec.

“You are obviously not fine!” Magnus said. Alec could see between the folds of the napkin Magnus try the penne.

Alec coughed into the napkin again when he heard Mangus speak. “This penne is much too Arrabiata, and you did it on purpose.”

“Werewolf rights,” Erik grumped. “Crush the vile oppressors.”

“Nobody has ever won a revolution with pasta, Erik,” said Magnus. “Now go get a fresh dish, or I’ll tell Luigi on you.”

“I—” Erik began defiantly, but trailed off. Alec still had his face in the napkin. “Of course. My apologies,” Erik said and left.

“What a pill,” Magnus remarked loudly.

“Yeah,” said Alec, putting the napkin down and tearing off a new strip of bread. “What have the Shadowhunters ever done to him?”

Magnus lifted an eyebrow. “Well, he did mention a dead uncle.”

“Oh,” said Alec. “Right.” He was looking at the tablecloth. He felt stupid.

“He’s still a total pill, though,” Magnus said.

Alec mumbled opened his mouth made a few noncommittal noises and closed it again. He stared at the table cloth. He couldn’t tell how Magnus felt about this date. Was Magnus even having an okay time?

“Quick warning,” Magnus said urgently, and Alec looked up. “The guy who just walked in is an ex. Well. Barely an ex. It was very casual. And we parted very amicably.”

Alec looked around, and sure enough, a man was headed toward them.

“You are scum!” The man hissed, and then picked up Magnus’s glass of wine and dashed it in his face.

“Get out while you can,” the man said to Alec. “Never trust a warlock. They’ll enchant the years from your life and the love from your heart!”

“Years?” Magnus spluttered. “It was barely twenty minutes!”

“Time means different things to those who are of faerie,” said Magnus’s ex. “You wasted the best
Alec was out of his league, and he knew it. If this guy was this upset about twenty minutes! How long had this date been now? Maybe thirty-five minutes? Forty? Alec had no idea.

Magnus started dabbing at his face with a napkin while Alec wondered again why Magnus was here with him?

“All right,” Magnus said. “It’s possible I was mistaken about the amicable parting.” He smiled. “Ah well. You know exes.”

Alec studied the tablecloth. It really was a nice tablecloth. Good thread count.

“Not really,” Alec said. He couldn’t help but tell the truth even if he knew it just made them more uneven. “You’re my first ever date.” Another thing he didn’t have in common with Magnus. Alec thought he would have to start writing these down soon, or he’d lose track there were so many.

Magnus looked down, and Alec returned to gazing at the tablecloth. The tablecloth, Alec couldn’t help note, had a hole in it off to the left. It looked like it had been burned in because the hole was in the shape of a perfect circle. Alec wondered what story there was behind that. Had a warlock burned the whole there? Or a faerie? They had fire, right? A werewolf claw could have done that too he guessed. He could probably rule out a vampire making the hole unless the vampire had used his fangs. But why would a vampire bite a tablecloth?

Magnus phone rang, and it snapped Alec to attention. Magnus answered it.

“An emergency, Catarina?” Magnus asked. “That’s terrible! What’s happened?”

Alec’s heart sunk. Isabelle had told him about this once. A trick for getting out of lousy dates. Have a friend call you away on an emergency so you could leave without hurting the other person’s feeling. At least, this meant that Magnus didn’t want to hurt his feelings? But it also meant Magnus didn’t want to be here with Alec. Magnus was having a horrible time just as Alec had feared.

“That’s so awful, Catarina. I mean, I’m really busy, but I suppose if there are lives at stake I can’t say n—”

Alec could only hear Magnus’s side of the conversation.

“Catarina, I don’t think you fully understand the point of what you’re meant to do here.”

“The only alcohol that has passed my lips is the wine that was thrown in my face,” said Magnus. “And I was totally blameless in that matter as well.”

What was going on Alec thought? Why would his friend have asked if Magnus had been drinking? How would this get Magnus out of his agreement to go on a date with Alec?

“Richard,” Magnus said almost as if answering a question.

“Fluid,” said Magnus. “What kind of fluid?”

Alec started at Magnus. What kind of escape plan was this? Alec didn’t need this detailed an excuse to know that Magnus just wanted to leave.

“I’ll waste your time another time, darling,” said Magnus and he hung up the phone. Magnus was staring at Alec like he was trying to decipher him. Alec already felt like an open book, but Magnus’s
look made him feel like an open book with lots of pictures and a how to manual.

“I’m so sorry about this,” Magnus said. “It’s an emergency.”


“There’s an out-of-control werewolf in a bar near here.”

“Oh,” said Alec. That was a fairly real sounding excuse.

“I have to go and try to get her under control. Will you come and help me?”

“Oh, this is a real emergency?” Alec exclaimed. Magnus wasn’t ditching him. A werewolf was no problem at all. He felt lighter. Maybe Magnus wasn’t having a lousy time after all.

“I figured it was one of those things where you arranged to have a friend call you so that you could get out of a sucky date.”

“Ha ha,” said Magnus. “I didn’t know people did that.”

“Uh-huh,” Alec said standing and putting his jacket on in one movement. “Let’s go, Magnus.” This he knew how to do. This was his job. Dating, he sucked at but fighting he could do.

Magnus was looking at him then, and Alec let himself believe that Magnus was happy Alec wanted to come.

Magnus threw money down on the table which made Alec feel awkward again. He had brought some money but in his haste to leave and worry about being late he probably didn’t have enough, and now Magnus was paying without even asking if they should split the bill.

“Please,” Magnus said. He seemed to understand the incomprehensible noises Alec was making at the sight of the money on the table. “You have no idea how much I overcharge Nephilim for my services. This is only fair. Let’s go.”

As they left, Alec heard their waiter yell “Werewolf rights!” Alec was definitely not going to tell Jace about this place, even if the food was fantastic.

They reached The Beauty Bar quickly. It was just around the corner from the restaurant.

There were people spilling out of the door in a slightly more urgent way than you would usually find. The crowd, in fact, had the air of those desperate to escape. They were in the right place.

A girl clutched Magnus’s sleeve and spoke to him.

“Don’t go in,” she whispered. “There’s a monster in there.”

“I don’t believe you,” was all Magnus said. He left her there and walked in, Alec right behind him.

There were a few people still inside the Beauty Bar when they went in, but it was very dark. Alec thought of maybe applying a night vision rune but wasn’t sure if pulling out his stele here was a good idea. He could see well enough.

He usually did this with Jace and Isabelle. He didn’t dare call them because he would have to explain why Magnus was here. He had never done this without Jace and Izzy.

“You all right?” Magnus asked.
"I always do this with Isabelle and Jace," said Alec. "And they’re not here. And I can’t call them."

"Why not?" Magnus asked. Alec felt his face go red but didn’t explain himself.

"You’ll do great without them," Magnus after a moment's pause. "I can help you." Alec wasn’t sure about that. How did a warlock and Shadowhunter work together on something like this? Their skill sets were so different. But Magnus seemed to know what he was doing, so Alec nodded and moved forward.

Alec wouldn’t let Magnus go first even though Magnus kept trying. Alec kept his protective stance in front of Magnus despite all the warlock's attempts to get ahead of him.

Alec noted that the people who were still in the bar were huddled flat against the walls. He noted this only so as to avoid the mundanes while fighting.

Alec heard the low rattling growl of the wolf and started creeping toward the sound. Alec was hunting now all his senses sharp. Where was the wolf?

Alec was aware of a figure coming at him from the side and almost shifted his focus before he saw Magnus stop the girl out of the corner of his eye.

"Don’t let him hurt her!" the girl scream as Magnus said something too quietly for Alec to hear over the girl’s scream.

Alec had to stop listening to Magnus and the girl. He was focused on the wolf. Alec did notice Magnus heal the girl though. He saw the blue light in his peripheral vision.

Alec lunged at the wolf. He made sure to avoid her claws and fangs while still being enough of a threat to keep her focus on him. Alec was in constant motion rolling, ducking, jumping coming back again and again.

"Alexander," Magnus called, and Alec automatically looked over to him. Big mistake. Alec turned his focus back to the werewolf again and had to back up right away. The wolf had taken a vicious swipe at him. He tucked and rolled landing right where he meant to in front of Magnus.

"You have to stay back," he told Magnus, breathlessly.

The werewolf sprang at Alec but before he could react Magnus threw a ball of blue fire at the wolf and she fell back.

"You have to remember I’m a warlock," Magnus said.

"I know," Alec said, looking around for the wolf again. "I just want—" Alec was so bad with words. Why couldn’t he just say I want to protect you? It’s what Alec did. It was how he knew to show he cared. He protected Izzy and Jace. If Magnus was who he was fighting with he would protect Magnus as well.

Alec heard a deep angry growl and turned to look where it came from. The wolf had recovered from Magnus’s magic and was not happy. "I think," Alec said, "I think you made her mad."

"Those are some excellent observational skills you have there, Alexander."

Alec ignored the obvious jibe and tried to push Magnus back again. Magnus grabbed Alec’s shirt and pulled him back instead.
Magnus pulled Alec all the way back into the bar which was thankfully empty now. Alec didn’t need to distract the wolf from the mundanes anymore. He could focus on ending this. Alec lunged at the wolf again. He had to calm her down and contain her somehow. He knew he had rope in his weapons belt that might work. He hadn’t used his seraph blades of course but it sure would have make things easier if he was fighting a demon. Killing was easier than containing.

Alec must have been thinking for too long because his lunge didn’t exactly go as he had planned. The wolf’s swipe caught him full in the chest and for a moment he was winded and flying through the air toward the mirrored wall.

Alec did know how to solve the situation though. He turned his body so his feet hit the wall and kicked off hard. He caught the chandelier and dropped down right back in the fight.

“Alec!” Magnus called. Alec didn’t look up this time. He just listened, his gaze never leaving the wolf. Sudden blue flames appeared around him.

“Alexander. Let’s do this together,” Alec heard Magnus call to him.

Blue lines appeared all around Alec and he noticed they seemed to be making the wolf nervous. They weren't flames this time but something else Alec couldn't identify.

This is what Magnus meant by working together Alec realize. And he liked this plan. Magnus was well back and away from danger but still helping. Alec liked this plan a lot.

He wove almost effortlessly through Magnus’s magic; trusting Magnus’s magic when it was there to protect him from the wolf. Alec could tell Magnus was moving the light around him in such a way as to help him distract and contain the wolf.

Everywhere the wolf went Alec was there and there. The wolf was starting to get confused. She whined. The blinding light everywhere was distracting her. Alec saw his opportunity and went for it.

He had his knee pressed into the wolf’s flank. Alec drew out the rope and started to tie the rope around the wolf’s neck as he pinned her to the down with all the weight of his body. She was fighting him but with no real power now. Magnus's magic light vanished. Alec noticed Magnus was doing something else now. He was speaking quickly under his breath.

“That must be the werewolf’s name Alec thought. The girl must have told Magnus while Alec had been fighting.

The werewolf started to change back into a woman under him. And in a moment Alec was pinning a naked woman to the ground instead of a wolf. He jumped back immediately. That was not his area. He had been more comfortable with the wolf.

Magnus gave the girl his coat and knelt to wrap her in it. Alec watched him and wondered, why did so many shadowhunters hate Downworlders? They were really just people.

“Thank you so much,” said Marcy, looking up at Magnus.

“Did I . . . please, did I hurt anybody?”

“No,” said Alec, confidently. “No, you didn’t hurt anyone at all.” This wasn't technically true, but she hadn't done any real damage, and she looked so scared of what she’d done Alec didn't have the heart to tell her anything else.
“There was someone with me . . .” Marcy began.

“She was scratched,” Magnus said. “She’s fine. I healed her.”

“But I hurt her,” Marcy said. The poor girl looked totally horrified. Alec couldn’t help it. He reached out and touched Marcy’s back rubbing it gently as he would have done for Izzy or Max if they were upset.

“She’s fine,” Alec said. “You didn’t—I know you didn’t want to hurt her, that you didn’t want to hurt anyone. You can’t help being what you are. You’re going to figure it all out.”

If he couldn’t help being gay she certainly couldn’t help being a werewolf.

“She forgives you,” Magnus said but Marcy hadn’t taken her eyes off Alec.

“Oh my God, you’re a Shadowhunter,” she whispered with real fear in her voice.

“What are you going to do to me?” Marcy shut her eyes. “No. I’m sorry. You stopped me. If you hadn’t been here—whatever you do to me, I deserve it.”

“I’m not going to do anything to you,” said Alec. Everyone he met today seemed to see Shadowhunters as something to fear. Alec thought he could at least show her some Shadowhunters weren’t killers.

“I meant what I said. I’m not going to tell anyone. I promise.” Alec felt sympathy for this poor girl. She meant what she said before. She thought she deserved to be punished for accidentally losing control. Alec had lost control in the subway on a mundane mugger, and no one had been sent to kill him. She just had to learn to control it was all. She just needed help. And that’s why Shadowhunters existed right?

Marcy sat up, gathering the coat around her. She looked better, Alec thought. The self-disgust seemed to be gone from her expression.

“Thank you,” she said calmly. “Thank you both.”

“Marcy?” said her friend’s voice from the door.

Marcy looked up. “Adrienne!”

The two woman flung themselves on each other and Alec looked away. That was so not any of his business. He had been right; a moment later they were kissing.

People were returning to the bar again.

“You’re pretty snappily dressed for a dogcatcher,” a man to said Magnus. He was, of course, right. Magnus still managed to look gorgeous even after their fight with the wolf.

Magnus inclined his head. “Thank you very much.”

More people came in, now wanting drinks and talking about the stray dog. Alec wanted to roll his eyes. Mundanes were so clueless.

“That was nice, what you said to her,” said Magnus. They were a bit lost in the crowd now and had some form of privacy.

“Uh . . . it was nothing,” said Alec. He shifted his feet not sure why he was so embarrassed this time.
“I mean, that’s what we’re here for, aren’t we?” Alec said. “Shadowhunters, I mean. We have to help anyone who needs help. We have to protect people.”

“I don’t think we’re going to get a drink in here; there’s much too long a line,” said Magnus slowly. “Let’s have a nightcap back at my place.” Alec nodded. Privacy was welcome at this point.

Alec was relieved to find Magnus didn’t want to take the subway back. They walked. It was a long walk but the weather was nice.

“I’m really glad your friend called you to help that girl,” Alec said finally having something to say. “I’m really glad you asked me along. I was—I was surprised you did, after how things were going before.”

“I was worried you were having a terrible time,” Magnus said.

“No,” said Alec, going red again. “No, that’s not it at all. Did I seem— I’m sorry.” Had he given that impression? He hadn’t had a miserable time at all. He had had an interesting time, it was true, but he had spent so much time worrying that Magnus was having a horrible time he hadn’t really thought about himself at all.

“Don’t be sorry,” Magnus told him softly.

“It was my fault,” Alec said and words started pouring out of him. All the silences of this date where he hadn’t been able to say a word now had whole sentences. “I got everything wrong even before I showed up, and you knew how to order at the restaurant and I had to stop myself laughing at that song on the subway. I have no idea what I’m doing and you’re, um, glamorous.”

“What?” Magnus said.

Alec just looked at Magnus. He didn’t know what his little confession would do. Make things worse or make no sense. He was so bad at this dating thing.

“I thought that terrible song was hilarious,” Magnus said and he laughed. Relief overcame Alec and he was laughing too.

When they reached Magnus’s home, Magnus laid a hand on the front door and it swung open.

“I lost my keys maybe fifteen years ago,” Magnus explained.

Alec just stared. Magnus had lost his keys when Alec was two years old. Alec tried not to think about this.

Alec’s thoughts jumped immediately to the fact that the date was coming to a close, and they were alone.

Magnus glanced at Alec then and Alec’s breathing picked up. He noticed he was biting his lip again. Magnus stopped. They were just outside Magnus’s door.

Alec only hesitated for a moment. He remembered how good it had felt last time. How every nerve in his body had been light up and he had suddenly understood why people liked kissing in the first place. He wanted that feeling again. He wanted Magnus. Alec’s hand reached out and caught Magnus’s arms by the elbow.

“Magnus,” Alec said in a low voice. Magnus’s breath caught in his throat and that was enough for Alec. Alec leaned in and kissed Magnus for the second time. Magnus had his eyes closed and Alec
closed his eyes as well. He felt Magnus pull his body closer the same way he had before, by the loops on his jeans.

Alec pressed Magnus up against the banister and Magnus’s hands were in his shirt. Okay, well, Magnus hands were in Magnus’s shirt but Alec was the one wearing it.

It was a while before Alec remembered they were standing right by Magnus door. Alec started to move towards it without breaking the now very heated kiss. Magnus blew the door open with magic and they went in, still locked together.

Magnus must have closed the door behind them but Alec wasn’t really aware of much besides Magnus pressed up against him. Alec broke away then to kiss a line down Magnus’s neck. He felt Magnus’s shiver as his lips moved over the sensitive skin and thrilled at it. Maybe he was good at this.

Magnus pulled Alec down to the sofa and Alec collapsed on top of him. Magnus lips were now at Alec’s neck and Alec felt like he was melting. Then were was a sudden pain but it wasn’t a bad pain. More like the kiss of a gentle stele. Alec leaned into the contact and realized Magnus was biting his neck. Alec was surprised to find he liked it. Magnus’s hands were exploring every part of Alec’s chest, shoulders and back. It was intoxicating.

Alec wanted more. He started on the buttons of Magnus’s waistcoat. His hands exposing Magnus’s torso. He felt the abnormal smoothness of Magnus’s stomach. He had no belly button. Alec was shocked for a moment. His hands were shaking slightly but that wasn’t about to stop him.

Alec felt Magnus’s hand leave his body and gently caress his cheek. Alec turned his face to the curve of Magnus’s hand and kissed it.

“Alexander,” Magnus murmured. “Maybe we should wait a second.”

Alec felt Magnus push him back just slightly and instantly jumped back. He had been so lost in sensations. Had he messed it up?

“Did I do something wrong?” Alec asked.

“No,” Magnus said. “Far from it.”

“Are you sending me home?” Alec didn’t want to leave. He wanted to be touching Magnus again. He was still too intoxicated to think straight. There was an electric charge that seemed to be pulling him back to Magnus. Magnus’s next words brought him back to to earth, at least a little.

“I have no interest in telling you what to do, Alexander. I don’t want to persuade you to do anything or convince you not to do anything. I’m just saying that you might want to stop and think for a moment. And then you can decide—whatever you want to decide.”

Alec ran his hands through his hair which was very messy. Alec paced while his heart rate slowed down. He tried to clear his head.

Alec knew he should probably go home before people wondered where he was. But the pull to stay was like a physical force. He paced more and more fighting with himself.

“I should probably go home,” Alec said.

“Probably,” Magnus said.
“I don’t want to,” Alec said.

“I don’t want you to,” said Magnus. “But if you don’t . . .”

Alec nodded. If I don’t, people will think you kidnapped me. He was still seventeen, which was technically a child by Shadowhunter laws. He couldn’t really come and go as he pleased yet.

“Good-bye, then,” Alec said. He couldn’t do anything to resist leaning down for one more quick kiss.

Alec found himself wrapped around Magnus on the floor. He was clinging to the warlock and his breathing was coming in strange gasps. Alec was kissing Magnus with all he had. He tasted blood which didn’t bother him until Magnus spoke.

“Oh, God,” Magnus said and Alec was back up on his feet holding on to the door frame for support. Had he hurt Magnus?

Alec looked at Magnus and saw nothing there to make him think he had hurt Magnus. Magnus looked different though. Less guarded somehow.

“Can I see you again?” Alec said quickly. The look on Magnus’s face had made Alec ask but he still wasn’t sure what the answer would be.

“Yes,” said Magnus, still lying on the floor. “I’d like that.”

“Um,” said Alec, “so—next Friday night?”

“Well . . .” Magnus started. Alec stood frozen worried Magnus was going to take the whole thing back and say he never wanted to see Alec again.

“Friday night would be fine,” Magnus said. Alec smiled. He felt like his whole face was lit up, but that might just be the flush on his cheeks and his rabid pulse.

Alec backed out of the apartment backward so he could look at Magnus while he went. He would hold that image in his mind for a week. One week he thought would go by fast. And if he was still this excited by then . . . well, he would just have to wait and see what happened.

Alec was too lost in his thoughts to notice the stairs. He stepped backward onto them and fell down them none too gracefully. He was grateful Magnus had already closed the door. He didn’t want Magnus to see that.

Alec noticed as he walked home that he was whistling. His hair was a mess, every nerve in his body was alight. He couldn’t wait till Friday!
Secretly Dating

Chapter Summary

In City of Ashes, Alec had Magnus's key. Also Magnus gives us alot of hints about what it was like when they first started dating in the story 'What to get the shadowhunter who has everything' in the Magnus Bane Chronicles. This chapter is mostly just my writing inspired by those things but there is only a small amount of direct dialogue from 'What to get the shadowhunter who has everything' at the end of the chapter.

Magnus stood by his window watching Alec skip down his street. He was pretty sure the shadowhunter was whistling. Magnus couldn't stop smiling. He could feel the tingling sensation all over his body where Alec had touched his skin. He remembered the way Alec had fallen down the stairs as he walked backward away from Magnus, like he didn't want to look away.

They had agreed to see each other again on Friday so Magnus had to wait a week. A week wasn't that long. He had lived for over four hundred years undoubtedly a week would go by fast.

But it didn't.

Magnus found his thoughts constantly wandering back to every moment of his date with Alec. The way Alec had been so insecure and unsure of Magnus's feelings for him. The way he had gotten lost in kissing him. The way Alec had been so kind to a werewolf girl he didn't know. Everything about Alec was swimming inside Magnus's head. Blue eyes and black hair. Innocent first infatuation. Warmth and eagerness. Youth and wonder. Alexander.

Magnus found himself getting keys made up for his apartment the next day. He wasn't even sure why he was doing it. It had been fifteen years since he had had keys. Why now?

Magnus felt stupid. It was too soon. They had been on one date. It shouldn't matter so fast he kept telling himself. He told himself again and again. But it didn't change anything the more he said it. He knew if Alec called he would come running. It was like his whole body was more awake, more aware, more alive.

And then it slowly dawned on Magnus. He remembered the dull fog that had been over his life for the last few decades and the sudden jolt of electricity he had felt the day he had met Alec. He remembered the last person he had loved, Etta, distantly as if through a haze. It had been fifty years ago, but that wasn't why. He realized that despite all his plans to never let himself become stagnant. All his intentions to live an exciting life had failed. He had started to petrify.

It had happened so gradually. Magnus hadn't realized how far he had gone. How close to petrified he had been before Alec blazed across his sky.

Magnus had noticed how apathetic he could be these days, but it was only now at its complete removal that Magnus could really see the difference. When Magnus thought about Alec, his heart beat faster. Kissing Alec had made every nerve in his body tingle. Magnus had never thought he would feel this strongly about anyone ever again. This was new. This was the opposite of apathetic. Magnus had gotten the keys made up for Alec and knew it was too soon, but he didn't care.
Magnus tried to keep busy while he waited for Friday. He decided not to call Catarina this time though. When Alec had first asked him out he had called Catarina to get her help in case he needed an excuse to leave the date early. He still felt relief that there had been a real emergency. If he had left Alec before the night was over… he didn't want to think about it.

Magnus decided the best distraction would be to obsess over his closet. He had been planning on extending it for quite some time anyway. The distraction proved to be anything but when he found Alec's blue shirt. It was still stained red from the drink Alec had spilled on it. Magnus cleaned it with a wave of his hand. He could have done that on their date, but he hadn't wanted to.

Magnus couldn't distract himself on Friday. He paced back and forth in front of his door. What was Alec going to be like when he got back? Maybe Alec had changed his mind and wouldn't show up? Should Magnus give him the key or just write the whole thing off as a stupid idea?

Alec appeared at Magnus's door around six o'clock in the evening on Friday, and he had once again put in an effort Magnus noticed. Alec wasn't wearing the cologne like last time, but he had put on a different blue shirt that brought out his eyes. Magnus observed Alec had more than one nice blue shirt. Mangus had a feeling though that this was the extent of Alec's wardrobe. Two nice shirts. Black fighting gear and holey sweaters.

"Hi," Alec said.

"Hello," Magnus said unable to keep a smile from his face. Without waiting for a reply he stepped aside and let Alec into the apartment.

"What's the plan today?" Alec said.

"That depends on you," Magnus said, unable to stop himself from flirting with Alec using his his eyes and tone of his voice. "Do you want to go out or stay in?" He had made some plans if Alec wanted to go out. He had picked a mundane restaurant this time, though. No werewolves or pixies. And he was planning on calling for a taxi.

"Well..." Alec began slowly. "The last restaurant we went to was just so friendly." Magnus couldn't help but feel like Alec was trying to flirt back. He hadn't seen Alec attempt flirting before and found he wasn't surprised Alec was better at it than he thought he was.

"So staying in then..." Magnus let it hang there giving Alec a way out.

"Okay," Alec said. Magnus couldn't help but grin. Magnus went to sit on his sofa. He gestured for Alec to sit down beside him. Alec did so but warily.

"Would you like something to drink?"

"Anything with caffeine," Alec said. "Jace, Izzy and I were out late last night."

"Oh and may I ask what for?" Magnus didn't like it when Alec talked about Jace. It made his insides squirm unpleasantly.

"Killing demons," Alec said.

"You nephilim never do get a chance to just be young do you?" Magnus laughed. "They make you work."

Alec didn't know what to say to that. He didn't know any other life. Were most seventeen year olds not responsible for fighting for their life every other day?
Magnus, remembering he had agreed to get Alec coffee, snapped his fingers. Alec jumped when the cup appeared in his hand.

"Do you always steal coffee?" Alec asked. Magnus just shrugged.

"It's not like you don't have the money to buy coffee," Alec continued.

"And how do you know that," Magnus teased. "Maybe I am dreadfully poor."

"I saw your bill once," Alec said. "On mom's desk. You aren't poor." Magnus chuckled, he did enjoy over-charging Maryse it's true.

"I am the High Warlock of Brooklyn," Magnus said. "And Brooklyn is a big place."

"How long have you been the High Warlock of Brooklyn?" Alec asked. Magnus paused. He realized he hadn't talked to Alec about this yet.

"A long while," Magnus said. "Listen Alec. There's one thing I never mentioned on our first date. And before we get any closer I need to explain." Alec looked up at Magnus the coffee in his hand forgotten, worry plain on his face.

Better to get it over with now, Magnus thought, before he got in too deep. It might be too late for that, a small voice in the back of Magnus's mind said but he pushed the voice away.

"I don't talk about my past," Magnus said. "I have a lot of it, but it isn't what matters. It's in the past. What is important is right now and the future. Can you take me as I am? No questions?" He looked right at those blue eyes and waited, holding his breath.

"Yes," Alec said simply. Relief written plainly on his face.

"Thank you," Magnus said. He leaned down toward Alec gazing at those blue eyes.

Alec stared right back. Alec loved Magnus's cat eyes. So unique and beautiful. He was too much in the moment to worry about Magnus's past. Agreeing to his request had seemed a simple thing compared to not being wanted. Being noticed by anyone this way was still so new to him.

"So," Magnus began, "If we aren't going out. What would you like to do?"

"I-" Alec started then tried again. "What would you like to do?"

Magnus tried to keep the desire out of his voice. He could feel the electricity running between them. They were sitting so close together on the couch now. He knew what he wanted to do, but he had promised himself to be gentle with Alec.

"Are you hungry?" Magnus asked. Alec nodded. Magnus noticed he seemed to be tentative about touching the furniture. Like a guest who wasn't really sure where he fit.

"What would you like?" Magnus said. "Chinese? Italian? There is this lovely little restaurant in France that is a favourite of mine."

"We aren't in France," Alec said.

"True," Magnus said. "But I'm a warlock."

"Can't we just buy food like everyone else?"

"Where's the fun in that?"
"Well if we did eat from that restaurant in France it would be stealing right?"

"Technically," Magnus said. "Yes."

"Then let's do something else," Alec suggested. "How about we order pizza for delivery. And pay the person who brings it over."

"You are such a buzz kill," Magnus said, but his tone was friendly, and Alec decided not to worry about killing buzz. It must be an expression he wasn't familiar with.

"How about a compromise?" Magnus said. "I will magic up any food you want and then send them money after."

"Deal," Alec said. Magnus grinned. He would probably remember to send money after.

Magnus pictured the last time he had been to France clearly in his mind and snapped his fingers. His table transformed. A French style table cloth covered in plates and entries.

"Wow," Alec said quietly. He got up off the sofa and sat down at the table, his eyes never leaving the food. Magnus enjoyed impressing Alec like this. Alec's wonder was a marvel to him.

Magnus sat down across from Alec and watched him stare at the food.

"This is-" Alec was lost for words.

"You know," Magnus said. "It takes better than it looks." Alec didn't need more prompting than that. He dug in. Magnus was surprised to find Alec's pleasure of the food more rewarding than his own.

"Told you," Magnus said, when Alec's eating had slowed enough for speech. "It's the best restaurant in France."

"I believe you."

"I should take you there sometime," Magnus said, without thinking. "It's a lovely country." I'm inviting him on a trip? Magnus thought, on our second date! Am I crazy?

"I don't know," Alec said. "I'm not eighteen yet. I can't leave the Institute."

Oh right! Magnus made a mental note to make sure Ragnar learned nothing of this until Alec was eighteen. Ragnar would tease him endlessly if he knew. Magnus had made a deal with his immortal friends years ago not to date anyone under eighteen. Large age gaps in your romantic relationships was an avoidable side effect when you were older than the major of the population but his friends had decided if he stuck to over eighteen they would forgive him.

"When do you turn eighteen?" Magnus asked.

"This September," Alec said brightly.

"That's not very long," Magnus said, smiling. Surely he could keep a secret from Ragnar for that long. Unless Raphael found out, he thought. Those two seemed to have some regular form of communication. And conspiring to talk about Magnus's love life was the kind of things really messed up pen pals might do.

Alec ate another croissant but didn't say anything.

"Do you want anything else to eat?" Magnus asked. He had finished eating already. Alec shook his
head. There was silence for a moment.

"I don't know what to say," Alec confessed. "Throughout our date I never had anything to say, and now we are here alone and I still don't know what to say."

Magnus brushed his finger over Alec's quivering lips. The boy was so flustered. He was beautiful when he was flustered.

"It's okay," Magnus said. "You don't have to say anything if you don't want to." Magnus was looking at Alec, his face red, his eyes wide, and the world fell away. His surroundings forgotten he gazed at those blue eyes.

His boy had bewitched him without ever doing magic.

"But-" Alec started. Magnus leaned across the table and kissed Alec gently, trying to relax him. Alec's eyes closed and the tension in his shoulders released. Magnus pulled away smiling.


Alec got up off his chair and walked over to Magnus, leaning down Alec kissed him. Magnus wrapped his arms around Alec and pulled Alec down on his lap. Alec lips parted and Magnus felt Alec's agitated breathing. His breathing he was sure was just as irregular. His arms were under Alec's shirt over those strong shoulder muscles Magnus had so admired on their first date. Magnus felt Alec's hands find the opening in his shirt and work their way up his back.

Alec's kisses were so sincere. Magnus felt a tingling sensation every place Alec touched him. Alec wasn't sitting in his lap anymore. Alec was straddling him. Magnus wasn't even sure when this had happened.

"Alexander," Magnus whispered, when Alec released Magnus's lips to kiss his neck. The simple use of his name seemed to spur Alec on.

Magnus was trying to get his mind to focus but his heart was pounding. His whole body responding to Alec involuntarily. Alec's lips at his neck sent shivers down his spine.

Alec's hands were so eagerly exploring Magnus's body. Alec moved into every touch as if asking for more. Magnus knew he had to stop but he didn't want to. The last thing in the world Magnus wanted to do was stop.

"Alexander," Magnus said more firmly. Alec stopped this time and looked Magnus's in the eye.

"You are driving me crazy," Magnus said, softly stroking Alec's flushed cheeks.

"Am I doing something wrong?" Alec said, quickly getting up off Magnus. Why did this boy not understand how irresistible he was?

"No," Magnus said. Deciding the simple answer was better than explaining how totally and completely Alec was overwhelming Magnus's senses.

"What's wrong?" Alec asked.

"I don't want to pressure you into anything," Magnus said. "I know you don't have any experience in this area and I want you to feel safe here."

"I-I do," Alec said, stumbling over his words. "Feel safe. With you, I mean." He blushed all the way
down his neck this time. Magnus was curious to know if his blush spread down past his neck under his blue shirt. Magnus wanted so badly to rip the bothersome shirt off Alec's beautiful skin and find out.

"I'm glad to hear it," Magnus said.

"Then why did you stop me?" Alec asked. Magnus gave his head a shake hoping that would clear it, at least a little. It didn't. His blood was pounding in his veins.

"I don't want to rush you," Magnus said, looking at Alec's innocent confused expression. Magnus moved his hands to cup Alec's face. Curving his hand to fit there perfectly while he stroked Alec's cheek.

Alec closed his eyes, leaned into Magnus's hand and kissed it. Just like he had at the end of their last date. Magnus pulled Alec down gently, unable to stop himself, and kissed him. Alec checked himself this time. He seemed to understand what Magnus was saying. He pulled Magnus toward him by the front of his shirt and deepened the kiss.

Magnus and Alec didn't talk much while they spent the evening together. They cuddled, they kissed, they laughed and they smiled. In fact, Magnus had quite forgotten the world outside his apartment. It wasn't until Alec saw the clock on the wall that the spell was broken.

"I have to go," Alec said suddenly standing up. "I didn't notice the time. They will be wondering where I am."

Magnus made a fast plan to destroy his clock.

Alec's posture was stiff when he had looked at the clock, but it changed as he turned to Magnus again. His eyes soft he said. "When can I see you again?"

"Whenever you like," Magnus said. "Tomorrow?"

Alec's smiled from ear to ear. "Okay," he said. "Maybe tomorrow. I will try and get away." He grinned and headed to the door.

"Oh wait," Magnus called. Alec stopped and turned to face him.

Magnus snapped his fingers, and the pale blue shirt appeared him his hand. Instantly transported from its place in his closet.

"This is yours," Magnus said handing it to Alec.

"You keep it," Alec said. He didn't want to have to explain why he came home with two shirts, but more importantly, he wanted to leave something of his here with Magnus. Alec didn't want Magnus to forget him.

Alec walked out the door smiling.

Magnus hugged the shirt to his chest knowing what the new feeling there was all too well. He hoped Alec came back soon.

By the time 9pm came and went the next day, Magnus was sure Alec wasn't coming over. He was disappointed, more disappointed than he should be so soon he reminded himself. But that ship had already sailed.
Magnus decided he was allowed to get a little drunk so long as he didn't call Catarina and/or Ragnor while he was intoxicated. That would have lead to disaster. He was just deciding how best to start getting drunk when his buzzer went off.

Magnus ran to the door a warm bubble of hope alive in his chest all of a sudden.

"Hello," he said into the intercom.

"Hi." It was Alec! He was so relieved he hadn't actually started drinking.

Magnus didn't reply he just buzzed Alec into the apartment. His mind racing. He looked down at his clothes and realized he was wearing his pajamas. With a little fast thinking he snapped his fingers. He was now wearing tight leather pants and a shirt that read better than Gandalf on it. Before he had time to think, maybe Gandalf was a reference Alec wouldn't get, Alec was at his door.

"Sorry," Alec said as he walked in. "I couldn't get away."

Magnus took Alec in and was pleased to learn his assumption of Alec's wardrobe had been correct. Alec was out of nice shirts.

"I knew you only had two nice shirts," Magnus said smiling.

"I hoped you wouldn't notice," Alec muttered blushing.

Magnus closed the gap between himself and Alec quickly. Resting his hand on the closed door behind Alec and leaning closer. There was barely an inch between their faces but Alec closed the gap and without hesitation. Magnus kissed him back, pressing his body against Alec's.

Alec's breathing quickened as his body was pressed hard against the door. Alec pulled Magnus in with both arms wrapped around his torso. Magnus broke their lips apart to kiss down Alec's neck. He reveled in the small gasps and moaned he could get out of the shadowhunter. Alec in return would kiss his neck and the sensitive spot behind his ears. Magnus couldn't help the sounds escaping him now.

Magnus wasn't sure how long they stayed like that. Standing in front of a closed door wrapped in each other. Kissing Alec was a joy, a new joy. Magnus felt like he could have stood there lost in Alec's touch till the sun came up. It wasn't until he felt Alec's stumble that he realized Alec was tired. Magnus slowly moved the make-out session to the sofa. Alec sat gladly and rested his head on Magnus's shoulder.

"Are you tired?" Magnus asked. He felt Alec nod. "Out late killing demons?" Alec nodded again, his eyes closed.

Magnus felt Alec's breathing slow and become even. He realized Alec had fallen asleep. He was suddenly filled with a strange warmth. Alec felt safe here. He felt safe enough to let himself be vulnerable, be asleep. Magnus had a sudden desire for Alec to not just feel safe here but be at home here.

Then Magnus remembered how Alec had always squirmed when he was offered stolen coffee. But he couldn't go out and buy a coffee machine now. He couldn't bare to disturb Alec's peaceful sleep on his lap.

This one instance is the only time Magnus has ever regretted owning a cat. Chairmen Meow jumped up onto Alec and started kneading his head. Alec woke up suddenly alert. Chairmen fell to the ground.
"Oh no," Alec said. "How long have I been asleep?"

"No long," Magnus tried to comfort him. "Just a few minutes." Alec seemed to relax.

"You can sleep here if you like," Magnus offered. He tried to sound casual as if it was just the logical thing to offer as a host. Though he was sure he had fooled Alec, he couldn't fool himself.

"I should get back," Alec said. "I just wanted to see you today even if only for a short visit." He was looking at his hands when he said this but Magnus could see the blush rising on the back of Alec’s neck.

"I am glad you came over," Magnus said. "If only for a little while." Alec turned and looked at Magnus his face alight. Blue eyes shining. Magnus got lost in Alec's face then. Memorizing every curve of his lips, every shade of blue in his eyes.


"Oh," Magnus said. "He's a wizard."

"You mean a warlock?" Alec asked.

"No a wizard," Magnus said. "He's a fictional character from a series of books called Lord of the Rings."

"Why is he on your shirt then?"

"It's just a joke," Magnus said. "He's a fictional magic user and I'm a real one so I'm better than Gandalf. Get it?"

"I suppose," Alec said standing up. He was halfway to the door before he turned. "When can I come over again?"

"Whenever you want," Magnus said. He couldn't help but give Alec his honest answer. Alec's vulnerability was making it easier for him to be vulnerable in return. Alec's smile lite up his face at Magnus's words as he walked out the door.

Magnus set out to buy a coffee maker the next day. Buying things the mundane way was rather tedious but it was worth it if it make Alec feel more comfortable.

Magnus did cheat when he got the coffee maker home however, using magic to set it up. But since that was technically not stealing Magnus decided it didn't count toward things that would upset Alec and therefore didn't matter.

Magnus stood back to admire his work. The machine was plugged in-unlike most of the appliances in his loft-and next to it was a container of ground coffee and filters. If this didn't invite Alec to make normal coffee here he didn't know what would.

Magnus went to sleep that night hoping Alec would like his new coffee maker. It had only been a day that Magnus hadn’t seen Alec but he missed him already.

Magnus awoke to a strange smell in his apartment. It must have woken him because the sun wasn’t up yet. Magnus never got up this early. He got out of bed and cautiously went to investigate.

It was Alec standing in his kitchen making coffee. Alec was wearing an old sweater and jeans but Magnus didn't care. He was so happy to see him.
"Alec," Magnus said beaming as he entered the kitchen.

Alec took one look at him and froze. Magnus saw Alec's eyes go wide as they moved up his body. Then Magnus remembered he was only wearing the boxers he had slept in. Magnus wasn't sure what he should do here. Would this make Alec uncomfortable? Or would Alec feel uncomfortable if Magnus went and got dressed? Maybe Alec would think Magnus didn't want to be seem like this by Alec if he quickly left to dress?

Pulling his thoughts back, Magnus looked at Alec. Alec was still taking Magnus in. He didn't seem upset though. He wasn't backing up or leaning his body backward even a little. Magnus almost thought from the look on Alec's face that Alec had just realized he was here very early and it wasn't unexpected for people to be not quite ready for company yet. Magnus resolved to make Alec feel okay with being here early.

"Are you making coffee?" Magnus asked. Alec blushed turning his attention back to the coffee machine very fast as if suddenly realizing he was staring and Magnus could tell. In that movement Magnus could see the speed of his angel reflexes.

"Yeah," Alec said. "I don't remember this being here before though."

"I just got it," Magnus said. He decided not to tell Alec he got it for him. If Alec didn't figure it out there was no need to overburden him with Magnus's obsessive need to have him here.

"Is it okay that I'm here?" Alec asked in a rush. "I mean this early?" Magnus didn't answer instantly. He was trying to find the right way to tell Alec it was okay without overwhelming Alec. Saying he wanted Alec here every second of every day would have come off rather needy indeed.

"The door wasn't locked so I-" Alec said stumbling over his words. "I can go. I'm s-" Magnus didn't let Alec finish his apology.

"It's more than okay that you're here, Alexander," Magnus said. "Thank you for making me coffee."

The worry left Alec's face as he smiled.

Magnus took the coffee Alec offered him and sat at the table. Alec took the cup he had poured for himself and sat opposite.

"I can't stay long," Alec said. "But we can sit and drink our coffee."

"I'd like that," Magnus said, gazing at Alec’s blue eyes.

After a few moments of comfortable silence in which they both finished their coffee, Alec spoke.

"Your clocks gone."

"Really," Magnus said in mock surprise. "I hadn't noticed." He had, of course, known his clock was gone. Having promptly vanished it to the bermuda triangle the first time it had been responsible for Alec's departure.

"How do you tell the time?"

"I have a cell phone," Magnus smiled.

"Oh," Alec said a blush coming up quickly to flood his face.

"You blush beautifully," Magnus told Alec his hand reaching out to stroke Alec's face. Alec's blush
deepered as Magnus touched him but he smiled. Alec stared into Magnus’s eyes for a moment more than made his excuses and left quickly. Magnus took a deep breath and inhaled the still present smell of coffee on the air.

Mangus was sitting at his desk working. It was too late now to really expect Alec to come over. Magnus had stopped locking his front door after Alec’s first morning visit. In the hope Alec would just let himself in like he had that day. It was a simple thing really, Alec coming and going here as he pleased. But it made Magnus happy somehow. Magnus was starting to hope giving Alec a key wouldn’t be so unwelcome.

Magnus heard a click as his front door opened.

"Magnus?” Alec said cautiously as he entered the apartment.

"I'm here," Magnus said pushing out from his desk.

"I know it's late but-" Alec began. Magnus didn't let Alec finished his sentence.

"Please come in Alexander,” Magnus said standing up and turning to face the door. Relief was plain on Alec face as he walked in closing the door behind him. Magnus wondered why Alec always reacted like this. Like he was actually worried Magnus would say no and throw him out.

"You sure it's not too late," Alec asked again.

"I'm sure," Magnus said, as he got up and walked the few steps from his desk to Alec. Magnus reached up and rested his hand on the side of Alec's face. Alec leaned into the touch, closing his eyes. The expression of peace and calm on Alec's face with his eyes closed warmed Magnus's heart. He leaned forward and kissed him gently. Alec brought his arms up to wrap them around Magnus as the kiss deepened but Alec's movements weren't as enthusiastic as usual. His kisses and caresses slower, less energetic.

"Tried?” Magnus asked pulling out of the kiss to look at Alec who nodded. Magnus pulled Alec over to the couch. Alec came willingly. Obviously very tired. Magnus wondered why Alec was here. Why hadn't he just gone home to sleep? Especially if he was so worried Magnus wouldn’t want him here this late?

Within minutes Alec was asleep on Magnus's couch. Magnus was prepared for his cats arrival this time. Scooping Chairman Meow off the floor he went to his room and locked the cat in it. Nothing was going to wake Alec up this time.

Magnus watched Alec sleep his mind blank. His feelings surreal. In no time at all this shadowhunter had Magnus totally entranced. Besotted. Twitterpated.

Alec slept all night on Magnus's couch and the next morning Magnus awoke to the smell of coffee again.

Magnus had been out all day with a stupid needy client. The client was paying him well it was true but it almost wasn't worth it at this point. And worse of all he hadn't seen Alec in ages. This he felt was probably contributing to his foul mood the most.

Magnus was glad to be home. His loft was the place he usual saw Alec after all. It was where Alec was most likely to visit him. Though the last time Magnus has seen Alec they had gone out. It had been an mundane restaurant so they wouldn't see anyone who could recognize them. This had improved the stress levels of the event immensely. A pleasant walk, little conversation and a nice meal with Alec. No werewolves or crazy spicy penne.
Magnus opened his door and froze. His bad mood evaporated as he took in Alec sitting on his sofa.

"Oh!" Magnus said, startled. "You're here."

"You said I could come over whenever," Alec said, obviously worried that hadn't meant come over when no one was home.

Magnus closed the door behind him and leaned over the sofa. He kissed Alec hello.

"And I meant it," Magnus said. Alec smiled then quickly with those angelic reflexes of his pulled Magnus down and kissed him some more.

"How long have you been waiting?" Magnus asked when they pulled apart.

"Not long," Alec said. "You know you have stopped locking your door right?"

"I know," Magnus said, sitting on the sofa next to Alec. "No one's stupid enough to robe the High Warlock of Brooklyn you know."

"It was locked when we got back here on our first date," Alec said. Magnus suppressed a grin. He had noticed.

"Is that so?" Magnus said deciding to feign ignorance in this matter.

"Why isn't your door locked anymore?"

"There is someone I don't want to keep out," Magnus said. He wasn't sure how to put it more mildly than that and Alec was obviously not going to drop the issue.

"Who?" Alec asked. Magnus studied his face and found nothing but curiosity. It had not occurred to Alec that Alec was the one Magnus meant.

"You," Magnus said simply. Alec looked stunned, blood flooding his cheeks as he looked at Magnus. Unable to find words Alec pulled Magnus close and kissed him. His every movement full of unspoken emotion.

Magnus quickly forgot everything else and threw himself into the sensation of kissing Alec. Alec's hands were under his shirt again and Magnus's fingers followed suit. Once he was gasping for breath he had to pull away but didn't want to stop. He slowly began to kiss Alec's neck but Alec's shivers and moans spurred him on and his kisses turned to nips.

"Stop," Alec said all of a sudden. Magnus pulled away quickly.

"I didn't mean-," Alec said, shakily. "I just- last time you did that Jace noticed. And I didn't really know what to say."

"Ah Jace," Magnus said suddenly not in the mood anymore. He leaned back sitting upright on the sofa. Alec closed the space between them.

"I didn't mean stop anything else," Alec said softly, leaning in closer to Magnus.

"You haven't told anyone you have been coming here to see me have you," Magnus said. His words sounded accusing, but his tone was gentle.

"No," Alec admitted.
"Is it only that you don't want them to know you're gay?" Magnus asked. "Or do you not want them to know you're with a warlock?"

"Mostly just the gay thing," Alec said. "I just don't want Jace to-I just think it's easier if-" He seemed incapable of finishing a sentence. Magnus took pity on him.

"Alright," Magnus said, moving his hand back to Alec's face. "Just this for now then."

"Thanks," Alec said.

"Alec," Magnus said softly. "I want to give you something. Is that okay?" He got his answer in Alec's open intrigued expression.

What the hell, Magnus thought, he was already falling off this particular cliff so he figured he might as well jump rather than cling to the edge. Besides if Alec was comfortable enough here to come over when Magnus wasn't home…

Magnus got up off the couch and went over to his desk. Opening the draw he picked up the small box.

"Here," he said handing it to Alec, who opened it.

"A key?" Alec said not catching on.

"It's the key to my apartment," Magnus said. "So I can finally start locking the door again." He smirked but then was serious as he added. "I want you to be welcome here anytime you want to be here." It was simple, and it was true. Something about Alec made him want to be open and honest about what he wanted.

Alec looked stunned. He was staring down at the key with wide eyes.

Alec didn't know what to say. He was touched. He was overwhelmed. He was aware that this was a big deal, but somehow it didn't feel like too much.

Alec's hand closed around the key holding it to his chest for a moment. "Thank you," he said.

Magnus couldn't help but hope Alec held the key to his chest because he was holding Magnus close to his heart but he was probably reading too much into it.

"Do you want to go out today?" Alec asked.

"Sure," Magnus said. "Where did you have in mind?"

"Taki's."

"Are you sure?" Magnus asked. They had never gone to Taki's before. Mundane restaurants were safer.

Alec insisted he was okay with it however so they headed out. Walking side by side with Alec was pleasant. They were silent but it wasn't an awkward silence. It wasn't filled without unspoken worries or anxieties. It was comfortable.

When they reached the cafe it was bustling. The center of attention was a peri and a werewolf having some kind of territorial dispute.

Magnus and Alec were able to get in without anyone paying them the slightest attention. Magnus was relieved. He didn't want Alec to be uncomfortable.
Magnus then noticed that one person was paying them attention after all. He saw the little blond waitress wave at Alec where they sat in the booth.

"Do you know her?" Magnus asked.

"A little," said Alec. "She's part nixie. She likes Jace."

"I see," Magnus said. He was aware again that Alec also liked Jace. Magnus felt that familiar squirming feeling in his stomach and suddenly recognized it for what it was, jealousy.

"Well she is a much better waitress then the werewolf Erik from our first date," Magnus said.

"True," Alec said. "She probably won't accuse me of killing her uncle."

"Or put too much arrabia in your penne."

Alec laughed.

"You know I met a nixie at a nightclub once," Magnus said conversationally. "They are a fun group of people."

The little blonde waitress came over to take their orders then. Magnus suspected she had switched tables with the waitress who had seated them. Why would she do that? Did she like Alec as well as Jace? Or maybe she just liked everyone. Magnus watched her leave with narrowed eyes. He wasn't enjoying jealousy very much.

Though it did seem Alec wasn't paying her any attention at least. Then Magnus remembered Alec wasn't like him. Alec only liked boys. Magnus felt a bit better.

Magnus launched into the story of the nixie at the nightclub with new enthusiasm. Alec was laughing. Magnus did have some fantastic stories.

Magnus was quite enjoying himself until Raphael came in with his two highest ranking vampire followers, Lily and Elliott. The hope that they hadn't seen Alec and Magnus died soon after.

"Nope, nope, nope, and also no," Raphael said. "Are you Alexander Lightwood?"

"Hi?" Alec said.

"Wait a minute," Raphael said. "Are you Alexander Lightwood?"

"Yes?"

"Aren't you twelve?" Raphael demanded. "I distinctly recall you being twelve."

"Uh, that was a while ago," Alec said clearly alarmed at being so addressed. Magnus couldn't blame him. Raphael despite being over fifty years old looked about fifteen. Magnus resolved to only take Alec to mundane restaurants from now on.

Magnus saw Alec's shoulders tense up. He jumped to Alec's defence.

"Leave him alone," Magnus said. He reached his hand across the table to hold Alec's, wanting to
show support. Alec responded at first but then snatched his hand away when he noticed the vampires looking.

"What would your parents think?" Elliott asked. Magnus could tell the vampires were just having a laugh messing with Alec who was so clearly agitated. His reactions were too good and the vampires were entertained. But Magnus could see stress rising in Alec. Like a pressure gauge.

"Elliott," Magnus said. "You're boring. And I don't want to hear that you've been telling any tedious tales around the place. Do you understand me?"

Magnus was playing with his teaspoon in what he hoped was a threatening manner. Blue sparks were travelling from his fingers to try and get the point across. Elliot didn't seem to think Magnus could kill him with only a teaspoon but Magnus tried to convey with his eyes that it was possible.

"Dios," snapped Raphael. The use of god's name made the other two vampire's flinch. Magnus remembered how hard Raphael had worked to be able to say god's name after he had been turned and thought he must love being able to do it when so many vampires couldn't. "I am not interested in your sordid encounters or constantly deranged life choices, and I am certainly not interested in prying into the affairs of Nephilim. I meant what I said. I don't want to know about this. And I won't know about this. This never happened. I saw nothing. Let's go."

Magnus sighed in relief as they left the cafe.

"You don't think they will say anything to my parents do you?" Alec whispered clearly very distressed about the thought.

"No," Magnus said, confidently. He was less confident that Raphael wouldn't tell Ragnor about this.

Alec didn't ask for an explanation. He simply accepted Magnus's word, relaxing back into their date. It amazed Magnus sometimes when Alec did this. He was so trusting.

The peri and werewolf having the territorial dispute seemed to have hit an impasse that only violence could solve. Magnus saw the peri flip a table over and the werewolf shift form.

Magnus had barely registered more than this but Alec had already reacted. He was on his feet throwing knife in hand before anyone else in the room had time to blink.

Magnus saw Alec standing in front of their booth as if he had automatically placed his body between Magnus and the threat. Magnus knew Alec did this with his parabatai and his sister. Alec behaved with them as if his life was worth less than theirs but Alec couldn't believe his life was worth less than Magnus's. He was Nephilim after all.

No one had ever tried to protect Magnus before not like this. So automatically like breathing. Magnus felt a pang of emotion in the centre of his chest.

The other customers at Taki's had a rather different reaction to Alec angelic power revealed to them in a blaze of action. The peri and werewolf went to opposite corners of the cafe and, Magnus suspected, left the building.

Alec slid back into their booth looking embarrassed.

Magnus was gripped with a sudden desire to kiss Alec. But more than that he wanted to tell Alec how important he was to him. Magnus wanted to pour his heart out to the boy. He wanted to tell Alec how he wanted him everyday and everywhere he went. He wanted so expose his clinginess and neediness to its fullest! To verbally express all the powerful emotions running through him.
But he knew better than to do it. Magnus was keenly aware that this was all new to Alec. Magnus wanted to be good to him. To be fair to him. Not to burden him with the surprising weight of Magnus's feelings that Alec probably didn't return. At least not in the same way.

Magnus paid the bill hurriedly and dragged Alec outside. Alec came willingly enough and once he was sure they were alone Magnus pushed Alec up against the brick wall and kissing him passionately. Trying to convey all the emotions he dare not speak aloud. Alec's gentle hands moved up Magnus's back while Magnus hands were on Alec's waist and the back of his neck. Alec kissed him back with shattering enthusiasm.

"What was that for?" Alec asked when they finally broke apart.

"Nothing," Magnus lied. Keep things light he told himself. No need to scare the boy away.

They walked together out of the ally. Alec had to go home but promised to come over again as soon as he could.
Magnus walked the rest of the way home alone. Wondering if he would ever truly get to be part of Alec's world.
Hostage (CoA)

Chapter Summary

This is the beginning of City of Ashes from Magnus's point of view. Where he is called in to help Jace and then switches Jace for Alec.

Beta read by Sabiduria on fanfic.net

Magnus knew Alec wasn't ready to have the talk. Wasn't ready to define what they were to each other. Magnus was fairly certain the Nephilim boy was far less invested than he was. This stung a little but Magnus told himself that, for the moment, he could deal with that. Alec was young and new to love. Magnus told himself he could be patient.

Magnus’s heart skipped a beat as he heard the chime of his phone, signaling a text from Alec. Reading it Magnus sighed. He knew he would go. If Alec needed help, he would go. Even if it seemed to be Jace who needed the help. Parabatai were such romance killers, Magnus thought.

He did quite enjoy the looks on the other Shadowhunters’ faces when he strolled in. Jace looked half dead, and Magnus also enjoyed pointing this out. He agreed to keep Jace safely in his custody. He knew of a great loophole to add into the agreement as well. This loophole might even get him more Alec time. He smiled to himself as he transported Jace back to his place.

Jace was not Magnus's idea of an ideal roommate. In fact, Magnus found himself almost wishing for the days when Raphael had stayed in his loft. Jace liked to clean and, to Magnus's horror, this meant he couldn't find anything.

"Did you clear off my desk?" Magnus yelled. Jace didn't even have the decency to look guilty.

"Yeah. It was a mess," Jace said.

"Where did you put all the papers?" Magnus said. "I had a system."

"No you didn't," Jace said. "Your desk was chaos."

"Just because you can't understand my system doesn't mean I didn't have one."

"I put them all neatly in the drawer," Jace said pointing. "Stop freaking out."

Magnus opened the draw and sighed in relief. All his work was there.

"If I knew you were going to be such an annoying roommate, maybe I wouldn't have agreed to have you here," Magnus grumbled.

"Nah, you would have," Jace teased.

"And why would you say that?"

"Because of Alec." Magnus balked. Alec didn't want anyone to know, but specifically Jace!

"I don't know what you're talking about," Magnus said, calmly.
"Oh please," Jace said. "Alec just happened to have your phone number in his contacts, even though he didn't have any idea we would need your help. And you just happened to come running when he texted you. Running fast, I might add, since you were there right when Alec called out to you."

"You are a perceptive one," Magnus said narrowing his eyes. "Does Alec know you’ve figured it out?"

"I don't think so," Jace said. "He doesn't want me to know. Although I’m not sure why."

Magnus knew why. Alec liked Jace. It made his insides squirm unpleasantly to think about it. Stupid blonde Nephilim Magnus thought at Jace.

"So, what’s so important about these papers anyway?" Jace said.

"I’ve been trying to track down Valentine since he killed that young warlock a few weeks ago," Magnus said bending over his papers again.

"Any luck?"

"No," Magnus said. "Though I am reasonably sure he isn't in the city anymore. It would help if I had something of his, but-"

"Take this," Jace said, and he pulled the Morgenstern ring off his finger and held it out to Magnus. "If it will help."

"It will!" Magnus said eagerly taking it. "Thank you." Stupid, slightly useful blonde Nephilim, Magnus amended.

"No problem," Jace said. "Can you show me how you track with it? Or is it something only a warlock can do?"

"It's a rune actually," Magnus said. "Or at least there is a way to do it with a rune. Here look." Magnus put the ring on his desk and used blue fire guided by his finger to carve a rune into the wood of the desk. He then put his hands on the rune and closed his eyes. Nothing.

"Didn't work," Magnus said. "But it's that simple. You could probably use your hand instead of a desk. Runes work on you." Jace looked at the shape on Magnus desk like he was trying to commit it to memory.

"Thanks, Magnus," Jace said. "Keep the ring so you can try again."

"Alright," Magnus said.

"I'm gonna watch TV," Jace said and made to leave.

"It isn’t plugged in," Magnus said deciding he would be kind and not let Jace try to figure out the TV on his own. "And there is no remote."

"How do you turn it on?" Jace asked. Magnus snapped his fingers and the TV light up.

"Ah of course," Jace said. Magnus left Jace with the TV and returned to his work.

His dreams lately had been worrying him. They were very disturbing. Blood everywhere. Apocalypse stuff. He hadn't left when the Circle was threatening Downworlders two decades ago, but that was different to these dreams. Rivers of blood, Nephilim blood, was different. Alec was Nephilim, and Magnus knew he would stay, potential apocalypse or not.
Magnus heard the key turn in the lock and smiled. Alec was here. When Alec walked in, he was followed by Clary and Simon.

As Magnus had thought, they all had somewhere to be. The Seelie Court was not what he had expected but either way his loophole would work. Swapping Jace for Alec would be welcome indeed.

"Hello hostage," Magnus said, turning to Alec once the other Nephilims’ footsteps had faded.

"Temporary hostage," Alec corrected.

"Alright if you must rub it in," Magnus said. "Temporary hostage what would you like to do?"

Magnus moved closer to Alec.

"I wonder if they are at the Seelie Court by now?"

"Ah. You want to worry about Jace," Magnus said, taking a step back and muttering under his breath, typical. He downgraded Jace back to just stupid blonde, useful or not. Magnus went to sit at his desk. He might as well work if Alec was just going to fret. What a waste of this perfect good loophole, Magnus thought. He started reading but to his surprise he had only read one sentence when warm arms came around him from behind.

"I'm sorry," Alec said. "I just can't help worrying about them. I’m sure they’re fine." Magnus stood up and turned around not letting Alec's arms free he pulled the Shadowhunter in close.

"Did you put that loophole in on purpose knowing I would be the one switched?" Alec whispered.

"Guilty," Magnus said sweetly.

"That's what I thought."

Magnus gave Alec a pleading look. Trying to stop Alec’s annoyed expression before it started.

"Can you blame me for trying to steal a little more time with you?" Magnus asked. Alec rolled his eyes.

"We have bigger problems right now, you know."

"There are always bigger problems, Alexander," Magnus said.

"Well for the moment I am focused on this one," Alec said. "Valentine is up to something."

"Truer words were never spoken," Magnus said. "So if you aren't going to fret. What should we do?"

Alec shrugged. Magnus kissed him quickly then dragged Alec over to the couch, smiling. Once Alec was comfortably seated, Magnus snapped his fingers and most of his comic collection appeared on the coffee table.

Magnus and Alec passed away a rather lovely afternoon. Magnus explained about superhero comics and how the good guys always won while Alec complained that wasn’t realistic. Despite this, Alec seemed to be enjoying himself. It wasn’t until the sun set and the room drew dark that Alec realized how much time had passed.

"They should be back by now," Alec fretted, looking out the window. "It's getting dark."
"They probably went back to the Institute after they left the Seelie Court is all," Magnus said. Magnus put his arm around Alec and started moving his thumb soothingly across the skin of Alec’s neck.

"Maybe. Or maybe they were tricked into consuming fairy food," Alec said, not reacting to Magnus’s touch at all. At least he didn’t shy away from it, Magnus thought hopefully.

"You would know if that happened," Magnus said. "You are bonded through that rather remarkable rune. I am sure you remember it. Rhymes with hah-hah-cat-eye."

"It’s just frustrating not being able to do anything to help!" Alec said standing up. Magnus sighed. He studied Alec from where he sat on the couch. He saw Alec’s stress in the set of his shoulders. The frustration in the tightening of the muscles in his arms and legs. The worry in the expression on his face.

"Do you want me to check on them?" Magnus asked.

"How?"

"Do you have anything of theirs?"

Alec shook his head. "I would have tried to track them by now if I did."

Magnus got up and went over to his desk. He looked up a spell and muttering the incantation under his breath he flung a potion at the wall. An image appeared there. An image of Jace, Clary and Isabelle walking into the Institute.

"See. They’re fine," Magnus said. Alec walked over to where Magnus stood and kissed him softly.

"Thank you," he said.

Magnus could tell Alec had relaxed. The worry in his face was gone and his body slack where it had been taught. Magnus ran his hands over Alec’s shoulders and saw to his relief that this time Alec reacted to his touch like he usually did. Magnus felt Alec’s shiver as Magnus kissed his neck. He felt his own body shudder as Alec’s calloused hands went under his shirt. Moving on from Alec’s neck, Magnus found his lips, soft and warm. This was worth every moment with the stupid blonde. Standing here kissing Alec.

When they finally broke apart, Magnus guiding them both back to the couch. Alec picked up a comic and tried to read all of it, all the while getting Magnus to explain why there were so many plot holes.

Magnus smiled to himself as he watched Alec. He wondered if Alec would ever care about him the way he loved his family. Even if Alec didn’t have a crush on the stupid blonde, Jace was still his parabatai. Alec was devoted to his sister Izzy. These were the two most important people in Alec’s life, and Magnus wasn’t sure where he fit in. Right now he was just a useful person to have around. Useful to have a warlock at your beck and call, Magnus thought. Especially when you were an underage Shadowhunter with Valentine problems.

Alec didn’t know the thoughts in Magnus mind. He hadn’t once thought about what this relationship was. He was just enjoying it. It was all so new to him, so bright. Alec was simply amazed someone like Magnus was interested in him at all.
Alec fell asleep on Magnus's couch with a comic book over his eyes. As his body relaxed, the book slid down and fell on the floor with a soft thump. Magnus sat and watched Alec sleep. It was a strangely peaceful activity that he didn’t get to enjoy often, since Alec almost never slept over. Magnus watched Alec’s chest rise and fall. He watched the unguarded expression on his face, free of the day’s anxieties.

Magnus picked the comic book off the floor and set it back on the table. He was marveling at the hold this Shadowhunter had on him. Alec was unaware of the change he had incited in the immortal. Magnus wanted to tell him, wanted to put his heart on his sleeve but he wouldn’t risk it. Patience was hard, Magnus thought.

Alec shifted in his sleep and moved closer to Magnus, Alec’s head coming to rest in Magnus’s lap as his breathing evened out again. Magnus stroked Alec’s soft black hair, reveling in the glowing feeling in his chest.

Magnus realized as he woke that he must have dozed off. Alec's head was no longer in his lap. He looked around and saw Alec alert and staring at his phone.

"Do you know where we can get blood?" Alec asked when he saw that Magnus was awake.

"A butcher shop?" Magnus said slowly. “And you wanted blood because?"

"Its Simon," Alec said. "Jace says he’s becoming a vampire." Of course, Magnus thought, a new vampire would need blood right away.

"Where?" Magnus said all business now. Alec read the address off his phone, and the two of them were in motion at once. Magnus summoning the blood from the butcher shop. Alec too focused on the task to insist Magnus pay for it.

"You don’t have to come," Alec said to Magnus when he was holding the blood they needed and was about to walk out the door.

"I’ve never seen a vampire rise," Magnus said. It was technically true but it wasn’t why Magnus wanted to go.

“Alright then,” Alec said, knowing he had no time to argue the point. The two of them left for the cemetery.
His stolen time with Alec was over, and the golden haired annoyance was back at his loft. Magnus had assured Luke that Jace was all right when Luke had called, but he hadn't heard from Alec. He had given them more blood for Simon to keep in his room. He was an extremely useful person to have around, it was true.

"Clary won't answer my calls," Jace said walking into Magnus's office. Apparently reruns were no longer enough to keep him occupied.

"Sucks to be you," Magnus said not looking up from his work.

"Oh yeah, and has Alec called you?" Magnus's flinch slightly before he caught his reaction. He had a feeling Jace still noticed.

"Alec isn't my sibling," Magnus said looking down at his desk. He didn't notice the look of pain on Jace's face at his words.

"Alec isn't my sibling," Magnus said looking down at his desk. He didn't notice the look of pain on Jace's face at his words.

"It is funny, though," Magnus continued almost to himself. "You and Clary look nothing alike."

"I know," Jace said with anger.

"I am rather busy," Magnus said. "Is there something you need?"

"No," Jace said. "Nevermind." He walked back to the TV.

Magnus kept working. The TV was on, but Magnus was pretty sure Jace wasn't watching it. He was probably brooding.

Magnus looked at his phone. No texts from Alec. He frowned. He knew why. Jace was in his apartment. Alec didn't want Jace to know they were whatever it was they were. Alec was still unaware that Jace already knew. Magnus sighed. This all seemed very foolish to him.

"Clary!" Magnus heard Jace say with more feeling than he had ever heard from the golden boy before. Magnus didn't listen past Jace's first words. He turned to his work again.

"Magnus," Jace said coming into the room a few moments later. "Maia has been hurt. It may have been Valentine. I have texted Alec, and he is meeting us at Luke's."

There he goes again assuming I will help with nothing in return, Magnus thought. He knew it was an accurate assumption, but still.

Jace and Magnus headed out. They met up with Alec on the way, but Magnus knew better than to kiss Alec hello or hold his hand in front of Jace. But he wanted to.

Magnus arrived at Luke's with Jace and Alec to find Clary standing protectively in front of Simon holding a knife while Maia glared at them from the couch.
Magnus ignored the teenage angst. He knew why he was here and headed over to Maia. Introducing himself he tried to adopt a bedside manner Catarina would have approved of, at least a little.

He noticed Jace, Clary, and Simon leave while Magnus was focused on his patient. He and Alec weren't really alone with Maia there so he wasn't expecting anything. Alec, however, seemed to relax with just Maia in the room and stood closer to Magnus. Not close enough to touch him but not all the way across the room either.

When Magnus finished healing Maia, he swayed a little. Alec closed the space between them in an instant and caught Magnus.

Magnus wanted to kiss him but checked himself. He wanted to ask if he could have some of Alec's strength to rebuild his own. Magnus could feel how strong Alec was. He had always known how strong his Shadowhunter was. Not your Shadowhunter, he reminded himself. Not unless you are willing to ask him to be yours. Not unless you are willing to risk him saying no and leaving you.

"Thanks," was all Magnus said while in Alec's arms. Alec let go of Magnus quickly once he was back on his feet.

"You need to rest now," Magnus told Maia. "Can you stand?"

"I think so," Maia said, and she got up. Alec helped her get down the hall and into Luke's room.

Once Maia was settled in Luke's room, Alec came back. He kissed Magnus quickly and held his hand. Magnus knew they were alone, since that was the only time Alec would touch him. Magnus didn't know why it bothered him so much. He had been in his kind of situation before, after all. Why did it bother him so much now when it hadn't before?

"Thanks," Alec said. "Are you okay?"

"Just a little drained."

"But you're okay right?"

"Yes Alec," Magnus said. "I am fine." Alec smiled.

"Luke might be hurt when they get back," Alec said. "He may need healing too."

"Alright," Magnus said. Alec nodded clearly thinking about the situation and not about Magnus.

Magnus went outside to watch for an injured Luke. He was pretty sure now that's where Clary, Jace, and Simon had run off to. Magnus didn't have long to mope about Alec's indifference before they returned with Luke who was wounded.

They put Luke on the couch and Magnus healed him like a good little warlock. Man, they were running up quite the tab, he thought. If, you know, he was charging them.

When he was done, everyone ran over to Luke and Magnus collapsed on the couch. Two healings in less than an hour had him very drained.

Catarina always had more endurance for healing magic. She could heal all day and not need to take energy from anymore. Magnus wanted to ask Alec for some strength even more now. He knew he couldn't. He was tired, frustrated and getting cranky. And the vampire chose that moment to ask if Magnus was sure Luke would live.
"Yes I am sure," Magnus said, angrily. "I am the High Warlock of Brooklyn. I know what I am doing." He saw Jace talking to Alec, and it didn't improve his mood. Why did Alec have to have a stupid crush on this blond freak anyway?

"Which reminds me," Magnus continued stiffly. He shouldn't say it but he couldn't help the words. "That I am not exactly sure what it is you think you're doing calling on me every time one of you has so much as an ingrown toenail that needs clipping. As High Warlock, my time is valuable. There are plenty of lesser warlocks who would be happy to do a job for you at a greatly reduced rate."

"You're charging us?" Clary said blinking in surprise. "But Luke is a friend."

"Not a friend of mine," Magnus said. He must be in a really foul mood to be rude to Biscuit. "Did you think I was just helping you out of the goodness of my heart, or am I the only Warlock you happen to know?"

"No," Jace said. "But you are the only warlock we know who happens to be dating a friend of ours."

Well, Magnus thought, cat's out of the bag now.

"Why would you say something like that?" Alec said. Spoke too soon, Magnus thought, his heart sinking a little. Of course he is still going to try and deny it.

"Something like what?"

"That we're dating," Alec said. "It's not true."

Magnus felt a pang of pain that had nothing to do with his exhaustion. Why was he here again?

"I didn't say he was dating you," Jace said. "But it's funny how you knew just what I meant, isn't it."

"We are not dating," Alec said, again. Yes, say that more, Magnus thought, 'cause it felt so good the first time.

"Oh," Magnus said, hiding his hurt with long practice. "So you're just that friendly with everybody. Is that it?"

"Magnus!" Alec said staring at him. But Magnus wasn't feeling generous. He felt used and hurt. Magnus leaned back and said nothing.

"You don't… you couldn't possibly think…" Alec said. Magnus could tell Alec was lost for words.

"What I don't get is you going to all these lengths to hide your relationship with Magnus from me," Jace said. Finally, something he and the blonde could agree on. "It's not as if I would mind if you did tell me about it." Alec turned slightly gray but didn't speak.

"Help me convince him," Jace said speaking to Magnus now. "That I really don't care."

"Oh," Magnus, said. "I think he believes you about that."

"Then I don't-" It was Jace's turn to look confused now. Magnus wanted nothing more than to expose Alec's little crush to the whole room. Make Alec get over it. It was a selfish desire, he knew, and knew he wouldn't say a word.

"Jace, that's enough," Clary said. "Leave it alone." Ah right, Magnus thought. Clary knew his secret. Biscuit really was a lovely girl. He would be careful not to be rude to her in future even if Alec was being mean.
"Leave what alone?" Luke said from the couch. And just like that, the topic changed. Everyone focused on Luke. Magnus didn't like the idea of just him and Jace going back to his apartment. Not only because he was sure Alec would not come over now but also because he might slip and tell Jace about Alec's crush if left alone with him. He was perfect after all. Magnus decided staying to watch over his patients would be his excuse for sticking around.

"Jace," Magnus said, pulling Jace aside before everyone settled down for the night. "My magic is weak. You are to stay in the house even so, understand?"

"I understand," Jace said.

"I need you to swear you'll stay in the house," Magnus urged. "I swear I'll stay in the house."

"Good," Magnus said. "I'm exhausted." He collapsed onto the couch and passed out.

Even with his magic low and half asleep Magnus felt it when Jace left. Stupid blonde Nephilim. Where the hell was he going? Magnus wasn't about to chase Jace with his magic this low, however, contract or no contract. He stayed alive this long by doing stupid things like that. Magnus went back to sleep.

Magnus awoke stiff and sore on a lumpy couch. He needed a shower and ended up spending a good twenty minutes waiting outside the bathroom for Clary to come out.

She didn't want him to use all her body wash, huh? As if Magnus Bane used someone else's body wash. Did they all forget, when it was convenient, that he was a warlock! Snapping his fingers, he brought his body wash from home to him and returned it the same way after his shower. He decided not to bother with the gel and glitter today. He still wasn't feeling his best.

Magnus thought again how rare Alec's thank you had been. The warm memory was improving his mood at least a little. The two werewolves he had just healed hadn't even come close to thanking him. And Luke was now saying Magnus should have done more. Should have gone with Clary to fight the demons as well.

"I was healing you!" Magnus said, and couldn't help adding. "Where is the gratitude."

"I am grateful," Luke said. Well, that was something Magnus thought. I mean he was prompted first, and that wasn't a thank you, but still.

The conversation shifted quickly to Maia and Simon, but Magnus was only half listening. It wasn't long till Jace and Alec came in. Jace was rude to the werewolf girl for no reason. What did Alec see in this stupid blonde? Magnus realized he was staring at Alec when Jace addressed him next.

"Magnus wants to shout at me," Jace said once Maia left. "Don't you Magnus?"

"Yes," Magnus said turning from Alec to Jace. "Where the hell were you? I thought I was clear with you that you were to stay in the house."

"I thought he didn't have a choice," Clary said. "I thought he had to stay where you are because of magic."

Magnus explained that would be the case normally, but his resources had been depleted last night. Having to admit his limitations was making him angry. Jace explained that only an oath on the angel meant anything. Alec spoke then, but all he did was agree with Jace!
"Where were you all night anyway?" Magnus asked sourly. Don't say with Alec!

"I couldn't sleep, so I went for a walk," Jace said. Magnus didn't believe him for a second. Lying, stupid, blonde Nephilim. "When I got back I bumped into this sad bastard mooning around the pouch." He indicated Alec. This was at least what Magnus wanted to hear: Alec had not been with Jace.

"Were you there all night?" Magnus asked Alec forgetting about the others. Wouldn't it have been cold out on the porch? Magnus pictured Alec sitting alone on the porch shivering.

"No," Alec said. "I went home and then came back. I'm wearing different clothes, aren't I? Look." Magnus's image of poor, cold, lonely Alec vanished as he took in Alec's outfit. All Alec's clothes looked the same, so this wasn't strictly speaking proof of anything, but no one argued the point. Alec had brought donuts, which seemed to distract the teenagers quickly.

Before Magnus could explain to Clary that demons were in no way scared of the mere sight of her, she showed them the new rune on her arm. It was a rune Magnus had never seen! Clary quickly explained she thinks she can make new runes and went to get her sketchbook to show them. While she was gone, Magnus was looking at Alec. Alec was not looking at him. In fact, Alec was standing as far away from Magnus was he could get without leaving the room!

When Clary returned, Jace suggested she make a fearless rune. Magnus stared. Clary was drawing a new rune. Magnus didn't know there were new runes. He hadn't thought it possible. His curiosity peaked.

"I've got a seelie we can use," Jace said when it was time to test the rune on someone. "Who wants to do me?"

Magnus knew the answer to that questions was Alec, and couldn't help muttering, "A regrettable choice of words." Jace was quickly told by everyone that testing a fearless rune on him was pointless. They would never know if it worked. To Magnus's surprise, Alec volunteered.

"I could do with some fearlessness," Alec said. Magnus thought he knew what fear was gripping Alec. Jace finding out about Alec's little crush for instance. Alec let Jace mark the new rune on him.

Alec didn't feel any different after the rune was on him. Everyone was trying to scare him to find out if the rune was working but nothing happened. That is until the doorbell rang; Maryse, Robert, Isabelle and the Inquisitor entered and they saw a change in Alec.

Magnus saw hard resolution and determination in Alec's eyes as he approached the newcomers and realized what Alec was afraid of. It wasn't Jace finding out; it was everyone else finding out.

Alec stepped forward and spoke interrupting his mother. "Mother, Father," Alec said not unkindly, but very firmly, and more decisively than Magnus had ever heard him speak before. "There is something I have to tell you. I'm seeing someone."

"This is hardly the time," Robert said.

"Yes, it is," Alec said. "This is important. You see, I'm not just seeing anyone."

Magnus couldn't help but stare. Fearless is right! He knew, however, that once the rather extraordinary rune had worn off, Alec would regret saying this here and now. Magnus could tell this was not the time, the place, nor the way to tell them. If Alec ever wanted to tell them, Magnus thought sadly.
"I'm seeing a Downworlder," Alec continued. "In fact, I'm seeing a war-" Magnus stopped Alec before he could finish the sentence.

From the look on Alec's face when he got up, Magnus knew he had done the right thing. Alec looked so alarmed at what he could have said. If Alec had outed himself just then, Magnus was sure he would have looked worse.

Alec quickly backtracked, saying he wasn't seeing anyone, which didn't surprise Magnus. What did surprise him was how it could sting. Alec had said this so many times now, so why did it still hurt? But he would bail Alec out—he knew even if Alec didn't deserve it.

"Alec's been delirious," Mangus said. "Side effect of some demon toxins. But he will be fine soon." Maryse, as Magnus had suspected, quickly focused on the demon attack problem and left Alec alone.

Magnus found out where Jace had gone last night. The Inquisitor had tracked him to Valentine’s ship. At least Magnus now knew why all his tracking spells had failed. All that water had disrupted his spell.

The Inquisitor was a right nasty cow about the whole thing, calling him Downworlder while scolding him for not stopping Jace from running after Valentine. Like anyone could control these crazy teenagers anyway!

Magnus was already in a horrid mood and interrupted the Inquisitor without thinking. He shouldn't have done it. He tried to backtrack but the damage was done. Oh well, Magnus thought, she already hated him, so what's the difference really?

Magnus tried to keep his head on straight after that. He was surprised when Alec sided with the Inquisitor over his parabatai. Magnus knew he couldn't go over to Alec and ask. He couldn't go over to Alec at all. He was making an effort not to look at Alec and he hated it. Magnus couldn't help Alec now by being here. When Isabelle stormed out he decided to take it as a cue to leave.

"I'd say it's been nice meeting you all, but, in fact, it hasn't," Magnus said. He was good at throwing people off with his words. Alec had gotten too close for comfort in telling his parents. "It's been quite awkward, and frankly, the next time I see a single one of you will be far too soon."

Magnus tried not to look at Alec as he left slamming the door behind him. But he did catch a glimpse of Alec staring at the ground on his way out. Would Alec know it was an act or would he think Magnus never wanted to see him again? Magnus didn't know, and there was no way to find out.

Magnus took the subway home, too tired to bother with a portal. He walked up to his apartment door and tried to push it open. It was locked. Then he remembered he had started locking it again once he had given Alec a key.

Magnus opened the door with a snap of his fingers and walked in.

He collapsed into his desk chair, not even attempting to get work done. His mind wandered, and he quickly realized he was moping.

Magnus was used to Shadowhunters calling him warlock or Downworlder and not appreciating anything he did for them. The Inquisitor's scorn had meant nothing to him. But Alec's words still floated in his mind. His denial over and over again that Magnus wasn't there for him. That they were weren't anything to each other.

His not-boyfriend that he was way too emotionally invested in probably wasn't that invested in him. On top of that, Alec was probably never going to tell anyone they were… whatever it was they
were. And Alec might think Magnus was mad at him.

Yep, Magnus thought, moping was positively all he was good for right now.
Chapter Summary

This is the last chapter for Magnus's point of view of City of Ashes

Magnus’s hair wasn’t done and he was in his comfy slippers but he was almost feeling like himself again. He had managed to get a few minutes of shut eye alone in his loft after leaving Luke’s and it had made all the difference.

He was just starting to hope maybe his magic might have a chance to get back to normal, before those nephilim called on him again, when his phone ran.

“Magnus.”

“I’m here.”

“Can you meet us down by the waterfront in Brooklyn?” Alec’s voice wasn’t pleading. It was urgent.

“Where on the waterfront?”

“Somewhere deserted,” Alec said. “Otherwise, you can pick.”

“May I ask why?” Magnus said though he had a pretty good idea.

“We need your help getting to Valentines ship.”

“Why are you going there on your own?” There was anxiety in Magnus’s voice now. Why did Alec think he had to do everything? Was it his ambition to get himself into every dangerous situation possible?

“Valentine has taken Simon and Maia. He plans to use them to finish the ritual with the sword. The Clave is too busy worrying that Jace is in league with Valentine to work on stopping Valentine himself. Their only plan is to trade Jace back to Valentine in exchange for the Mortal Instruments which we all know won’t work.”

“I will meet you,” Magnus said.

“You aren’t meeting me. I have to stay here to tell the Clave to back Jace up once the deal falls through,” Alec said. “You are meeting Jace and Luke.”

“Will you be able to convince the Clave to send back up?”

“I hope so,” Alec said. “Be careful Magnus. Text me the address. I’ll forward it to the others.” And Alec hung up. Alec wanted Magnus to be careful. Magnus smiled. That did improve his mood a bit.

Magnus turned his focus to the task at hand. Getting a bunch of people to a boat was one thing but getting through Valentine’s wards was another. He picked the best location to meet and sent the text to Alec. He looked up some spells and did what he could to recharge his magic even if he knew it
wouldn’t help enough to matter. He changed into something dark that wouldn’t stand out. Being flashy in a sneak attack wasn’t a good idea. Unfortunately flashy described most of his wardrobe. When he finally found boring clothes he set out for the waterfront choosing to conserve his magic and take a taxi rather than a portal.

He arrived to find Jace, Luke and biscuit waiting for him.

“Magnus,” Clary greeted him.

“You look surprised to see me,” Magnus said to Clary.

“We did wonder if you were coming?” Jace said.

“I said I would come so I came,” Magnus said to Jace. “I just needed time to prepare. This isn’t some hat trick shadowhunter. This is going to take some serious magic.”


“Can you unlock the truck for me,” Magnus said. “I mean I could do it myself but that seems rude.” Also a waste of magic which no matter how small he could not afford.

“Sure,” Luke said heading to the truck. Magnus followed him noticing that Clary and Jace stayed behind.

“What’s your plan for my truck?”

“Well, we need a way to get to Valentine's boat don’t we?”

“Yeah…” Luke said. “But I can’t drive on water.”

“Simple minded thinking,” Magnus said. “You turn into a werewolf and yet can’t imagine a truck driving on water.”

Magnus rubbed his hands together and blue sparks flicked between them. He got into the back of the truck and drew the pentagram there, placing his hands on the freshly draw lines he muttered the spell under his breath. Blue sparks seemed to cover the whole truck for a moment then fade leaving only the pentagram lite up.

“One truck ready for water skiing,” he said when he pulled away. Magnus could feel the magic he had used for this trick. And he hadn’t even started on the wards yet.

“Really?” Luke looked skeptical like he thought Magnus wanted him to drive into the river and drowned.

“Yes really,” Magnus said. “I have done this spell before you know.”

“Okay then,” Luke said. “I’ll drive the car down to the beach then.” Luke got in and started the car. Magnus made his way back to where Clary and Jace were still standing. Jace was drawing runes on Clary’s arms.

As Magnus watched Clary receive runes, a memory came back to him and the quote escaped from his mouth almost as if practiced. A quote from the bible about the Mark of Kane.

Luke had the car in position and called for everyone to get in. Once everyone was on board Luke
drove the truck into the river. Magnus was a little smug when the spell worked perfectly.

The stupid blonde ruined Magnus mood again by calling the car an aqua truck.

“If you don’t like it Nephilim,” Magnus said. “You are welcome to see if you can walk on the water.” Jace didn’t answer. Magnus took this as an acknowledgment that Jace knew he couldn’t walk on water.

When Valentines ship came into view the demons arrived. Jace jumped up on top of the truck and started fighting the flying things. A demon hit the top of the truck and broke the windows. Clary joined in the fight and so did Luke. The demons had pulled the top off the truck. Magnus sunk lower in the car trying not to be seen. He could sense the wards now.

Stipping them was going to be exhausting. He started work on breaking them. He had to get the wards down before anyone made it to the ship or this whole thing would end before it started.

“Magnus are you hurt,” Clary called to him. She must of noticed him sunk low and thought he was wounded.

“No,” Magnus said. He tried to sit up to show her he was fine but fell back; he explained the situation to her instead. If he didn’t get the wards down anyone who set foot on that ship, who wasn’t Valentine, would die.

Clary’s next sentence was cut off by a soaring demon digging its claws deep into her jacket and flying off with her.

Jace quickly stated the demon wasn’t going to kill her but proceeded to jump into the river and swim, with alarming speed, after her anyway. Luke followed.

Magnus was alone on the floating truck but the demons stopped attacking once the shadowhunters were gone. He focused on the wards. Drained as Magnus was if he had been a lesser warlock, as he had suggested in spite before, he wouldn’t have been able to keep the wards at bay in his current condition. He hadn’t gotten all his strength back from healing Maia and Luke earlier. And now he was sitting on a truck only held up by his magic while he was magically fighting powerful demon wards.

Magnus wasn’t sure for how long he had been focused on the wards now. He couldn’t remember the last time he had been this drained. But he was sure the last time he had been this drained he hadn’t been still trying to use yet more magic.

Magnus wondered what would have happened if he'd never met Alec or if Alec hadn’t been interested enough to enthral Magnus the way he had. Would Magnus still have been here right now fighting Valentines wards on this truck in the middle of the river? Would he have done this just for his city and his friends like he was doing this for Alec? Would Alec’s friends have thought to ask him at all if not for Alec? Maybe Clary.

It is true his friends Catarina and Raphael lived in New York. Though he and Raphael didn't actually spend time together socially and he could usually take care of himself. Catarina’s biggest problem was that she didn't know when to stop helping others and look after herself. He could imagine her darting from one broken body to the next in the middle of a battlefield not worrying about getting hit herself. Sometimes Magnus envied Catarina her conviction in her chosen profession. She finds a lot of peace and purpose in healing others.

There was no point in this train of thought. It wasn’t worth thinking about. He had met Alec and he
had fallen in love with Alec. What was the point of thinking this way? He didn’t want to have never met Alec even if it meant he was here fighting demon wards and running very low on strength. Too low he realized. Dangerously low. He was going to pass out soon. Magnus wondered absently if he’d drown when he did pass out since the truck would sink once he was unconscious.

Drowning alone in a filthy river. How had this happened? Drowning was not the way he would have chosen to go. He remember all too well when his step-father had almost drowned him. He had been very young but still had magic enough to fight his stepfather off and escape to the silent brothers were he was safe but never loved.

Magnus saw many bright seraph blades on the ship now. Alec must had succeeded in bringing reinforcements. If Magnus hadn’t know it was a battle he would have described the bright lights as dancing. A deadly dance. A deadly dance that Alec was now a part of. Alec there on that boat fighting for his life. Magnus felt a strain on his heart and recognized it as worry for Alec. Magnus had never seen so many demons all together before. That ship was a death trap and that’s where Alec was.

Magnus saw a figure climbing down the ship. He recognized Alec’s sister Isabelle. He watched as she got to the end of the ladder and swam to a boat. If Izzy was there, Alec was close by.

Suddenly Magnus saw a figure fall from the ship. With his excellent vision, he saw it was Alec. But even if Magnus got Alec on the truck it would just sink when he passed out. They would both drowned. Thinking fast Magnus increased the spell on the truck to make it remain afloat even if he wasn’t conscious.

Magnus was completely out of magic now. He saw Alec floating in the water. How long had it been since he had seen Alec fall? Had Alec already drowned? No Alec was not allowed to drowned. Magnus jumped in after Alec. Grabbing Alec firmly by the shoulder Magnus started swimming back to the truck.

Physical strength was all he had at his disposal now but it had been enough to save Alec from drowning.

Once Alec and Magnus were safely up on the truck, Magnus looked him over. He didn’t seem hurt too badly to Magnus’s relief. Alec had hit his head pretty hard, but that seemed the worst of it. Magnus relaxed slightly once he knew Alec was going to be okay and allowed himself to feel how utterly exhausted he was. He watched as Alec woke, coughing up water.

“What happened?” Alec said his teeth chattering.

“You tried to drink the east river,” Magnus said. “I pulled you out.”

“Isabelle,” Alec said. “She was climbing down when I fell.”

“She is fine,” Magnus said. “She made it to a boat. I saw her.” Magnus reached out to touch Alec's head, still worried about how hard Alec had hit his head. “You, on the other hand, might have a concussion.”

“I need to get back to the battle,” Alec said pushing Magnus’s hand away. Magnus let his hand fall back to this side. Alec rejection hurt but he was so tired it was a dull hurt. “You’re a warlock can’t you, I don’t know, fly me back to the boat or something and fix my concussion while you’re at it?”

Of course, Magnus thought cause I am totally an endless supply of energy here. Just use me up until there is nothing left why don’t you. He sank down in his seat and didn’t reply. He was so tired.
“Sorry,” Alec said. “I know you don’t have to help us out. It’s a favor.”

“Stop,” Magnus said. “I don’t do you favors, Alec. I do things for you because…” I love you. Magnus just managed to stop the words before they slipped through his lips. He didn’t think Alec noticed as he quickly added. “Well, why do you think I do them?”

“I need to get back to the ship,” Alec said.

Magnus couldn’t be angry right now. He couldn’t be anything but tired. Maybe later he would look back on this and wish Alec had said something else. Maybe he would look back on this and be angry or maybe he would die here and never be able to look back on this at all.

“I would help you,” Magnus said. “I can’t.” In a calm emotionless exhausted voice Magnus explained why he couldn’t. How he was about to pass out and Alec had to get to land before the truck sank and they both drowned.

“I didn’t realize,” Alec said, really seeing Magnus for the first time since waking up. Magnus knew he must look pretty bad but from the look on Alec’s face Magnus gauged he looked basically as bad as he felt.

Alec held out his hands.

“Take my hands,” Alec said. “And take my strength too. Whatever of it you can use to keep yourself going.”

“I thought you had to get back to the ship,” Magnus said stunned.

“I have to fight,” Alec said. “But that’s what you’re doing, isn’t it? You’re part of the fight just as much as the shadowhunters on the ship. And I know you can take some of my strength. I have heard of warlocks doing that so I’m offering. Take it. It’s yours.”

Magnus took Alec’s hands, watching Alec’s face. When he saw nothing in Alec’s expression to think Alec was going to change his mind, Magnus started to take the gift Alec was giving him. Alec was so strong. Magnus could feel his energy return to him. There was a bright light were their hands were joined. Alec’s power felt warm and bright. Angel’s light.

“Did that help?” Alec asked when Magnus’s grip on Alec’s hands relaxed.

“Yes,” Magnus said still holding Alec’s hands. “Thank you. I can keep going now.” Magnus could more than keep going. Alec’s strength coursed through him and Alec was holding his hand. Magnus wondered which was making his heart sing more.

“I’m glad you’re feeling better,” Alec said. “And that we aren’t going to drowned.” He smiled looking up at Magnus. Magnus throwing caution to the winds leaned in and kissed Alec. Alec didn’t flinch away. There was no one around but they were still out in the open. Magnus pulled away quickly not wanting to push his luck. He couldn’t tear his eyes from Alec. Those blue eyes however were looking around and behind Magnus.

“Something’s happening on that ship,” Alec said. “I think it’s falling apart!” Magnus turned to look.

“We can’t hope to retrieve all the shadowhunters from the water,” Magnus said.

“How many can you save?” Alec asked. He seemed to understand now that Magnus had limits.

“I’m not sure,” Magnus said as the ship's oil tanks fell apart and the oil caught fire. “If I can’t see
them in the water I can’t get them out.” Alec was about to dive into the water when Magnus saw it.

“Wait!” Magnus said. “Look!” Alec stopped and turned to see where Magnus was pointing. Small pale figures were moving among the black geared shadowhunters and pulling them up onto boats.

“Water fairies!” Magnus said. “That Jace must be mighty charming to get this help from the Seelie Queen.”

Magnus and Alec watched for a moment as the ship burned, demons drowned and shadowhunters were rescued.

“There will be wounded,” Magnus said. “I should go help. Will you be okay here?”

“I am coming with you,” Alec said. It wasn’t a question. Magnus didn’t argue. He moved the truck forward toward the largest group of little boats, blue sparks trailing behind them. Magnus jumped from the truck to the small vessel and sensed Alec land next to him.

“Who is in the worst shape?” Magnus said to the first shadowhunter he found. The shadowhunter seemed totally stunned. Magnus was apparently not what he was expecting. Alec on the other hand was.

“We are here to help,” Alec said.

“We definitely need it,” the shadowhunter said addressing Alec and ignoring Magnus. Typical nephilim Magnus thought.

“Magnus can heal whoever is worse off,” Alec said forcing the other shadowhunters to acknowledge Magnus’s presence. Alec wasn’t a typical shadowhunter.

With Alec forcing their hand the other shadowhunter looked at Magnus as if realizing he was actually here to help. They quickly indicated the two figured behind him.

Magnus moved over to them and started the healing. He noticed Alec pull out his stele and start drawing iratzes on those who wouldn’t need a warlock’s help. It was almost like they were a team Magnus thought. A secret team.
This chapter is Alec and Izzy's point of view of the story 'What to get the shadowhunter who has everything' from the Magnus Bane Chronicles and had direct dialogue from that story. I researched what shadowhunters do for their birthday and found a Q&A with Cassandra Clare that said they don't make a big fuss about their birthdays. Shadowhunter only really care about their 18th birthdays which involves a rune ceremony were they also receive a stele of their own.

Alec was staring at the ceiling of his room. He didn’t usually lie in bed like this but today was an exception. Eighteenth birthdays were the only ones shadowhunters really celebrated. It meant you were an adult. Alec could be part of Clave meetings now. He could go places Jace and Izzy couldn’t. Despite all this Alec didn’t feel any different.

Alec heard hammering on his door. When he heard ‘Happy birthday!’ in an excited female voice just loud enough to be heard over the racket he knew it was his sister. She was probably trying to wake him up since he usually never laid in bed.

Alec was halfway out of bed when Izzy entered his room. Presumably banging on the door had lost its appeal.

“What do you want for your birthday?” Izzy asked.

“At least wait for me to leave my room Iz!” She just waved her hand dismissing his complaint as not worth of a response.

“What does Alec Lightwood want for his birthday,” his sister asked again. Alec didn’t know what he wanted, in general, let alone what he wanted for his birthday. Sometimes it seemed to Alec that he was living in two different worlds.

First, there was his family. Jace, Izzy and him going on missions and hanging out at the Institute with their little brother. Max looked up to Jace more than Alec, which made him jealous. Alec was Max’s older brother after all so why did Jace have to be the one Max stared in awe at. Then again everyone stared in awe at Jace so why was Alec surprised. But maybe when Max grew up and went on missions with them Alec would be able to show Max his older brother was pretty cool too.

Then there was the very new world of being with Magnus.

“You don’t have to get me anything,” Alec said.

“But I am going to anyway,” Izzy said. “So what do you want?”

“Don’t know,” Alec said. “Sorry can’t help you.”

“What about Magnus?” Izzy said.

“What about him, Iz?” Alec said, looking behind Izzy to check his parents weren’t standing at the door listening.
“Nothing,” Izzy said, but she had a glint in her eye that Alec was sure meant trouble. He sighed. “Don’t get me anything Iz, okay.” She just grinned at him as she spun around elegantly and left his room. Alec suppressed a groan as he dressed and headed downstairs for breakfast.

“Good morning,” his mother said as he came into the kitchen. “Happy Birthday Alexander. All grown up! Eighteen!”

“Thanks,” Alec said, taking the rigorous hug his mother gave him with as much grace as he could muster.

“I am taking you down to the council later,” his father said. “To get your rune and stele.”

“Great,” Alec said, he forced a smile for his parents. It was strange how much he wanted to see Magnus. But he reminded himself that wasn’t possible today. His family would ask where he was.

Alec couldn’t picture Magnus here with his family. It was also hard trying to imagine his parents at Magnus’s loft. Alec was different around Magnus. He felt both bolder and at the same time smaller when he was with the warlock.

Alec hadn’t seen Magnus since the battle on Valentines ship. Magnus had said he was helping them for Alec, and he hadn’t known what to say. He never did. It still surprised Alec when Magnus was pleased to see him. The first time Magnus had singled him out even with Jace standing right beside there, it had stunned Alec into silence. Alec had always been content to be the shadow behind Jace’s supernova, but Magnus had looked past the blaze to fixate on him. Why was still a mystery to Alec. Magnus seemed larger than life most of the time. Such a person wanting him was amazing in and of itself.

Though when Magnus had been drained toward the end of the fight, Alec had seen a vulnerability in the warlock that he ever seen before. Magnus had brightened though as he had taken Alec’s strength. It had been instant, like watching witchlight go from dark to light.

“Alec,” his father said. “Are you listening?”

“Sorry, what?” Alec snapped his mind back to the present where his father was talking to him.

“When you’re done your breakfast we need to get going,” Robert said.

“Alright,” Alec said.

“Where is your sister?” his mother asked.

“I don’t know,” Alec said. “She gave me a weird look and left. I thought she came down here.”

“She did,” Maryse said. “But then she told me she would be back later and ran out the door.”

Alec groaned. “She was interrogating me about what I wanted for my birthday earlier.”

“Ah,” Maryse said, smiling. “I am sure she will be out a while then. You are hard to shop for.”

“We should go, son,” Robert said. Alec followed his father out of the institute with his mother insisting she tag along saying things like ‘growing up too fast’ and ‘I remember when you were little etc.’ Alec felt like she was trying to embarrass him on purpose as they made their way to the coming of age rune ceremony.
Isabelle Lightwood knew exactly what her brother needed for his birthday but she couldn’t make the whole world change over night. What she could do was prove she accepted him even if the stupid world didn’t understand her brother was still perfect even if he liked boys.

“WHO DARES DISTURB THE HIGH WARLOCK AT WORK?” Came a booming voice from the intercom once Izzy pushed the button. She didn’t speak, taken aback by the loud greeting. Did Magnus great everyone like this?

“Seriously, if you are Jehovah’s Witnesses . . .” Magnus said much more calmly.

“Ah, no,” Izzy said confidently. “This is Isabelle Lightwood. Mind if I come up?”

“Not at all,” Magnus said as she was buzzed into the building. Izzy went up to Magnus’s apartment. When she opened the door the first thing she saw was a demon. A dark slimy demon with tentacles that stood inside a pentagram in the center of Magnus’s living room. She studied it for a moment before remembering that wasn’t why she was here. As long as this warlock cared about her brother she wasn’t going to judge. Izzy walked straight to the coffee machine to stop herself from standing stupidly in the doorway staring at the demon.

Izzy sat up on the counter and stretched out her legs trying to decide how to say what she came here to say.

“So it’s Alec’s birthday today,” Isabelle said.

“I’m aware,” Magnus said. Izzy watched him carefully. She saw something there. Magnus wasn’t going to give an inch until he knew how much she knew.

“I know you two are . . . seeing each other,” Isabelle said. “I don’t care. I mean, it doesn’t matter to me. At all.” She spoke those last words with defiance as if she could show the whole world it didn’t matter. Show her parents that Alec was the same wonderful person he had always been even if he was gay and seeing this warlock.

“That’s good to know,” Magnus said. Izzy nodded. She knew Magnus understood what she had meant. That when and if Alec was ready to tell people who he was she would be there to support him. She would stand by him no matter what.

“I thought—it seemed important to tell someone that, on his birthday,” Izzy said. “I can’t tell anyone else, even though I would. It’s not like my parents or the Clave would listen to me.” It was strange talking about her parents like this and Izzy felt herself bite her lip as she spoke. But her parents didn’t have her loyalty over her brothers. They didn’t have a leg to stand on and she knew it. Her father in particular. “He can’t tell anyone. And you won’t tell anyone, right?”

“It is not my secret to tell,” Magnus said. Izzy saw something there under the warlock’s expression. He was obviously a master at hiding his emotions but Izzy to had some experience in this area. She also knew how much Magnus had helped them over the last few weeks.

“You really like him, right?” Isabelle asked. “My brother?”

“Oh, did you mean Alec?” Magnus said. “I thought you meant my cat.”

“Come on, though,” she said, laughing. “You do.”

“Are we going to talk about boys?” Magnus inquired. “I didn’t realize, and I am honestly not prepared. Can’t you come over another time, when I’m in my jammies? We could do homemade facials and braid each other’s hair, and then and only then will I tell you that I think your brother is
totally dreamy.” Izzy smiled. She knew Magnus liked her brother.

“Most people go for Jace. Or me,” she said. Magnus didn’t speak, but he got this look in his eye. A soft look and Izzy guessed he was thinking about why he preferred Alec. Izzy knew Magnus wouldn’t tell her, but she didn’t mind. She was just happy he did.

“May I see your whip?” Magnus asked. Izzy stared at him. She could think of no reason he would want a shadowhunter weapon, but she had decided to trust this warlock for the sake of his relationship with her brother. She unwound the whip from her wrist and handed it out to Magnus.

Isabelle watched as Magnus carried her whip to a closet nearby and stood with his back to her. She heard him mutter something under his breath and saw his arms move as if pouring something. Then Magnus turned and handed the whip back to her.

“What did you do to it?” Isabelle asked.

“I gave it a little extra kick,” Magnus said. Izzy narrowed her eyes at Magnus. Why would he make her weapon stronger? Warlocks usually charged massive sums of money for this sort of thing.

“And why would you do that?” she asked.

“Why did you come to tell me that you knew about me and Alec?” Magnus asked. “It’s his birthday. That means the people who care about him want to give him what he wishes for most. In your case, acceptance. In mine, I know that the most important thing to him in the world is that you be safe.”

Isabelle nodded and met the warlock’s eyes. She could see now Magnus had downplayed how much he cared about Alec earlier. And no one knew. Izzy launched herself off the counter where she was sitting and went over to a coffee table where she spotted a notepad.

“Here’s my number,” she said as she scribbled it down.

“May I ask why you’re giving it to me?” Magnus asked.

“Well, wow, Magnus. I knew you were hundreds of years old and all, but I hoped you were keeping up with modern technology,” Isabelle said holding out her phone and wiggling it at him. “So that you can call me, or text me. If you ever need Shadowhunter help.”

“Me need Shadowhunter help?” Magnus said, incredulously. “Over the—you’re right, hundreds of years—let me tell you that I’ve found it is almost invariably the other way around. I presume you’ll be wanting my number in return, and I’m also prepared to bet, based on nothing more than a passing acquaintance with your circle of friends, that you are going to get into trouble and need my expert magical assistance rather a lot.”

“Yeah, maybe,” Isabelle said knowing he was probably right. “I’ve been known to be a troublemaker. But I didn’t give you my number because I want magical help, and okay, I understand that the High Warlock of Brooklyn probably doesn’t need an assist from a bunch of underage Nephilim. I was thinking that, if you’re going to be important to my brother, we should be able to get in touch. And I was thinking that you might want to have it if—if you need to contact me about Alec. Or if I need to contact you.”

Izzy knew Magnus’s number was on file at the Institute since he was the High Warlock of Brooklyn but her’s wasn’t. Izzy wanted Magnus to understand they could communicate where Alec was concerned. She remembered all too well the time Alec had been dying with no hope of recovery and Magnus had just shown up. She still wasn’t sure how he had done it, but she was eternally grateful he had. She wanted to make sure Magnus was in the loop.
"All right," Magnus said after a moment's pause. "Thank you, Isabelle."

"No need to thank me," she said winking at him. "I'll be driving you mad before long."

"I'll be expecting it," Magnus said. Izzy had done everything she had set out to do today. She headed out but couldn't stop herself from noticing the demon again. Slime from the demon was oozing outside the pentagram now.

"By the way, that demon is dripping slime all over your floor," Isabelle said to Magnus as she left.

"Hi," the demon said waving a tentacle at her. She barely spared the demon a distasteful glance before turning to Magnus, raising her eyebrows at him.

"Just thought I'd point it out," she said as she closed the door behind her. Despite the strange demon, Izzy was feeling elated. She had delivered her birthday gift. She had been surprised by how much Magnus cared about her brother and how well the warlock knew her brother. She touched the whip around her wrist. Alec always kept them safe while they were fighting. He was always the shield while she and Jace flew headlong into the wall. All in all, Izzy thought Alec had gotten quite a few things he wanted for his birthday, not that he knew about any of them.

Alec wasn’t sure why he was standing in the rain outside Magnus’s apartment. Sure he had been thinking about Magnus all day but to just show up unannounced like this? Then again every other time Alec had just shown up he had been surprised to find Magnus was okay with it or at least seemed okay with it.

Alec remembered being marked with the rune of independence just hours ago. His parents beaming at him and all eyes on him. It had made him uncomfortable. And he had wondered the whole time what would happen if they knew he was gay. He had looked up into the faces of the council and his parents and thought about how that look in their eyes would change. Would he see disgust? Disappointment? Betrayal? Alec didn’t know of any other gay shadowhunters. The mundane world seemed to be better at accepting such things Alec knew, but he didn’t live in the mundane world. He was nephilim. A shadowhunter who couldn’t have anything he wanted it seemed.

Alec couldn’t have Jace. He couldn’t have a family of his own unless he was willing to marry without love. But the whole idea seemed so lonely to him. Wearing a mask for his parents was one thing but every day hiding from the one you were supposed to love was another. Alec was such a lousy liar. He wouldn’t be able to do that.

Alec could go see Magnus though. With him, Alec felt like he didn’t have to hide. So Alec did know why he was standing outside Magnus’s apartment in the rain after all. But Magnus was probably busy. He probably didn’t want Alec to just show up like this. Alec decided he would call and see if Magnus wanted to see him first. Then if Magnus was busy, Alec would just leave, and Magnus would never know he had walked all the way here in the rain. Alec pulled out his phone and dialed the familiar number.

"Hey," Alec said when the phone picked up.

"Why are you calling?" Magnus asked, abruptly.

"Um, I can call another time," Alec said. "I'm sure you have better things to do—" Alec was suddenly very sure Magnus Bane The High Warlock of Brooklyn had better things to do than talk to a barely of age shadowhunter who had been stupid enough to just arrive and expect... what had
Alec expected anyway?

“Of course I don’t, Alexander,” Magnus said quickly. Alec consciously relaxed all the muscles in his body that had stiffened at Magnus’s first reply. “I was just surprised to hear from you. I imagined that you would be with your family on the big day.”

“Oh,” Alec said. It wasn’t just Magnus’s quick denial that surprised Alec but also his knowledge that today was Alec’s birthday. “I didn’t expect you to remember.”

“It might have crossed my mind once or twice during the day,” Magnus said. “So have you been having a wonderful Shadowhunting time? Did someone give you a giant axe in a cake? Where are you, off to celebrate?”

“Er,” Alec said. Alec remembered the key. The key Magnus had given him when he had said Alec was always welcome. Alec drew strength from that. “I’m kind of . . . outside your apartment?” Alec held out his hand then and rang the buzzer. He was instantly let in. Alec smiled. Maybe Magnus wanted to see him too. Alec came up the stairs quickly eager to see the man he hadn’t stopped thinking about all day. When Magnus opened the door, he had a strange look on his face, that Alec couldn't identify.

“I wanted to see you,” Alec said. It was all he ever knew how to say. The basic blunt truth. “Is this okay? I can go away if you’re busy or anything.” Alec stared at Magnus knowing his face was giving him away. He didn't want to go away. He could feel his face light up just looking at the warlock.

“I think,” Magnus said as he reached out and pulled Alec in through the door, “that I could be persuaded to clear my schedule.” Alec knew it, Magnus had been busy but the look on the warlock’s face made Alec hope somehow that Magnus didn’t mind. Alec could feel how close to Magnus he was now and the urge to touch him became overpowering. Alec moved forward and kissed Magnus as he had wanted to all day.

“Happy birthday, Alexander,” Magnus murmured when they broke apart.

“Thanks for remembering,” Alec whispered back.

“Of course I remembered,” Magnus said. “You only turn eighteen once you know.”

“I guess,” Alec said, wrapping his arms around Magnus. Alec didn’t really care about his birthday past the freedom being of age gave him. He could feel his body relaxing from the day's stress just from being near Magnus.

“How long can you stay?” Magnus asked, his arms coming up to hug Alec in return.

“Not long,” Alec said. “I just wanted to see you today.”

“I’m glad you came over,” Magnus murmured as his hands moved to hold Alec’s lower back and his hungry lips found Alec’s, kissing him intensely. Alec own hands were in Magnus’s shirt as Alec focused all his attention on his mouth. An urgent, desperate sound come from Magnus’s throat, and then the warlock suddenly pushed Alec up against the wall pressing hard against him. Magnus’s whole body was in line with Alec. Every plane of him touching Alec. Alec gasped. Magnus pulled away, fast shaking his head, his black hair falling in his eyes.

“Sorry,” Magnus said.

“’s okay,” Alec muttered looking down at his shoes. He could feel the blood rushing into his face.
Magnus was breathing hard. Magnus had spent the whole day thinking about Alec. He had called Ragnor and Catarina to ask them what to get Alec for his birthday. Even Eligos, the slime demon he had summoned for that stupid client, had teased him about his fretting over Alec’s present. The whole time Magnus had wished only that Alec was here. Then Alec had appeared in his doorway. The shock and joy had engulfed him, and Magnus had forgotten about his careful boundaries. Magnus wanted Alec. Wanted him every way you can want another person. But he reminded himself to be careful. If Magnus’s emotions were overwhelming him, then he couldn’t even image how they would overwhelm Alec.

And Magnus didn’t want Alec to stop coming to see him. Magnus didn’t want to put any pressure on Alec who was new to this Magnus reminded himself as he took a few very deep breaths.

“Did you have a good birthday?” Magnus asked taking a step back to allow Alec into the apartment.

“It was okay,” Alec said. He didn’t want to tell Magnus that it hadn’t felt like his birthday until he had come here. The way Magnus had pulled away from him like that was worrying Alec. Was Magnus losing interest in him? Alec knew he wasn’t anything special. Knew he couldn’t hope to hold Magnus’s attention for long. But the idea made Alec feel hollow somehow.

“Did you get anything for your birthday?” Magnus asked.


“You nephilim aren’t big on presents huh?”

“It’s just stuff you don’t need that isn’t useful,” Alec said. “Just stuff that piles up.”

“I suppose you’re right,” Magnus said. He was glad now he had chosen a gift of a less tangible nature. Maybe Isabelle would tell Alec and maybe she wouldn’t but either way she was safer.

Alec slowly took a step closer to Magnus. As if he was watching to see if Magnus would move away. Magnus didn’t; everything was alright as long as Alec was leading. As long as Alec was comfortable. Alec reached out and took both the warlock’s hand in his. He slowly pulled Magnus closer, moving his hands to Magnus’s back under his shirt. Magnus closed his eyes as he felt Alec’s scarred hands on his bare skin. Then he felt Alec’s lips on his neck. Magnus heard a soft sound come from his throat as Alec peppered kissing down Magnus's skin then slowly moved up to his lips. Magnus let Alec lead the kiss, not opening his eyes. If the apartment had caught on fire in this moment Magnus was sure he wouldn’t have noticed.
This is Magnus's point of view for the beginning of City of Glass.

For an immortal Magnus wasn’t the most patient person in the world. He had hoped for something to change after everything that had happened on Valentines ship. But Alec was still distant and still wanted to keep their relationship a secret from everyone like always.

Magnus felt like he was holding up his end of this not a relationship very well indeed. He had been roommates with Jace, healed a bunch of strangers for free, fought Valentine’s wards and generally made himself quite useful.

Magnus sighed. There was no one else in his loft, so his sigh was rather pointless, but he couldn’t help it. How long would he let his go on? How long until his heart couldn’t take it anymore?

When Alec was with him everything was brighter, and he forget why he was so grumpy the rest of the time. Alec was around so rarely though he seemed to have plenty of time to mop in between.

Being in love with someone who was in love with someone else that they couldn’t have sucked. Oh and being in love with someone who didn’t want anyone else to know you were even on speaking terms let alone sort of not dating really sucked. Actually Magnus thought being in love in general kinda sucked. Okay that last one was a lie Magnus knew but either way right now definitely sucked.

Just then he heard his phone buzz. Turning to look Magnus read Alec’s text saying he was going to Idris for a couple of days. The text went on to explain that Alec’s mom would be asking for a portal. Why had Alec even bothered telling him this? Magnus would have found out when Maryse called anyway.

Magnus half-fell half-leaned against the wall of his room for a second then giving up entirely slid to the ground. Yep, he thought, this not-a-relationship was going so well. Alec called when he needed something and Magnus came running. Alec repeated to everyone he knew that they weren’t dating but still called on Magnus whenever he needed help.

Magnus’s experience and common sense were winning out. This Nephilim was going to break his heart after all it seemed.

Not long after Alec’s text Magnus got the expected call from Maryse. He tried not to sound as miserable on the phone as he felt since his mood had nothing to do with the job she wanted and everything to do with her son.

When Magnus arrived, Alec was there, but he made a point not to single Alec out. He tried his best to act as if Alec was just the son of the women who was hiring him for this job and nothing more. Once or twice, he caught Alec looking at him, but he tried very hard not to think about it. If this relationship was doomed as it seemed to be, he had to start pulling away. It only made good sense. Logical sense. To bad Mangus wasn’t logical or that might have worked.

“I don’t see why it’s taking so long,” Maryse said to Magnus. “Is that normal?”
“What’s not normal is the discount I’m giving you.” Magnus said. “Normally I charge twice this much.”

“It’s only a temporary Portal. It just has to get us to Idris. And then I expect you to close it back up again. That is our agreement.”

Temporary, Magnus thought, like my relationship with your son it seems. Before Magnus had time to brood truly on this fact, he felt his powers being suppressed and recognized the cause, hellsmoke.

Forsaken attacked through the smoke. The shadowhunters were in motion before Magnus could even blink twice. Isabelle’s whip flashed. Alec didn’t have his bow and arrow, but he had his seraph blade and was fighting alongside his family. Magnus winced when he saw Alec’s arm get slashed open. Something was coming up behind Alec. Magnus had started moving toward Alec without realizing it before he saw Jace jump in and take out the forsaken in Alec’s blind spot.

Magnus tried to focus. Alec was fighting but Alec was good at fighting what Alec needed was a escape plan, like the portal to Idris. Magnus could feel the hellsmoke clouding his magic and knew the portal was the only magic he could offer. He held up his blue sparkling hands and saw the portal open up in the wall.

“The portal,” Magnus shouted. “Go through the portal!”

Maryse went through first carrying Max. Alec dragged Isabelle through and then Jace jumped through carrying someone who must have been Simon. Magnus had no idea why Jace had decided to bring Simon. Maybe the blonde just really hated the vampire and wanted the Clave to execute him? Magnus doubted this even before he thought it. Magnus really couldn’t help but dislike Jace for holding Alec’s heart. These spiteful thoughts seemed to be beyond his control to prevent. Oh well no one needed to know. Magnus had an excellent poker face after all.

The Forsaken started to disperse as soon as the shadowhunters were gone. By the time Magnus closed the portal all the forsaken were gone.

Magnus assess the situation. Madeleine was dead, and the hellsmoke still covered the area. He wondered if the attacker’s objective had been to kill Madeleine. She must of fallen right at the beginning of the fight. Magnus had been too focused on Alec to notice.

Magnus knew he had to remove the hellsmoke from the Institute since it required a warlock. He would just add it to Maryse’s bill he thought with some satisfaction. After all, he had undercharged her.

While Magnus was still working Clary and Luke barged onto the scene.

Clary was hysterical and wouldn’t listen when Magnus explained that the portal was gone.

“Then open another one!” Clary yelled.

“It’s not that easy,” Magnus said and he explained how he wouldn’t send someone through unexpected. Not even for biscuit would he break that law. Lesser laws sure but the Nephilim were very guarded about magical entrance into their city.

Magnus did wish he could help Clary. She looked desperate.

“Clary,” Luke said. “We’ll get in touch with the Lightwoods. We’ll make sure they have all the information they need to get the antidote for Jocelyn. They can contact Fell—”
But Clary was on her feet, shaking her head. “It has to be me,” she said. “Madeleine said Fell wouldn’t talk to anyone else.”

“Fell? Ragnor Fell?” Magnus echoed, why hadn’t they said that in the first place. This he could help with. “I can try to get a message to him. Let him know to expect Jace.”

Some of the worries cleared from Luke’s face. “Clary, do you hear that? With Magnus’s help—” But Clary had stormed off.

“I will contact Ragnor for you,” Magnus said to Luke figuring the teenager needed time to cool off. “He is an old friend of mine actually.”


“It’s not a problem,” Magnus said. “Gives me an excuse to call the old guy again.” He smiled. How long had it been since he’d seen Ragnor anyway? He had talked to Ragnor just recently on Alec’s birthday. But surely he had seen Ragnor since he’d been banned from Peru.

Suddenly a bright light caught their attention. Magnus recognized that as portal light but that wasn’t possible. He turned and saw Clary standing in front of a portal holding a stelee.

“Clary!” Luke said, racing up the path. His face a mask of anger and dismay. “Clary, stop! The wards are dangerous! You’ll get yourself killed!” Luke ran and grabbed Clary’s arm just as Clary vanished through the impossible portal dragging Luke along for the ride. They were gone.

Magnus stared at the impossible thing that had just happened. Clary making fearless runes was one thing but portals. He shook his head. Ever since he had met Alec, Magnus thought, his life had become more and more out of the ordinary which was saying quite a lot for him.

----------

Magnus was waiting for a response from Ragnor while sitting on his couch in his slippers curled up with Chairman Meow. He had long since finished cleaning up the institute and was taking a much need rest.

Alec had texted a few times, but Magnus hadn’t answered them. Alec had called a few times but Magnus had let it go to voicemail. He was just so sick of being not in a relationship with Alec while managing to be in a relationship with Alec. All they while watching Alec be in love with the stupid blonde!

Magnus must have dozed off because when he awoke, there was a fire message sitting on his lap. He didn’t know how long it had been there. He picked it up.

It was from Alec. Guess he gave up calling Magnus thought. Magnus read the first line and stopped. The message was addressed to Warlock Bane of all things. Alec wasn’t even calling him by his first name now! Alec only contacted him when he needed something. Like Magnus was just here to be of assistance when needed and ignored when not needed. That was it Magnus thought. If Alec refuses to acknowledge their relationship, maybe Magnus would just refuse to acknowledge Alec entirely. Warlock Bane indeed!

Magnus answered Alec’s message in spite of his annoyance since it was probably important. Then he got up off the couch. After making himself some breakfast, Magnus idled away his morning fretting about Alec. This was a colossal waste of energy he knew, but it couldn’t be helped. Alec had called a few more times after the fire message, but Magnus had let them go to voicemail too. Alec hadn’t left a message. Not answering Alec’s phone calls was turning out to be a huge energy suck.
Or at least emotionally sucky.

In Idris Jace had punched his hand through a window after starting a fight with Clary.

“Why do you do these things to yourself?” Alec said finishing Jace’s bandage. Healing like a mundane would be good for him. Maybe he wouldn’t even punch any more windows. “Not just what you did to the window, but the way you talked to Clary. What are you punishing yourself for? You can’t help how you feel.” Alec thought about how he felt and how he couldn’t help it. Though Magnus wasn’t his sister, thank goodness.

Jace’s voice was even. “How do I feel?”

“I see how you look at Clary,” Alec said. “And you can’t have her. Maybe you just never knew what it was like to want something you couldn’t have before.”

“What’s between you and Magnus Bane?”

Alec stiffened. Immediately on alert. “I don’t—there’s nothing—”

“I’m not stupid. You went right to Magnus after you talked to Malachi, before you talked to me or Isabelle or anyone—”

“Because he was the only one who could answer my question, that’s why. There isn’t anything between us,” Alec said but he caught the look on Jace’s face and knew there was no point trying to deny it. “anymore. There’s nothing between us anymore. Okay?”

“I hope that’s not because of me,” Jace said.

Alec felt his face go white and drew back. Jace knew he was seeing Magnus, but he didn’t know anything else right? “What do you mean?”

“I know how you think you feel about me,” Jace said. “You don’t, though. You just like me because I’m safe. There’s no risk. And then you never have to try to have a real relationship, because you can use me as an excuse.”

“I get it,” Alec said tightly. He knew Jace lashed out at people when he was upset. Maybe that was all this was. “First Clary, then your hand, now me. To hell with you, Jace.”

“You don’t believe me?” Jace asked. “Fine. Go ahead. Kiss me right now.” Alec stared. Was Jace kidding? Jace wasn’t gay Alec knew that for sure. What was he playing at? But at Jace’s words, he couldn’t help but think about it that way. As a possibility and he was surprised to find there wasn’t much of a reaction. So what if he was allowed to kiss Jace.

“Exactly. Despite my staggering good looks, you actually don’t like me that way. And if you’re blowing off Magnus, it’s not because of me. It’s because you’re too scared to tell anyone who you really love. Love makes us liars,” said Jace. “The Seelie Queen told me that. So don’t judge me for lying about how I feel. You do it too.”

Next Jace asked Alec to lie for him so Jace could rescue Simon from prison. Alec agreed but once Jace left he was lost in his thoughts. He didn’t want Jace the way he wanted Magnus. The more he thought about it, the more he realized it was true.

Magnus, the day Alec had asked him out pulling him in and kissing him every nerve in his body
singing. Jace, sitting next to Alec while they did weapon’s training casual and comfortable like family. They were different. Such a simple thing, how had he not realized it before.

Alec thought back to Simon’s words. Simon had used unrequited love as a way to try to bond with Alec. He hadn’t brought up Alec’s sexuality as a way to hurt him or threaten him or anything. He had just been making conversation. This simple acceptance was new to him.

No that was wrong. Clary had never told Jace anything even though Alec had treated her horribly. Jace wasn’t upset or angry. He was just his usual Jace self, stupid and getting in trouble. Simon had tried to make small talk about it. Izzy had teased him about Magnus how many times now? The people he loved had all accepted him like this, gay and involved with a warlock. Well, the people he loved minus his parents. But that was a whole other problem.
This is another chapter for Magnus's point of view of City of Glass. Magnus didn’t hear back from Ragnor Fell until the next day and all Ragnar said was to meet him in Idris. Ragnar wasn’t usually so cryptic. Maybe he and Raphael were messing with him. Magnus had tried to convey the importance of the message to Ragnar, but it might have been lost on him.

Magnus portaled to just outside of Idris and started walking. He hated coming to Idris when he wasn’t invited because of this whole having to walk into it thing. He was on a mission to help Jocelyn Fairchild after all who is a shadowhunter. Why can’t they just cut him some slack?

The walking got old fast, so Magnus conjured up an off road bike to try and get him there faster. He hadn’t ridden a bike in quite a while, and it didn’t seem to be getting him anywhere faster anytime soon so he gave up on it. He hadn’t ever liked biking anyway.

When he did eventually get to Ragnar’s cottage, he was expecting his old friend to give him heck for doing errands for shadowhunters and chew him out for being so bad at riding bikes. He had expected his old friend to be there like he always was. As a constant in Magnus’s life for hundreds of years but what Magnus saw when he arrived was destruction.

Magnus could smell demons on the air. Everything in Ragnar’s place was pulled apart as if someone was looking for something. And his friend’s body lay broken on the floor. Magnus sunk to the ground and looked at Ragnar’s green form. He recalled all the times he had dragged Ragnar to Peru and how Ragnar had teased him about this horrible attempt at being musical. He remembered centuries of friendship that had all been destroyed in one moment.

Magnus wasn’t sure how long he sat by his friend’s still body before he got up and checked the room. If Ragnar had still been alive when whatever had done this to him had left he would have left Magnus a clue.

Ragnar had left Magnus a message. His attacker had worked with Valentine and was after the Book of the White. Ragnar never had it, but he knew where Jocelyn had hidden it and now so did Magnus. Magnus wanted the book for so many reasons.

To give his friends death some meaning. To have such an important and amazing spell book in his hands. To bring an old warlock legacy back into the hands of its people. To heal Jocelyn Fairchild for Clary. And other reasons. Reasons he wasn’t about to admit even to himself.

Magnus couldn’t just go to the manor house and get it. So the question became who could just go get it. Jace would know that house well and Clary was also highly motivated. A plan formed in Magnus head, one where everyone wins. But how to get in touch with Clary?

Clary had portaled into Alicante Magnus knew, but he had no idea what had happened to her after that. And did she know that Jace had taken Simon into Alicante and probably been locked up for it too? He knew he couldn’t tell her if she didn’t know already. She wouldn’t want to look for the book if Simon was being held prisoner or worse.
Mangus was surprised by the arrival of a message addressed to Ragnar Fell from someone named Sebastian. This Sebastian person said he needed to see Ragnar and was doing it as a favor for Clary Fairchild.

Well, that works out nicely Magnus thought. Clary is coming to see me! Now how to get rid of this Sebastian? Magnus wasn’t about to trust anyone he didn’t know not after what happened to Ragnar. He still wasn’t sure how demons got into Idris in the first place, and he wasn’t taking any chances. He would take Ragnar’s place at this meeting and pause this Sebastian while he explained his plan to Clary.

The wards of Alicante are a powerful constant magic in the world. They can be sensed by those with magic and those with demon blood. Magnus Bane falls into both of those categories. When the wards fell, he knew. He also knew that Alec was in Alicante. Alec was no longer safe.

With the wards down, Magnus was free to portal right from Ragnar’s house to the middle of Alicante. Once there he immediately had to start fighting for his life. He realized only after the fact that portally right into the middle of it may have been a bad plan. Oh well.

Blue sparks flow from Magnus’s hands this way and that. The ally he was in was all light up with blue. Iblis demons were almost human in form but made of smoke and had these horrid yellow eyes Magnus thought. Magnus tried very hard not to compare his eyes with theirs as he took them down one by one.

Magnus had started conjuring fiery spears and hurling them at the demons along with his blue sparks. Really should have thought this through before just showing up. Magnus was just disposing of the last demon in the alley when he heard a loud screech from behind him. Magnus turned quickly to see Alec dispatching a demon that Magnus had missed.

“Alec,” Magnus said staring. “Did you just—did you just save my life?”

“You never called me back,” Alec said after a moment’s hesitation. “I called you so many times, and you never called me back.” Magnus just starred. This is what he wanted to talk about while there were demons all over the place killing people. This!

“Your city is under attack,” he said. “The wards have broken, and the streets are full of demons. And you want to know why I haven’t called you?”

Alec jaw was set in a stubborn line. “I want to know why you haven’t called me back.”

Magnus threw his hands up in the air in a gesture of utter exasperation. What the hell was this Nephilim playing at?

“You’re an idiot,” he said.

“Is that why you didn’t call me? Because I’m an idiot?”

“No.” Magnus strode toward him. He was totally fed up now. Screw being gentle with this innocent little idiot. Screw being careful. “I didn’t call you because I’m tired of you only wanting me around when you need something. I’m tired of watching you be in love with someone else—someone, incidentally, who will never love you back. Not the way I do.”

“You love me?” Alec looked shocked. Honestly stunned. Magnus realized he had not been as obvious as he thought he had. Alec had had no idea how much Magnus cared. Magnus thought his
actions had spoken volumes. He had felt so vulnerable. His friends had teased him to no end while he pestered them for gift ideas, but Alec had been oblivious the whole time.

“You stupid Nephilim,” Magnus said patiently. “Why else am I here? Why else would I have spent the past few weeks patching up all your moronic friends every time they got hurt? And getting you out of every ridiculous situation you found yourself in? Not to mention helping you win a battle against Valentine. And all completely free of charge!”

“I hadn’t looked at it that way,” Alec admitted, and Magnus knew he was telling the truth. Alec hadn’t thought about that one tiny bit. Why Magnus did anything must be quite a mystery to Alec. Alec didn’t think about Magnus at all!

“Of course not. You never looked at it in any way.” Magnus said suddenly angry. “I’m seven hundred years old, Alexander. I know when something isn’t going to work. You won’t even admit I exist to your parents.”

“I thought you were three hundred!” Alec said staring. “You’re seven hundred years old?”

Oops Magnus thought I think I lied about my age again. Well you know what they say about old habits.

“Well,” Magnus amended, “Eight hundred. But I don’t look it. Anyway, you’re missing the point. The point is—”

A dozen more Idlis demons dropped down on them, and Alec swore. The demons were fanning out into a half circle around them, their yellow eyes glowing.

“Way to change the subject, Lightwood,” Magnus grumbled.

“Tell you what,” Alec said, reaching for a second seraph blade. “We live through this, and I promise I’ll introduce you to my whole family.”

Magnus was pleasantly surprised. Maybe Alec had gotten the point. There might be hope yet for their not a relationship. He raised his hands, fingers shining azure flames. They lit his grin with a blue fiery glow.

“It’s a deal.”

Magnus and Alec fought side by side then taking out the demons with ease as they always did them they worked together.

Alec’s words were singing inside Magnus’s head. Introduced to his whole family.

Alec was mostly thinking about the demons all around him trying to kill him, but some part of his mind was still processing Magnus’s words. Magnus loved him. This was such a contradiction to what he had thought was happening, Magnus losing interest in him, that Alec was still having to say it to himself to take it in.

Once that first wave of demons were dealt with, there was no more room in his head for thoughts other than the task at hand which was rounding up survivors and killing demons as they went.

By the time Magnus and Alec got their group of survivors to the Accords Hall, it was full of people. Magnus wasn’t surprised to find that none of the shadowhunters wanted him there. Luke’s
werewolves had saved many shadowhunters but were being accused of invading Idris. Luke, Magnus thought, was making a rather compelling argument for downworlders.

“What can Downworlders do against Valentine?” Malachi asked scornfully to Luke. “We are Nephilim; we fight our own battles.”

“That’s not precisely true, is it?” said Magnus switching from just eavesdropping. He couldn’t help butting in when stupid shadowhunters said stupid things. “You lot have used the help of warlocks on more than one occasion in the past, and paid handsomely for it too.”

Malachi scowled. “I don’t remember the Clave inviting you into the Glass City, Magnus Bane.”

“They didn’t,” Magnus said. “Your wards are down.”

“Really?” The Consul’s voice dripped sarcasm. “I hadn’t noticed.”

Magnus faked a look of concern. “That’s terrible. Someone should have told you.” He glanced at Luke. “Tell him the wards are down.”

Luke, ignored Magnus and continued to be the diplomat. Magnus had never been very good at that. Jokes and sarcasm was more his thing.

“Magnus,” Clary whispered getting Magnus’s attention at once. She slipped silently to his side and whispered. “Come talk to me. While they’re all too busy squabbling to notice.”

Magnus cut through the crowd like a can opener getting myself and Clary to a more isolated spot.

“What is it?” Magnus asked.

“I got the book.” Clary drew it from her pocket. “I went to Valentine’s manor. It was in the library like you said.” She offered him the Book of the White. “Here. Take it.”

Magnus plucked the book from her grasp with a long-fingered hand. He flipped through the pages. Everything was here he realized. The stories didn’t do it justice. “This is even better than I’d heard it was,” he announced gleefully. “I can’t wait to get started on these spells.”

“Magnus!” Clary’s sharp voice made him focus again. “My mom first. You promised.”

“And I abide by my promises,” Magnus said. Even if it had been something other than biscuit, he would always abide by his promises.

Magnus held the book close to his chest. Mine he thought.

“There’s something else, too,” she added. “Before you go—” But Clary was cut off by that rather untrustworthy Sebastian. Looking at him again Magnus decided to stand by his earlier thought; Sebastian would have made a good hat stand.

Sebastian asked what was going on and explained away his injuries after inquiring about Clary’s but Magnus wasn’t really listening. He finally had the book of the white.

“Nothing. I was just talking to Ma—Ragnor,” Clary said. Magnus almost laughed.

“Maragnor?” Sebastian said. “Okay, then.” Sebastian glanced curiously at the Book of the White Magnus noticed. He clutched the book tighter. You can’t have it he thought.

“What’s that?” Sebastian asked.
Magnus studied him for a moment. Definitely, not going to trust his one he decided. “A spell book,” he said finally. “Nothing that would be of interest to a Shadowhunter.”

“Actually, my aunt collects spell books. Can I see?” Sebastian held his hand out, but before Magnus could refuse, he heard someone call Clary’s name, and Jace and Alec descended on them, clearly none too pleased to see Sebastian.

“I thought I told you to stay with Max and Isabelle!” Alec snapped at him. “Did you leave them alone?”

Perfect Magnus thought. The boy giving me the I-want-your-book-look is distracted. Magnus slipped out of the Accords Hall and quickly made a portal back to New York.

Once Magnus was at home with the book he sat down and read it cover to cover. He probably skipped a meal or two. He did find the spell Jocelyn had used to protect herself from Valentine’s interrogation. It was complicated indeed. Magnus thought it would have been quite a feat to pull off even for Ragnar.

This antidote was going to take time Magnus thought. And help! He would call Catarina. She was much better with healing magic than he was.

___

Alec couldn’t believe it. He was dressed all in white at his little brother’s funeral. The wards were back up and Magnus had vanished with the Book of the White.

Alec wanted Magnus. He wanted to cry into Magnus’s shoulder. He wanted to cry until he couldn’t cry anymore but he didn’t. He had not been raised to show such weakness. He was a soldier.

The funeral went by for Alec in a haze of grief and numbness. Alec didn’t have the energy to really process his brother’s funeral. The battle was coming. The fight that would probably be his last fight.

The promise he had made Magnus now seemed empty. He was probably going to die when Valentine unleashed endless demons on them to rebuild Nephilim. It sounded even more stupid when Alec thought about it like that. Destroy in order to create such, an oxymoron. Valentine was a moron, and his brother was dead. Dead. And Magnus wasn’t here, but Magnus loved him. He wasn’t in love with Jace and Max was gone. These three thoughts circled around in Alec’s head like a broken record. They would all probably be dead soon. Jace had run off on a suicidal mission and Alec wondered what it would feel like if Jace died. What would their parapati connection let him feel of death? Maybe he’d die first in the battle, and he wouldn’t have to find out.

___

It took Magnus and Catarina two days to make the antidote. Magnus was sure he couldn’t have done it without her.

Magnus and Catarina walked into the hospital. Since Jocelyn was a patient of Catarina’s getting into her room was easy. Once inside Magnus closed the door behind them.

Catarina finished the spell with a quick incantation and the potion in her hand glowed momentarily before she went over to Jocelyn’s bed side.

It took a moment for Jocelyn to open her eyes.

“Who are you?” Jocelyn said, not recognizing Catarina. Magnus moved forward so she could see

“You are in the hospital in New York,” Magnus said. “Clary and Luke rescued you from Valentine’s weeks ago, but they weren’t able to wake you up.”

Magnus indicated Catarina standing next to him. “This is Catarina Loss. She helped revive you. She’s an old friend of mine. You can trust her.” To her credit Jocelyn seemed to take this in stride.

“How did you wake me up?” Jocelyn asked sitting up. “Did Madeleine get in touch?”

“Yes she did,” Magnus said. “But she was killed when the Institute was attacked by Forsaken. I’m sorry.” Magnus saw pain flash over Jocelyn’s face and then he saw it pushed aside in want of more information.

“What else has happened while I was sleeping Magnus please don’t leave anything out.”

“Before you jump into a story Magnus,” Catarina said. “I really must attend to my other patients. I am glad you are finally wake Jocelyn Fairchild.” She smiled politely and left the room.

Magnus launched into his story. Jocelyn listened. When Magnus finished she said, “Where is Clary now? I need to see her.”

“In Idris.”

“Can you get me there please Magnus?” Magnus saw not only a worried mother but also a warrior in the stance Jocelyn now took. She was standing next to her hospital bed looking much like the women who had sought his help over fifteen years ago.

“Yes,” Magnus said. “But there is one more thing you need to know.” And he explained about Jace and how Jace is her son. She didn’t react the way he had expected. There was fear there and disbelief.

“But you said you know Jace,” Jocelyn said. “You’ve spent time with him.” Magnus nodded. “Is he-” she paused as if horrified she was asking the question. “Is he evil?”

Magnus blinked. “Huh?”

“Is he evil?”

“A little too sarcastic maybe,” Magnus said. “And has some serious emotional trauma but not evil, no.”

Jocelyn nodded with a resolution on her face.

“Why do you ask?”

“I will have to find out for myself if he really is my son,” Jocelyn said. “But first things first. Take me to my daughter.”

Magnus used a portal to get Jocelyn and him to just outside of Idris. The wards were back up so Magnus couldn’t portal all the way in. They walked. Magnus was looking forward to seeing Alec. He hadn’t technically been away that long but in times like these days could mean everything.

“Thank you, Magnus,” Jocelyn said while they walked. “Thank you for helping my daughter and
me."

“It’s nice to be appreciated,” Magnus said smiling. And it’s nice to be thanked he thought. Some shadowhunters were definitely better than others.
The Mortal War (CoG)

Chapter Summary

Another chapter for Malec's point of view of City of Glass.

The Clave had decided to surrender to Valentine. The end of the world as Alec knew it. Magnus was back though, and that was something. Alec felt better with Magnus standing next to him. His mother, sister and Simon were with him as well, but it was Magnus's presence that mattered most to him.

Clary stormed into the room then and stood up on the dais. Alec was quite amazed at her speech. He hadn't known everything that had happened on Valentine's ship but after her fearless rune, he believed her.

"I did it with a rune," Clary said. "It was a rune so strong it made the ship come apart in pieces. I can create new runes. Not just the ones in the Gray Book. Runes no one's ever seen before—powerful ones—"

"That's enough," Malachi roared. "This is ridiculous. No one can create new runes. Like her father, this girl is nothing but a liar."

"She's not lying," Alec said. He felt compelled to help her. If she could convince them there was hope, maybe they wouldn't surrender to Valentine. "I've seen her create a rune. She even used it on me. It worked."

"You're lying," the Consul said, but doubt had crept into his eyes. "To protect your friend—"

"Really, Malachi," Maryse said crisply. "Why would my son lie about something like this, when the truth can so easily be discovered? Give the girl a stele and let her create a rune."

Clary was given a stele, and she drew a rune on her wrist without even looking down at it.

Suddenly Clary was gone. Magnus was standing in her place. Alec blinked and turned. Magnus was still standing next to him. Alec kept looking back and forth between the Magnus that had been Clary and the other Magnus. What did this mean? He heard other people call out different names. Then Alec realized that no one else was seeing Magnus.

Clary reappeared behind the dais and Alec realized what had happened. Clary's had done whatever that was with a rune. But what had the rune been meant to do? Surely it didn't just show you random people in the room. Alec tried to remember what names other people had called out. He was trying to figure out the runes intended purpose. He was distracted from this thoughts when Clary started speaking again.

Alec listened to Clary's speech with awe. She had made a rune to bind downworlders and shadowhunters so they could fight together. Really fight together. Almost like parabatai but a temporary bond. Alec thought about that for a minute. He wanted Magnus to be his partner. They had worked together before, but this would be different. This would be better.
Magnus didn't need to look at Alec to know he was still standing beside him. The Alec he could see in front of him wasn't really Alec, no matter how amazing Clary's rune skills were. Magnus noticed Alec's reaction to the new rune with a warm feeling in his chest. Alec must of been seeing him from the way Alec kept looking back and forth between Clary and Magnus. Maybe, if Magnus was understanding Clary's new rune correctly, Alec loved him too.

Magnus didn't say anything to Alec. They had a date set for when they didn't die, and Magnus would hold Alec to that.

The meeting took forever. In Magnus's opinion, it was a super simple decision. Use the rune end of story, but the Clave insisted on talking it to death! When they finally agreed the rune was their best plan it was with far too much effort on Luke's part. At least, that was Magnus's opinion on the matter.

"I have always been told that only the Nephilim can bear the Angel's Marks," a faerie knight said, with a measure of distrust. They were all gathered around Clary to get the rune. "That others of us will run mad, or die, should we wear them."

"This isn't one of the Angel's Marks," said Clary. "It's not from the Gray Book. It's safe, I promise."

The faerie knight looked unimpressed.

Magnus sighed. He would have to show them all how's it's done. Those untrusting fools. He flipped his sleeve back and reached a hand out to Clary. "Go ahead."

"I can't," she said. "The Shadowhunter who Marks you will be your partner, and I'm not fighting in the battle."

"I should hope not," said Magnus. Who else then to get the ball rolling. He looked around and spotted the next best test subjects. Luke and Jocelyn.

"You two," he said. "Go on, then. Show the faerie how it works."

Jocelyn blinked in surprise. "What?"

"I assumed," Magnus said, "that you two would be partners, since you're practically married anyway." When Luke had started coming around to his loft for Clary's biannual visits Magnus had seen Luke's feelings for Jocelyn written plainly on his face. Honestly Magnus wasn't sure how Jocelyn hadn't figured it out yet. The women must be dense or something.

Colour flooded up into Jocelyn's face, and she carefully avoided looking at Luke. "I don't have a stele—"


"Magnus," Luke said. "Magnus can you make a portal for us big enough to get everyone fighting to the battle?"

"Where to?"

"Brocelind Plain. If you have been there, that is," Luke said. Magnus saw biscuit then and gave her a smile before turning to Luke.

"It's fine," he said. "I'm familiar with Brocelind Plain. I'll set the Portal up in the square. One that big
won't last very long, though, so you'd better get everyone through it pretty quickly once they're Marked."

As Luke nodded and turned to say something to Jocelyn. Clary leaned toward Magnus and whispered, "Thanks, by the way. For everything you did for my mom."

Magnus's smile broadened as he read the expression on her face. "You didn't think I was going to do it, did you?"

"I wondered," Clary admitted and went on to explain that she wasn't impressed about not being told Simon was in Alicante.

"You'd have dropped everything and go rushing off to the Guard," Magnus said. "And I needed you to look for the Book of the White."

"That's ruthless," Clary said angrily. "And you're wrong. I would have—"

"Done what anyone would have done. What I would have done if it were someone I cared about. I don't blame you, Clary, and I didn't do it because I thought you were weak. I did it because you're human, and I know humanity's ways. I've been alive a long time."

"Like you never do anything stupid because you have feelings," Clary said. "Where's Alec, anyway? Why aren't you off choosing him as your partner right now?"

That hit home Magnus thought as he winced. "I wouldn't approach him with his parents there. You know that." Magnus wanted to though. He wanted to run over to Alec and… he wasn't even sure. He just wanted to be closer to the man was that so horrible?

"Doing the right thing because you love someone sucks sometimes."

"It does," Magnus said, "at that."

_________________

"So whose son is he?" Alec replied. Simon had just finished explaining that Jace isn't Valentine's son, but Alec was only half listening. Alec was frantically looking around the room for Magnus. He had a theory about that rune Clary had drawn, but that didn't even matter. He knew how he felt either way, and he needed to find Magnus. Jace was just Jace and his parentage was his problem.

"Who cares!" Isabelle threw her hands up in delight, then frowned. "Actually, that's a good point. Who was his father? Michael Wayland after all?"

Simon shook his head. "Stephen Herondale."

"So he was the Inquisitor's grandson," Alec said absently. "That must be why she—" He broke off, staring into the distance. Had that been Magnus! Why did he pick today of all days to blend into the crowd? Glitter and rainbow striped pants would have been so much easier to find.

"Why she what?" Isabelle demanded.

"Alec, pay attention. Or at least, tell us what you're looking for."

"Not what," said Alec. "Who. Magnus. I wanted to ask him if he'd be my partner in the battle. But I've no idea where he is. Have you seen him?" he asked, directing his question at Simon.
Simon shook his head. "He was up on the dais with Clary, but"—Simon craned his neck to look—"he's not now. He's probably in the crowd somewhere."

"Really? Are you really going to ask him to be your partner?" Isabelle asked. "It's like a cotillion, this partners business, except with killing."

"So, exactly like a cotillion," Simon said.

"Maybe I'll ask you to be my partner, Simon," Isabelle said, raising an eyebrow delicately.

Alec frowned. That had his attention. "Isabelle, you don't need a partner, because you're not fighting. You're too young. And if you even think about it, I'll kill you." His head jerked up. "Wait—is that Magnus?"

It wasn't Magnus. Alec really wasn't listening to whatever Simon and Izzy were saying now. Alec was lucky he was tall and that Magnus was tall, or he may not have spotted Magnus's hair bobbing in the crowd.

"There's Magnus," he said, and took off without a backward glance, shearing a path through the crowd to the space where the tall warlock stood. Alec noticed the surprise on Magnus's face as he approached. I have never even held his hand in public Alec realized. No wonder he is fed up with me.

"I found you," Alec said a little breathlessly.

"I wasn't lost," Magnus said. He was trying to conceal his smile Alec noticed. Was I that afraid that I didn't want him to smile at him around other people? Why had this amazing force of nature put up with him as long as he had Alec don't know? Alec let a full smile with all his emotions flow onto his face. Magnus stared at him shocked.

"Alec," Magnus whispered. "People can see us and your parents are right over there."

"Will you be my partner in this fight Magnus?" Alec asked disregarding his parents. Alec realized just then how stupid he would feel if Magnus said no.

"Of course I will," Magnus said quickly. Alec then felt stupid for worrying Magnus would say no. "But I'm not the one with parents who will ask nosy questions." Alec ignored this as well and pulled out his stele.

"Give me your hand," he said. Magnus lifted his hand and placed it gently in Alec's. Alec started to draw the rune on the back of Magnus's hand. Then he draw the partner rune on his own hand. Alec felt a zing as the rune took effect and he could see a shiver run through Magnus like he felt it too.

Alec looked into Magnus's eyes then those beautiful cats eyes he loved. He could feel the thrill of power from the rune on his hand. Magnus's power. Magnus's love. The world fell away, and Alec flung his arms around Magnus and kissed him full on the mouth. He knew there were people watching, but somehow he wasn't scared anymore. This wasn't like the time he had had the fearless rune. This was a new kind of fearless. A more permanent kind. Alec was gay and in love with Magnus Bane, and that was that.

He felt Magnus's total surprised and then his surrender to the kiss. When Alec finally disentangled himself from Magnus, he saw his mother her eyes wide and unblinking with her hand over her mouth. Everyone within sight of them seemed to be staring at them. Thankfully there was no time to do a meet and greet.
On the plus side, Alec thought, if they all died here today in this battle he would never have to talk to
his parents.

Alec grinned hugely at Magnus, who's answering smile lite up his whole face.

"You never cease to surprise me, Alec Lightwood,” Magnus said so softly it was almost a whisper.

"I did promise," Alec said.

"I didn't think you would go about fulfilling your promise in quite that way though."

"It worked," Alec said defensively.

"It did indeed," Magnus said. "I don't mean to kiss and run but I have to go make a portal." He stroked Alec's cheek as he spoke, an expression of love on his face.

"I'm your partner in his fight remember," Alec said. "I am coming with you."

Alec reached out with his hand and held Magnus's hand. They walked like that outside. Alec noticed his mother exchange runes with a Faerie Knight on his way over. He was glad she was too busy to talk.

"As nice as it is to hold your hand," Magnus said sweetly when they arrived at the portal site. "I need two hands to make a portal." Alec felt his face redden as he released Magnus' hand. Magnus’s hands sparked blue fire as he held up them.

A great shimmering portal now stood in front of them.

"Magnus!"

"Isabelle?" Magnus said. She was running toward them with a determined look on her face.

"You are not joining the fight," Alec said before Isabelle could say another word.

"I know!" Isabelle said. "I just need to talk to Magnus for a second. Go away Alec." Alec rolled his eyes and moved to help organize the crowd of warriors now surrounding the portal.

"I need your help," Isabelle said. "Please!"

Magnus smiled at Izzy. Nothing was going to ruin his mood right now. Not evil masterminds starting wars and certainly not being called on to help.

"What can I do for you?" Magnus said kindly. Isabelle seemed surprised he was so ready to help but got over it quickly. She held up a small toy.

"Can you track Jace for me?" she said. "I just need to tell him who he is. He shouldn't die in this fight thinking he's Valentines son or some kind of demon. He needs to know he isn't Clary's brother!" She paused and then added. "Alec wants you to do this. Please, Magnus!"

"Alright alright," Magnus said. "You don't have to beg." He took the toy from Isabelle and quickly performed the basic tracking spell. He gave Isabelle the location.

"Thank you!" she said and ran off.

"What was all that about," Alec said returning once he saw Izzy ran off.
"Your sister just wanted help with something," Magnus said.

"It wasn't something dangerous was it?"

"Probably not," Magnus said. Though he knew it probably was considering what Jace had run off to do. He also knew if Isabelle was desperate enough to use her brother to motivate Magnus he figured trying to stop her was foolish. Isabelle would have just found another way. Besides, they were all going to war. Safe was a relative thing.

"Can you feel it," Alec asked. "The rune Clary made?"

"Yes," Magnus said. "It's like the time you lent me your strength but so much stronger."

"And it goes both ways this time," Alec said smiling at him. Magnus smiled back, a warm bubble in his chest. Not even war could ruin his mood right now.

There was indeed war on the other side of the portal. The demons didn't take long to appear once they stepped through the purple curtain into the battlefield. The fight began.

Alec was marvelling at his new found aim. Whenever he throw a weapon if his aim was off, even just a little, blue sparks sent it flying right at the target. He could feel his small cuts and bruises healing themselves as if by magic before he reminded himself that it was magic. His arrows had never been so effective as when they were on fire. This was a totally new way of fighting.

Magnus was marvelling at how fast his body could move. His reflexes felt almost instant. He thought about moving and suddenly he was there. It took some getting used to. His magic seemed to have no limits like he was both giving and receiving strength from Alec at the same time. Which he reminded himself he was. He could feel years of skill and training in his every movement. It was a subtle change, but it made all the difference in the world.

Alec and Magnus fought side by side while the battle raged on. Alec wasn't sure how long he had been fighting when he felt it. Something snapped inside him. Like something essential had been cut off. Like his arm or leg was suddenly missing. His parabatai rune grow cold and dark. Jace was dead he thought. There was no other explanation.

Alec shot an arrow into the demon that had circled around behind Magnus. The demon died before it got a single claw into Magnus. Alec redoubled his efforts in the battle. He couldn't help Jace right now but he was sure as hell gonna kill a lot of demons.

The fight wasn't going as well as it could but it wasn't over for the shadowhunters either. Alec shot yet another fiery arrow into the chest of an approaching demon. He didn't keep his eyes on the arrow but turned to the next target; then did a double take. The demons were gone. Vanished. He turned to find Magnus looking around much the same way he was.

"What happened?" Alec asked him.

"I don't know," Magnus said. "The only thing I can think of is that Valentine is dead."

"Jace!" Alec said. "Our parapatai connect Magnus. It's broken. Do you think-"

"That he died saving us all from Valentine," Magnus said. "It's possible. First things first though. We need to tend to the wounded." Alec nodded but his expression was pained.

"We will find out what happened Alec," Magnus said his hand on Alec's shoulder. Magnus couldn't think of any other way to comfort him. He couldn't say don't worry. Or everything will be fine.
Magnus magicked the wounded and dead into the air as if they were on invisible stretches and floated them back to Alicante's Accords Hall through a portal of his making. He was still marveling at the almost limitless magic reserves he seemed to have. Alec was strong indeed. When this rune wore off, Magnus was going to need to get used to his old magic levels again.
Alec was in the Accords Hall helping with relief efforts but he was thinking about Jace. He knew there were people out there searching, making sure everyone was accounted for. He knew search parties had gone down to the lake to see what had happened. Would someone find Jace’s body? Had it been Jace who had stopped Valentine?

When Alec saw Clary, his eyes locked on her. Looking for any sign of what might have happened to Jace. He had just had time to register Clary wasn’t upset when he saw a stretcher being carried behind her.

Alec couldn’t help it. He ran over.

“Is that Jace?” Alec asked breathlessly. “Is he--”

“He’s okay,” Clary said. “Just unconscious.” Alec knew Clary wouldn’t lie to him about that. He knew that if Jace were dead Clary would be in pieces.

Alec moved his hand over his parabatai rune. It felt warm again. Like it had never been cold and dark. The only thing he could think of was that he had been so worried Jace would die he had imagined the whole thing.

______

Magnus was in the hospital watching over an unconscious in Jace. There was something different about Jace. Something new about him Magnus couldn’t put his finger one. He was newer somehow but that made no sense. Magnus watched Biscuit as she watched Jace from the chair next to his bed. There was something there in her expression. She was hiding something. The battle had ended only hours ago, and she hadn’t left his side.

“Clary,” Magnus said.

“Yes, Magnus,” Clary said, turning her gaze from Jace for the first time since Magnus had entered the room.

“What happened to Jace?” Magnus asked. Clary looked away from Magnus and down at her hands.

“You can tell, can’t you?” Clary said. “We decided we weren’t going to tell anyone.”

“What happened?”


“Then how?” Magnus spluttered.
“The Angel,” Clary said. “I stopped Valentine by changing his runes. The Angel obeyed me instead of him. The Angel said I could have anything I wanted. One wish. Valentine had stabbed Jace through the heart, so I wished for Jace back.”

Magnus could feel how wide his eyes were. His mouth hanging open to stared at Jace. There was no evidence that Jace had been stabbed through the chest, none at all.

“Oh, Clary!” Magnus said. “I have no idea what that will mean. As far as I know this has never happened before.”

“I know,” Clary said. “But Jace is alive.” She said it with a finality like as long as Jace was there everything would be okay.

Magnus turned back to Jace and re-assessed his condition with this new information. There was absolutely nothing wrong with Jace physically. He seemed just very drained and tired as far as Magnus could tell.

Clary had to go when her mother came but she wouldn’t leave until Magnus promised to stay. Magnus had surprised himself by agreeing without any hesitation.

This whole situation had peaked his curiosity, but it was far more than that. He was concerned about Jace. The stupid blonde! It didn’t take long for Magnus to realize why. Jace was Alec’s parabatai. Jace was someone Clary would wish for above all other things. Jace mattered immensely to the people Magnus loved. Even if Alec had a crush on him.

“Clary.” The voice was muffled by tiredness.

“Don’t try to get up,” Magnus said, quickly turning to stop Jace from moving.

“Where’s Clary?” Jace said sitting up in bed anyway.

“She isn’t here,” Magnus said and added quickly before Jace could ask or try to stand. “But she’s fine. She’s with her mother.”

“When can I see her?”

“You need rest,” Magnus said. “Clary told me what happened. The Angel healed you physically, but you are still exhausted. Your spirit and mind need time to recover.”

“Then I can see Clary?”

“Yes,” Magnus said. “And there is Valentines funeral. If you want to go.”

“When?”

“Tomorrow.”

Jace nodded.

“Now lay down,” Magnus said. “Clary will not forgive me if you get hurt trying to move around when you should be lying down.”

Jace relaxed and let his head hit the pillow again. Magnus could tell Jace was tired, but it had been invoking Clary’s wishes for his safety which seemed to have made the difference.

“They have also planned a celebration of sorts afterwards,” Magnus said. “There will be fireworks.”
“Will Cl--” Jace started, but Magnus answered before he could finish. This boy had a one track mind.

“Clary will be there, yes.”

Jace smiled and closed his eyes. Magnus could tell he had fallen asleep when his breathing slowed. He slept the whole rest of the day and all night. The next day Magnus allowed him to leave the hospital.

______

Alec’s shoulders had never felt lighter. Sure Jace was alive and they won the war and though was so important it wasn’t why he felt lighter. His shoulders had started to feel lighter after his first date with Magnus. The first time he had admitted who he was and asked a man on a date. But there had still been that crushing feeling. The feeling of hiding from everyone else. It hadn’t been there with just Magnus but now it wasn’t there at all. Alec hadn’t realized how much it had been crushing him until its sudden removal.

Alec hadn’t actually talked to his parents about Magnus yet. They had been avoiding the topic and ignoring Magnus completely. Alec wasn’t sure if he had expected anything better but it still stung.

Alec was trying to focus on other things. He found a sweater and dark jeans without holes to wear to the celebration tonight. Isabelle, Aline and him were all headed there now.

The Angel Square was like magic, Alec thought. He actually thought Magnus’s magic had been involved. Something of the warlock was there in the decorations.

There were huge trees, that hadn’t been there yesterday, in the middle of the square. The trees were almost the height of the demons towers with silvery trunks wrapped in ribbon. No glitter though. Magnus must have had to retrain himself.

Alec saw shadowhunters and downworlders talking, drinking and laughing together. He was amazed that he had once thought this impossible. It seemed so right to him now. Well almost. There was great sorrow mixed with the joy. They had fought a war just days ago. He had lost a brother.

There were people carrying plates of food and glasses of brightly coloured liquids around to guests.

Isabelle took one of the bright pink drinks from a server.

“It’s not like Magnus’s party,” Isabelle said. “Everything here ought to be safe to drink.”

She was talking to Simon, who had just come over to join them.

“Ought to be?” Aline said, looking worried.

Alec wasn’t paying attention to them. He was looking at the magical forest. He had seen Magnus in the shadow of a tree. Magnus was talking to a woman in a white dress with pale brown hair.

Alec saw the women look at Clary with a strange expression but then Magnus broke away and came toward Alec.

Alec forgot about the girl. Magnus was dressed like a Victorian gentleman. A long black frock coat over a violet silk vest. His handkerchief was embroidered with the initials M. B., and it protruded from his vest pocket. He looked amazing Alec thought. And mine.
“Were you in the fight old friend?” Magnus said.

“Yes,” Tessa answered.

“Now the real question is whether you fought as a warlock or a shadowhunter.” He smiled at her.

“I took a rune like every other warlock in the fight’ Tessa said then her tone changed. “But oh Magnus look at this! Downworlder and shadowhunter have never fought so before.”

“I know what you mean,” Magnus said. “It’s a new world.”

“Will would have loved this world,” Tessa said.

“That boy did always treat me like a person,” Magnus agreed. “Have you seen Jem lately?”

“We are due for another visit this January.”

“It’s kinda ironic don’t ya think,” Magnus said. “That though he was dying he outlived everyone he knew.”

“Brother Zacharias outlived everyone,” Tessa corrected.

“I suppose you are right,” Magnus said. “Oh and speaking of Will. It has been discovered that Jace Wayland is actually Jace Herondale? His father was Stephen Herondale. I thought you’d want to know.”

“Thank you,” Tessa said, smiling. “It means a lot that there is someone left. That my children’s legacy lives.” She paused. “My great great great grandson.”

“Indeed,” Magnus said. “But don’t overwhelm him, Tessa. He has just found out who he is. Be gentle.”

“I can be patient,” Tessa said. “But what can you tell me about the last of my line, Magnus?” Magnus knew she was thinking about her James and her Lucie. The first and only shadowhunters to ever be half warlock.

“He is a fighter,” Magnus said. “Reminds me of a young Will actually. Witty, sarcastic, reckless. A typical Herondale really.”

Tessa smiled. “I can’t wait to meet him,” she said. “Thank you for telling me Magnus. I will return to the Spiral Labyrinth for now but when he is ready I will tell him about the Herondales. About where he comes from.” Her gaze shifted behind her for a moment and she smiled. “I think right now you are wanted elsewhere.” She didn’t need to indicate that Alec was watching him. Magnus could feel Alec’s eyes on him.

“Indeed, I am,” Magnus said. “It’s good to see you, Tessa.”

Tessa smiled at him and slipped away. Magnus turned to face Alec.

“Nice vest,” said Alec with a smile when Magnus approached.

“Would you like one exactly like it?” Magnus inquired. “In any color, you prefer, of course.”

“I don’t really care about clothes,” Alec protested.
“And I love that about you,” Magnus announced. Since letting Alec his feeling Magnus had stopped censoring everything he said. He was done stopping the word love from escaping his lips. Even if Alec had not said it back. What Alec had done was enough. “Though I would also love you if you owned, perhaps, one designer suit. What do you say? Dolce? Zegna? Armani?”

Alec sputtered as Isabelle laughed. Magnus saw Clary and remembered Jace when he had first woken up.

Magnus leaned toward Clary and whispered, “The Accords Hall steps. Go.”

Before Clary could say a word, Magnus turned back to Alec. He saw Clary leave out of the corner of his eye, and smiled.

“I don’t think I want to wear any of those names,” Alec said once he stopped sputtering. He was so cute when he sputtered. “They sound—” He made a face to better show his total lack of enthusiasm for new clothes. Magnus laughed.

“I think you’d look great in a suit!” Isabelle said to Alec.

“Thank you,” Magnus said, with genuine affection. He was becoming quite fond of Alec’s little sister.

“Not going to happen,” Alec said stubbornly. Magnus pulled Alec in closer to him. After a quick kiss, Magnus turned Alec around in his arms resting his chin on Alec’s shoulder. It was a new joy to hold Alec in public and Magnus couldn’t get enough of it.

Magnus stared up at the stars with his arms wrapped around his love. He couldn’t remember the last time he had been this happy. He wasn’t paying attention to what Isabelle and Aline were talking about. But when Clary and Jace returned he decided to at least pay some attention. Mostly because upon their return Magnus felt Alec’s neck warm from his blush at being held so around so many people. Alec did not pull away though and Magnus was glad of it.

“You’re here!” Isabelle said animatedly. She thrust a glass into Clary’s hand. “Have some of this!”

“Is it going to turn me into a rodent?” Clary asked.

“Where is the trust? I think it’s strawberry juice,” Isabelle said. “Anyway, it’s yummy. Jace?” Isabelle was offering the drink to Jace now.

“I am a man,” Jace said, “And men do not consume pink beverages. Get thee gone, woman, and bring me something brown.”

Definitely, something Will would say Magnus thought. How had he not seen it before?

“Brown?” Isabelle made a face.

“Brown is a manly color,” said Jace. “In fact, look—Alec is wearing it.”

Magnus could feel Alec’s warm blush deepen and released Alec to look at his sweater properly.

“It was black,” Alec said defensively. “But then it faded.”

“You could dress it up with a sequined headband,” Magnus suggested. “Just a thought.”

“Resist the urge, Alec.” Simon said. “You’ll look like Olivia Newton-John in Xanadu.”
“There are worse things,” Magnus said. Simon engaged Clary and Jace in conversation. The three of them moving slightly away. Magnus turned back to Alec.

“You know I could turn that sweater back to black if you want?” Magnus said standing very close to Alec face to face.

“Nah,” said Alec, moving just that inch closer. “I’ll stick to brown. It’s a manly colour, so I hear.” Magnus made a mental note never to give up improving Alec’s wardrobe. Even if it was just a blue scarf to bring out his eyes.

“You know, not having to do laundry is one of the perks of dating a warlock,” Magnus said, wrapping his arms around Alec again. He couldn’t help it, not with Alec so close. “You should take advantage of it.”

“I think I have taken advantage of you long enough,” Alec said, surrendering to the embrace.

“Don’t say that,” Magnus said, moving his hand from Alec’s waist to stroke his cheek. “You didn’t. Not really.”

“Nice of you to let me off the hook but I did,” Alec said. “I don’t think my friends, and I would have made it through all this without your help.”

“You would have found a way,” Magnus said. “You are nothing if not resourceful.”

Magnus gazed at those blue eyes until he saw those eyes look past him.

“Magnus!” Alec said in an urgent whisper staring at a point behind Magnus to the left. “My parents are coming.” Alec pulled away from Magnus instantly all coiled nervous energy. They stood with half a foot of space between them now.

“Alec,” Maryse said when she reached them. Robert stood next to her but a step behind.

Magnus tried to picture them as just Alec’s parents and not previous circle members who Magnus had witnessed kill the Whitelaw’s. These were the parents of the one he loved, and he was determined to make a good impression or failing that at least not a bad impression.

“Hi, mom,” Alec said. He was shuffling his feet like he always did when he was nervous.

“Alec I--” Robert started but then closed his mouth like he had realized that was all he had to say.

“I would like to introduce you to my boyfriend,” Alec said firmly. “Magnus Bane.”

Magnus tried to smile kindly at Maryse and Robert, but he saw a look in their eyes. A look that told him they were scared. It was one thing to know your parents used to work on the wrong side; it was another thing to know the details. The fear he saw in their eyes was that fear. Someone who knew them then knowing their son now. It was a subtle expression and Magnus was sure Alec hadn’t seen it. But Alec didn’t know Magnus had met his parents when they were in The Circle. Magnus had never told him. And Magnus never would. It would destroy Alec’s relationship with his family and that would destroy Alec. Nothing was worth that.

“Hello,” Magnus said and held out his hand. Maryse was the first to shake it and then Robert. Robert let go very quickly.

After that, the Lightwoods didn’t look at Magnus once. He had kind of expected it, but Magnus could tell it was bothering Alec. Alec kept looking over to Magnus, almost like he was trying to
include Magnus in his little gathering. Magnus was touched but knew he would never be part of Alec’s family. That wasn’t how it worked. Parents did not approve of their children dating someone like him.

Maryse had her arm around Alec’s shoulder and was talking to him about other things. Things besides her son’s boyfriend. Robert stood a little away from them watching Alec and Maryse, his expression blank.

Magnus wanted to help Alec but didn’t know how. Magnus couldn’t make Alec’s parents accept him. There was no spell or potion that could help him with this. Magnus felt powerless. It was a strange feeling. A strange feeling he didn’t much like.

He had however agreed to run the fireworks tonight. Magnus turned and walked a few steps away from Alec and his parents. Standing out of site he stared up at the sky. Then he spoke the words and snapped his fingers. The fireworks started. Streaking lines of gold fire in the sky.

He watched them for a while. Lost in thought. Then he felt warm arms wrap around him from behind, and he smiled.

“Alec,” he said, softly.

“The fireworks are beautiful,” Alec said.

Magnus turned around in Alec’s strong arms to face him.

“Are you okay?” Magnus asked, his thumb stroking Alec’s cheek.

“I think so,” Alec said. “Dad wouldn’t even look at you, though.” He sunk his head, looking down at his feet.

Magnus moved his hand gently over Alec’s face to rest it under his chin, just like he’d done the first time he had kissed Alec. He slowly encouraged Alec to look at him.

“Is there anything I can do?”

“I don’t think so,” Alec said.

“Would you like a distraction maybe?”

“What kind of distraction?”

“Well, I seem to remember promising to take you to France when you were eighteen.”

“Oh.” Alec looked a little taken aback.

“Unless you don’t want to,” Magnus backtracked. “I everything fine now right? Crisis averted but he you want to stay that’s fine too. Or if you just want to go home or…”

“Or what?”

“Or whatever you want,” Magnus said.

“Where do you want to go?” Alec asked.

Magnus smiled. It was so Alec to throw that question back at him.
“Wherever you are,” Magnus said sincerely but Alec rolled his eyes.

“No really Magnus,” Alec said. “Where do you want to go?”

“I really want to be with you,” Magnus said. “That’s all.”

Alec blinked then his face relaxed and he leaned into Magnus, rested his face on Magnus’s chest.

“The food from that French place was rather good,” Alec said into Magnus’s shirt.

“France it is then,” Magnus said, holding Alec under the fireworks. Getting away would be good for Alec Magnus thought. Just the two of them. No judging parents. No demanding friends. Magnus had never had Alec all to himself before. Only stolen moments. He found he was quite looking forward to it.
Chapter Summary

This chapter technically takes place during City of Fallen Angels but since they aren't in the first half of the book it doesn't have any direct dialogue in it from the book. I based this chapter off of the end of City of Glass and all the hints in City of Fallen Angels about where they are on their vacation. It is also based off of all the noticeable changes in their relationship after they return from their vacation.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“So,” Magnus said. “Where do you want to go first?”

“Umm,” Alec said. They had just arrived in France and Alec was still taking in the scenery. His head spinning around to look in all directions.

“How about the Eiffel Tower?” Magnus asked knowing Alec didn’t have an answer. Magnus was determined to show Alec everything. Magnus wanted to give Alec something in return for everything Alec had given him. Showing Alec the wonders of the world seemed like a good place to start.

“Okay,” Alec said. Magnus held out his hand, and Alec took it. They walked down the street in comfortable silence.

Magnus saw then that Alec wasn’t looking down at his shoes like he had thought. Alec was looking down at this phone.

“Who are you texting?” Magnus asked a little miffed Alec was texting while they were here together alone in France.

“Jace,” Alec said without looking up.

“And why are you texting Jace,” Magnus said a little sourly.

“Can’t help it,” Alec said lifting his head to grin at Magnus.

“Why not?”

“Cause I’m here, and he’s stuck in the Institute,” Alec said.

“You aren’t texting him for any other reason?” Magnus couldn’t help asking.

Alec blinked at Magnus, open, honest confusion on his face. “Huh?” he said.

“Well you are in love with him after all,” Magnus said. Magnus tried to keep the frustration out of his voice, but he failed.

“I’m not in love with Jace,” Alec said, suddenly serious. He wanted to wipe away the pain he heard
in Magnus's voice. He hadn’t realized Magnus still believed this. “I don’t think I ever was.”

Magnus stopped walking; he whirled around to stare at Alec. “When did you come to that conclusion?”

“Jace asked me to kiss him,” Alec said.

“Oh god!” Magnus said, his eyes widening. The picture formed in his mind. Jace and Alec kissing! It wasn’t a good image. It made his insides twist. “You didn't! Did you?”

“No,” Alec said quickly, trying to calm his boyfriend. “But the thing is I thought about it. I really thought about it for the first time as a possibility. And I realized that I didn’t want to kiss Jace. Jace told me I was using him as an excuse never to get close to anyone else. I’d never have to tell anyone I was gay if there wasn’t someone worth telling them for right?”

As Alec spoke, he watched the horrified look on Magnus’s face vanished completely. His face softening with love and wonder. There was something else there as well. Alec couldn’t quite identify.

“Well I have to say you have surprised me yet again Alexander,” Magnus said, his cat eyes meeting Alec’s blue ones. “Since I met you surprises seem to be a common occurrence for me.” He smiled. “It takes my breath away.”

“I don’t believe no one has ever surprised you before,” Alec said.

“Not so often and not so well,” Magnus said.

“Can you explain that,” Alec asked.


For a moment, Alec forgot he was on a street. It was a rather deserted street but a public street nonetheless. Alec reached around Magnus and pulled him in, deepening the kiss.

Magnus’s smile broke their kiss. His lips too tight over his teeth to continue kissing. Magnus took Alec's hand and continued their walk to the Eiffel Tower. The smile still on his face.

Walking in Europe Alec noted was very different than walking in New York. The view wasn’t nearly so good in New York for one thing, but there was something else as well. The air, the people, the mood, were somehow different. And no one looked twice at two men holding hands.

As he looked around, his head turning in all directions to see everything he could, Alec felt so lucky. France was a beautiful country, but the thing he loved most about being here was being alone with Magnus. No prying eyes or judgemental looks. No conversations ending when he walked into a room. He didn’t have to see those unpleasant slightly unidentifiable looks on his parent's faces.

Then Alec remembered that look on Magnus’s face when he had asked him to explain other times in his life that had surprised him. He realized Magnus had avoided the question. It made Alec feel cut off from Magnus. Like he was being held at arm’s length. Alec shook his head, trying to clear his thoughts.

“When’s your birthday?” Alec asked suddenly. It was something about Magnus that he didn’t know. Something small enough the Magnus might answer instead of dancing around it.
“December,” Magnus said. “Why?”

“Well on my birthday you wished me a happy birthday,” Alec said. “If I don’t know when yours is I wouldn’t be able to do do the same.”

Magnus smiled. “Izzy never told you then?”

“Told me what?”

“I got you something for your birthday,” Magnus said. “It just wasn’t something for you.” Magnus enjoyed the confused look on Alec’s face before explaining.

“I didn’t know what to get you. I called and annoyed my friends about it actually. They were all super unhelpful but then I remembered how much you desire to keep your family safe. So for your birthday, I gave Izzy’s whip a little extra kick.”

“But that was ages ago,” Alec said. That was before Magnus loved him. Before he had come out to his parents. Before everything.

“It wasn’t ages ago Alexander,” Magnus said, chuckling. “I was two months ago.”

“Oh right,” Alec said sheepishly. Magnus loving him seemed so new. It hadn’t occurred to him it had been there even two months ago. Two months felt like an eternity to him right now. “I guess cause... I mean so much has happened I--” He tried to finish the sentence a few times but in the end settled for asking, “How did you make her whip stronger?”

“A potion I had been saving for a special occasion.”

“My birthday was a special occasion?” Alec said.

“Of course,” Magnus said. Alec beamed and squeezed the warlock’s hand as they walked. There were so many other things he wanted to say, but he didn’t know how. He settled for walking with Magnus down the beautiful cobblestone road. Soon the Eiffel Tower came into view.

“Ah,” Magnus said. “That’s no good. That line will take all morning.” Magnus turned his gaze on Alec a wicked grin on his face.

“I know that grin,” Alec said. “And we are going to stand in line Magnus.” Magnus pouted. “Don’t give me that look!”

“Oh alright,” Magnus said, pretending to give up. “If you insist.” The warlock started walking very slowly to the line with his shoulders slumped like he was being asked to kill a puppy or something Alec thought.

“Alright fine!” Alec said. “You win.” Magnus’s spun around all signs of anguish gone and that wicked grin back on his face.

“That’s my rebel,” he said. Magnus pulled Alec aside into a corner surrounded by low brick walls. It was a fairly isolated spot, but Alec saw Magnus put up a glamor before his hands sparkled. Magnus rested his hands on the brick wall beside them, blue sparks flying. A portal appeared.

“After you,” Magnus said, his voice gleeful.

Alec rolled his eyes but went through the portal. And he was standing on top of the Eiffel Tower. His breath caught in his throat. The view was spectacular. The small houses and buildings all lined
up in well-organized rows. The great walkways and gathering places looked so open from up here. So unlike the small cramped buildings. Out past the buildings was the water. Turned slightly grey from the effect of so much atmosphere between here and there.

Alec spared a glance then for his near surroundings and realized why the line downstairs was so long. The tower hadn’t opened yet. He stood alone on top of the Eiffel Tower for only a moment before Magnus joined him.

“It’s quite the view isn’t it,” Magnus said, coming to stand next to Alec. Alec didn’t speak. He didn’t have the words. Magnus watched his face instead, full of youthful wonder. This view he had seen so many times in his life was suddenly new through Alec’s eyes.

“Thank you,” Alec said. He didn’t turn his gaze from the landscape, but he did reach out and grab Magnus’s hand. They stayed like that for a while. Magnus watching Alec and Alec gazing out at Paris.

“The Tower will open soon,” Magnus said, squeezing Alec hand gently. “Do you want to stay here? The view is much more spectacular at night it is true, but that means lots of people around.”

“People aren’t really my thing,” Alec said. Magnus chuckled remembered their first date fiasco on the subway.

“I know,” Magnus said.

“Oh wait first,” Alec pulled out his phone and turned the camera to take a picture of him and Magnus. Alec had long arms but not quite long enough for a good shot.

Magnus snapped his fingers, and suddenly the camera didn’t need Alec to hold it up. Alec’s arm dropped back down to his side as Magnus took the picture with another snap of his fingers.

“How did it turn out?” Magnus asked as Alec snatched his camera from mid-air.

“Great!” Alec said, beaming. The photo didn’t have the view in it, but Alec didn’t care. That wasn’t why he wanted this photo. Before people arrived to see them, Magnus made another portal.

Alec stepped out of the shimmering portal and felt the ground beneath his feet. He looked up and saw they were right under the Eiffel Tower. He held up his camera and snapped a photo of it.

As soon as Magnus came through the portal, Alec dragged him over to the ideal photo spot under the tower. Alec held up his camera to point it at them both and again Magnus helped by floating the camera at the perfect height to take the photo.

“Move the camera back this time,” Alec said, as the blue sparks momentarily glowed around his phone. “I want the tower in the background.”

Magnus moved his hand forward, and the camera followed as if attached with a string. The flash went off, and Alec went to retrieve his phone.

“I think I will send that one to Jace,” Alec said, as he looked over the photos.

“Oh, not the other one?”

Alec remembered the feeling of being alone with Magnus high above the world. High above all the problems and worries of the world there was just him and Magnus. He smiled at the thought. Yes, that one he would keep just for himself.
“You can’t see the tower in the background when you’re on top of it. And it’s way more jealousy-inducing if he sees the Eiffel Tower,” Alec said, grinning fiendishly. This was also true but not as important. “Rather than just us.”

“You really are enjoying that aren’t you.”

“What?”

“Taunting Jace.” Alec laughed. Magnus noted the lighthearted tone to Alec’s voice. Alec had never been in love with Jace after all. He was just Alec’s friend. Somehow a weight had been lifted off Magnus’s heart.

“Where do you want to go next?” Magnus asked. Alec looked up from his phone, the most curious expression on his face. Magnus couldn’t quite place it. It was a very intense determined look.

“The hotel,” Alec said firmly.

“Why?” Magnus said, baffled. This was not the answer Magnus had expected after that look. “There is nothing to see there. And it’s still early. We could go to the Louvre. Or maybe the Sainte-Chapelle. There are just so many places in France I want to show you. If we don’t see more than one a day, it will take a very long time indeed.”

“The hotel,” Alec repeated.

Magnus sighed. Alec didn’t say anything so Magnus just guided their walk toward the hotel. It wasn’t a long walk and soon enough they arrived at the grand entrance.

“This place is really big,” Alec said looking up at the elaborate ceiling. Alec hadn’t realized hotel had meant mansion!

“Splendid isn’t it!” Magnus said.

“Expensive.”

“Now don’t be so silly,” Magnus said, “We are on vacation after all. Who needs a saving account or a second apartment in Tokyo.” Magnus had never really valued money like other people. At least not for centuries. Sure when he had first felt the Silent Brothers when he was seventeen he had had nothing. But for a long time now making money was easy, or at least easy enough that he didn’t worry about it. Having too much money, however, bored him. He always had enough money, that he could enjoy spending it when he wanted. But spending it on Alec. Alec with his frugal ways never ceased to be awed by luxurious things. It was delightful to see the things Magnus took for granted through Alec’s eyes.

“You sold an apartment in Tokyo for this?” Alec looked stunned.

“Actually,” Magnus said, thoughtfully. “I sold that one decades ago, now that I think about it.” He was staring off toward the wall lost in organizing his thoughts. Real Estate had never been a huge interest of his. Nevertheless, he had owned quite a few properties over the years. He remembered selling that brownstone to buy the necklace that Isabelle now wore. It had been a gift for Camille at the time, but Magnus much preferred it on Isabelle. Camille hadn’t really deserved it anyway.

“We should have stayed somewhere less--,” Alec throw his arms wide to indicate the huge lobby. “Extravagant.”

Magnus chuckled as he walked over to the receptionist to check in. Alec stood in the middle of the
huge entrance way. He had never seen anything so grand before. Sure the Institute was big and all but it wasn’t like this. This was probably the most highly-priced floor he had ever stood on. Alec looked down at the floor and saw the trail of mud left by his shoes. He swallowed nervously.

“Why did you pick the most expensive hotel in France,” Alec asked when Magnus returned from the front desk.

“I want to show you the world,” Magnus said, shrugging.

“I could have seen it without the price tag, though,” Alec said.

“You are worth much more than any currency,” Magnus said, quietly. “You are priceless.” Alec felt colour rise in his face. Magnus was standing very close to Alec looking right at those blue eyes. Magnus beamed at him, and Alec felt his blush deepen. Alec looked down at his shoes, suddenly very aware of how out in the open he was and even more aware of what he was planning on doing when they got to the hotel room. Alec didn’t look up. He just followed Magnus to the elevator staring at his laces. His left shoe lace was coming undone while the right was too tight. He wasn’t sure why he was thinking about this of all things.

Alec couldn’t keep looking at his shoes for long. The beautiful carpet caught his attention and soon he was looking all around the halls. His eyes were wide as he took in every lavishly decorated aspect this hotel had to offer. The crown molding on the ceiling. The view out the window. The smell, like something old and well cared for mixed with a pleasantly fresh, clean smell.

Magnus watched Alec’s as he looked around. Yes, seeing through Alec’s eyes was another reason he wanted to show Alec the world. He wanted to see the world again for the first time.

When Magnus stopped at a door, Alec almost walked into him. Alec read the number 511 in gold lettering on the door as Magnus pulled the small plastic card from his pocket, inserted it into the lock and opened the door.

Magnus watched as Alec explored the rooms. Alec stared at the gold leaf on the mantel over the fireplace, the fine satin sheets on the king-sized bed, the beautiful view out of the large window in the living room. The window that seemed to take up the whole wall.

“This place is--,” Alec finally said, his voice soft and astonished. ”It is so--" Alec couldn't find a word that did it justice.

“I am glad you like it,” Magnus said. He snapped his fingers and their packed suitcases from New York appeared by the door. “So are you going to tell now why you wanted to come here instead of sightseeing with me?”

“I wanted to see the hotel,” Alec said, but his gaze had shifted back down to his shoes.

“Yes but no one comes to France to visit the hotel room,” Magnus said matter of factly.

“Maybe I do,” Alec said, again to his laces.

“Why would you do that?” Magnus asked chuckling.

Alec didn’t have the words. His head snapped up, and he walked over to Magnus and put both his hands on either side of Magnus’s face. Locking eyes with the warlock; Alec’s thumbs resting on Magnus’s cheekbone. Magnus’s breath caught in his throat as Alec leaned in slowly and kissed him.

There kisses were always passionate, always heated but this felt different. Alec seemed shaky.
“Are you alright,” Magnus asked, pulling out of the kiss but keeping both of his arms wrapped around Alec. Alec nodded but Magnus knew there was something more he wanted to say. He just couldn’t find the words.

“You can tell me anything,” Magnus said.

“I just realized--,” Alec stammered. He had been lost in kissing Magnus. Lost in his intentions and desires when he had suddenly identified the look on Magnus’s face before. Hope. Alec had said he wasn’t in love with Jace and there had been hope in Magnus’s expression. Alec didn’t want Magnus to hope for something he already had. “I-- I never said it back.”

“Said what?”

“That I loved you,” Alec said. “You told me but I never said--”

“You don’t have to say anything,” Magnus cooed softly. “Don’t worry.”

“But I do,” Alec said his face an open book of honest affection. “I have for a while I just didn’t know how-- didn’t know if you did to. Then you told me and I thought it was so obvious that I did that I never said it back.”

“When I told you,” Magnus said. His words almost as shaky as Alec’s. “That look on your face, so shocked. I almost couldn’t belie--”

“I figured you were bored of me,” Alec said, interrupting Magnus. “I thought you didn’t want to see me anymore.”

“You could never bore me, Alexander.”

Magnus’s voice was steady now and Alec knew he had said enough. He pulled Magnus in closer kissing him. Magnus kissed Alec back like he always did. He didn’t register the change in Alec’s intentions right away. He loved kissing Alec and gave himself over happily to it until he realized Alec was guiding them toward the bedroom.

Magnus barely had time to register more than that before Alec had thrown him onto the huge bed. With his lightning fast reflexes, Alec was on top of Magnus before Magnus could catch his breath. Alec was everywhere. Alec’s arms supported his weight over Magnus as Alec kissed him with nothing short of inexhaustible need.

“Oh god,” Magnus moaned as Alec kissed all down Magnus’s neck pulling his shirt down to kiss his shoulder, his chest. Magnus’s hands moved up under Alec’s lose shirt. He wanted to pull Alec’s shirt off but checked himself. Alec probably didn’t meant what Magnus thought he did. Magnus was just interpreting Alec’s actions as he wished to see them. He kept reminding himself to stay calm though it was becoming an impossibility at this point.

Alec suddenly sat up and pulled his own shirt off, flinging it to the ground. Magnus froze. Alec had noticed Magnus’s small moment when he had thought about removing Alec’s shirt.

“What are you doing?” Magnus asked. Alec didn’t say anything. He put his strong arms around Magnus’s shoulders and pulled him into a sitting position. His hands in Magnus’s shirt Alec pulled it up over Magnus’s head fasted than Magnus could blink. Alec flung the shirt away without even looking where it was going, and they fell together back down on the bed. Both their bare chests pressed together. Alec was kissing every inch of the warlock’s skin.

Magnus wasn’t sure if he was breathing anymore. He could feel his heart pounding in his chest. He
could feel his own desires usually so well controlled suddenly overpowering him.

“Are you sure,” Magnus whispered. He had to ask but he was so scared. Scared Alec didn't mean it. Magnus wasn’t sure what he would do if Alec wanted to stop. Magnus could feel his whole body sparking with electricity. The feeling was so intoxicating.

“I am sure I want you,” Alec said. “I am not sure what I am doing.”

“I am,” Magnus said softly. He wasn’t about to stop this now. He wasn’t sure if he could but he didn’t need to because he had heard the conviction in Alec’s voice. That was all he needed.

Magnus rolled them both over so he was on top of Alec, kissing every inch of Alec’s chest. Kissing every scar and rune etched there. Running his hands over his boyfriends every surface. It thrilled him even thinking the word. Finally being able to call Alec his. His boyfriend. The claim he had always wanted to have on Alec, Alec had finally given him.

Magnus took his time. He watched Alec for any signs of distress. Alec showed none. Alec seemed to melt everytime Magnus touched him in a new way. Everytime Magnus showed him how something could feel that he hadn’t known before. This was a different type of sex than Magnus had ever had before. He couldn’t call this sex even in his mind. This made Magnus finally understand why people called it making love.

_______

They both lay panting on the bed. Alec couldn’t believe what had just happened. He had been fantasizing about Magnus like this for so long, but the reality had been so much better. He hadn’t known enough to get the fantasy even close to as good as the real thing. Magnus had known exactly what he was doing. He was gentle and commanding and magnificent.

Alec couldn’t keep the grin off his face.

“That was amazing,” he said. He knew the word wasn't the right one, but it was the best he had. Amazing wasn’t a big enough word. Wasn't an important enough word.

“Yes well I am amazing it is true,” Magnus said with a flick of his wrist. Alec laughed. Magnus knew he was good at this, but it had surprised him how he and Alec had fit together. They were so different after all. Age and experience vs, youth and innocence. But nevertheless, they had moved together easily. Perfectly even.

They were brought back to reality by their stomachs growling.

“Do you want to go out for dinner?” Magnus asked.

“I don’t really want to leave the hotel room,” Alec said still grinning.

“Room service?” Magnus asked. Alec nodded, jumped up off the bed and started putting his clothes back on.

Magnus watched him a little disappointed. Did he have to put all his clothes back on?

By the time the food arrived Magnus had put on a robe to prevent the chill that came with his slowing pulse. Alec, of course, fulling dressed, answered the door, thanked the door man, and wheeled the tray over to Magnus. They ate in relative silence. Alec wasn’t much for idle conversation and it was a very comfortable silence. A warm, loving feeling in the air.
They fell asleep that night in each other’s arms, and Magnus found the new joy in just sleeping so near Alec. The sound of Alec’s steady breathing beside him seemed to make his breathing easier somehow. Before this trip they had only ever had stolen moments. Alec had slept over by accident before but never like this. Sleep was more peaceful with Alec next to him.

Magnus woke up to the familiar smell of coffee and for a moment thought he was back at his loft. Alec arriving very early before Magnus woke and making coffee.

When Magnus opened his eyes and saw the beautiful hotel ceiling, he remembered this was better than Alec at his loft for only an hour in the morning. This was Alec all day every day!

“Do you want some coffee,” Alec asked.

“I’d love some,” Magnus said getting up and taking the mug Alec offered him.

“They have some very strange coffee’s here,” Alec noted. Magnus chuckled.

“Do you want to go to my favourite French restaurant for breakfast?” he asked.

“Sure,” Alec said. “I mean we can’t stay in the hotel all day right?”

“Well you know,” Magnus started, but decided not to make the stamina rune joke. Ragnor had teased him with that joke when Magnus had called to ask what to get Alec for his birthday. He would save that for another day. He was already well aware that Alec didn’t need a stamina rune anyway.

“I know what?”

“Nevermind,” Magnus said, smiling. “You are probably right. We are in France after all. It would be a shame to stay in the hotel the whole time.”

Alec blushed so deeply it went down past his neck and under his shirt. Magnus's eyes followed the reddening of Alec's skin, and he noticed something.

“Alec,” Magnus said. “That is the same thing you wore yesterday.”

“No, it isn’t!” Alec said.

“It looks the same.”

“It’s clean,” Alec said. “And this shirt has gray thread instead of black.”

“How exciting,” Magnus said, sarcastically.

“Just because I am not wearing”—Alec paused for effect while he gestured at Magnus—“that doesn’t mean I don’t put on clean clothes.”

“This is just a robe,” Magnus said. “I am not going out in it.” Magnus snapped his fingers and looked down at his new attire. He was wearing a bright purple jacket with tan pants and a white button up shirt. Magnus thought he looked rather fetching. No need to start the trip off to fabulous he thought. Though he would need to go into the bathroom to gel his hair before they left.

“That isn’t any better,” Alec said.

“Clean isn’t the point Alec,” Magnus said. “It’s all about style.”
“Well I have none,” Alec said smiling. “So there.”

Magnus couldn’t help but grin back. He went over to Alec and wrapped his arms around him.

“You know I kinda love your old holey sweaters,” he said.

“You do?”

“I love everything about you,” Magnus said as he tightened his arms around Alec. Alec’s blush hadn’t faded yet, but Magnus could tell he had made it worse. He grinned. Alec’s blushing were beautiful.

“Since everyone knows about us now,” Magnus said slowly as he turned Alec around in his arms to face him. “Will I get to see you more. After our vacation I mean. More than just a few stolen moments.”

“What did you have in mind?” Alec whispered into Magnus’s ear before kissing down his neck.

“You could stay over sometimes?” Magnus suggested his breathing becoming highly irregular. “Plan to stay over I mean. Not just accidently sleep on the couch.”

“I could,” Alec said, and it was true. He was eighteen now, and he could come and go as he pleased. He pulled back to look at Magnus.

“And if you stay over,” Magnus said, catching his breath enough to continued speaking. “You will want to be able to get dressed in the morning and brush your teeth.”

“What are you suggesting?”

“A draw,” Magnus said, grinning. “But I could make you a whole closet, if you like.”

“Just a draw is fine,” Alec said, picturing the glittering cave full of designer clothes Magnus would try to make him use. Magnus beamed and kissed Alec’s lips before they could continue their escapades on his neck. They were both breathless when Alec pulled away.

“Hungry?” Alec asked. Magnus nodded and, after quickly going into the bathroom to do his hair they left the hotel room.

When they arrived at the cafe, holding hands the whole way, Mangus managed to get them a table overlooking the water.

“You should order the croissants,” Magnus said, once their waiter left. “They are excellent!”

“Are they the same ones I had at your place?” Magnus nodded. “Then I will try something else.”

“I will have the croissants then,” Magnus said putting his menu down. “And maybe some tea.”

“I am going to have…” Alec ran his fingers over the menu. “Crumpets.” Alec wasn’t sure what a crumpet was but decided it was time to find out.

While they waited for their food to arrive, Alec looked out over the water. The blue sky met the river in a sharp line with buildings on either side. The water rippled out from every boat floating on its surface. The sun shone and reflected its light off everything in sight. It was breathtaking.

Alec’s phone rang. Checking the caller ID, Alec picked it up.
“Hey, mom,” Alec said.

“How is your trip, Alec?”

“Great,” Alec said. “We took a picture with the Eiffel Tower. Do you want me to send you one?”

“That’s alright,” his mom answered. “I am glad you are getting to see the world.” The resigned tone in his mother’s voice reminded Alec his parents weren’t allowed to leave New York.

“Your dad wants to talk to you. One sec.”

“Hello Alexander,” his dad’s said.

“Hi dad,” Alec said. Things with his dad had been awkward since he had introduced Magnus to his parents as his boyfriend. His dad was ignoring the whole thing. Like Magnus didn’t exist. Like Alec was alone in France. Alec knew his family would have preferred it is he was alone in France right now, and the knowledge hurt.

Things weren’t as awkward with his mom, but they weren’t really better either. Alec could tell she wasn’t taking his relationship seriously. In Alec’s opinion, this wasn’t really any better than what his dad was doing. Maybe his mom thought being gay and in love with a downworlder was a phase he would grow out of or something.

“How are you?” his dad asked.

“Fine,” Alec said. His father made necessary small talk for about two minutes—never once asking about Magnus or even acknowledging his existence—before he hung up.

“Next time they call,” Alec said, putting his face in his hands. “Don’t let me pick up the phone.”

“I wish I could help,” Magnus said his voice soft but breaking.

“Maybe I shouldn’t have forced your hand,” Magnus said. Alec still had his head in his hands. “I could have let you kept us a secret.”

“No,” Alec said pulling his head back up. “It was going to come out eventually anyway.”

“I still wish I could make it better,” Magnus said, helplessly.

“Me too,” Alec said. Magnus couldn’t bare the pain in Alec’s voice. He wished there was a spell to cure homophobic parents of their homophobia.

Their food arrived a moment later, and Alec tried to forgot about the world outside of this moment. The Eiffel tower in the distance, the best and only crumpet he had ever eaten and Magnus sitting here with him. The moment was beautiful.

“What would you like to see today?” Magnus said when they had finished eating. Alec had a feeling Magnus was trying to distract him from thinking about his parent's phone call. “Somewhere else maybe? We haven’t seen much of France yet, but we can always return. Do you want to see the Boboli Gardens? Or maybe India?”

Alec looked at Magnus from across the table. Those beautiful cat’s eyes looked back at him. Across the table was too far away, Alec thought. Alec got up and moved his chair next to Magnus’s, resting his head on Magnus’s shoulder.

“Those sound great Magnus,” Alec said, holding the warlock closer. Alec didn’t care where they
They ended up staying in France for a few more days. Seeing both the Louvre and the Sistine Chapel like Magnus has previously suggested. They also continued to enjoy the hotel room. Alec enjoyed the hotel room even more the second time.

Their next stop was the Boboli Gardens in Florence Italy. The sculptures there were very old, but the gardens themselves were beautiful. Alec enjoyed Magnus’s interpretations of the sculptures better than the sculptures themselves. He seemed to have an endless supply of anecdotes. The program Alec had been given when entering the gardens told him the sculptures were from the 16th-18th centuries. As Magnus spoke of a particular sculpture he had seen being carved Alec tried not to think of the age gap between them. He tried not to think about the fact that Magnus wouldn’t share his own personal history with Alec. Magnus didn’t seem to mind telling him about historical events or funny trivia it was true, but Alec wanted more.

When they reached what Alec was told was the Fountain of Neptune Magnus talked about the legend that Neptune had struck the ground with his trident to bring forth water from the ground.

“That was probably what a mundane thought they saw when I shadowhunter killed a demon in from of them or something,” Alec said. “All the stories are true.”

“It is possible,” Magnus said. “I am not quite old enough to know for sure. Some legend are beyond even me.” He smiled.

“Are you really eight hundred years old,” Alec asked turning from the fountain to look at Magnus.

“I have quite lost track over the years,” Magnus said. “Would you like to see more of the gardens or should we do lunch?”

That hadn’t really been an answer, but Alec wasn’t surprised. Magnus hadn’t lied. Magnus never actually lied but somehow he never really told you the whole truth either. Alec mentally shook his head. There was no use worrying about this after all. Magnus was Magnus. Magnus had said as much on their second date. Alec just hadn’t realized he would become so curious.

“Sure let’s get lunch,” Alec said.

They ate at a lovely little restaurant and then Alec decided he had seen enough of Italy. He didn’t want to think how long Magnus had lived already anymore and getting away from those statues seemed like a good idea. Magnus chose their next destination: India.

India was a large country, with a great many large elegant and colourful buildings with impressive names like The Taj Mahal. Alec noticed the colours the most though. Shadowhunters used colours differently. Black never representing darkness like it did for most. White for grief. Gold for marriage. In India, all the colours were bright and warm, and there were so many people!

The beaches were beautiful but so crowded; Alec didn’t want to linger too long. They checked into the hotel and Alec collapsed onto the bed without even commenting on how fantastic the room was.

“You must be tired,” Magnus said. “Since you haven’t even marveled at the gold on the walls.”

“There was a whole building made of gold,” Alec said.


“India has too many people,” Alec said. “I need a break.” He put his arm over his eyes to block the
light coming through his closed eyelids. Alec felt the bed move as Magnus lie down next to him.

“My sweet Alec,” Magnus said as he ran his hand over the runes on Alec’s arm, tracing the pattern.

“Hmm,” Alec breathed. The soft touch was relaxing him more. He could feel the tension leaving his shoulders.

Magnus gently moved his hands down Alec but to Alec’s slight disappointment Mangus continued down until he reached Alec’s shoes. Alec didn’t open his eyes as Magnus’s pulled his shoes and socks off. Then his pants and finally Magnus pulled the blankets out from under Alec and tucked him in.

“Sleep now my Alexander,” Magnus whispered. “I promise a less stressful day tomorrow.”

Alec tried not to think about how the only other people who had ever called him Alexander were his parents. And the only other people to ever tuck him into bed were his parents. He tried not to think about Magnus as hundreds of years older than his parents as he drifted off to sleep.

When Alec awoke Magnus was still fast asleep beside him. Alec smiled and stroked the warlock’s face before rising. He had never been one to lay in bed.

After a quick shower, Alec dressed and made coffee. Magnus slowly awake once the smell of coffee reached him.

“You want to wear that outside?” Alec asked as he saw what Magnus planned on wearing today.

“It’s a rather lovely colour don’t you think?”

“I think I saw a lot of women wearing it yesterday.”

Magnus chuckled. “I remember when women weren’t allowed to wear pants at all. Why is it that men still aren’t allowed to wear dresses. It is such a double standard.”


“Yes.”

Alec thought about it. There was no one here he knew who they could run into. There wasn’t even an Institute in his particular city. If Magnus was going to wear women’s clothes, there were far more embarrassing ways he could do it.

“On one condition,” Alec said, holding up his phone. “I get to text a picture of you in that to Jace.”

“If you insist,” Magnus said reluctantly.

Alec held up his phone and took the picture. Magnus posed very dutifully. In fact, Alec suspected Magnus was enjoying this. Oh well. He texted the image to Jace all the same.

“Shall we go, darling,” Magnus said holding his arm out.

“Oh no,” Alec said. “If you are dressed like that I am the one escorting you.” He grinned. Magnus rolled his eyes.

It wasn’t so bad walking next to Magnus in a sari Alec thought. Most people seemed to mistake him for a girl. He thought this highly ironic. People mistaking them for a normal straight couple when
they were probably the strangest couple in the whole city. A Caucasian teenaged shadowhunter and his Indonesian ageless cross-dressing warlock boyfriend. Maybe the most unusual couple in the world, Alec amended.

After a day of sightseeing in the Sari, Magnus thankfully gave it up. Alec could only handle a few days in India however. There were so many people there.

“Where to next?” Magnus asked as they were checking out of the hotel.

“You pick.”

“I chose last time.”

“But you know more places than I do,” Alec said. “It doesn’t matter where we go. It will be new to me no matter what.”

“It is new to me through your eyes,” Magnus said.

Alec wouldn’t budge, however, and Magnus once again chose their next stop. Berlin didn’t have quite so many bright colours as India but it was breathtaking nonetheless.

Magnus told Alec about the story behind the Berlin wall. This didn’t make Alec so uncomfortable as the statues at the gardens had since this was much more recent history. It seemed a strange concept to Alec to cut a capital city in half like that. Then again most mundanes politics didn’t make any sense to Alec.

“You know,” Alec said, watching Magnus model the outfit he planned to wear the next day. “You could dress like a normal person sometimes.”

They had spend the whole day hitting up local tourist attraction and were now back at their hotel.

“And you could pay even the tiniest bit of attention to what you wear sometimes,” Magnus said. He was dressed in a lederhosen. “I don’t see what is so wrong with wearing leather breeches anyway.”

“I guess the sari was worse,” Alec agreed.

“I think it brought out my eyes,” Magnus said.

Despite their disagreement on clothing, Alec was having a wonderful time. He had succeeded in not thinking about his parents. It was easier here in new and exotic places to forget the strange why they talked to him now.

“Well there was green and yellow in the sari,” Alec said. “So it probably did bring out your eyes.”

Magnus’s expression changed for just an instant. Alec barely caught it.

“What’s wrong?”

“Oh,” Magnus said. “Nothing.” Alec pulled Magnus down to look him right in his eyes. Piercing blue eyes staring sincerely at him cut through Magnus’s defenses.

“I don’t like my eyes sometimes,” Magnus said. “They are my demon mark.”

“I love your eyes,” Alec said, quickly. “Do you remember when you healed me after that greater demon attack.” Magnus nodded. “I remember your eyes so well from that day. The gold in them reflected the sunlight from the window. I remember thinking they were graceful.” Alec blushed, but
his voice didn’t waver.

“Thank you,” Magnus said stroking Alec’s cheek. Alec felt a warm glow in his chest. Seeing Magnus’s insecurities even such a small one as his appearance made the distance between them feel less.

Alec pulled Magnus in close, kissing him. Magnus’s arms encircled Alec and before Alec knew it, Magnus had his shirt off. Alec grinned. He loved hotel rooms. Alec got the leather breeches off of Magnus quite quickly after that. His jeans were more trouble to remove than the lederhosen had been but they too fell to the floor as they fell into bed.

The whole next day Magnus wore his lederhosen and Alec walked beside him. Again glad he didn’t know anyone in Berlin though the sari had still been worse. Alec did text a picture of the two of them to Jace with Magnus wearing the strange leather breeches. If nothing else it would continue to show Jace he was missing out on an excellent vacation by being too young to leave the Institute.

They visited a number of museums in Berlin, and the Brandenburg Gate which Magnus told him was one of Berlin’s most well-known landmarks.

“It sounds like Berlin hasn’t had the greatest luck over the last hundred years,” Alec said summing up Magnus’s monologue about Berlin history.

“Fair enough,” Magnus said. “Would you like to visit somewhere else? We have seen most of Berlin. At least the parts I was determined to show you.”

“Where do you wan--”

“Oh no,” Magnus said. “You choice, this time.”

Alec frowned but thought about it.

“Somewhere romantic,” he said.

“Ah,” Magnus said. “I know just the place.”

“Where?”

“You’ll see,” Magnus said slyly. When they reached the hotel, Magnus checked out at the front desk but confused the poor staff by not going upstairs to collect his things. Once they turned the corner to a deserted street behind the hotel, Magnus snapped his fingers. Alec suspected Magnus had just packed up the hotel room. Magnus looked both ways down the alley before opening a portal.

When Alec stepped out of the portal he stood mesmerized by the view. The water came right up to the buildings and there were long thin boats moving through the canals. The men standing in them were holding long paddles and singing.


“Are the buildings supported over the water with magic?”

“No,” Magnus said. “Though that’s not a bad idea. I should mention it to the High Council of Italian Warlocks. I would hate to see his great city sink.”

“There is a High Council of Italian Warlocks?”

“Oh yes,” Magnus said. “Most countries have one.”
“I didn’t know that.”

“Every society has a ruling body of some kind,” Magnus said shrugging.

“Even vampires?” Alec asked. Magnus had started walking, and Alec had followed automatically.

“I am not familiar with theirs,” Magnus said. “But I am sure they have one. I mean the leader of the coven in New York isn’t the highest ranking vampire in the world.”

“What about werewolves?”

“Oh theirs I am quite familiar with,” Magnus said. “Have you heard of the Praetor Lupus?”

“A little,” Alec said.

“As far as I know the Praetor Lupus is the only one that helps all downworlder rather than just their own kind. Then there are the fairies who have the Seelie and Unseelie Courts.”

Alec nodded. He was familiar with those. They walked in silence until Magnus suddenly stopped. Alec didn’t see a big fancy building or museum. Why had Magnus stopped?

Magnus stepped off the side of the path and for a split second Alec thought he was going to fall into the water. But before he had time to reach out and grab Magnus he saw that Magnus was standing on one of those little thin boats he had seen earlier.

Magnus turned and held out his hand to Alec, who took it dubiously. Once he had stepped into the boat, Magnus sat down. Alec followed suit and the man holding the long paddle used it to push off from the ledge.

Alec saw buildings go by on either side of him as they went down the canal. Magnus put his arm around Alec and Alec leaned into him. Alec could see many other couples in boats and had figured out this was normal. He wasn’t even blushing.

The little boat carried them much faster down the canal than they could have walked down the path that ran parallel to the water. It was rather peaceful. The noises of the water as the paddle moved though it. The sounds of singing as well. Both from the man in their boat and other men in the surrounding boats. Alec snuggled in close to Magnus and relaxed. Taking in the beauty all around him.

When the little boat finally stopped Alec jumped out first and held his hand out to Magnus this time. Magnus took it smiling. They walked together to the restaurant that had obviously been Magnus’s destination.

As they were seated, Alec noticed Magnus seemed to be able to get a water view anywhere he went in Europe. All there hotel rooms had stunning views and if there had been water anywhere near the hotel Alec could see it through the window of every hotel room they had stayed in so far. Every restaurant they ate at as well. Even the first one back in France. Alec suspected there might be magic involved but decided it was best not to inquire. He was enjoying the view after all. What did it hurt really?

“You were right,” Alec said, after a long pause. Their waiter had already come and gone taking their order. “This place is romantic.”

Magnus bowed slightly without standing up. Just bending his head down and holding his arms slightly out from his sides. “I aim to please.”
Alec didn’t know what to say to this so he settled for letting his emotions flow onto his face, his lips stretching wide as he smiled.

“I am so glad you are enjoying yourself,” Magnus said. “Making you happy makes me happy.”

Alec was spared answered by the arrival of their food.

Alec loved the new and exciting food he had been eating lately. He never really got to eat exotic things back home so he was savoring every minute. They didn’t talk while they ate. There wasn’t anything that needed to be said. The view and the sounds of the water against the sidewalk were smoothing.

After dinner, Alec and Magnus walked the streets of Vienna. Eventually taking another ride on in a gondola which Alec learned was the name of the tiny thin boats. Magnus didn’t insist they sightsee and Alec enjoyed the break.

Once the sun went down Magnus and Alec found a hotel to stay the night. Magnus even chose a normally priced one this time Alec noticed when they walked in.

It was a nice change to have less extravagant surrounding after all the grand hotels. Magnus snapped his fingers liked he always did and brought their luggage from Berlin.

Alec pulled off his dirty clothes. He was going to take a shower before bed.

“I don’t think I can let you do that,” Magnus said, as Alec headed to the bathroom. Alec turned.

“What do you mean?”

“Walk away from me,” Magnus said. He was looking Alec up and down and Alec remembered he was only wearing boxers. He blushed. The warmth flooding his face and spreading down his neck and chest.

Magnus crossed the short distance between them in seconds and traced his fingers over the red skin on Alec chest. Alec shivered. He suddenly didn’t feel like showering. Alec’s hands went up under Magnus’s jacket and pulled it off, dropping it to the floor. Next, he started on Magnus’s shirt. Magnus lifted his arms to let Alec pull the shirt over his head.

Alec got Magnus out of his pants before pushing him up against the wall by the bathroom door. He could feel his bare chest against Magnus’s. Could feel Magnus’s heart beat not quite the same as his own but still so steady. So central to Alec’s world. Alec’s hands were on Magnus's hips. His fingers just under the elastic of Magnus’s boxers. Alec felt Magnus’s gasp as his hand boldly moved down.

“I love you, Alexander,” Magnus whispered breathlessly. Alec’s breathing was too erratic to speak he focused on his hands as they moved together into the bathroom.

_____

Magnus awoke but didn't open his eyes. The glowing feeling in his chest felt like a permanent fixture there. The last thing he wanted to do was dispel the illusion. He could tell the sun had risen by the light coming through his eyelids.

By there was no smell of coffee. Magnus noticed then the slight pressure on his side and realized Alec’s arms lay across him. Alec was still asleep. Magnus gently turned to face Alec making sure not to wake him. Magnus gazed at his sleeping boyfriend while Alec’s chest rose and fell with his even breathing.
Magnus tried to imagine not being with Alec. Tried to think of having Alec for fifty or more years and being able to give him up. He knew the amazing glowing feeling in his chest could very well be permanent but the person who created it wasn’t. It wasn’t fair. Then there was the chance he wouldn’t get those fifty years. Alec was a warrior. Shadowhunters often died young and Magnus couldn’t bare the thought. It was one thing to have Alec for as long as possible. It was another to lose him sooner.

Magnus studied Alec’s face. Thinking about the way Alec blushed. The way it felt to hold Alec in his arms. The way Alec stumbled over his words. The way Alec could cut through Magnus’s misdirection with the blunt truth. The look on Alec’s face as he had kissed Magnus in the Accord Hall. The way Alec had started arriving at his apartment in the early mornings to make coffee. The way Alec had refused to release Magnus’s wrist while he was healing him on only the second occasion he had seen Alec. The way Alec had so enthusiastically sought out his second kiss only seconds after his first.

The more Magnus thought of Alec the more Magnus knew this time was different. He had loved so many faces over the years. He had been with even more but this was somehow new. Brighter than the rest. And Magnus realized he would never be able to lose Alec. Not now and not seventy years from now. It would never be okay when Alec was gone.

“How late did I sleep in?” Alec said sleepily.

“Yes?”

“How late did I sleep in?”

“You are on vacation,” Magnus reminded him, as he tucked a lock of black hair behind Alec’s ear. “You can sleep in as late as you like.”

“Sleeping in feels so weird,” Alec said, sitting up in bed.

“Did I tire you out last night,” Magnus teased. He was thrilled to see a blush rise on Alec’s cheeks.

“No,” Alec said. “At least not any more than I tired you out.”

“Fair enough,” Magnus said, grinning. “So what would you like to do today?”

“Room service?” Alec said shyly. Magnus laughed.

“As you wish,” he said.

Magnus didn’t worry about anything else for the rest of the day. He stayed in the moment. They didn’t leave the hotel room. All three meals were delivered and they ate together in front of the tv. Magnus picked out some classic movies which of course Alec didn’t appreciate. But Magnus didn’t mind. It was one of Alec’s charms after all. His holey sweaters and his total lack of appreciation for all things popular culture. Magnus enjoyed inflicting his movies on Alec, but he enjoyed Alec most of all. Alec’s warm touch and soft kisses.

Alec fell asleep in Magnus’s arms while they watched a movie in bed. Magnus, also quite tired, turned the tv off and snuggled down next to Alec pulling the blankets up over them both. Sleeping next to Alec was the best sleep he had ever had. His warm presences made Magnus’s bad dreams easier to ignore.

Magnus woke to the smell of coffee and knew Alec was already up.
“Good morning,” Alec said brightly handing Magnus a steaming cup of coffee.

“No sleeping in today huh?” Magnus asked. Alec shook his head. “Pity. I rather enjoyed waking before you yesterday.”

“You will need to set an alarm if you want to wake before the shadowhunter,” Alec said.

“That would appear to be the case,” Magnus said sipping his coffee. “So what do you want to do today?”

“Breakfast?”

“Restaurant or room service?”

“Restaurant.”

“I know just the place,” Magnus said getting out of bed he kissed Alec lightly and went to dress.

They walked out of the bubble that was their hotel room and headed down the street. It wasn’t far to the cafe and again they were seated at the table with the best view of the water. Alec ordered the bravest thing on the menu and stared out at the view.

“The water is beautiful,” Alec said.

“Like you eyes,” Magnus said. “Blue and deep.” Alec blushed but didn’t speak. He reached out and took Magnus’s hand while they waited for their meal to arrive.

Alec and Magnus spent the next few days in Venice. Taking boat rides, walking the strange streets, eating at restaurants or at their hotel and occasionally shopping while Alec had little patience for it.

Venice was Alec decided his favourite place they had been so far. He had been enjoying himself too much to even take any jealousy inducing pictures for Jace.

“What would you like to see next,” Magnus asked.

“We can’t just stay here?” Alec asked.

“We could,” Magnus said. “But I was going to show you the world remember?”

“I choose last time,” Magnus said. “It’s your turn.”

“Oh alright if you insist,” Magnus said, and he opened a portal. An hour later Alec was sitting in a restaurant having lunch in Vienna, Austria.

“Have you ever been to the Opera?” Magnus asked when he finished eating.

“What’s an Opera?” Magnus quickly explained the basic idea.

“It sounds kinda boring,” Alec confessed. People standing and singing very loudly in a language he didn’t know wasn’t exactly what he would call entertainment.

“That depends on your point of view I suppose,” Magnus said. “If you can’t feel what the music is trying to tell you, you may not be able to get the full effect.”

“I think I can get us some tickets,” Magnus said when Alec didn’t answer right way. He held his hand in the air mischievously like it was about to summon the tickets from the booth.
“You mean steal some tickets?”

“That is always what you say,” Magnus said, but he wasn’t annoyed. He was smiling. “Alright, I could buy some tickets then. You know Alexander you are turning out to be a rather expensive date.”

“Just because I make you pay for things instead of stealing them.” Alec looked at Magnus with a grin. “That just makes me an honest date.”

Magnus could see the change in Alec so clearly. This trip, coming out to his parents, everything seemed to have lifted Alec up somehow. Made him more aware of his own worth. Magnus had never seen Alec so open to new things. New foods, new entertainment, new other things.

Magnus laughed. “Would my honest date like to go to the Opera?”

Before Alec could answer his phone vibrated. It was a text from Izzy. She asked how Magnus and Alec were enjoying their vacation. Alec answered her explaining he was to see an Opera.

“Why not try it,” Alec said, putting his phone back on the table.

“Excellent!” Magnus said and almost produced the tickets magically before he remembered Alec wanted to buy them.

“We better go get tickets then,” Magnus said. “If you insist on buying them we shall have to stand in line.” He stood up leaving money on the table and held out his hand to Alec. Alec took it and walked out of the cafe with Magnus.

They had almost reached the Opera house when Magnus received a fire message.

It read:
A vampire has been caught killing shadowhunters. Please come as soon as you can. Maryse.

Magnus groan, but handed the note to Alec. Just when Alec had agreed to try the Opera. This sucked.

“How long will it take us to get back?” Alec asked, reluctantly.

“There is a portal capable of taking us over seas near here,” Magnus said. “I can’t make one for that distance on my own. It’s right by the Opera House.”

“We might as well go then,” Alec said glumly. “I mean the sooner we go the sooner we will get back right?”

“Right,” Magnus said.

Chapter End Notes

Did you notice the room number of their hotel? ^_^ hehe
"We really didn't expect you until tomorrow, at the earliest," Maryse said when they arrived.

Alec didn't want to be here. His parents were here. And so were other shadowhunter who gave him strange looks or stopped talking when he entered a room. Alec found a piece of wall and decided to stare at that.

"Fortunately, there's a Portal located near the Vienna Opera House," Magnus said. "The moment we got your message, we hurried to be here."

"I still really don't see what any of this has to do with us," Alec said, being here was making him grumpy. "So you caught a vampire who was up to something nasty. Aren't they always?"

Then Alec saw Simon. And backtracked.

"Sorry, Simon. I didn't mean you. You're different." Simon just nodded. Alec hoped he hadn't offended him. Simon didn't make any sense to Alec. He was a vampire, but he was Clary's friend and Jace even seemed fond of him now.

"She is of interest in our current investigation into the deaths of three Shadowhunters," said Maryse. "We need information from her, and she will only talk to Magnus Bane."

"Really?" Alec said looking at the vampire in question. "Only to Magnus?" Why would she do that? Did she know Magnus?

Alec saw Magnus's gaze shift toward the vampire and was surprised by the expression on Magnus' face. He couldn't identify it. Magnus's mouth almost moved like he was going to smile.

"Yes," Maryse said.

"That is, if Magnus is willing," Maryse said.

"I am," Magnus said. "I'll talk to Camille for you."

"Camille?" Alec said. Magnus knew her name! "You know her, then? Or-she knows you?"

"We know each other," Magnus shrugged. "Once upon a time she was my girlfriend."

"Your girlfriend?" Alec almost yelled."You dated a vampire? A girl vampire?"

"It was a hundred and thirty years ago," Magnus said. "I haven't seen her since."

"Why didn't you tell me?" Alec demanded. Alec felt it again. The feeling he was being held at arm's length. Like he was being cut out of something important.
Magnus sighed. "Alexander, I've been alive for hundreds of years. I've been with men, been with women-with faeries and warlocks and vampires, and even a djinn or two." Magnus looked at Alec's mother who had a horrified look on her face. Alec couldn't blame her. He was a little horrified too. He knew Magnus was old and had been in love before but to hear it like that!

"Too much information?" Magnus said, noticing his audience. Maryse nodded almost automatically.

Alec was reeling. Was there anyone in the world Magnus hadn't slept with? He felt suddenly so small, young, inexperienced and unimportant. Magnus was the only person Alec had ever kissed. The only person he had ever slept with. With all that experience had Magnus enjoyed being with him at all? Had it not meant as much to Magnus? Could it ever?

"How many other people?" Alec asked. "Roughly."

"I can't count," Magnus said shaking his head. "And it doesn't matter. The only thing that matters is how I feel about you."

"More than a hundred?" Alec asked not even taking in the words Magnus had said after 'I can't count'. How many was so many you couldn't count them. He couldn't focus on anything else at the moment. He couldn't help picturing Magnus with a whole bunch of faceless gorgeous strangers.

"Two hundred?"

"I can't believe we're having this conversation now," Magnus said.

"Why so many?" Alec said. Alec was intense he knew, but he couldn't help it. "Do you get bored with people fast?"

Would Magnus get bored of him?

"I live forever," Magnus said quietly. "But not everyone does."

That felt like a blow to the heart. Alec felt himself recoil as if hit. Were all Magnus's lovers so interchangeable to him? "So you just stay with them as long as they live, and then you find someone else?"

"Would you rather I spent all of eternity alone?"

What was he to Magnus really? A footnote? A trivial part of Magnus long long life. Alec couldn't be in the room anymore. He had to get out.

"I'm going to find Isabelle," he said. He walked out of the room without a backward glance.

Once he was on the other side of the door he stopped. He couldn't go find Isabelle. He couldn't risk missing anything said in that room.

Magnus watched Alec walk away from him. How had this happened? Would Alec leave him just like the rest? Alec, who he loved more than he ever thought he would. More than he probably should. He noticed eyes on him then and turned.

"Eavesdropping, vampire?"

"I really don't love it when people call me that," the daylighter said. "I have a name."

"I suppose I'd better remember it. After all, in a hundred, two hundred, years, it'll be just you and
me." Magnus said. "We'll be all that's left."

That wasn't a very kind thing to say he knew, but he couldn't help it. Seeing Camille again and Alec storming out had immortality on his mind.

Immortality. It tore you away from the people you loved. He wondered if he would ever want to try and give it up. He wasn't sure how or if it could be done. He wasn't there yet, though.

Magnus saw his thoughts mirrored on Simon's face.
"Staring eternity in the face," Magnus said to Simon. "Not so much fun, is it?"

"Where's Alec?" Maryse said returning before Simon could speak.

"He went to see Isabelle," Simon said.

"Very well." Maryse said. "If you wouldn't mind..."

"I'll talk to Camille," Magnus said. "But I want to do it alone. If you'd like to wait for me in the Institute, I'll join you there when I'm finished."

Maryse hesitated. "You know what to ask her?"

"I know how to talk to her, yes." Magnus said. With Camille, this mattered far more. "If she is willing to say anything, she'll say it to me."

Alec was listening. He had hide behind the door to avoid Simon and his mother from seeing him when they had left the room.

Alec couldn't hear everything Magnus and Camille were saying. There were noises across the hall that were loud enough to drown out some of it. But Alec could tell Camille was talking about him. Like he was a play thing. Like Alec’s love was an asset Magnus had managed to acquire.

Alec was getting very frustrated that he was missing parts of their conversation. He wished he had his stele so he could use a rune to improve his hearing.

When Magnus talked about his relationship with Camille, there had been no emotion in Magnus's voice at all. In a hundred years would Magnus talk about Alec like that?

Alec couldn't help where his thought went while he was listening. Would Magnus go back to her when he died like she implied? She would still be young and beautiful when Alec was long dead. And before Alec was dead he would be old and wrinkled and frail while Magnus would be young and strong. How could Magnus still want him then?

Alec snapped his mind back to the present. He had missed some of what they said he realized.

Alec hated that this woman knew Magnus in a way Alec didn't. Know who Magnus had been a hundred and thirty years ago.

Alec heard a chair pull out from the table. He knew Magnus must of gotten up since Camille was tired down.

"I'll do what I can, Camille. But I make no promises," Alec heard Magnus say.

"You never would. Come here, Magnus. Come close to me." Camille's voice was soft.
Alec listened hard but couldn't tell if Magnus had moved closer to her or not. He so wanted to believe that Magnus had not.

Alec looked like Will. Was that why Magnus loved him? Because he looked like someone else Magnus used to love? The thought twisted Alec’s heart painfully.

Magnus must of known Alec looked like Will the moment he saw Alec. Why was Magnus pretending he didn't know.

"Pretty boys have always been your undoing," Camille said. Pretty boys! Did Magnus have a habit of finding another 'pretty boy' after the old one wasn't pretty anymore?

Camille called him a child. And he realized that compared to them he was. Hundreds of years separated him from the two beings in that room. Hundreds of years separated him from Magnus.

The past is the problem thought Alec. The past is how we become who we are. Magnus knew everything about Alec. Everything. It wasn't fair.

And Alec realized something. Magnus had never tried to make any of his previous lovers immortal. He had never cared enough about someone to keep them forever. Did Magnus want Alec forever? If it was possible… The book of the white! Magnus had gone to a lot of trouble to get it. Could there be something in that book Magnus hadn't told him about?

Suddenly his mother was standing beside him. Alec had to stop himself from jumping in surprise. He had been so focused. He crossed his arms over his chest to try and hide his surprise. His mother went in, and he followed her.

"Magnus," Maryse said. "Have you come to some agreement?"

Magnus dropped his hand which Alec noticed had been near Camille's face. So he had moved closer to her like she asked. This did not improve Alec's mood.

"I'm not sure I'd call it an agreement," Magnus said, turning to Maryse. "But I do think we have some things to talk about."

After everything was settled with Camille Magnus and Alec went to Luke and Jocelyn's engagement party. Magnus was quite enjoying the party actually. He was unaware his conversation with Camille had been overheard. Magnus did notice that Alec seemed a little more on edge than normal, but Magnus thought that was just because they were here rather than in Vienna.

"So," Magnus said, trying to make conversation. "Jordan. I hear you're in the Praetor Lupus. I see you're wearing one of their medallions."

Jordan nodded. Magnus noticed that he seemed very fixated on Maia.

"Good organization," Magnus said. "I knew the man who founded it, back in the 1800s. Woolsey Scott. Respectable old werewolf family."

"Did you sleep with him, too?" Alec said suddenly. Magnus jumped a little from surprise. Where had that come from?

He had slept with Woolsey it was true but he wasn't about to tell Alec that. Besides it had been more a friends with benefits thing anyway. Not romantic in the slightest.
"Alexander!" Magnus said alarmed.

"Well, I don't know anything about your past, do I?" Alec demanded. "You won't tell me anything; you just say it doesn't matter."

Magnus couldn't help it; he was angry. It was the last thing he wanted to be, especially at Alec. But what was Alec playing at?

"Does this mean every time I mention anyone I've ever met, you're going to ask me if I had an affair with them?" Magnus said.

Magnus saw that stubborn look on Alec's face now. The one he got when there was no changing his mind. Magnus was too mad to see the hurt there behind the stubborn expression.

"Maybe."

"I met Napoleon once," Magnus said. "We didn't have an affair, though. He was shockingly prudish for a Frenchman."

"You met Napoleon?" Jordan said, totally oblivious to the situation. "So it's true what they say about warlocks, then?"

Magnus was about to respond that yes warlocks were immortal and met all sorts of people from your history books when Alec gave Jordan a truly unpleasant look.

"What's true?" Alec said, very rudely.

"Alexander," Magnus said coldly. "You can't be rude to everyone who talks to me."

Alec made a wide, sweeping gesture. "And why not? Cramping your style, am I? I mean, maybe you were hoping to flirt with werewolf boy here. He's pretty attractive, if you like the messy-haired, broad-shouldered, chiseled-good-looks type."

"Hey, now," Jordan said, but his tone was mild.

Magnus put his head in his hands. What was happening? He felt like he had gone from paradise to his own personal hell in the space of an afternoon.

"Or there are plenty of pretty girls here, since apparently your taste goes both ways. Is there anything you aren't into?"

"Mermaids," Magnus said into his fingers before he could stop himself. "They always smell like seaweed."

"It's not funny," Alec said violently getting up from the table. He walked off into the crowd.

Magnus left his head in his hands. Alec was freaking out about nothing! He didn't love Camille. He wasn't even sure now if he had ever loved Camille. He wasn't about to flirt with random people at this party. Magnus talked about the here and now or the future and that was it. Alec had agreed. Why was he freaking out now? Nothing had changed.

Then Magnus realized Alec must have overheard him talking to Camille. It was the only thing that made sense. Alec had obviously missed the important parts of his talk with Camille however. He had said Alec was his future. He had said Camille's love had been worth nothing to him. These things shouldn't have upset Alec! Magnus couldn't think of what he had said that would upset Alec so
much. What was Alec so upset about? It was all literally ancient history; why did Alec care?

"I just don't see," he said mostly to himself. "Why the past has to matter."

"The past always matters," Jordan said. "That's what they tell you when you join the Praetor. You can't forget the things you did in the past, or you'll never learn from them."

"How old are you?" Magnus demanded. "Sixteen?"

"Eighteen," Jordan said, looking slightly frightened.

Call me in four hundred years, Magnus thought.

Magnus heard Clary excuse herself and leave the table.

"Well, if there's going to be a mass exodus...," Magnus said throwing his hands in the air. He got up. He had to find Alec. Alec had been so happy in Europe. Maybe Alec would calm down if they got back to their vacation.

Alec hadn't really stormed off with the intention of going anywhere. Once his anger had been spent, he ended up sitting alone at a corner table.

Not long after Alec sat down, Magnus found him. Magnus turned a chair around to lean forward on the back of it facing Alec. Alec didn't look up at him, though. He continued staring at the rather unremarkable wall.

"Do you want to go back to Vienna?" Magnus said. "Or we could go somewhere else." Magnus continued when Alec didn't speak. "Anywhere you want. Thailand, South Carolina, Brazil, Peru- Oh, wait, no, I'm banned from Peru. I'd forgotten about that. It's a long story, but amusing if you want to hear it."

Alec didn't want to hear about Peru. Alec wanted to hear about this Will and Camille and London and whatever else Magnus didn't want to tell him. He wanted to know how long Magnus would stay with him once Alec's hair turned gray and fell out.

Magnus started to change the colours in the wine glasses on the table then. They switching from blue to pink.

People were starting to stare. More people staring at him was the last straw on Alec's nerves. Alec reached across the table and hit Magnus's hand away from the glasses.

"Stop that," he said. "People are looking."

"Well," Magnus said. "I have to do something to keep myself from dying of boredom, since you're not talking to me."

"I'm not," said Alec. "Not talking to you, I mean." And he wasn't. He just didn't know what to say. He never did.

"Oh?" Magnus said. "I just asked you if you wanted to go to Vienna, or Thailand, or the moon, and I don't recall you saying anything in response."

"I don't know what I want." Alec said. He was playing with an abandoned plastic fork on the table. When he glanced up at Magnus Alec saw that look in Magnus' eyes again. The look that meant
Magnus was far away. Far away from Alec. Unreachable.

"You've got that look again," Alec said peevishly, glancing up through his lashes. "Like you're staring at something I can't see. Are you thinking about Camille?"

"Not really," Magnus said. "How much of the conversation I had with her did you overhear?"

"Most of it." Alec prodded the tablecloth with his fork. "I was listening at the door. Enough."

"Not at all enough, I think," Magnus said. Suddenly the fork Alec was playing with moved toward Magnus. Alec heard Magnus slam his hand onto the table.

"Stop fidgeting. What was it I said to Camille that bothered you so much?"

Alec raised his blue eyes. "Who's Will?"

Magnus exhaled a sort of laugh. "Will. Dear God. That was a long time ago. Will was a Shadowhunter, like you. And yes, he did look like you, but you're not anything like him. Jace is much more the way Will was, in personality at least and my relationship with you is nothing like the one I had with Will. Is that what's bothering you?"

"I don't like thinking you're only with me because I look like some dead guy you liked."

"I never said that. Camille implied it. She is a master of implication and manipulation. She always has been."

"You didn't tell her she was wrong."

"If you let Camille, she will attack you on every front. Defend one front, and she will attack another. The only way to deal with her is to pretend she isn't getting to you."

"She said pretty boys were your undoing," Alec said. "Which makes it sound like I'm just one in a long line of toys for you. One dies or goes away, you get another one. I'm nothing. I'm-trivial." It almost hurt to say the words out loud. Made them more real somehow.

"Alexander-" But Alec couldn't let him finish. If he stopped now he wasn't sure he would ever find the words again.

"Which," Alec continued "is especially unfair, because you are anything but trivial for me. I changed my whole life for you. But nothing ever changes for you, does it? I guess that's what it means to live forever. Nothing ever really has to matter all that much."

"I'm telling you that you do matter-" Magnus said, but before he could go into any sappy details, Alec interrupted him again.

"The Book of the White," Alec said, suddenly. He was on a roll now. He had to ask the question. "Why did you want it so badly?"

"You know why. It's a very powerful spellbook," Magnus said. He looked taken aback by the question.

"But you wanted it for something specific, didn't you? A spell that was in it?" Alec took a ragged breath. "You don't have to answer; I can tell by your face that you did. Was it-was it a spell for making me immortal?"

"Alec," Magnus whispered. Alec could see he had shocked Magnus. "No. No, I-I wouldn't do that."
Magnus wouldn't impose his wishes on someone else. He knew it was selfish to change the one you loved for your own benefit.

"Why not? Why through all the years of all the relationships you've ever had have you never tried to make any of them immortal like you? If you could have me with you forever, wouldn't you want to?"

"Of course I would!" Magnus almost shouted. Alec felt a small amount of pressure leave his chest.

"But you don't understand," Magnus continued lowering his voice back to normal. "You don't get something for nothing. The price of living forever - "

"Magnus." Alec recognized Isabelle's voice. He turned. She was running toward them."Magnus, I need to talk to you."

"Isabelle." Magnus said. "Lovely, wonderful Isabelle. Could you please go away? Now is a really bad time."

"Then, you don't want me to tell you that Camille's just escaped from the Sanctuary and my mother is demanding that you come back to the Institute right now to help them find her?"

"No," Magnus said. "I don't want you to tell me that."

"Well, too bad," Isabelle said. "Because it's true. I mean, I guess you don't have to go, but-"

"She escaped?" Alec said. "No one's ever escaped from the Sanctuary."

"Well," Isabelle said, "now someone has."

Alec slunk down lower in his seat. Magnus had to go. And he would probably end up sulking here all night alone with his sucky thoughts.

"Go," he said. "It's an emergency. Just go. We can talk later."

"Fine," Magnus said standing up. He didn't want to leave Alec now when he knew the thoughts that were running through Alec's head. It was a cruel sort of irony that Alec thought he was trivial when Magnus knew the opposite to be true. Alec was different in some way. A different love than he had ever known.

"But," Magnus said, leaning in close to Alec. "You are not trivial." It was the most direct way he could think of to try and ease Alec's mind before he had to go.

Alec flushed; it was what he wanted to hear, but he was having a hard time believing it.

"If you say so," Alec said.

"I say so," Magnus said, and he left with Isabelle.

Alec decided to settle into his chair for some serious mopping. He wasn't allowed to mop for long however before Isabelle recruited him to search for Simon.
Magnus was worried about the state he had left Alec in. Had Magnus’s attempt to communicate to Alec how important he was been enough? Had he gotten through to Alec at all? Magnus couldn’t imagine any way in which Alec was trivial.

Why was it the ex he never wanted to see again was the only immortal one? He would have loved to see the others. The warm, happy memories he still had for some of them floated to the front of his mind.

This first love, the first person he had stayed with through her mortal life. Her face came back to him perfectly but her name… He had told Tessa about her a century later. How is it he couldn’t remember her name!

Then there was Imasu who had left him after only a summer romance. He and Axel had never really given it a chance. Etta had stayed longer but left in the end as well.

The rest were shorter still. Kitty had been a summer of crime with very little romance. They became less and less meaningful as Magnus recalled the faces of those people he had been with. Some he didn’t know the name of. These had all been patches, he knew. Trying to fill the hole in your heart was not really possible through sex with strangers, but it hadn’t stopped Magnus from trying. And failing.

Magnus snapped his mind back to the present.

Magnus was stuck helping them find Camille. Which as far as he was concerned was pointless. If she had managed to get out of the Sanctuary then he was pretty sure someone had helped her. Someone more powerful than her. Maybe the same someone who had her murder those shadowhunters. They weren’t going to find her by any of the usual methods.

His time would have been better spent with Alec.

“We have received a message from Alec,” Maryse said, holding the fire message in her hands. Magnus watched her read. Her eyes went very wide. Magnus froze.

“We are leaving now,” Maryse said, and started ordering people around, getting ready to leave.

Magnus snatched the note from where she had left it on the desk. He read it once quietly and was instantly in motion.

What was Alec thinking? Why hadn’t Alec contacted Magnus for help? All this time Magnus had been going through the motions of looked for Camille long since knowing it was hopeless, and Alec had been fighting for his life. Why had he done such a reckless thing anyway? Magnus couldn’t help but worry it was all this fault for making Alec so mad. Magnus should never have left the party!

As soon as the elevator door opened, Magnus ran out of it, almost knocking Simon down in the
process but he didn’t stop to apologize.

Magnus pulled Alec close the moment he was in arm’s reach. The anxiety in his chest was slowly fading as he checked Alec over for injuries. He ran his fingers over Alec's face; every touch calming him. Alec was fine.

"How could you go off like this and not even tell me—I could have helped you—" Magnus said softly while he caressed Alec’s perfect face.

"Stop it." Alec said. He pulled away. Magnus tried to compose himself. Get a grip warlock! You can’t go to pieces like this.

"I'm sorry," Magnus said. "I shouldn't have left the party. I should have stayed with you. Camille's gone anyway. No one's got the slightest idea where she went, and since you can't track vampires..." He shrugged. There that was less clingy right? A casual shrug.

"Never mind," Alec said. "She doesn't matter. I know you were just trying to help. I'm not angry with you for leaving the party, anyway."

"But you were angry." Magnus said. "I knew you were. That's why I was so worried. Running off and putting yourself in danger just because you're angry with me—"

"I'm a Shadowhunter," Alec said. "Magnus, this is what I do. It's not about you. Next time fall in love with an insurance adjuster or—"

"Alexander," Magnus said. "There isn't going to be a next time." There he had said it out loud. It was terrifying. Magnus leaned in and touched his forehead to Alec’s. Staring at those blue eyes.

"Why not?" Alec said. "You live forever. Not everyone does."

"I know I said that," Magnus said. "But, Alexander—" He wasn’t sure how to tell Alec what he had known for so long. Alec was different. He couldn’t lose Alec now or ever.

"Stop calling me that," Alec said. "Alexander is what my parents call me. And I suppose it's very advanced of you to have accepted my mortality so fatalistically—everything dies, blah, blah—but how do you think that makes me feel? Ordinary couples can hope—hope to grow old together, hope to live long lives and die at the same time, but we can't hope for that. I don't even know what it is you want."

Magnus’s heart broke. What he wanted was Alec. Alec forever but the world was cruel.

"Alex-Alec," Magnus said, in a weak voice. "If I gave you the impression I had accepted the idea of your death I can only apologize. I tried to, I thought I had—and yet still I pictured having you for fifty, sixty more years. I thought I might be ready then to let you go. But it's you, and I realize now that I won't be any more ready to lose you than I am right now."

Magnus put his hands on either side of Alec’s face and looked deep into those blue eyes. He needed Alec to understand. "Which is not at all."

"So what do we do?" Alec whispered.

"What everyone does," he replied. "Like you said. Hope."

Magnus saw the anger leave Alec’s eyes and relief washed over him. The tightness in his chest relaxed and he pulled Alec closer to him. Still holding Alec’s face Magnus kissed him. Kissed him
like they were alone which of course they weren’t but Magnus didn’t care. Standing there kissing Alec everything was okay again. For now.
Jace was missing. Magnus had borrowed Jace’s ring from Clary and was trying to track him, with of course no luck. It seemed his tracking spelled only worked these days when they weren’t really needed.

Weeks went by with no sign of Jace, and the Clave was giving up. At least, Clary wasn’t going to be punished for not telling anyone Jace had been raised from the dead.

The Clave expected life at the Institute to go back to normal, but Magnus knew things would never be normal for Alec again. Not knowing what was happening to Jace was killing Alec, Magnus could tell.

“It seems I inspired Helen,” Alec said, with less feeling than Magnus knew he would have in his voice were Jace safe at home. “When I kissed you in the acords hall I mean. She came out to her parents because of that.”

“It was very brave,” Magnus said. “I am not surprised you inspired people doing that. You inspire me.”

“Really?”

“Yes,” Magnus said still engrossed in his work. He wasn’t getting anywhere with the symbols, but he wasn’t about to stop trying either.

“How so?”

“That’s like asking me how the sun warms the earth,” Magnus said. “You just do.”

If Magnus had looked up from his work he would have seen that, Alec did not understand his metaphor. Alec had wanted a straight answer and hadn’t gotten one.

“What are you working on?”

“These are the symbols we found on the roof that day,” Magnus said. “I am trying to learn more about them. Figure out how they work. Might help us find Jace.”

“You know you don’t have to--” Alec started to say, but Magnus turned quickly to look at Alec and said, “Yes I do.”

“Clary has an idea,” Alec said. “She wants to talk to the Seelie Queen. Do you want to come?”

“Not the best idea,” Magnus said, returning his attention the papers on his desk. “I don’t think my presence there will help. She and I haven’t seen each other in a long, long time, and I’d prefer to keep it that way.”
“Alright then,” Alec said. Alec turned to leave, but before he moved more than a step away, Magnus got up from his desk and kissed Alec goodbye.

“Don’t let the Queen mess with your head,” Magnus said. Alec nodded and left.

Magnus could feel something different in Alec recently. He wondered if it was just Jace being missing. Or if it had started before that. Magnus hoped he was imagining this feeling. The feeling Alec was pulling away from him. Slipping through Magnus’s fingers.

Magnus put on some light music and got back to work. He didn’t know what else to do. If they found Jace would Alec smile more like he used to?

Magnus didn’t notice the lights outside go dark until he realized he couldn’t read the words in front of him. Snapping his fingers the indoor lights came on, and he kept working.

Magnus knew it was getting late, but he wasn’t going to stop working. The idea of going to sleep wasn’t appealing. He knew he would dream, and he didn’t want to have those dreams. The ones of blood and darkness. The dreams that came from his father. Dreams that sometimes came true. Dreams that usually sent him into hiding. He was no hero. If not for Alec, or if he thought for a second Alec would leave with him, he would be gone.

When Alec did come home, Mangus looked up from his work. Alec was holding his cat, Chairman Meow. Magnus loved it when Alec just walked into his loft like it was Alec’s home. He loved that Alec seemed so comfortable here.

"The Chairman likes you,” Magnus said, smiling at his boyfriend.

"He likes anyone who scratches behind his ears," Alec said.

Magnus realized how stiff he was from sitting in his chair all day. He leaned back and stretched.

"How was the Seelie Queen?"

"Same as usual."

"Raging bitch, then?"

"Pretty much," Alec said and summarized the events for Magnus. Alec was very good at summarizing Magnus noted. He seemed to have a knack for making every word matter.

"I worry about Clary," Magnus said. "I worry she's getting in over her little red head."

"She wants to find Jace. Can you blame her?"

Jace was the one Clary loved; she would do anything for him. She had already brought him back to life by wishing it. Magnus pulled Alec closer and looked deep into his eyes.

"Are you saying you'd do the same thing if it were me?" Magnus couldn’t help asking. He wished he hadn’t once he’d spoken because Alec turned his head away and changed the topic. Magnus tried not to let this bother him. He explained to Alec about the symbols he was working on.

Alec started asking him about Camille. Magnus didn’t want to think about her. He answered Alec’s questions honestly until he saw an opening to change the topic and did so. He enjoyed Alec’s sputtering at his stamina rune joke.

Magnus looked up from his work and saw the look on Alec’s face. He couldn’t help but ask, "Are
you okay?"

Alec didn’t reply. He pulled Magnus to his feet and kissed him. Magnus was never opposed to kissing Alec and melted into Alec’s touch. Alec had him pinned against the desk, every part of Alec touching him.

Somewhere in Magnus’s mind, he registered that Alec was changing the topic now.

"Come on," Alec whispered against Magnus's ear. "It's late. Let's go to bed."

Magnus shivered. He felt his whole body want Alec closer. Wanted to curl up with Alec in bed and go to sleep. But the look in Alec’s eye earlier was troubling him. Alec’s avoiding his question. Alec was upset about something, and he wasn’t talking to Magnus about it. If only Magnus could find Jace. He bit his lip and looked back at his desk.

"Why don't you go on ahead?" he said. "I'll join you-five minutes."

"Sure." Alec straightened up. "I'll see you there."

Magnus worked late into the night, again just like he had last night. He fell asleep at his desk.

The dream came again. Darkness and blood. Apocalypse. Magnus was relieved when he awoke, ending the dream, sun streaming through his windows. Before starting work, Magnus decided a shower was required. Sleeping at his desk had done horrible things to his back. Hot water would be welcome.

Once out of the shower Magnus made coffee, the way Alec liked it: using a coffee machine rather than stealing it. As it was brewing Magnus remembered Alec telling him about his meeting with Izzy and the others. Magnus decided to try a new nickname on Alec today, sweet pea.

"No," Alec said, shaking his head. Why did Alec have to hate all Magnus’s adorable nicknames for him? Just one thing to call Alec that was for him only that meant he loved him was that so much to ask?

"I'll keep at it." Maybe honey or sweetheart next time he thought. Alec would probably hate those too. Love was very English, very simple. Alec might not be opposed to that one.

Magnus held out the coffee he had made for Alec and explained that he was supposed to meet his sister and the others in an hour.

Magnus leaned in and kissed Alec but instead of pulling him closer like Alec usually did Alec got up and got dressed.

Magnus felt that constricting feeling in his chest again. Alec was holding something back. Magnus lay on the bed trying not to let his worry show on his very tired face.

Magnus watched Alec get dressed in all dark, boring clothes. Then he saw a blue scarf sitting on the dresser. He remembered buying it last year at the gap. It was nothing remarkable but it was the exact colour as Alec's eyes. He would look so good in it.

Magnus thought it was a simple thing to suggest Alec wear the scarf but suddenly Alec was yelling. Magnus couldn’t help but rise to the occasion even though he hating fighting with Alec.

Magnus was so confused. Alec thinking W.S. was Will not Woolsey. Alec asking if he was the newest thing in the apartment. Alec was the most important thing in the apartment that was all that
mattered!

Why would he tell Alec things that would make him so upset? Why did Alec want to know all this pointless information that would only make him mad? Why couldn’t Alec just accept that now was what was important? How they felt now.

"Don't wait up," Alec said, slamming the door behind him as he left.

Magnus stood in his apartment now at a loss for what to do. If Alec wouldn’t talk to him what could he do? What could he say? Magnus sighed and went back to looking for Jace. If they found Jace, maybe he could talk sense into his friend.

Magnus didn’t leave his apartment all day. He sat and worked at his desk, trying not to think about the way Alec had stormed out.

Working on Lilith’s runes was not only a distraction but also the only thing he could do to help. Magnus had somehow gotten it into his head that if he could find Jace, it would fix everything. Fix that look in Alec’s eyes.

Magnus was eating his magically summoned late lunch—he had worked through regular lunch—when Clary called him.

“Magnus!” Clary said breathlessly.

“What’s wrong, biscuit?” Clary didn’t hate his nicknames.

“Jace and Sebastian came to my house,” Clary said. Magnus sat up a little straighter in his chair suddenly alert. “We can’t stay here in case they come back and Luke’s hurt.”

“Come over here,” Magnus said. “No one will look for you at my place.”

“Thank you!” Clary said relief in her voice and hung up the phone.

Magnus stood up. This was a new lead about Jace. Alec would want to know. Magnus got out his phone.

Jace showed up at Clary’s with Sebastian, Magnus typed. Luke has been hurt. Everyone is headed over to my place.

Magnus hit send.

It wasn’t long until Magnus’s buzzer rang. Magnus opened the door his arms wide in welcome. He loved theatrics.

Magnus stepped back letting them in. Clary looked shaken, and there was blood on her sleeve. Jocelyn looked resolved.

Magnus slumped down onto his sofa, tried. He was wearing his favorite slippers he noted when he put his legs up on the table. He hadn’t remembered putting them on. Lack of sleep must be messing with his mind.


"Do you think you can help him? Whatever it costs, I'll pay—"

Magnus stood up. Is that why they thought he was helping, still? He had charged Jocelyn for Clary’s
memory spells it’s true, but that had been long ago. With no apocalypse hanging over his head.

"I don't know," Magnus said. He had decided to ignore the money question. Wasn’t important.

Magnus was thinking hard. He started pacing. Magnus could try to help, but he might not be fast enough to do any good. He knew who could help a werewolf quicker than a warlock: The Praetor. Woolsey Scott had known all about how demon metals and drugs acted on lycanthropes. Magnus explained this to them and told them he would arrange it.

He turned and headed toward the kitchen. Magnus tried to contact Jordan but didn’t get an answer. Then he remembered the way Jordan had been looking at Maia during Jocelyn and Luke engagement party. He decided to call Maia. He had a feeling Jordan would be wherever Maia was. She picked up right away.

Magnus tried not to eavesdrop on the redhead ladies fighting in his living room while he explained the situation to Maia. He then contacted the Prator itself to leave a message, for when Maia and Jordan arrived.

Magnus hung up the phone and heard Alec’s key in the lock--Alec was after all the only one with a key. Magnus skidded back into the living room to see Alec.

"Alec!" Magnus said when he saw Alec standing in his doorway. Magnus was happy to see him. He had heard the key and come running like he always did whenever Alec was involved. Alec didn’t return Magnus’s gaze. Alec took off his coat and hung it up.

Magnus was instantly worried. Alec’s hands were trembling. There was a tightness in his shoulder.

"You got my text?" Magnus asked.

"Yeah. I was only a few blocks away anyway," Alec said. "It's true, what Magnus said? You saw Jace again?"

Magnus listened to Clary explain what had happened with Jace. He was staring at Alec’s face the whole time. Magnus felt Alec’s hurt as his hurt. He saw Alec’s face go white with shock and horror. Magnus didn’t know Jace well enough to be able to understand what Alec was feeling. Magnus felt so helpless.

Scrabble. It wasn’t his best joke ever, but he couldn’t help trying to lighten the mood. Trying to lessen the pain on Alec’s face. He had failed. There had to be a way to bring a smile back to Alec’s face, even if it wasn’t Magnus who could do it.

"He's a murdering psychopath," Alec said flatly speaking of Sebastian. The one who had murdered his little brother. "And Jace knows it."

"But Jace isn't Jace right now-," Magnus began intending to try and comfort Alec again even if he didn’t know how. Magnus had never loved a sibling. Had never had a best friend in quite the same way Alec did with Jace. Parabatai was closer than a best friend it was true. Magnus phone rang. Since he didn’t know to comfort Alec anyway Magnus went into the other room to answer it.

Magnus heard a voice inside his head when he picked up the phone. It said: I am coming. I will tell no one.

Magnus smiled. He knew he had been right to reach out to Brother Zachariah even if the rest of the silent brothers wouldn’t help. Jem could be relied upon.
“Thank you,” Magnus said.

Anything for Will’s line the voice in Magnus’s head replied and fell silent.

Magnus started walking back to the living room, listening to their conversation as he came into earshot. They made it sound like Sebastian and Jace were using dimensional magic. That would explain why all his efforts had been in vain.

"It would mean there's literally no way to find them if they don't want to be found," Magnus said.
“And no way to get a message back to us if you did find them. That's complicated, expensive magic. Sebastian must have some connections."

Before Magnus could start to wonder what those connections might be the door buzzer sounded. Magnus watched everyone in the room jump. Such skittish Nephilim he thought rolling his eyes.

"Everyone calm down," he said and went to greet Brother Zachariah.

Jem explained his theory. A bond not unlike parabatai but much stronger and more dangerous. A bond that striped one member of his free will. No blade of this world can wound only one of them. With Jem’s help they formed a plan. The Iron sisters needed to be contacted. Isabelle was the best suited.

Isabelle! Magnus thought. She might make Alec smile again. Everyone needed rest either way. Magnus made them all wait until tomorrow to contact the Iron Sisters.

Magnus took Alec’s phone. After a moment’s thought, he sent Maia a follow-up text.

I have a feeling Isabelle will be at Jordans, Magnus typed. Please tell her to come over to my place in Brooklyn right away. Magnus.

Magnus sent the message. Even if they weren’t leaving until tomorrow, Izzy needed to be here. Alec needed his sister.

Magnus was about to get started on the wards he had promised when Clary and Jocelyn started yelling at each other again. Clary went to one of the spare rooms and slammed the door.

Magnus knew that look on Clary’s face well. He was surprised Jocelyn hadn’t noticed it. But Jocelyn had been asleep for much of Clary’s entrance into the shadowworld and Jocelyn had never seen Clary make a portal before. Magnus had. Magnus put up the wards anyway knowing they wouldn’t keep Clary in. Nothing could do that.

When Isabelle arrived Alec ran over and hugged her. Magnus watched watching Alec. It wasn’t long before Alec was messing up Izzy’s hair and smiling at her. Magnus breathed a little easier.

Magnus lead Izzy to her room. He leaned against the wall his arms over his chest looking at Izzy. He realized he wanted, no needed, to talk to someone who loved Alec. Someone who could help Alec the way he couldn’t.

“He isn’t happy,” Magnus said.

"Of course he isn't," Isabelle snapped. "Jace-"

"Jace," Magnus said, his hands involuntarily forming fists at his sides. Parabatai. Why did shadowhunters choose to bind themselves to each other this way? Chose to suffer if the other died? Like Will and Jem. The look on Will’s when he had summoned Magnus to the institute. Jem dying
and Will broken. Shattered as I'd he were the one dying. As if Jem’s death was his death. As if they were the same person. Jace seemed to be destined to be broken just as Jem had been. If Jace couldn’t be fixed what would happen to Alec? How much would Alec sacrifice for Jace?

"I thought you and Jace were friends."

"It’s not that," Magnus said and he tried to explain it to her. Explain that some things take too much sacrifice to fix. So much it can destroy the giver. She still didn’t understand.

"I know about parabatai," Magnus said. "I've known parabatai so close they were almost the same person. Do you know what happens, when one of them dies, to the one who’s left?"

Magnus couldn’t bare to think of Alec like that. He could so clearly remember the pain on Will’s face when his other half was dying. To see Alec’s face in that pain...

"Stop it!" Isabelle said, "How dare you, Magnus Bane? How dare you make this worse than it is."

"Isabelle," Magnus said, stunned; realizing what he had said. He had let Isabelle see too much. He had needed to talk and had taken it too far.

He looked at her then and saw the same open heart he saw in Alec. "I am sorry. I forget, sometimes... that with all your self-control and strength, you possess the same vulnerability that Alec does."

"There is nothing weak about Alec," Isabelle said, misunderstanding Magnus's use of the word vulnerable.

"No," Magnus said. "To love as you choose, that takes strength. The thing is, I wanted you here for him. There are things I can't do for him, can't give him."

Magnus hated admitting this. Hated feeling useless, powerless. Hated not being enough for Alec.

"He loves you," Magnus said.

"Of course he loves me. I'm his sister."

"Blood isn't love," Magnus said. His blood father, a prince of hell. A prince of hell who would probably use him up and leave him for dead if he got the chance. Blood doesn’t mean love. He picked a different example than his own as a reply.

"Just ask Clary."

Magnus walked out of the room before Isabelle had time to answer, closing the door behind him. He was still a little rattled from exposing his emotions so much.

Alec was standing in his living room looking down at Magnus’s attempt to decipher Lilith’s symbols.

“It was nice to see you smile,” Magnus said, coming up behind Alec and wrapping his arms around him. “If only for Izzy.”

Alec didn’t speak. He just leaned back into Magnus, resting his head on Magnus’s shoulder.

“Do you think it could work?” Alec said turning in Magnus’s arms to face him.

“I don’t know,” Magnus said. “I have never heard of a binding spell like this one before.”
“Never?” Magnus shook his head.

Alec was shaking again. Magnus snapped his fingers and a warm blue magically smoke-free fire appeared in the grate. It filled the room with warmth instantly. Magnus held Alec’s hands until they stopped shaking.

Magnus guided Alec to the overstuffed sofa and sat down pulling Alec down with him. Alec came willingly and laid his head in Magnus’s lap.

“Rest now, love,” Magnus said stroking Alec’s soft hair. Alec closed his eyes. Magnus stared into the fire. Images, feelings and thoughts from long ago flooded his mind. Mixed with worry for the beautiful man now asleep on his lap.

Magnus snapped out of his daze and turned. Simon was standing there.

"Isabelle called you over, I know," Magnus said very quietly. He knew how well vampires could hear, and he didn’t want to wake Alec. "She’s down the hall that way-the first bedroom on the left."

Magnus didn’t watch Simon go down the hall; he turned back to the fire, lost in thought.

When he felt tired enough to sleep, Magnus scooped Alec up in his arms, magically reducing his weight so as not to disturb Alec’s sleep, and carried Alec to bed. Magnus lay down next to Alec, wrapping a blanket around them both, and fell asleep one arm around Alec holding him tight.

Magnus woke to find the space next to him empty. Alec was already awake. He headed into the bathroom and recognized the smell of sandalwood. Alec had already showered, or he supposed someone had used Alec’s shampoo. Magnus saw his bottle of hair gel sitting next to the sink. Well, it had been a while since he had spiked his hair. Actually, it had been a while since he’d left the apartment.

When everyone was ready Magnus made a portal, and they all went through.

Magnus checked on his hair once he was through. "Check it out," he said to Isabelle pointing to his hair which was still perfect.

"Magic?"
"Hair gel. $3.99 at Ricky's." Isabelle just rolled her eyes. Apparently she didn’t understand the importance of quality hair products. Of all people Magnus thought she would have.

Magnus and Alec followed Isabelle and Jocelyn until they reached the entrance.

"Don't worry," Alec told his sister. "You'll be fine, Iz."

She raised her chin. "I know," she said and followed Jocelyn through the door.

After a moment, Magnus decided to cut the silence.

“Would making-out get in the way of our guard duties, do ya think?” He wink at Alec.

“Huh?” Alec said as if from far away. “Oh ah yes.” Alec turned to look at Magnus then. “You don’t have to stay and keep watch with me.”

“I don’t mind,” Magnus said.

“No really,” Alec said. “It’s okay. I know your time is better spent working on the problem. I’ll play
bodyguard.” Alec smiled.

It made sense I guess, Magnus thought, but he had a funny feeling.

“My time is always well spent with you,” Magnus said. Alec’s eyes softened. He moved closer to Magnus and stroked his face; kissing him quickly on the lips.

“My as well,” Alec said. “But there is no point in both of us waiting around, is there?”

“I guess you’re right,” Magnus said, letting go of his funny feeling. He kissed Alec once more.

“I’ll see you at home,” Magnus said.

“Yeah,” Alec replied. “See ya.” He smiled, and Magnus left through a portal back to his loft.
After much discussion, the plan was to summon the demon Azazel to try and get a weapon that could kill Sebastian without harming Jace. It was Ironic, Magnus thought, that there was less danger in summoning a demon than an angel.

"You can't go wake her up because…” Simon said. “because she isn't here." Ah, Magnus thought. Now we shall find out what Biscuit is up to.

Simon started to explain but Magnus sensing a long story waved him over to the table.

When Simon was done, Jocelyn was predictably furious. Simon, Izzy, and Magnus tried to explain to her that Clary was a force of nature, like her mother, who did what she wanted.

Magnus remembered a young Jocelyn, who would do anything to help Valentine and thought this older Jocelyn really was rather blind. Simon could have tied Clary up? I mean really! Jocelyn left still fuming.

"So," Magnus said. "Who's up for raising Azazel? Because we're going to need a whole lot of candles."

“Candles?” Alec said, dubiously.

“Lots of candles,” Magnus corrected him. He was waving his hands around trying to remember all the candles he had in his loft. As he remembered one, he summoned it. A pile of candles was forming in front of him.

“Why?”

“When you are summoning a demon,” Magnus said. “You can’t use electricity.” And he put them all to work. Getting more candles. Mixing salt and dried belladonna. Laying everything out in the middle of Magnus’s living room.

They all stood around the circle when everything was ready and Magnus spoke the words. Azazel appeared before them.

"Warlock," Azazel said. "I know who you are."

"You do?” Magnus didn’t recall summoning this particular demon before.

"Summoner. Binder. Destroyer of the demon Marbas. Son of-"

"Now," Magnus said quickly. Of course, this demon knows Asmodeus. What shitty luck. "There's no need to go into all of that."

"But there is," Azazel said. "If it is infernal assistance you require, why not summon your father?"
Magnus could feel Alec’s eyes staring a hole into him even without looking behind him.

"My father and I are not on the best of terms," Magnus said. "I would prefer not to involve him."

The demon wanted payment, of course, and of course his friends had no idea he was trying to get them out of it. It’s called a bluff people!

He didn’t actually think a demon would have made a good addition to this decor.

"Jealous, little Shadowhunter?" Azazel said, grinned at Alec in a way that made Magnus nervous. "Your warlock is not my type, and besides, I would hardly want to anger his-"

"Enough," Magnus said. He wanted this stupid demon gone before Alec found out who his father was.

The demon wanted memories. Demons always wanted happy mortal memories.

Magnus had three lifetimes worth of memories; he could give one up easily but the others he did not speak for.

Magnus wasn’t surprised when they all agreed to the demons terms, but he had wished maybe they hadn’t. Magnus went through one at a time to collect the memories from Alec, Izzy, and Simon but he hated to do it. Hated it with every fiber of his being.

He couldn’t see the memories they gave him but he could tell when there was one there to retrieve.

Magnus held the memories of his friends in his hands. It disgusted him to give something so pure up to evil hands. He added a memory of his own. A memory of Will Herondale since it was Will’s great great great grandson they were trying to save it seemed fitting. Will wouldn’t have minded.

When Azazel explained his plan, Magnus felt stupid. He should have known this wouldn’t work. Should have know the demon would want more. They always did.

They couldn’t release Azazel on the world.

Magnus’s squirm as he heard Alec say ‘A Prince of Hell, set free in the world?’ He was the son of a prince of hell no matter how much he hated to be one. Would Alec look at him differently if he knew that?

Magnus felt the colour drain from his face as Azazel continued to torment them. Furious, Magnus banished Azazel. They talked over the horrible plan, coming to the only possible conclusion.

“We just wasted a whole day,” Alec said. “A day we didn’t have. No more stupid ideas."

"Alec," Magnus said, unable to stop himself from putting a hand on Alec’s shoulder. "Are you okay?"

"Who are you again?" Alec asked.

Magnus felt like he had been punched in the stomach. The wind knocked out of him and the ground dropped out from under him. One memory shouldn’t have done this! What had Alec been thinking about? What had they done!? What had he done!?

"Alexander," Magnus said, trying to compose his voice.

"Too soon to joke about the happy memory thing, I take it," Alec said.
Magnus’s emotions were so high he couldn’t help his voice from rising when he answered, "You think?"

He had planned on going into detail about how Alec was never ever allowed to scare him like that again! But Maia and Jordan came in. Magnus was called on to get them both up to speed with current events. His heart rate slowly went back to normal as he did so.

________

Magnus thought it was a little strange when Alec went to get clothes from the Institute since Alec had clothes here but maybe Alec just wanted an excuse to be back home.

Magnus knew sometimes you just had to get away. He tried not to worry about it. If Alec needed space, he wasn’t going to push him. Alec would come to him when he wanted to talk about it.

Everyone was settling down for bed and Magnus knew he was exhausted. There was nothing useful left he could do tonight. He laid down on his back in bed and looked up at the ceiling.

Were they ever going to have a plan that could help Jace? If they couldn’t save Jace would Alec be okay? Would he ever smile again if Jace died? And why was Alec out so late?

Magnus wasn’t sure when the questions running through his mind had fallen away and sleep had overaken him.

Magnus awoke suddenly from a loud noise and jumped upright.

"What's going on?" Magnus said sleepily.

"Nothing," Alec said. "I couldn't sleep."

Magnus rolled over and touched Alec's bare shoulder. He was cold. Alec must have just arrived.

"I was walking around," Alec said, when Magnus asked where Alec had been. Alec said he had been walking around in mysterious place.

Magnus was to tired for this. Being vague was so unlike Alec. He laid back down on his pillow.

"I see you went to crazytown," Magnus said, closing his eyes. "Did you bring me anything back?"

Magnus felt Alec’s breath before he felt Alec’s lips on his.

"Just that," Alec said and tried to pull away but Magnus held onto him. That had not been anywhere close to enough kissing for him.

"Well, if you're going to wake me up," Magnus said, "you might as well make it worth my time."

“And what would be worth your very valuable time?” Alec whispered. Magnus started kissing Alec’s neck and down his bare chest. Alec moaned.

“You, Alexander.”

________

The next morning there was a new problem. Banished Azazel hadn’t done the trick. The demon refused to leave.
Magnus didn’t understand it. He had summoned demons before many times and none of them had stayed past when he had wanted them to. Azazel was one of the most powerful demons he had ever summoned but that shouldn’t change anything.

"You can’t force us to bargain with you," Mangus said, angrily.

"I can try. It's hardly as if I have anything better to occupy-" Azazel stopped then and Magnus saw why. His cat! His suicidal cat! Chairmen Meow was streaking through the pentagram after a mouse but before Magnus had time to worry about the demon eating his cat Simon had run in after Chairmen.

Magnus picked up the book again and tried to make the demon go away! He wasn’t making any progress and Simon was about to be thrown when suddenly Azazel was thrown instead. Once Azazel got up, he just stood there and talked to the vampire until suddenly Azazel vanished taking most of Magnus’s loft with him.

Everyone was a bit shocked, to say the least. After they had gotten over the shock, however, they noticed the room. Or at least what had been Magnus’s living room.

Magnus figured they thought it was their fault he was never going to get his security deposit back--not that Magnus really needed the money or anything but still--and that's why they all starting cleaning.

Magnus didn’t feel much like cleaning it all by magic right now anyway. He was rather tired. And watching Alec trying to figure out how to use the Swiffer was almost worth the whole thing in and of itself.

Magnus’s extremely foolish cat was sleeping on his lap. The vampire was sitting next to him. Everyone was a little too freaked out by what they had seen the Mark of Cain do and weren't sure what to make of the daylighter, Magnus suspected.

Simon explained his idea to Magnus. It had potential. It was actually rather ingenious but he wasn’t about to tell Sherwin that. If indeed Sheldon survived summoning an angel in the first place. Magnus was again venturing into magic and mythology he knew nothing about.

Magnus was less impressed with the vampire when he started asking Magnus about his father.

"Not my favorite topic, Smedley."

"Simon," the daylighter said. "If I'm going to die for you all, the least you could do is remember my name."

"You're not dying for me," Magnus said. "If it weren't for Alec, I'd be..."

"You'd be where?"

The words flowed from him without thought. This dream and the coming darkness. A city of blood.

"You love Alec enough to stick around," Simon said. "That's kind of heroic."

"You loved Clary enough to wreck your whole life for her," Magnus said, bitterly. "See where that got you."

He tried very hard not to compare himself and Simon. Compare Alec with Clary. He was not wrecking his life for Alec. Simons had been turned into a vampire. It was totally different.
He stood up calling for everyone to hear the plan.

Eventually, the daylighter had them all on board with his plan. Alec wanted to start right away but Magnus insisted on sleep first.

The next day Magnus decided to drive to the farm that way Simon would have time to change his mind. Magnus had a feeling Simon wouldn’t change his mind but felt he deserved the change either way.

“This whole thing is too dangerous,” Alec said as Magnus and Simon prepared to leave. “I am coming too.”

Magnus knew that look in Alec’s eye and didn’t argue. Isabelle came running to the car, right as Magnus had revved the engine and insisted she was coming as well. Magnus remembered Izzy had called Simon over last night. There was something going on there. It had been obvious at the time was happened but Magnus now thought he knew why as well.

Magnus hated to see Alec in pain because his parents didn’t accept him. While Alec explained to Izzy about the thousands of paper cuts, Magnus squeezed his hand trying to show support.

They arrived at the farm and Magnus got to work setting up the summoning circle. Drawing the curved lines in the wet sand, chanting as he did so. His spell book open on the ground.

Magnus noticed that Alec was standing quite a ways away while he worked. He tried to focus on the task and ignore the rising anxiously in his chest.

When he was done, the two circles and symbols on the sand were glowing. Magnus called Simon forward and gave him the book, telling him to sound out the last few lines of the spell. Simon gave Magnus the ring to talk to Clary in case he failed.

"Ready, Simon?"

"Hey," Simon said. "You remembered my name."

Magnus always knew the daylighters name, not that he was going to admit to it or anything. Coming up with random names starting in S to call Simon was much more fun.

Magnus moved away from the circle, well back. Simon had had his chance to back out, it was now or never. But Simon seemed to feel the need for goodbyes. Maybe he really did think he was going to die. Why was he doing it then, Magnus wondered.

Magnus watched as the Angel Raziel appeared before Simon. He watched as the Angel spoke to him. He waited to see if the Angel would harm Simon. But it didn’t. Simon returned with a sword. A very glorious sword.

Magnus returned Simon’s ring to him and they were all driving back when Clary spoke to Simon. She finally had the intel they needed.

Sebastian’s plan was huge. Bigger than Magnus had thought. Magnus helped them figured out the locations Clary mentioned. They didn’t have much time. Alec and Izzy had to warn the shadowhunters. Luke’s pack had to be called upon. A call to arms. Magnus was going to portal them all straight into the fight.
Alec stepped through the portal and immediately started looking for a good archer’s perch where he could see to shoot. He spotted a stone dolmen and jumped up, setting his feet securely before looking for a target.

Alec saw one and acted. The arrow went straight and true into the throat of the figure reaching for the infernal cup. Grinning he reached for another arrow.

Alec saw the wolves, running low to the ground, followed by the shadowhunters who had decided to risk everything to be here. Izzy, his mom, Helen, Aline, and Jocelyn. Simon and Magnus followed them.

He only took a second to noticed this however before he turned back to shooting targets. Not even looking to see if his arrow hit the mark before notching his next arrow. Alec couldn’t see Jace or Clary in the crowd but he kept looking while he fired arrow after arrow from his high perch.

Alec did see Magnus and Izzy guarding Simon and the sword as they made their way through the crowd looking for Sebastian.

Magnus saw that first arrow Alec fired. Straight and true and felt pride rise up in him. That was his boyfriend. He couldn’t help but brag about it a little. He was rather possessive of his shadowhunter it was true.

He was wearing battle armor but he had added some sequins for style. Izzy and Magnus became Simon’s guards as they searched the melee for Sebastian.

Magnus’s hands were spitting fire at the Dark Nephilim. Blue and green fire. Wolves claws and fangs flashed in his peripheral vision while Magnus fought. The Dark Nephilim couldn’t use they seraph blades so the only points of light there he knew were one his side.

Mangus saw Simon standing frozen in place staring at a Dark Nephilim. Magnus looked and he recognized the figure Simon was staring at. But he knew she was no longer Luke’s sister Amatis. Simon still hadn’t moved even when she came at him with a dagger.

Magnus knew how fast vampires could move. He knew Simon could save himself but he also saw that Simon wasn’t going to. Simon seemed rooted to the spot.

Magnus reacted jumping in front of Simon and shoving him backward. Simon had the sword that was Jace’s only hope.

Warlock reflexes were not as good as Nephilim ones and Magnus’s blue fire missed her but her knife didn’t miss him.

Magnus felt the blade slice through his side and knew it had been meant for his heart. Magnus collapsed.

He heard his name being called but the voice was moving away from him. The knife, that had just missed his heart the first time, was over him again and this time Magnus knew it would strike its target.

So this is how it will end, Magnus thought. Well it was better than drowning.

Magnus waited for the cold knife to finish him, his eyes closed. He heard something move quickly through the air. Heard something hit the ground hard. An arrow. An arrow fired with immense force.
His strong angel has saved him again, he thought before passing out.

Alec saw Magnus fall to the ground. His heart skipped a beat but his arrow did not. His reflexes as quick as a striking snake had the arrow moving through the air at once. This time, he watched to make sure the arrow hit its mark. He watched as the figure standing over Magnus fell back with the force of his arrow. The arrow had been going fast enough to knocked her over and away from Magnus.

Alec couldn’t see Magnus clearly enough to know if he was dead or alive. Nowhere in his world view did Magnus die before him.

Magnus’ eyes were still closed but he could feel steady hands pressing on him and moving over him. He could feel the blood flowing over his skin from the wound on his right side. Magnus could feel those steady hands pull at his body armor and press down very painfully.

"Ouch," Magnus said feebly. "Quit leaning on me."

"Raziel," Alec said, softly almost like a prayer. "You're all right."

Magnus felt Alec’s hand stroke his cheek.

"I thought..." Alec said. "I saw you fall."

Alec kissed him on the lips lightly, carefully as if Magnus were made of glass.

"I thought you were dead," Alec said.

Magnus could feel the relief coming off Alec almost as a palpable entity. He decided a joke was necessary to lighten the mood.

"What, from that scratch?" Magnus said, then looking down at his right side added, "Okay, a deep scratch. Like, from a really, really big cat."

"Are you delirious?" Alec said.

"No," Magnus said. Just trying to lighten the mood he thought. He knew he would die if he couldn’t stop the bleeding. The bleeding that was taking away his strength. He explained this to Alec.

"Here, give me your hand," Magnus said and Alec did. Magnus entwined their fingers together before he spoke. Magnus reminded Alec of when he had needed help during the battle on Valentines ship.

"Do you need it again now?" Alec said. "Because you can have it."

"I always need your strength, Alec," Magnus said, and he did. Magnus’s world had somehow become centered around Alec’s strength.

Alec, his blue eyed angel.
Chapter Summary

This is the last chapter of Magnus's point of view of City of Lost Souls.

The mission was a success in that they got Jace back. A failure in that they didn’t manage to kill Sebastian, who now has the ability to create evil shadowhunters.

Magnus was still recovering from the stab wound he had received during the battle, but he was for the most part fine. No one seemed to have told Alec this, however.

“Don’t get up!” Alec said as Magnus tried to get off the couch.

“I am not a cripple!”

“I know,” Alec said. “But I’m here so let me get it for you, okay?”

Magnus sighed and sat back down. It was sweet really that Alec wanted to play nursemaid but totally unnecessary.

“Here,” Alec said handing Magnus the cold glass of water. “Anything else I can get for you?”

“I am a warlock,” Magnus said. “I can do magic. I could summon up pastries from France!”

“I know,” Alec said. “But…” He was doing that thing Magnus noticed. The thing where he can’t find the words to express his thoughts. Magnus took a sip of his water waiting. After Alec had fumbled over his words for another few minutes, however, Magnus sighed.

“Come sit down next to me,” Magnus said.

“I should really…” Alec began looking around and as if desperate to find something useful to do.

“You should really come cuddle with your wounded boyfriend,” Magnus said playing the injured angle.

Alec collapsed onto the couch.

“I just don’t know what to do!” Alec said. “I want to help. I want to be useful.”

“Just relax,” Magnus said.

“I am not good at that,” Alec said.

“I know,” Magnus chuckled. “But everything is fine now. Just enjoy the moment.” Alec’s face didn’t relax.

“What’s wrong?”

“I--” Alec started. “I--when you fell I--” He shook his head as if trying to clear it. “I never thought of it happening.” He paused. Magnus fought back the desire to reply knowing Alec needed space to
“Never thought of something happening to you,” Alec said. “I have been so focused on me dying. Me growing old. It never occurred to me that anything would happen to you.” Alec’s voice was breaking.

“Shh love,” Magnus crooned putting his finger over Alec’s lips. “It’s okay. I’m fine. You saved me.”

“If I had been a moment later,” Alec said. “I don’t know what I--” He broke off choking on the words.

Magnus pulled Alec close and held him tight. Alec wrapped his arms around Magnus and held even tighter still. Magnus didn’t mind the slight pain Alec’s tight grip caused on his injured side.

Alec slowly relaxed as Magnus held him. Magnus started stroking his hair absently. Alec’s breathing slowed, and Magnus realized he had fallen asleep. He was probably still tired from the battle and from Magnus sapping his strength to heal himself.

Magnus let Alec sleep on him looking down at his peaceful face. Listening to Alec’s even breathing. Gazing at Alec’s face Mangus couldn’t stop his thoughts wondering. What was it that was so different about this love? He had loved so many times, in so many ways. How could any romantic love feel so new? He had never felt for someone else the way he felt for Alec. Could Alec be the one? When Alec was gone would he even want to love anyone else? Would he even be able to? Magnus had told Alec there wasn’t going to be a next time, and he had meant it.

Magnus’s mind went to the Book of the White. One of the reasons he had wanted it; the reason he had barely even admitted to himself. The only thing in his long life that he had never done. Growing old with someone he loved. Would that someone be Alec? Was it even possible? Could there be a way to let a warlock grow old? He had read the Book of the White cover to cover and found no such spell. But if he wanted it badly enough could he find a way?

“Magnus?” Alec’s voice was distorted with sleep.

“You fell asleep, sweetie,” Magnus said. Alec sat up.

“Sweetie?”

“Don’t like that one either?” Alec shook his head.

“It isn’t much better than sweet pea,” Alec said rubbing his eyes. “How long was I asleep?”

“I’m not sure,” Magnus said surprised time had gotten away from him. “Maybe an hour?”

“And you just laid there and let me sleep on you?”

“I guess I did,” Magnus said, smiling. Alec blushed. Magnus suspected he hadn’t planned on falling asleep and was rather embarrassed about it.

Magnus stared into Alec’s face and saw the red on this cheeks all the more clearly. He put his hand on Alec’s face. This thumb tracing circles on skin.

“I love that you know,” Magnus said.

“What?”
“Your blush,” Magnus said, softly. “When you first came to see me, it was all so new... but after all this time together I can still make you blush.”

“I can’t help it,” Alec said.

“I know,” Magnus laughed. “I bet you hate that huh?”

Alec nodded. “It’s embarrassing to have all your emotions so plain on your face all the time!”

“I think it’s endearing,” Magnus said remembering what he had first thought when seeing Alec that day; a heartbreaker who wore his heart on his sleeve.

Alec smiled at him. “Well, I guess I can put up with the blushing thing if you like it.”

“I thought you had no control over it?”

Alec laughed. It was his care-free laugh Magnus noticed. He was so relieved to see Alec laugh like this again. It must have all been worry for Jace after all. The weird distant behavior. Magnus had worried for nothing.

They enjoyed a pleasant afternoon together in Magnus’s apartment. Magnus still wasn’t feeling totally back to normal, but his magic wasn’t drained. Alec even relaxed enough to let Magnus magically summon their dinner from the place around the corner on the condition they sent money after.

Magnus went to bed early. Laying down was more comfortable than sitting on the couch as long as he lay on his uninjured side.

“Come lie down next to me, Alexander,” Magnus said. Alec walked over and cuddled up next to Magnus.

“Are you tired yet?”

“No,” Alec said.

“That’s what you get for napping,” Magnus teased.

“You could have woken me up you know,” Alec said.

“But you looked so peaceful!” Alec just chuckled.

Magnus felt himself start to fall asleep. With Alec next to him sleep was always easier, and he was so very tired.

Magnus rolled over in his sleep and felt cold, empty space next to him. He woke up, opening his eyes. Alec wasn’t there. It wasn’t really morning yet. Even Alec didn’t get up this early. Magnus sat up looking for a note or some indication of where Alec was. There was nothing.

Magnus got up unable to sleep anymore. Where was Alec at this hour? Magnus tried not to worry. Alec was a very capable shadowhunter and probably not in any danger. He worried anyway. He had just decided maybe he would text Izzy when his phone rang.

“Alec?” Magnus asked. He had picked up the call so fast he hadn’t checked the caller ID.

“I think not,” a sly voice answered. Magnus knew that voice.
“Why are you calling me Camille?” Magnus said stiffly. “You haven’t gotten in touch for over a century. Aren’t you supposed to be hiding from the Clave?”

“I am,” Camille said. “But I have some information that might interest you.”

“Nothing you have to say could possibly interest me,” Magnus said and was about to hang up the phone when she spoke quickly. Her next words stopped him cold.

“Alexander Lightwood has been coming to see me.”

“I don’t believe you,” Magnus said, firmly.

“Oh really?” Camille purred. Magnus could tell she was enjoying this. “He has come to see me several times. We have stuck a deal.”

“Alec wouldn’t do that,” Magnus said.

“He wants your immortality, dear Magnus. He wants you to die with him. I was to do this for him, and he was to kill Raphael for me.”

Magnus was silent. He couldn’t believe it! Alec sneaking around behind his back with his ex to take years off his life and kill his friend! (Not that Alec knew Raphael was Magnus's friend technically speaking.) Taking away Magnus’s choice in the length of his life! This was too extreme. Alec couldn’t have. Camille must be lying. He knew she was good at lying. Alec was a horrible liar. This made no sense.

“I know you don’t want to believe me, Magnus,” Camille said. “So I have organized some proof for you. Alec thinks he is meeting me at an abandoned subway tonight, but I shall not be there. If he is, you will know I am telling the truth.”

“Even if this is true,” Magnus said. “Why are you telling me?”

“Oh Magnus,” Camille said. “You know me.” She hung up the phone. And Magnus did know her. He knew why before he had even asked but he had wanted her to say it. She, of course, had never done anything he wanted.

Magnus tried to stay calm. He told himself that Camille was just a evil bitch. He resolved to trust Alec.

A letter came through the mail slot on his door and Magnus went over quickly to read it.

He recognized Camille’s writing at once. She had written it all down. When Alec had met with her and where. Magnus was horrified at the timing of it all. Alec sending Magnus home to work while he stayed to guard. Alec out doing errands for longer than those errands required. The timing could be a coincidence, but it was a rather convenient coincidence. Maybe there was another explanation.

Camille had written down which subway station Alec would be at to meet her in just under thirty minutes.

Magnus’s resolve failed. He pulled on whatever coat he touched first and ran out the door. If she was lying and Alec wasn’t at the subway, Alec would never know he had doubted.

Magnus walked into the abandoned subway. Willing there to be no one there. Or at least for Alec not to be there. He hoped Camille was just messing with him. Trying to set him up or trap him while he was still wounded. Anything else would have been welcome.
Magnus saw the bright light in the darkness. Bright witchlight that was illuminating the side of Alec’s face.

Magnus felt the knife again—the knife that had almost killed him was there in his chest—only this time it had pierced his heart.

And suddenly he was angry. The pain momentarily overcome with rage, fury. How could Alec do this to him! How could Alec betray him like this!


Magnus saw Alec slowly turn and look at him.

Camille wanted Magnus for an ally, not an eighteen-year-old shadowhunter. He had warned Alec about Camille but Alec had not listened. Alec had told her no in the end, but he had thought about it. Had never said anything to Magnus. Never trusted Magnus.

"And even if you did come here-unnecessarily—and tell her the deal was off," Magnus said, in a deadly calm voice, "Why are you here now? Social call? Just visiting? Explain it to me, Alexander, if there's something I'm missing."

Magnus didn’t have much hope now that Alec had a good explanation for this. He would give Alec this chance, though.

"Magnus-" Alec said taking a step toward him. Magnus moved away. Alec wasn’t going to give him an explanation because Alec didn’t have one. What little hope left in Magnus vanished. Alec wasn’t the person Magnus thought he was.

"I'm so sorry," Alec said. "I never meant-"

"I'll be out all day," Magnus said. "Come and get your things out of the apartment. Leave your key on the dining room table." Magnus searched Alec’s face, not sure what he wanted to find. Did he want Alec to be miserable? Or was it okay if, as Magnus thought, Alec didn’t care as much as he did?

"It's over. I don't want to see you again, Alec. Or any of your friends. I'm tired of being their pet warlock."

Tired of being called on to help for every little thing only to be pulled apart and left broken for his trouble.

Alec’s hands shook so much he dropped the witchlight which went out at once. Magnus could still see with his cat eyes. He saw Alec fall on his knees looking for the light, fumbling in the dark.

Magnus picked it up and the strange bright colours shined from it in his hand. Another unwelcome reminder of the fallen angel who sired him.
"It shouldn't light up like that," Alec said, but Mangus suspected he was speaking automatically. "For anyone but a Shadowhunter."

Magnus put the stone into Alec’s hand, and the light changed back to soft white.

But as Magnus felt the bare skin of Alec’s hand, his anger vanished completely. Alec was so cold.

"Alexander..." Magnus said unable to stop himself from pulling Alec close. He knew he shouldn’t. If Alec had any sense, he would pull away, but Magnus felt Alec accept his embrace and rest his head against Magnus’s shoulder.

"Kiss me," Alec said.

Magnus looked at Alec his hand absently resting on Alec’s face stroking his cheekbone. He could have one last kiss couldn’t he?

Magnus bent and kissed Alec slowly, sadly. Alec clutched at Magnus’s jacket desperately and Magnus drew away. The bright rose, blue and green of the witchlight changed back to white once it was again only in Alec’s hand.

"Aku cinta kamu," Magnus said. It was his native language. The language his mother had spoke to him in. It meant more somehow to tell Alec like this. Magnus couldn’t help but love Alec he knew. Nothing would change that.

Love wasn’t the only thing a relationship needed. Alec didn’t know this. Didn’t understand how Magnus could love him but still leave him.

"It was just-She offered, but I thought about it and I couldn't go through with it-I couldn't do that to you."

This was not a good enough explanation to change anything. "You didn't trust me. You never have."

"I do," Alec said. "I will-I'll try. Give me another chance-

"No," Magnus said. Trust, Magnus thought, was the foundation of any real relationship. If they didn’t have that by now.

"And if I might give you a piece of advice: Avoid Camille,” Magnus said. He didn’t like the idea of Camille getting Alec in trouble even if they weren’t together anymore.

Magnus turned and walked away his hands in his pockets to stop them from shaking. It took all the strength he had to walk away from Alec. He couldn’t move quickly. He was drained and weak and broken.

Magnus didn’t go home. He had promised Alec he would be out all day. He didn’t know where he would go. He walked a little aimlessly until he was too tired to walk anymore. Then he sat on a bench in the park near his loft and let the misery have him.

When the sun started to go down Magnus walked the short distance home.

Chairmen meow seemed to know something was wrong. The cat came up to Magnus as he entered the apartment, rubbing against his legs. Magnus went down and picked him up.

He saw Alec’s key on the table.

Magnus carried his cat to the bed where he collapsed. Chairman curling up next to him purring.
Magnus didn’t want to look at the now empty draw that used to have Alec’s clothes in it. He didn’t want to walk into the bathroom and see that Alec’s toothbrush was gone.

Magnus just lay there, his mind somewhere between blank and agony. He hadn’t done anything wrong so why was he lying here bleeding out through the hole in his heart.
Aftermath (CoHF)

Chapter Summary

The beginning of this chapter probably took place during City of Lost Souls but the only direct dialogue in it is when Jace is talking to Magnus and that is from City of Heavenly Fire. Think of this chapter as bridging the gap between those two books during those weeks when they are broken up but City of Heavenly Fire hasn't started yet.

Alec’s decision to kill Camille hadn’t really worked out. She was already dead. Without an outlet for his rage, it burned itself out leaving a charred hole in his heart.

Alec went to Magnus’s loft after that but of course Magnus wasn’t there. The hurt and grief of losing Magnus was worse here in his place.

Alec packed up his draw of clothes and his toothbrush with tears running down his face. He wanted in vain to leave something here. Someone of his so Magnus wouldn’t forget him but he didn’t know what. He saw Jace’s ring sitting on Magnus’s table and packed it as well. Jace would want it back. Finally, Alec left his key on the table.

It seemed so small a thing to mean so much to him. He remembered when Magnus had given it to him. Alec hadn’t known what to say, he never did. He had just taken the key and held it to his chest, like a talisman. A symbol that Magnus wanted him.

Now it was just a small piece of metal, empty and meaningless.

Alec left Magnus's apartment feeling like he was being torn away from everything. And it was his fault. The horrible grief was mixed with the crushing guilt. It weighed him down as he headed back to the Institute alone.

No one asked him any questions when he got home, and he went straight to his room. Laying on the bed, he let the guilt and pain have him.

How could he have done this? How had it gotten so out of control? What could he have said to defend his actions if he had known how to say them? Nothing he knew. Magnus would never forgive him. He couldn’t forgive himself.

Alec woke up alone in his room and realized he had fallen asleep fully clothed on his bed. He wanted to sleep more. Wanted unconsciousness as an escape from the pain and guilt. But he couldn’t sleep, and he was getting hungry.

“Alec!” It was his mother. “Alec what’s wrong?” Maryse said, anxiety in her voice. Alec was in the kitchen looking for breakfast. He didn’t answer her.

“Is Jace alright?” Maryse asked.

“Jace is the same, mom,” Alec said in monotone. “The heavenly fire in him but he’s fine.”

“Then I don’t understand,” Maryse said. Alec didn’t answer. He opened the fridge and grabbed the first thing he saw, sitting down to eat it.
“Alec!” Maryse said more urgently.

“What do you want mom,” Alec almost yelled back at her. She was stunned for only a moment before she sat next to him concern on her face.

“I want to know why you look--,” Maryse said, pausing to find the words. “You look like someone died.”

“No one died,” Alec said. “And it’s nothing you will care about so just drop it.”

“What do you mean I won’t care!” Maryse said offended. “You’re my son!”

“Your gay son who just got dumped by his boyfriend,” Alec said bitterly. “I know you never liked Magnus so just drop it okay.”

Maryse had the strangest look on her face then Alec thought. It almost looked like she was seeing him for the first time.

“What happened?” she asked softly.

“I messed it up,” Alec said, angrily. He wasn’t sure what he was eating now he had had a few bites. He hoped Isabelle hadn’t tried to cook cause then he would probably get sick.

His mother didn’t say another word to him while he finished eating whatever it was and left the kitchen.

Alec decided to train. Exercise was always good for clearing the head, and it would be good to blow off some steam.

He hadn’t been trained for more than an hour when Izzy came in.

“Alec,” she said. “I talked to mom.” Alec didn’t answer, but he did swing the seraph blade in his hand a little harder than he meant to. It stuck into the wall with a thud.

“I’m not like mom,” Izzy said. “I liked Magnus. Please talk to me.”

Alec collapsed onto the floor, his head in his hands and fell into his sister’s arms. She pull him in, holding him tight. Before he knew it he was crying into his sister’s shoulder.

He confessed it all then. Every time he had gone to see Camille. Every time Magnus had refused to tell him about his past. Every time he felt he was being held at arm’s length. How it had made him crazy enough to see Camille in the first place.

Izzy just listened all the while holding him. His sobbing slowed as he continued talking. It felt so good to talk to her. Like the burden was being lifted from his shoulders, if only slightly.

“I’m never going to see him again, Izzy,” Alec said as if every word was painful to speak. “Never.”

“You might,” Izzy said. “You never know.”

“You didn’t see the way he looked at me before he left,” Alec said. “He is never going to forgive me.”

“Do you want me to hate him for you?” Izzy asked. “Cause I can if you like?”

Alec choked out a humorless laugh. “No Izzy please don’t do that.”
“What can I do Alec,” Izzy pleaded.

“There isn’t anything you can do,” Alec said. “Except what you are doing.” He stood up pulling out of the hug. “Thanks for listening.”

Izzy smiled at him. “Anytime,” she said, but she had a look in her eye.

“What are you thinking Iz?” Alec said weakly.

“I was just thinking I’d like to give that warlock a piece of my mind is all,” Izzy said.


“What if I just went and talked to him.”

“I don’t know,” Alec said.

“It can’t hurt right?”

“I know you will anyway even if I tell you not to,” Alec said. Izzy grinned.

Telling Jace and Clary wasn’t so hard after that. Jace also offered to hate Magnus for him. Clary hugged him and said she would go see Magnus too. Alec knew he couldn’t have stopped either of them if he had tried but somehow he didn’t want to try.

Despite what he had said to Izzy Alec did have some hope. Magnus still loved him. Those parting words played over and over in Alec’s mind. Those words both kept him sane and drove him mad. They were what made Alec overcome whatever pride he had left and text the Magnus. Desperately clinging to the hope like a man hanging on a vine over a cliff.

_____

Magnus noticed the first text message arrived only a day after he had walked away from Alec at the subway.

Magnus ignored them or at least he didn’t answer them. He did read every one of them, some of them he read more than once.

Alec texted he was sorry, over and over again. Then the texts shifted to pleading for a reply. Next Alec merely asked over and over if Magnus was okay. Saying he needed to know. The hardest texts to stop himself from answering were the ones that said, I love you, or I miss you.

But Magnus didn’t dare return the texts. He didn’t dare see Alec. He knew he wasn’t strong enough. He knew he would see those blue eyes and forget why everything had fallen apart. He would forget that Alec didn’t trust him. He would forget that the relationship was doomed. He would forget that Alec couldn’t handle his immortality. He would forget Alec had considered shortening his life.

Seeing Alec was a bad idea, but being mad at Alec was painful.

The buzzer on his door went off. Magnus ignored it. The buzzer went off twice more. Magnus turned music on. The buzzer was in a constant state of buzzing. Someone was holding down the button. Magnus groaned but went to open the door.

Of course, it was Isabelle Lightwood. She let herself in without so much as a hello.
“By all means,” Magnus said with a great deal of sarcasm. “Come in.”

“I did,” Isabelle said.

“I know,” Magnus muttered. “What do you want Isabelle?”

“I want you to talk to Alec.”

“What a surprise,” Magnus said.

“He is a wreck!” Isabelle said, real anger in her voice now. “And it’s your fault!”

Magnus made sure not to give away too much emotion with his expression. “My fault!”

“Yes your fault!” Izzy yelled. “You broke his heart!”

“Ha!” Magnus said. She had it backwards. Magnus hadn’t snuck around behind Alec’s back with his ex to try and end Alec’s life early after all.

“You can laugh at that!” Izzy said. “Don’t you care at all!”

Magnus sobered, managing to conceal the pain her words brought on. Izzy knew nothing about how much he cared.

“That isn’t the point,” he said. “Now if that’s all you had to say, please leave.” He gestured to the door.

Izzy was fuming. She looked almost too mad to speak. She stormed out, slamming the door behind her.

Magnus collapsed on his sofa, hugging a pillow. So Alec was a ‘wreck’ huh? At least according to Izzy. But what did Izzy know anyway? Magnus clung to the pillow like it could plug the hole in his heart. Why did Isabelle have to come to see him anyway? Why couldn’t they just leave him alone?

Magnus couldn’t have told you what he really did for the next few days. They all blurred together. He didn’t leave the apartment.

He did however get a message from the Institute to make a portal. That meant seeing Alec. Magnus contacted Catarina and asked her to do the job for him. He couldn’t see Alec. Not now.

Maryse had considered asking a different warlock to open the portal she needed, but Magnus Bane was the High Warlock of Brooklyn. She was supposed to go to him first. Maybe it would be good for Alec to see him again. Maybe.

Maryse wasn’t sure how she felt about Alec and Magnus breaking up. It was strange to feel relief about something that was so clearly making her son miserable.

“Mom,” Alec snapped her out of her thoughts as he walked into her office.

“Yes Alec,” Maryse said.

“Who is coming to make the portal to Idris?”

Maryse was about open her mouth and say she had asked Magnus when a fire message appeared
before her. Picking it up she read.

“Catarina,” she answered Alec once she had finished reading the short message. “It seems Magnus is unavailable.”

“Or avoiding me,” Maryse just heard Alec mutter under his breath as he left the room.

Yes it was true Maryse didn’t know what to think of her son no longer dating a warlock. A warlock who knew all her darkest secrets but had never told her son any of them as far as she could tell. A warlock whose absence was now making her son bad tempered and sulky. Also she noticed Alec didn’t seem to care that he really needed a haircut.

“Alec,” Maryse stood up at her desk as she called out to her son who was almost at the door. “It isn’t all your fault no matter what you did.”

Alec just blinked at her. “What?”

“I know you said you messed it up,” Maryse said. “But it takes two to mess up a relationship.”

“You don’t get it mom.”

“I may not know the details,” Maryse continued. “But I know that no matter what you did you didn’t do it just cause. You had a reason. A reason that wasn’t your fault.”

“Thanks mom,” Alec said. “But it’s okay. You don’t have to say anything.”

Maryse let Alec leave then before falling back into her chair. It was so hard to have a child in pain when there was nothing you could do to ease it.

_____

Magnus heard the buzzer and got off the couch. His dinner had arrived early it seemed. He had decided to be extra lazy today and actually have someone deliver it rather than summon it by magic. Alec always had liked it when he paid for things. Magnus stopped that thought before it went any farther.

Magnus got up off his sofa and opened the door. His chinese food looked an awful lot like Clary.

“Hi, Magnus,” she said. “Can I come in?” Well at least she had asked. Magnus stood aside to let her in. She stood awkwardly in front of the closed door.

“What can I do for you, biscuit?” Magnus asked.

“Why do you call me that anyway?”

“Oh,” Magnus said, taken aback. “I figured you came here to insist I take Alec back?”

“Oh right,” Clary said. “Yeah, that is why I am here.”

Magnus waited. “Well,” he said. He wasn’t good at waiting.

“Why do you call me biscuit?”

Magnus chuckled. “It’s a inside joke you can’t remember, is all.”

“Explain it to me then.”
“You had to be there,” Magnus said. “Besides you were very young. You may not have remembered it even without losing your memories.”

“You always do that don’t you,” Clary said.

“Do what?”

“You don’t really answer questions,” Clary said. “I mean you sort of do, but you always leave the other person with more questions.” She paused. “I don’t know what I would do if the person I loved wouldn’t answer my questions. I have no idea how that feels, but I know what heartbreak feels like. I know how Alec feels now.” She gave him a stern look. “It isn’t fair.”

“Life isn’t fair,” Magnus said. And didn’t he know it!

“There’s nothing I can say that will change anything is there?”

“What’s done is done,” Magnus said.

“Another cliche,” Clary said. “Are you really answering me with a cliche?” Magnus didn’t say anything. He didn’t want Alec’s friends to know how much he was hurting and how much they were making it worse by constantly showing up!

“Well if that’s all you’re going to say I guess I will go,” Clary said. She left, slamming the door behind her.

_____

When Simon came to his door, it was rather unexpected.

“Third time isn’t the charm in this case, daylighter,” Magnus said. “Say what you came to say and get out.”

“You should get back together with Alec,” Simon said matter of factly. “He is really sorry.”

Magnus just blinked at him, broken record much!

“When Clary told me you and Alec broke up I kind of expected you to leave New York,” Simon said. “You said you weren’t a hero and that without Alec you would run and hide but…” Simon looked right at Magnus as he finished. “You’re still here. In New York, I mean.”

“Is that all you had to say?” Magnus said.

“Did you even hear what I said?”

“I am not deaf.”

“But did you understand,” Simon said. “You still love Alec. I know you do.”

“That is not the point,” Magnus said. “He betrayed me.”

“He told us everything you know. Well at least he told Izzy Jace and Clary everything. Clary told me. I don’t think he betrayed you.” Magnus’s expression stayed resolutely the same.

“If that’s the way you see it,” Simon said, with a sigh. “There isn’t anything I can say that will make a difference.”
Magnus didn’t speak. He tried to keep his face blank. Simon was staring right at him as if looking for something and Magnus was determined not to give him anything. After a while Simon lost his sympathetic look and left, slamming the door behind him.

I know I still love Alec, you stupid daylighter, Magnus thought at the closed door. But he wasn’t mad at Simon.

He suddenly realized he wasn’t even mad at Alec.

At some point Magnus he had forgiven Alec. He wasn’t sure when or how but there it was. Being mad at people you love does you more harm than whatever you are mad at them for. Forgiving Alec was inevitable Magnus realized.

_______

Magnus’s phone went off. He checked it automatically and stared. It was his birthday. Magnus had forgotten. But Alec hadn’t.

Magnus used to sometimes throw parties on his birthday but only because he had already wanted to throw a party in the first place. He didn’t really care much about the birthday itself. What was the difference between 402 and 403 after all?

The difference, Magnus thought, was Alec. Alec was older. Alec could change, grow but Magnus was frozen in time, like a sculpture. Oh, why had he let himself get mixed up with shadowhunters again! So much more mixed up than he had ever been before. He had known it was a bad idea from the start but that hadn’t stopped him.

His door buzzed again. He groaned. How many friends did Alec have? The buzzer had gone off three more times before Magnus answered it furious. He had had enough! Did they all think his apartment was their new stomping ground?

Jace had a very different tactic than the others however.

“Well, this is novel,” Magnus said. “None of the rest of your group has tried insulting me.”

“Is it working?” Jace said. Magnus answered him with a pizza joke. Jace was not impressed.

“How old are you, Magnus?” Jace asked. “The real answer.”

Four hundred and three today, Magnus thought.

“What were your parents’ names? Your father’s name?”

Asmodeus Magnus thought sourly. Magnus remembered his father well enough. Meeting him once was one time too many. But his mother was different. He could remember this mothers presence more than anything else. Her love before she had learned who he was. But her face was a blur. Magnus knew she had resembled him. A mixture of his dutch grandfather and his indonesian grandmother. The image of her face lost to him over the centuries.

“I don’t have anywhere to be,” Jace said. “I can sit here all day.”

“Great,” Magnus said, know Jace meant every word he wasn’t about to be out bluffed. “I’m going to take a nap.” Unconsciousness would be better than Jace.

He stopped mid-motion when Jace’s phone rang.
Jace listened then sat up, instantly alert.

“What is it?” Jace said, his voice strained. “What’s happened?”

Magnus sat up worried. Was it about Alec? Jace closed his eyes still listening. Then Jace got up and went straight for the door.

“What is it?” Magnus said, following Jace. He couldn’t just answer the phone like that and not explain! “Is it Alec? Is he all right?”

“What do you care?” Jace said. It felt like Jace had hit Magnus across the face. He felt his whole body flinch back involuntarily. To Magnus’s surprise, Jace didn’t slam the door on his way out like everyone else had.
The second chapter for Magnus's point of view of City of Heavenly Fire. This chapter features Catarina's point of view as well.

I have written another story with her point of view if you are interested where she first meets Magnus in the 1600s. It is called 'Saving Catarina.'

After Jace’s visit, Magnus was snapped into action. He remembered there was a world outside his apartment. A world he had ignored. How much had be missed in his stupor?

His father was still sending him the dreams. The apocalypse dreams. He had been too wrapped up in mopping to focus. But his mind was clear now. He had to find out what was going on.

Magnus contacted every person he could think of who might know who Sebastian’s allies were. The allies that were so well connected he could use dimensional magic. He got no useful information. However, Magnus did learn about the attacks on the Institutes that Sebastian had been conducting. Each time gaining more darkened soldiers while the Nephilim lost fighters.

So many Institutes had been hit already, and he hadn’t known. What were the Nephilim planning on doing about it?

Then Magnus remembered the job he had turned down. They were headed back to Idris he realized.

Alec was leaving.

Magnus was surprised Alec hadn’t texted him. In fact, he realized Alec had stopped calling and texting him completely now. This seemed to spur Magnus into action more than anything else had.

He needed to see Alec. He knew it was a bad idea, but he didn’t care. He needed Alec to survive this war.

Magnus walked up to the Institute determined to not give away his emotions. Determined to be remote. To say what he needed to say and nothing else.

First, Magnus encountered Clary and Simon, who throw his joke back at him. He decided to ignore them, moving through the crowd looking for Alec.

Seeing Alec Magnus grabbed his arm and steered him around the corner away from prying eyes.

“Okay,” Magnus said, coolly. “You wanted to talk to me. So talk.”

Alec just looked at him; his eyes wide.

“I wanted—What?” Alec said, bewildered. Magnus told himself he could keep things business-like. He could stay detached. Or at least look detached.

“Wanted to talk to me,” Magnus said again.
“Aren’t you ever going to forgive me?” Alec said in a rush. He has done it again Magnus thought as all his carefully constructed walls crumbled. Magnus confessed it all then. Telling Alec that he forgave him and was worried about him. Alec looked shocked.

Magnus was laughing. He couldn’t help it.

“Oh, Alexander,” he said, his heart lighter than he had been in weeks.

“What?” Alec asked.

“You’re just—You’re so—I really want to kiss you,” Magnus said. He had missed Alec so much. The desire to pull him in and kiss him was overwhelming. Magnus fought it by shaking his head. It didn’t work. To his surprise, Alec welcomed the idea. Magnus could tell Alec would let himself be kissed.

Magnus tried to be good. He explained why they hadn’t worked. His hands he realized were on Alec’s shoulder while he spoke. Then his thumb was brushing Alec’s soft cheek. Magnus forget about what he was saying. He forgot everything and kissed Alec.

Like Magnus had known he would, Alec leaned into the kiss. Alec parted his lips breathing him in, and Magnus came back to his sense. He pulled away.

“I shouldn’t have done that,” Magnus said. His emotions were running high, and he could feel the warmth flooding his face.

“I forgive you,” Magnus said. “But I can’t be with you. I can’t. It doesn’t work. I’m going to live forever, or at least until someone finally kills me, and you’re not, and it’s too much for you to take on —”

“Don’t tell me what’s too much for me,” Alec said so confidently Magnus couldn’t help his surprise. He couldn’t stop the spark of useless hope that flared in his chest at Alec’s words.

Magnus told Alec about Tessa without using her name. About how her love had died and it had almost destroyed her.

“I don’t know why I thought this would ever work,” Magnus said. “I’m sorry, Alec. I shouldn’t have come.”

“No,” Alec said. “You shouldn’t.”

Magnus couldn’t believe Alec had said that. After all those texts and phone calls. He stared at Alec and saw a stranger’s expression on the face he loved.

Alec explained his side better this time. Better than he had at the subway station. Alec was it seemed in a much better place than Magnus was. Alec was able to accept the fact he was mortal and Magnus wasn’t. Alec just wanted to know about Magnus’s life. Was that the real reason he had gone to see Camille? To ask her about Magnus?

“I told you,” Magnus said, still not able to really believe what Alec was saying. ”On our second date that you would have to take me as I came, no questions—”

Alec was so different now than he had been even then, on their second date. So much surer of himself. And Magnus realized Alec was right. It wasn’t just Alec’s fault what had happened. Magnus had been part of it. Magnus had asked an innocent infatuated child to make a promise that he didn’t understand, couldn’t understand, and then expected the man that child grow into to stand
by his promise.

The hope in Magnus died. He couldn’t change. He didn’t know how. He thought Alec could change him, all the wonder and joy of youth, but Magnus was still the same.

“Change yourself,” Alec said, without anger. Magnus shook his head. He didn’t know how! He gave Alec the warning he had originally planned on delivering. He wanted Alec to go to Idris where he would be safe. Or at least safer than here at an Institute Sebastian was bound to attack. And Alec would feel bound to defend. The thought of Alec fighting such a pointless battle made Magnus voice his next words.

“I need you to live,” Magnus said. Then before Alec could say anything else he walked away as fast as his legs would carry him.

Alec’s words ran through his head like the pulse of his heart. His lips still tingled gently from Alec’s kiss. It hadn’t been a good idea to see Alec. It had just made everything worse.

Magnus flung himself into action again. He redoubled his efforts to help. To learn what was coming. The apocalypse. Sebastian’s Nephilim apocalypse. He learned Sebastian was allied with demons. Demons more powerful than his father. Demons no shadowhunter could hope to defeat. But that still didn’t explain how they were using dimensional magic the way they were. Magnus knew he was missing something, but he couldn’t find it. No matter where he looked. Every time he thought he was close to an answer, he was suddenly grasping at air.

Magnus finally admitted to himself the truth, he couldn’t do anything to help. He wasn’t sure anyone could.

God, he needed a drink.

Catarina prided herself on being a good friend. It had been hundreds of years since Magnus had saved her life and she had repaid the debt long ago. But he was still her friend. Her oldest friend.

She had agreed to take his place on the council in Alicante so he wouldn’t have to see his ex. She had taken the portal job for the same reason. So when Magnus called saying he needed someone to talk to and get drunk with she agreed. Though she knew, she wouldn’t be getting drunk. Despite just getting off work, she had an early shift at the hospital tomorrow.

Magnus was already sitting at the bar nursing a drink when Catarina arrived at the Hunter’s Moon. She sat next to him and ordered a Long Island Ice Tea. He didn’t even acknowledge her presence as she sat down. He was staring off into space.

“My mind was on other things,” Magnus said when she implied he was eyeing up the bartender.

“Whatever it is, don’t do it!” Catarina continued her teasing. “It’s a bad idea.” She was pretty sure his mind was on Alec Lightwood and knew he needed cheering up.

“And why do you say that?”

“Because they’re the only kind you have,” she said, reminding him of the time he had tried to be a pirate.

“I don’t repeat my mistakes,” Magnus said.
“You’re right. You make all new and even worse mistakes.”

“I’m not contemplating a career change. I was thinking about . . .”

“Alec Lightwood?” Catarina said, unable to stop the grin spreading across her face. Magnus had it bad. “I’ve never seen anyone get under your skin like that boy.”

“You haven’t known me forever,” Magnus said. Catarina ignored this remark and reminded Magnus he had made her take the portal job so he didn’t have to see Alec but shown up anyway.

“Don’t deny it,” Catarina said. “I saw you.”

“I didn’t deny anything. I showed up to say good-bye; it was a mistake. I shouldn’t have done it,” Magnus said, taking a swig of his drink.

“Oh, for goodness’ sake,” Catarina said. “What is this about, really, Magnus? I’ve never seen you so happy as you were with Alec. Usually, when you’re in love, you’re miserable. Look at Camille. I hated her. Ragnor hated her—”

Magnus put his head down on the table.

“Everyone hated her,” Catarina continued. Magnus needed to hear this. She had to be ruthless to be kind. “She was devious and mean. And so your poor sweet boyfriend got suckered by her; well, really, is that any reason to end a perfectly good relationship? It’s like siccing a python on a bunny rabbit and then being angry when the bunny rabbit loses.”

“Alec is not a bunny rabbit. He’s a Shadowhunter.”

“And you’ve never dated a Shadowhunter before. Is that what this is?”

“In a sense,” Magnus said. “The world is changing. Don’t you feel it, Catarina?”

“I can’t say that I do.”

“The Nephilim have endured for a thousand years,” Magnus said. “But they could be wiped away as quickly as they came.”

“But you don’t really think—”

“I’ve dreamed about it,” he said. “You know I have true dreams sometimes.”

“And you want to push Alec away before you lose him.”

“I can’t rid myself of the feeling that the apocalypse is coming, somehow,” Magnus said, explaining about Sebastian’s demon allies.

“How do you know that?” she asked.

“I’ve looked into it.”

“I thought you were done helping Shadowhunters,” she said but before he could answer she held up her hand to stop him. It had been a silly question. Magnus never meant it when she said things like that. His heart always brought him back into the fight.

“That’s the thing,” Magnus said. “I’ve looked into it, but I don’t think I can help them, Catarina. I don’t know if anyone can.”
Catarina couldn’t help but pity her friend. Love had never been her passion. Healing had sustained her throughout her long life. No love had every made her as miserable as Magnus was now. He turned away from her pitying expression.

“Mortals die,” Catarina said. “You have always known that, and yet you’ve loved them before.”

“Not,” Magnus said, “like this.”

Catarina was stunned. She felt herself inhale in surprise. She was probably one of the only people in the world who knew the enormity of Magnus’s statement. After Magnus’s four hundred years that there was someone who could make him feel something new was a miracle in and of itself. A miracle he was throwing away.

“Magnus,” she said tenderly. “You are impossibly stupid.”

“Am I?”

“If that’s the way you feel, you should be with him,” she said. “Think of Tessa. Did you learn nothing from her? About what loves are worth the pain of losing them?”

“He’s in Alicante.”

Catarina reminded Magnus that he would be in Alicante too if he hadn’t dumped that job on her as well. She reached into her scrubs pocket and handed him the invite to Meliorn’s peace and goodwill supper.

“Faerie food,” Magnus grumbled. But he broke off half way through his rant noticing something was wrong. Something to do with the werewolf pack.

Magnus, of course, had to go help. Catarina tired only half-hearted to stop him. Magnus would be Magnus, she knew, no matter the situation.

Catarina watched him, though. She watched the werewolf pack tense at the sight of a warlock getting involved in their affairs. She was relieved that at least one of the werewolves, the temporary leader to boot, knew Magnus could be trusted.

Catarina heard Magnus inquire after the situation. And listened to the answer. The Praetor Lupus headquarters had been burned to the ground. A hundred or more werewolves dead.

Luke needed to be told and Magnus, who was now headed to to Alicante anyway, was probably agreeing to deliver the message. Catarina saw Magnus accept a small silver object from the werewolf before coming back over to her.

“I have to go,” Magnus said.

“I know,” Catarina smiled. “You have to go be the hero.”

“I am not a hero,” Magnus said. “You of all people should know that.”

“Well you don’t give up,” Catarina started counting on her fingers. “You don’t back down. You are stubborn to a fault, and you follow your heart wherever it takes you. What should I call you then?”

“Call me a fool,” Magnus said. “And thank you, Catarina.”

“No problem. I love telling you off,” she said. “You know that.”
Magnus went home before going to Alicante. His mind was full of everything Catarina had said to
him.

He had been cruel to Alec. Magnus wasn’t sure now if at all Alec would take him back. If Alec had
any sense, he wouldn’t. What had Alec said would make the difference? His past.

If it meant having Alec back again could he reveal himself like he’d never done before?

Maybe Alec could handle his immortality while so many others couldn’t. If Magnus could just find a
way to share his past. Could he call Alec his again?

Maybe the awe-inspiring thing was the mystery. If Alec knew him. Really knew everything about
his past. Could they be equals? Or would his past just make Alec see him too differently? If Alec
knew the most shameful things, he had done… if Alec knew who his father was would Alec still
love him?

There was only one way to find out.

Magnus found a blank spiral notebook in his desk and stared at its blank pages. It was different
knowing Alec might one day read these. Could he remember enough details? Or had it been too long
since he had tried? Really tried.

Magnus decided to start at the beginning and was relieved to find he could remember her name now.
His first love. The mortal women who had spent her whole life with him. The others had left him
before the end. Or he had pulled away before anything took root in his heart.

He started writing. The words transferring from his mind to the paper more effortlessly that he would
have thought possible. Every word was both hastily scribbled and carefully chosen.

Magnus only wrote down the biggest events in his life. The events that defined him. He didn’t have
time to write more than that. He decided it would be the first installment. Proof of his new found
resolve.

Magnus chose to leave the book here in his loft. If Alec did take him back and want the book, he
would summon it then. No need to carry his secrets around with him in the shadowhunter’s capital
city. The thought made him nervous.

Magnus hide the book very well in his loft, making sure to leave magical alarms in case someone
found it. He was being paranoid he knew, but the idea of so much of himself being written down
was making him jumpy. He felt exposed.

But it would be worth it to have Alec back in his arms again.
Upon arriving in Alicante, Magnus went straight to Luke's. Before he could start working on his love life he had a message to deliver.

Luke looked rather shocked when he opened the door.

“Clar-” Luke started. “Oh, it’s you?”

“Sorry to just drop by like this,” Magnus said. “But I have a mes--”

“Can you have a look at something for me Magnus,” Jocelyn asked interrupting. “Please.” She looked so desperate.

“What am I looking at?” Magnus asked walking into the house. Luke closed the door.

“A box,” Jocelyn said leading Magnus down into the seller. Luke following behind. “Sebastian left it. We are worried it’s a trap.”

Jocelyn picked a small silver box off a table and handed it to Magnus.

Magnus turned the little box with the initials J.C. on it over in his hand. He felt Jocelyn’s anxious gaze on him the whole time.

“I don’t think there’s anything wrong with it,” Magnus said finally, “No snares, no traps, no magic at all.”

“Thanks,” Jocelyn said. “For looking at it. I can be a bit paranoid. And after what just happened in London—”

“What did happen in London?” Magnus asked.

“We don’t know that much,” Luke said. He explained what he did know. London had been attacked like the other Institutes, but something had warned the shadowhunters. A protection the Council was unaware of.

“A ghost,” Magnus said. His thoughts drifted to the past, a smile on his face. Jessamine Lovelace’s ghost. “A spirit, sworn to protect the place. She’s been there for a hundred and thirty years.”

“She?” Jocelyn said, leaning back against a dusty wall. “A ghost? Really? What was her name?”

“You would recognize her last name, if I told it to you, but she wouldn’t like that,” Magnus said. “I hope this means she’s found peace.”

“Anyway,” he said snapping out of his reverie. He had come here for a reason. “I hadn’t meant to drag the conversation in this direction. It isn’t why I came to you.”

“I had a life before Alec,” Magnus snapped. He shouldn’t have been so harsh, but the idea of Alec, and talking to Alec about the notebook was making him nervous. “I’m the High Warlock of Brooklyn. I am here to take a Council seat on behalf of Lilith’s Children.”

“I thought Catarina Loss was the warlock representative,” Luke said taken aback.

“She was,” Magnus said, his voice gentler now. “She made me take her place so I could come here and see Alec.” He sighed. “She, in fact, made this particular pitch to me while we were in the Hunter’s Moon. And that’s what I wanted to talk to you about.”

“Did you see Bat?” Luke asked.

“Yes.” Magnus hesitated. He hated delivering bad news. But it couldn’t be helped. He explained to Luke about the attack on the Praetor Lupus, Jordan’s death in Maia’s arms and Sebastian’s message that Maia had been left alive to deliver. The message asking all downworlders to break their alliances with the shadowhunters. To let the Nephilim fall.

“Are you going to deliver that message at the Council?” Luke asked.

“No,” Magnus said. “But I’m not going to conceal it from the Downworlders, either. My loyalty is not to Shadowhunters over them.” He knew Luke’s was, however. Luke had been a shadowhunter before he became a werewolf.

Magnus showed Luke his dinner invitation and explained he planned on telling them then. Luke tried to convince Magnus the message from Sebastian should be hidden. Jocelyn even invoked Tessa’s name to get Magnus to agree. But Jocelyn didn’t know Tessa as well as Magnus did. Tessa would have preached honesty.

There was suddenly a hammering noise from upstairs. Like someone was banging on the door. Luke, thinking Clary had forgotten her key, went to get the door.

The women in the doorway told them Clary was hurt. She and Jace had run off into a battle they weren’t supposed to… again.

Magnus didn’t wait for Jocelyn to ask. Depending what was wrong with Clary’s, he could be her best chance. It was lucky he was here.

Magnus saw Clary lying on the ground as they entered the courtyard. She was barely alive. Her skin white, except where it had turned blue around her mouth and finger. Her gear was torn and bloody. A Morgenstern sword lay beside her.

Magnus quickly started healing her. She seemed more drained than injured. Like she had put all her heart and soul into something, emptying herself out. While he worked, he overheard what had happened.

Clary had done this to save Jace. Magnus should have guessed. The girl was relentless.

The blue light from his hands light the area while he worked. Jocelyn and Luke were leaning over Clary on her other side.

Magnus noticed Luke stand to prevent Simon coming closer to Clary. What was Simon doing here? Did that idiot want to be locked up again? The vampire was fighting Luke with everything he had to get to Clary.
“Simon, no,” Magnus said with force.

Magnus let Luke finish explaining to Simon how Clary was better off here with Magnus than at the hospital building. Magnus continued pouring his energy, his blue sparks, into Clary. Trying to keep her going.

Alec was standing on the steps of that hospital. After seeing Magnus however, Alec quickly went back inside. Magnus never saw him.

Magnus heard Luke explain to Simon what Clary had done. When Simon spoke Alec’s name, Magnus couldn’t help but listen.

“Alec felt something happen to him through the parabatai bond. Something to do with the heavenly fire. And Raphael was babbling about ley lines—”

Magnus listened after that and discovered Simon didn’t know Jordan was dead. Magnus heard Luke give Simon Jordan’s Praetor Lupus Medallion. Simon stopped trying to get to Clary once he realized his friend was dead.

Magnus did all he could for Clary and once he was sure she was stable he left her in the loving arms of her parents. He had a dinner to get to. Then he was going to go see Alec.
The first thing Magnus was aware of was pain and fever. His mouth was dry, his throat sore. Before he even opened his eyes, he knew where he was. Knew that if his father could do this to him, there was only one place he could be.

His hands were chained. Probably in a wasted effort to stop him doing magic. He couldn't do magic here. Couldn't do anything here except die.

It all came back to him now. The elegant dinner. The poisoned wine. Meliorn laughing in Magnus’s face while the other representatives passed out around him. The Endarkened Nephilim surrounding him as he fell to his knees. Meliorn taunting him as he lost consciousness.

Magnus opened his eyes and saw the endarkened there in read gear surrounding him. One of the them was securing his chains to the floor. He glimpsed Sebastian, a mocking smile on his face before the Endarkened left. Locking the door behind them.

Magnus looked around the room. He was locked up with Raphael and Luke. They had obviously been awake for a while. Neither of them were chained. Raphael had tried to free Magnus from his chains, but even his vampire strength couldn’t move them. Luke was screaming Jocelyn’s name.

Magnus wasn’t sure how long Luke called for her. He heard Luke’s voice become hoarse to the point of pain before he stopped.

Magnus tried to comfort Luke. Sebastian wouldn’t hurt Jocelyn. Not because she was his mother but because she was Clary’s. He wanted leverage over Clary.

Magnus wasn’t sure how much time was passing. He curled up around his aching insides.

Magnus knew he would probably die here if that was what his father wanted. He had never felt so powerless. So like a child.

At some point, Raphael fell asleep in the corner, and Magnus figured it must be daytime.

Magnus watched the vampire sleep remembering long ago. Raphael’s attempt to end his life when he knew he was one of the damned. Magnus offering him a chance to still be himself. To be around his mortal family again. His family was of course long gone now. His siblings might have had children, though. Maybe Raphael had grand-nephews or nieces he kept in touch with. Magnus had never asked.

“He needs to feed,” Magnus said. Some of the concern for his friend must have shown on his face.

“You know each other,” Luke said.

Magnus’s raised his eyebrow.

“Before what? Before you were born? Let me make something clear to you, werewolf; almost everything in my life happened before you were born,” Magnus snapped, but his eyes lingered on Raphael sleeping in the corner. His expression he knew was gentle. He found himself explaining to Luke what had happened fifty years ago when he had met Raphael.

“I hope he survives this,” Magnus said. Raphael wasn’t being tormented by his demon father. Maybe Raphael could find a way home.

“You hope Raphael survives this?” Luke said. “Come on—how many people has he killed?”

Magnus felt anger rise up in him. This werewolf's hands were not so clean. He had no right to speak like that.

“Who among us has bloodless hands?” Magnus said, cold fiery in his voice. “What did you do, Lucian Graymark, to gain yourself a pack—two packs—of werewolves?”

“That was different. That was necessary.”

“What did you do when you were in the Circle?” Magnus demanded. He remembered Luke the night he had helped the Whitelaws against the Circle. The last stand of the New York Institute that had cost the lives of the whole Whitelaw family. Luke had been with Valentine. Luke had been the most reluctant to do along with Valentine it was true--balking at Valentine blinking the werewolf child with silver coins on her eyes--but he was not in a position to judge Raphael.

“I’m worried about my family now,” Luke said. “I thought you’d be worried about Alec.”

“I don’t want to talk about Alec.”

But he couldn’t stop himself from thinking about Alec.

Alec. He had fallen in love, so completely, with a shadowhunter. He had known from the start he shouldn’t have done it. When Alec had arrived at his loft and asked him out Magnus should have said no but he hadn’t been able to. It had been so effortless with Alexander. Loving him had been like free falling off a cliff with infectious joy in his heart. All the while knowing he would hit the earth eventually but not caring.

The love of those with Angel blood was different. They get under your skin. He had cared about shadowhunters before. So nearly loved them. Clary had been a new experience for him. Watching a child grow. He had found he cared for her as if she were his niece or little sister. But he had never been in love with a Shadowhunter, before Alec. Then to be loved in returned by one of the angel. The love of angels a high and holy thing.

Nephilim, Angel’s warriors, put their duty above all else. Magnus had seen it before. Seen people have to make a choice between the one they loved and the world. He knew he was selfish enough to want the one he loved to chose him. But Alec was Nephilim; he’d never do that. Magnus had always known honor, family and duty came first with Alec. Magnus came second. Always second.

He couldn’t hold on to the hope anymore. The hope he would see Alec again. The hope Alec would forgive him. Choose him.

Magnus thought of Alec and remembered his goodness. His awe-inspiring goodness. Awe was poison to love. Love had to be between equals. Magnus could never be Alec’s equal.
Magnus was aware he was speaking his thoughts out loud to the room. It didn’t matter anymore who heard. His secrets didn’t matter, not here in this hell.

Magnus just lay back down, closing his eyes giving in to the pain his father was inflicting on him. Giving in to the pain of so many worse things.

Magnus awoke to hear Luke and Raphael talking about the bright light outside the window. He heard Raphael describe the bright heavenly light and guessed what it could be. Those reckless teenagers! Had Alec come with Jace? Or was that a different heavenly fire?

Magnus felt horrible, but he was not going to answer his father’s call. There were worse things than physical pain he knew. He rolled onto his back trying to be more comfortable despite his chains, but it was no use.

Raphael had never seen Magnus so sick and asked if he could help. Magnus explained.


“No,” Magnus said, despairingly. “It wouldn’t be worth the price. There’s always a price, with my father.”

“Wouldn’t you pay it? If the choice were your life?” Luke asked.

Luke didn’t understand. He didn’t know Asmodeus. Magnus fell back against the stone floor.

“I might not be the one who pays it,” was all he had the strength to say before shutting his eyes. Sleep came almost instantly. Magnus felt something soft under his head as he slept. Like someone had put a pillow there.

Magnus awoke when an endarkened woman brought them food. He was too sick to eat and didn’t even bother moving when she sat the bowl of gruel in front of him. Knowing Sebastian, it might be drugged anyway.

Magnus saw Raphael drink the blood hungrily and wanted to warn him. Tell him it wasn’t a good idea but Raphael had finished drinking it before Magnus even opened his mouth to speak.

Sebastian graced them with his presence then. He taunted Luke for his love of Jocelyn and Clary but Sebastian allowed Luke’s confident reply to affect him. There was something in his tone that Magnus hadn’t noticed before. There was an edge of petulance to it.

It was Raphael Magnus had to warn next. Calling Sebastian crazy wasn’t the best idea. Magnus watched as Sebastian offered Raphael a deal to join him. Magnus had to admit it was a logical deal, but he was still disappointed when Raphael accepted it. Disappointed and angry.

“I should have let you walk into the daylight,” Magnus said, in an icy voice. Raphael flinched ever so slightly, and Magnus realized he should never have said anything. He was now the one who wasn’t listening to his own warnings. Sebastian had seen Raphael flinch.

“Now let us seal our agreement in blood,” Sebastian said. “Kill the warlock.”

Magnus watched Raphael approach with a strange detachment from the whole affair. He could feel his heart pounding in his chest, but he wasn’t afraid. Being close to death wasn’t new to him. It had been a long time since it had frightened him. He knew a small part of him longed for it. The part that had all but vanished since he had met Alec. But he wasn’t about to defend himself here. When he was weak, had no magic and almost no hope of getting out of here alive.
Magnus felt the knife at his throat and let his mind fill with images of Alec. His blue eyes and steady smile. The sweet way he blushed. His fluster at now knowing what to say. The way Alec’s strength had felt coursing through him. Warm and bright.

He realized Catarina had been right. He had pushed Alec away for more than just his meetings with Camille.

Magnus remembered Tessa weeping in his arms in Paris and had pictured himself losing Alec the same way. He had been angry with Alec it was true, but he had also been afraid. Terrified of losing Alec.

Raphael dropped the knife to the floor. “I cannot,” he said. “I will not. I owe him a debt from many years ago.”

“You disappoint me, Raphael,” Sebastian said and moving forward he picked up the knife and drove it into Raphael’s heart.

Magnus watched helplessly as his friend turned to ash before his eyes.

Sebastian left after that, looking childishly annoyed. Like he has been disappointed in his new toy. Magnus hated him. Hated that this infant had destroyed a strong independent ageless—okay yes dead but also—honourable person. What was the point of immortality when it only lasted fifty years?

Magnus sank back down to the ground. Everything hurt. His father hadn’t relented. Magnus couldn’t even sit up anymore. He just lay half propped up on his elbows on the floor. Luke was at the window again. He said there was a great light burning the mist away. It was almost like they were being rescued.

“The Clave?”

“The Clave?” Magnus said, with as much distaste as he could muster. “I hate to break it to you, but they don’t care enough about us to come here. Your daughter, though. She does.”

“Clary,” Luke said, horrified. “No. She shouldn’t be here.”

“Isn’t she always where she isn’t supposed to be?” Magnus said. He was so dizzy. His head was resting on the wall behind him. “And the rest of them. Her constant companions. My . . .” Alec. His Alec. Who he had no right to call his. Surely Alec wouldn’t have let Jace come on his own. Was Alec… could Alec be here?

The door burst open and Magnus tried to get to his feet. If this was Sebastian come to finish them off, he wanted to die on his feet. He of course failed, falling back to the ground.

And suddenly he was looking up at the only face he wanted to see.

Alec’s face wasn’t guarded. It was open and full of sadness. Magnus hadn’t seen Alec except once since breaking up with him. Alec had been guarded then. Careful. Now he wasn’t and Magnus saw the pain there just like his own and he realized with sudden clarity that Alec did care as much as he did. He had been wrong. The fear in Alec’s blue eyes told him that. Fear for him.

“Oh, my Alec,” Magnus said. “You’ve been so sad. I didn’t know.” Magnus’s strength gave out and he sunk back to the ground.

“Alec. Are you alright? Are you hurt?” Alec’s voice was like music to him. Music he could listen to happily while he lay here.
“Hold still,” Alec said, pulling out a seraph blade. Magnus was seized with a sudden desire to honour his friend. He grabbed Alec’s wrist with more strength than he knew he had.

“Call it Raphael,” Magnus said, glancing at the blade in Alec’s hand. “It is an angel’s name.” Magnus couldn’t keep his eyes open after that, but he heard Alec mutter Raphael’s name softly. He felt his chains fall away, and Alec’s hands take him by the shoulder.

Magnus reached for Alec. He didn’t care about getting up. He didn’t care about anything, except Alec. His Alec here now. He pulled Alec down sliding his hands into Alec’s soft hair and kissed him.

He felt Alec freeze for just a moment, but before he had time to worry Alec would push him away. Alec was kissing him back. Alec’s hands ran up Magnus’s shoulder to cupped his face. The world could only have been made better, if Alec would lay down with him. Hold him. He wouldn’t let Alec go even when he pulled out of the kiss.

“Are you being chased?” Magnus asked softly.

“I—ah—some of the Endarkened are looking for us,” Alec said carefully.

“Pity,” Magnus said, closing his eyes again. “It would be nice if you could just lie down with me here. Just . . . for a little while.”

Magnus heard Isabelle then. Alec answered her but all Magnus was aware of was Alec so close to him. Alec not rejecting his kiss. Alec here to save him.

“Can you stand?” Alec asked. Magnus nodded. If Alec was here, he could do anything… maybe not.

“Magnus!” Alec exclaimed. Magnus was on the ground again. But Alec was beside him. Magnus managed to struggle but up to his knees before he spoke.

“You should go without me,” Magnus said. It wasn’t what he wanted. All he wanted was to hold Alec. “I’ll slow you down.”

“I don’t understand,” Alec said. “What happened? What did he do to you?”

Of course, Magnus thought, Alec believed Sebastian had done this to him. Magnus didn’t have the strength to explain. He just shook his head and let Luke answer Alec’s question.

Alec was looking at him then as if for answers, but Magnus didn’t have the strength to give him any. He shook his head. He knew that wasn’t fair. Alec deserved answers and Magnus resolved to give him some if they made it out of this dimension alive.

Magnus realized then what Alec’s arrival had pushed from his mind. Alec shouldn’t have come to rescue him. Alec shouldn’t have come to rescue him. Alec was in danger here. Might get stuck here. Might die here.

Magnus registered as if from far away that Alec had ordered the others to look for Jocelyn.

Alec reached down to lift Magnus up off the ground. With Alec for support, Magnus didn’t fall down this time. Alec’s strong arms were around him now, and Magnus held on tight.

“Hold on to me,” Alec said.

They walked in silence but for Magnus’s laboured breathing. Magnus was only slightly aware of anything past the comforting presence of Alec’s arms. But he did notice when the walls started closing in on them.

“Everything’s fine,” Alec tried to soothe him. “We just have to make it to—”

“Alec,” Magnus said firmly. “I am not hallucinating. The walls are moving.”

Magnus fell from Alec’s arms. A hiss of pain escaping him and he hit the wall.

“Sebastian,” Magnus gasped as Alec began to drag him forward. “He’s doing this.”

“How would that even be possible?” Alec said. “He doesn’t control everything!”

“He could—if he sealed the borders between the dimensions,” Magnus said trying to get up the energy to run. “He could control this whole world.”

Magnus didn’t tell Alec that would mean they might be trapped here. Alec trapped in a hell dimension. Alec dying. Magnus wished again that Alec had never come, no matter how wonderful it was to have him here.

Magnus tried to outrun the walls. Alec helped him as much as he could. They heard running footsteps behind them and turned to see Luke and Jocelyn. Sebastian was herding them all like sheep.

The four of them burst through the door, and Magnus saw Clary. Clary seated on Sebastian’s throne. Not held down but sitting there of her own volition. Magnus felt Jocelyn stumble back in shock behind him.

Alec had the fastest reflexes and before Izzy or Luke could attack Alec’s arrow was already headed for Sebastian's chest. Magnus saw the arrow hit its target who staggered back from the sheer force of its strike. But it didn’t last. Sebastian regained his balance and pulled the arrow out as if it was nothing more than a sliver.

Magnus saw Alec’s eyes find Jace where he lay in Isabelle’s lap on the ground. Magnus knew Alec was thinking of the heavenly fire. The only thing that might be able to hurt Sebastian.

Jace got up then, and Sebastian welcomed an attack from him showing he believed the heavenly fire to be gone from Jace.

Magnus saw the looks on Alec and Izzy’s faces. The looks of disbelief. Jocelyn was a wreck. Sebastian made it very clear then that they were all still alive only because of Clary wishes. Magnus thought he finally understood what was going on.

“That’s what you offered her,” Magnus said, raising his eyes to Clary. “You told her if she would agree to rule beside you here, you would close the borders and leave our world in peace. Rule in Edom, save the world. Right?”

“You’re very perceptive,” Sebastian said after a brief pause. “It’s annoying.”

It was Jace words that told Magnus there was more going on than meets the eye.

“Clary is yours,” Jace said, stepping back. Magnus knew Jace would never give Clary up. He would have died pointlessly before giving Clary up.
“All of you. Kneel to your queen,” Sebastian said.

Magnus knelt first, putting his trust in Clary. Jace had not made eye contact with Clary since they had entered this room and Magnus had noticed. Kneeling meant nothing after all. It was a childish thing to ask. Besides, he could barely stand anyway.

Everyone else had kneeled with him. First Alec then Izzy and the others. There was a shattering noise, and the window to Alicante vanished. There world cut off from them forever.

Magnus watched as Clary was drawn from her throne to stand in front of Sebastian. Watched as Clary let herself be kissed by her brother and watched as she ran her brother through with the Morgenstern sword. The heavenly was in the sword, and it burned the evil from him. He lay now in his mother’s lap just a normal boy. The child she would have had if Valentine hadn’t corrupted him in her womb.

Magnus couldn’t image the pain she was in. Losing her son once would have been bad enough he was sure but twice.

Once Sebastian, or maybe he was Jonathon now, fell still and cold. Once information about recent events were enhanced. Reality dawned on them.

“So we’re trapped here,” Isabelle said, shocked. “Forever? That can’t be. There must be a spell—Magnus—”

“There’s no way for us to reopen the paths from here to Idris.”

“No way for us?” Alec said. Alec knew Magnus better than he realized; he had caught the way Magnus had phrased his sentence. Careful not to lie or reveal too much truth.

“That’s what I said,” Magnus tried one more time to avoid the unthinkable. The inevitable. “There’s no way to open the borders.”

“No,” Alec said. “You said there was no way for us to do it, meaning there might be someone who could.”

Amedrous. Magnus was sure now what the price would be. It was different with Alec here. His desire to live was stronger. But there was no scenario he could think of where he lived through his. Lived to be with Alec in his world again.

Magnus drew away from Alec and looked around at them all.

“There are worse things than death,” Magnus said, softly. It could be more than just his life his father wanted. If his father asked for Alec’s life…

“Maybe you should let us be the judge of that,” Alec said.

“Dear God. Alexander,” Magnus said as if praying. He didn’t want to do this! “I have gone my whole life without ever taking recourse to this path, save once, when I learned my lesson. It is not a lesson I want the rest of you to learn. Playing dice with my own life is one thing; playing with all of yours—”

“We’ll die here anyway,” Jace said. “It’s a rigged game. Let us take our chances.”

“I agree,” Isabelle said and so did the others. Magnus looked around at these children. These trusting children who had fought their way here to save him, Luke and Jocelyn. To save the world. Magnus
hadn’t even told them what the little hope he offered actually entailed and yet they had faith in him.

Magnus drew himself up to his feet. Closing his eyes, he spoke the words that would call his father to him.

When he opened his eyes, he saw shock in every face. He couldn’t look at Alec. Afraid of the disgust he would find there.

Asmodeus introduced himself to the rest of the group as a Prince of Hell. A Fallen Angel.

“You’re—Magnus’s father?” Alec said. The words coming out like he was being strangled.

Asmodeus explained that he was rarely here and spoke of the Nephilim, who had died in this dimension. Accusing them of destroying themselves.

“Don’t excuse yourself,” Magnus snapped. “You as much as murdered my mother—”

“She was a willing little piece, I assure you,” Asmodeus said. Magnus couldn’t stop the flush across his cheeks. He had loved his mother and been loved by her before she had learned what he was. Before she had hung herself for lying with a demon. This demon.

“Let’s cut to the business part of this,” Magnus said. “You can open a door, correct? Send us through to Idris, back to our world?”

“Would you like a demonstration?” Asmodeus asked but without waiting for an answer he sent Luke and Jocelyn, who were still standing over Jonathan's body, back through to Alicante.

“There, you got the first two for free. The rest, well, it’ll cost you,” Asmodeus said.

“I know what you want,” Magnus said. He had already made this decision. There was no other way in which any of them got out of this alive. No other way Alec got back home alive. He needed Alec to live. “And you can have it. But you must swear on the Morning Star to send all my friends back to Idris, all of them, and never to bother them again. They will owe you nothing.”

“Stop,” Alec said. “No—Magnus, what do you mean, what he wants? Why are you talking like you’re not coming back to Idris with us?” Magnus was relieved to hear no disgust in Alec’s voice.

Asmodeus explained his desires. Mangus was shocked when Clary moved to stand between him and his father, voicing her disbelief a father could want to harm his child.

“Delightful,” Asmodeus said, laughing at Clary’s bravery. “Look at them, Magnus, these children who love you and want to protect you! Who would ever have thought it! When you are buried, I will make sure they inscribe it on your tomb: Magnus Bane, beloved of Nephilim.”

“You won’t touch him,” Alec said. Magnus heard cold iron in Alec’s voice, but Magnus knew it was pointless. They couldn’t fight Asmodeus.

“I do not plan to kill Magnus,” Asmodeus continued. “It is his life freely given I want, for the life of an immortal has power, great power, and it will help me fuel my kingdom.”

“He wants to take your immortality?” Alec asked, a strange tone in his voice. Magnus confirmed.

“But—you’d survive?” Alec said. “Just not be immortal anymore?” The hope in Alec’s voice was too much for Magnus.

“My immortality would be gone,” Magnus said. “All the years of my life would come on me at once.
I would be unlikely to survive it.”

“You can’t,” Alec said. His voice pleading pained and hopeless now. “He said ‘a life given willingly.’ Say no.”

Magnus raised his head to look at Alec. All his guards down he gazed at one he loved. Those beautiful blue eyes, so full of fear for him.

“I can’t say no, Alexander,” Magnus said, softly. “If I do, we all remain here; we’ll die anyway. We’ll starve, our ashes turned to dust.”

“Fine,” Alec said. “There isn’t any one of us who would give up your life to save ours.”

Magnus looked around then and realized Alec was right. He was astonished. He had never felt so welcome. So part of a group before. A group who would all rather die than sacrifice him and live.

“I’ve lived a long time,” Magnus said. “So many years, and no, it doesn’t feel like enough. I won’t lie and say it does. I want to live on—partly because of you, Alec. I have never wanted to live so much as I have these past few months, with you.”

“We’ll die together,” Alec said. “Let me stay at least, with you.”

“You have to go back. You have to go back to the world.”

“I don’t want the world. I want you,” Alec said.

The words he always had wanted to hear. The words he realized he had waited his whole life to hear were like a knife to his heart now. That he was to be ripped away from Alec now was the worst fate he could imagine.

“I have to save you, Alec,” Magnus said. “You and everyone you love; it’s a small price to pay, isn’t it, in the end, for all of that?”

“Not everyone I love,” Alec whispered, wrapping his arms around Magnus. Magnus couldn’t help but cling to Alec in return. His hands on Alec’s shoulder Magnus bend to kiss him. His fingers digging into Alec’s arms desperate to stay but knowing he couldn’t; he pulled away.

“All right,” Magnus said, turning to face his father. “All right, take me. I give you my life. I am—” But Magnus was interrupted.

“I am willing.” It was Simon. Magnus had forgotten Simon was even there. Actually Magnus hadn’t been aware Simon was here at all.

Magnus watched helplessly as Asmodeus thought it over. A vampire was boring but a daylighter he wanted.

“God, Simon, no,” Magnus said. This was what he had been afraid of. Someone else paying the price.

“I’m only seventeen,” Simon said. “If he takes my immortality, I’ll live out my life—I won’t die here.”

It was true Asmodeus could make Simon’s heart beat again. But it was too good a solution. Magnus knew his father wouldn’t be satisfied unless he inflicted pain on them.

Simon’s memories were the added price. Asmodeus didn’t want the memories of an infant or a
boring human child. He wanted the recent rich memories Simon had. His memories of all his friends. Memories of love.

Magnus watched helplessly as Simon agreed.

“You’re talking about who Simon is,” Clary cried. “You’re talking about taking him away from us forever.”

“Yes. Isn’t it delightful?” Asmodeus smiled.

Magnus had a moment of hope when his father learned of Simon’s family knowing he had become a vampire.

“I see.” Asmodeus looked displeased. “That does complicate things. Perhaps I should take Magnus’s immortality after all—”

“No,” Simon said with determination.

“Simon, shut up,” Magnus said desperately. “Take me instead, Father—”

“I want the Daylighter,” Asmodeus said. “Magnus, Magnus. You’ve never quite understood what it is to be a demon, have you?”

Simon’s mortal families memories would be altered. Their memories remained to leave their pain in tact. They couldn’t just tell Simon everything because of the Clave’s rules. They were stuck, and his father knew it.

“I shall rip a hole through the heart of your world, and when you feel it, you will think on me and remember me. Remember!” Asmodeus said, as he held Simon in his grasp.

Alec was holding Isabelle back. Simons was gazing at them all turn as if saying good-bye.

Simon gasped as his heart started beating again. Magnus heard Simon cry out in pain before he was enveloped in mist.

The ground came up fast under Magnus as he arrived in the Accords Hall. Alec, Izzy, Jace, and Clary with him. But no Simon.

Magnus held Alec’s hand and thought it was all that kept him going in that moment. What had he done?
For the next three days, Magnus was alone in quarantine.

No one had ever returned alive from a hell dimension before. The Silent Brothers had wanted to be entirely sure they weren’t carrying dark magic back with them.

Clary had screamed the whole time for Simon. Magnus could hear her through the wall.

As soon as Magnus had been let out, he glimpsed Alec being released from a room down the hall. Before Magnus could decide if now would be an appropriate time to approach Alec or not he was asked to attend the fairy trial.

The trial was tragic. Magnus had tried to tell them vengeance only lead to more war. Tried to explain that punishing an entire people for the acts of one leader and her followers would be a disaster. But the hurt was too fresh. The Nephilim couldn’t see the long-term horror they were creating. They didn’t think like faerie folk, like immortals. A proud old people such as them did not bow forever. And sending away a child for simply being born what she was! Alec had voted to not send Helen Blackthorn away, but he had not been in the majority, by far.

Magnus left the trial with a heavy heart. All that mattered now was talking to Alec. He had summoned his journal from home and felt its presence very acutely in his jacket pocket.

Magnus found Alec sitting alone on a rooftop. He knew that expression on Alec’s face for it mirrored his own.

“You couldn’t have done anything,” Magnus said. “Don’t punish yourself.”

Alec didn’t answer right away. He took a few deep breaths before saying, “How’d you get up here?”

Magnus sat down next to Alec on the roof and Alec turned to look at him. Magnus saw a yearning in Alec’s eyes as Alec looked Magnus over. It helped strengthen his resolve.

“You saved my life,” Magnus said.

“In Edom?”

“Not just in Edom,” Magnus said, bracing himself. He could do this. And he did. He explained how Alec had saved his life the moment Magnus had fallen in love with him. Alec had brought energy back into Magnus's life.

“Until you walked into that party,” Magnus said. “I was starting to think I’d never feel anything that strongly again.”

“What are you saying?” Alec said his voice wavering while he looked down at his hands. “That you want to get back together?”
“If you want to,” Magnus said, uncertainty in his voice. Alec looked at him surprised. Magnus couldn’t understand the shock on Alec’s face. Magnus waited. Hoping.

“I don’t know,” Alec said.

Magnus had feared this would happen, but he could still feel the hope in his chest die. “I can understand that you—I wasn’t very kind to you.”

“No,” Alec said bluntly. “You weren’t, but I guess it’s hard to break up with someone kindly. The thing is, I am sorry about what I did. I was wrong. Incredibly wrong. But the reason I did it, that isn’t going to change. I can’t go through my life feeling like I don’t know you at all. You keep saying the past is the past, but the past made you who you are. I want to know about your life. And if you’re not willing to tell me about it, then I shouldn’t be with you. Because I know me, and I won’t ever be okay with it. So I shouldn’t put us both through that again.”

Magnus pulled his knees up to his chest as if they could help hold him together. It hurt to hear Alec’s pain.

“I love you,” Magnus said, quietly. He wasn't sure what made him say it. Was he trying to excuse his behaviour? Explain it? Or was he speaking the words just because they were true?


“Alec,” Magnus paused finding the courage to give Alec the power. “You’re right.”

“It’s not fair to you,” Magnus said while Alec stared at him wide-eyed with shock. He told Alec how he had started to forget. How he was sure if he didn’t tell someone about his past it would fade away taking him with it.

Magnus could tell Alec didn’t know what to say. He plunged on.

“And I wrote this. I wrote down my life.” Magnus held up the notebook. The wind flipped the cover over. Magnus watched as Alec recognized his handwriting.

“Your whole life?” Alec said his eyes wider still.

“Not all of it,” Magnus said carefully. Mentioning some of the things he had written down.

“Will Herondale,” Alec said, taking the notebook from Magnus’s hand. “Were you. . . with him?”

Magnus shook his head, unable to stop the laugh that escaped him at the thought. What would Will have said to that!

“No Shadowhunters at all, in fact.”

“No Shadowhunters?”

“None in my heart like you are,” Magnus said. “I want to share my life with you, and that means today, and the future, and all of my past, if you want it. If you want me.”

Magnus had said it all now. He watched powerlessly as Alec looked down at the notebook. He knew if Alec had any sense he would say no. He would walk away from the emotional disaster Magnus represented. Magnus thought again about how badly he had treated Alec and marveled at Alec’s coming to rescue him from Edom in the first place. At Alec’s willingness to die with him in hell.
“All right,” Alec said, finally. Magnus whirled.

“Really?”

“Really,” Alec said. Magnus felt a warmth rise up his chest as he cupped his long fingers under Alec’s jaw and kissed him, slowly, gently. A promise of more later when they weren’t on a rooftop.

“So I’m your first ever Shadowhunter, huh?” Alec said when they broke the kiss.

“You’re my first so many things, Alec Lightwood,” Magnus said.

“I still don’t understand how that can be,” Alec said.

“You will,” Magnus said, a genuine smile on his face. Alec smiled back, holding the notebook to his chest just as he had held Magnus’s key all those months ago.

“I have to run the Institute for the next week while my mom stays here,” Alec said. “But I will come see you after.”

“It will be a very long week,” Magnus said, sweetly as he walked back the way he had come. “But worth the wait.”
Chapter Summary

This takes place just one week after City of Heavenly Fire and references most of Magnus's past as the chapter is about Magnus sharing his part with Alec. It has references to The Infernal Devices, the Magnus Bane Chronicles and Magnus Bane's Shadowhunter wikia page. So spoilers I guess but this whole story is such a huge spoiler I suggest you just read the books. ^_^

Alec had not had many opportunities to sit and read during the last week while running the Institute for his mother.

Right now he was in his room during one of those rare moments where he could read. Alec sat totally absorbed by the words. Magnus’s handwriting was beautiful, and Alec greedily read every word.

With every word Alec had questions answered while new questions formed and old ones came back to the surface. Alec did, however, have a small measure of what Magnus had meant when he said: ‘You are my first so many things.’

Those words had run through Alec’s head for days. How could he be his first anything when Magnus was hundreds of years old.

Reading Magnus's journal, Alec felt a new kind of closeness with the warlock. That feeling of being held at arm’s length was fading away.

Magnus’s last love before Alec had been a woman named Etta. They had met at a club and been happy together for fifteen years or so before Etta wanted children and someone to grow old with. She had left him.

Magnus had a summer romance with a boy in Peru. Alec was surprised to learn that Magnus wasn’t good at something: music. The boy’s name had been Imasu, and he had broken up with Magnus for not being a permanent person. Alec smiled, that was rather ironic.

Then there was Camille, who had taken Magnus for granted, used him, and finally broken Magnus’s heart into pieces. And even after that Magnus had helped her when she had no one else to turn to.

Alec realized how few people Magnus had loved, who had loved Magnus enough to stay with him for their whole lives. He could see now Magnus’s point of view of their break up. He could see the pain he had caused Magnus more clearly and knew Magnus had just been trying to protect his heart from another love that would betray him.

Magnus hadn’t known the way Alec loved him. Alec saw clearly Magnus’s face when he found him in Edom. Alec remembered the first words Magnus had said upon seeing the fear in Alec’s eyes: ‘You’ve been so sad. I didn’t know.’ Magnus hadn’t known how much Alec cared. How fiercely Alec loved him. Alec’s emotions were always so plain on his face that this hadn’t occurred to him.

Ragnar Fell was the only warlock Magnus had known well that was older than him. Reading about
Ragnor made Alec realize how little Magnus showed of himself to anyone and how much it meant that Magnus was sharing this with Alec. By looking at Magnus, you couldn’t tell how much he was hurting. Ragnor had died, and Magnus had never acted like he had lost a friend. A friend he had known for centuries. Alec couldn’t imagine knowing someone for that long let alone what it was like to lose someone you had known for that long.

Alec read about Raphael Santiago and understood why Magnus had, even in his weakened state, wanted Alec to name his blade Raphael. Again Alec was surprised how well the two immortals had known each other. They had been roommates. Magnus had taught the vampire how to fake normal for his mortal family.

Alec closed the book and stuffed it into his jacket pocket. His mother was due back any minute, and he couldn’t wait to see Magnus. Not only did me miss Magnus terribly—not just the warlock’s touch but his presence and that familiar sense of home—but Alec also had lots of questions he couldn’t wait to get answers too. New questions and old questions raced themselves around his mind.

Alec had also made a decision but as usual, he wasn’t sure how to go about actually doing it. Was it wrong to ask to move into someone else’s apartment? Did the person with the apartment have to do the asking? Alec didn’t know, and frankly he didn’t care. What did it matter what one was supposed to do? This was Magnus and him; he would just ask.

Alec heard the door and ran downstairs.

“Mom!” Alec said. “You’re back.”

“Hi Alec,” Maryse said. “How has the week been?”

Since he and his sister had returned from a hell dimension alive and unharmed, his parents had been too grateful to be mad at them for anything.

Alec gave her a quick rundown of the week and any relevant information she would need to know going forward.

“Sounds like you have done a great job running things Alec,” Maryse said, smiling. “Thank you.”

“I’m off then,” Alec said making for the door. He didn’t catch the look on his mother’s face, but he heard the fear in her voice.

“Are you coming back?”

Alec turned. He could see it now. His mother wasn’t sure if she would ever see him again.

“Oh course, mom,” Alec said. “I’ll be around. I have to help Jace, Izzy, and Clary when they go on missions.” He paused not sure how to tell her. “But mom. If Magnus agrees, I am planning on moving out.”

Maryse’s face fell.

“I can’t stop you, I know,” she said. “But Alec I will miss you.”

“I’ll still be over here all the time,” Alec said. “Don’t worry mom.” And with a smile he turned away from his mother and skipped down the street to Magnus’s loft, whistling.
It had been a long week waiting for Alec to come over. A long week of fretting about how Alec would react to the words Magnus had written down in that notebook. He had been running through everything he had written down in his head over and over. Picturing Alec reading them. Trying to figure out how Alec would react. Why had he included that time he had spent a summer on a crime spree! What would good rule abiding Alec think of that! There were so many things in his past that Alec might not take well. It was as if his thoughts were in a permanent state of broken record.

It wasn’t until Alec finally arrived at his door and Magnus stared into those blue eyes that his mind relaxed. He could see no disgust in them. No shame or hurt either. Alec was beaming at him, joyfully.

“Hi,” Alec said. Magnus pulled Alec thru the door, quickly closing it with a snap of his fingers, and kissed the shadowhunter desperately. Oh, it had been a long week. A long month!

Alec responded in kind running his hands up under Magnus’s shirt. Kissing along Magnus’s neck. Magnus moaned.


Magnus wasn’t sure how long he stood there kissing Alec. Long enough for both of them to be breathless, their hair ruined and their clothes crumpled.

Magnus noticed as he pulled away to catch his breath that the spiral notebook was in Alec's jacket pocket.

“I haven’t had that much time to read,” Alec said, noticing Magnus’s gaze. “I haven’t quite finished it yet. Do you mind if I read it here?” Magnus slowly ran his fingers down Alec’s face, his neck and rested his hands on Alec’s waist. He was trying to keep the worry off his face. Maybe there was still something in that book Alec hadn’t yet read that would bring the expression Magnus so feared on the shadowhunter’s face.

"Would you like something to drink while you read?" Magnus whispered, leaning in closer, kissing Alec’s neck. He moved his hands slowly into Alec’s shirt running his fingertips lightly over the shadowhunter’s scarred skin. Magnus felt Alec shiver.

“How do you do that?” Alec whispered, breathlessly.

“Do what, love?” Magnus whispered against the skin of Alec’s neck.

“Make me melt.”

“Oh that,” Mangus said a giggle in the tone of his voice. He pulled his face back grinning to look at Alec. “I could ask you the same thing. How do you burst through all my walls and cut straight to the truth?”

Alec just stared at him. Words were not Alec’s strong suit. He had been totally unaware.

“You have always been able to cut through my facade,” Magnus said, answering the unspoken question in Alec’s blue eyes. “With your straightforward honesty.”

How could he with his clumsy words hope to cut through Magnus’s carefully conspired sentences. But here Magnus was telling him he had always done so.

Alec pulled Magnus in and kissed him with everything he had. Kissed him with the passion of missing him this last month. Had it really only been a month? It felt like an eternity. Alec soaked
Magnus in. His hands running over every inch of the warlock. Memorizing him.

“Alexander,” Magnus said, breathlessly. He had pulled back gasping.

Alec smiled, also out of breath. Before Magnus, only his parents had ever called him Alexander, and it had bothered him at first when Magnus used it. Like Magnus was trying to parent him or something. It had made him more aware of their age gap.

But now he realized it was different when Magnus said it. Magnus speaking his full name was like a caress. A loving embrace and a promise.

“You are literally taking my breath away,” Magnus said. Alec laughed. He felt lighter than air. Being back here. Back home. Alec walked over to the sofa opening the spiral notebook to where he had stopped reading before coming over.

Magnus went to the kitchen to make Alec coffee all the while watching Alec read. He couldn’t help but worry when he saw an emotion cross Alec’s face.

Alec’s eyes widened ever so slightly, and Magnus wondered what had surprised him. Alec smiled, and Magnus racked his brains for what he had written that could have made Alec smile. Alec lifted an eyebrow or scratched his nose or blinked and Magnus’s mind whirled.

“Stop it.”

Magnus jumped spilling coffee all over the counter. Alec was looking up at him with a huge grin on his face.

“I can't read with you hovering.”

“Well,” Magnus said. “I can't help but hover.”

Alec laughed. “Why?”

Magnus just mumbled incoherently. He walked over to Alec, not even bothering to clean up the mess he had made, and collapsed onto the sofa next to Alec.

“You are the one who decided to share remember?”

“I know,” Magnus said. “Cause I love you more than I want to keep my secrets but…” he paused. “It still makes me jumpy.”

“Why?” Alec said in a teasing voice his eyes back on the book. ”You worried I'll read something so horrible I'll up and leave you.” There was a laugh in his voice as if he thought what he had said was utterly and completely ridiculous, but Magnus didn’t think so.

And Alec would have missed the importance of his statement if he hadn’t looked up at that moment while turning the page.

“By the Angel, Magnus!” Alec said, dropping the book. Magnus put his face in this hands. Alec stretched out his arms to hold the warlock’s shoulders trying to comfort him.

“I followed you into hell,” Alec said, desperate to remove the pain from his lover’s face. “Remember. And we weren't even dating. I met your father.” Alec gently lifted Magnus's head up to meet his gaze. “There’s nothing I could ever learn about you that would change how I feel about you or what I want our life to be like.”
“Maybe you just don’t have a very active imagination,” Magnus said, refusing to be comforted. Alec sighed.

“You know for someone with so much life experience you are kinda stupid.” He grinned.

“For someone so young you are rather wise,” Magnus said lifting his head from his hands. “But what if you learned—”

“It won’t matter,” Alec interrupted. “I may have only recently learned anything about your past, but I have known your heart for some time now. And it is a good one.”

“Thank you,” Magnus said soft as a prayer. That Alec still believed this after meeting Magnus’s father was a marvel to him.

“Is that why you never told anyone else everything?” Alec asked.

“Partly,” Magnus said.

“What was the other part?”

“After so many years alone, after so many loves leave you bleeding, you stop give away your heart for fear it will break,” Magnus said as if every word was a struggle to say. “But you stole my heart so fast, Alexander. There was nothing I could have done to stop myself from falling.”

“What do you mean?” Alec asked softly.

“It scared me how fast it mattered what you said and what you wanted,” Magnus said. “How quickly I cared more for you than for myself. Even before I gave you that notebook. You had so much of me. Had so much power over me. Maybe that’s why I’m jumpy.”

“It kinda scared me a little too at the time,” Alec said. “But romantic love of any kind was so new to me I didn’t really know what to make of it.”

“You were just scared someone would find out,” Magnus said. “It was, after all, the first thing you tried once Clary put that fearless rune on you.”

Alec laughed. “I remember that. You stopped me.” His laugh faded, and a curious look replaced it. “I never asked you. Why did you do it anyway? I know you wanted me to tell my parents so...”

“It’s it obvious?” When Alec continued to look nonplussed, Magnus added. “Letting you tell your parents then would have been selfish. It wasn’t what you wanted. I knew once the rune was gone you would have regretted it.”

“I have never regretting outing us, Magnus.”

Magnus looked into Alec's eyes and couldn't resist pulling Alec closer to him on the sofa. Couldn't resist winding his hands into Alec's hair and kissing him. Alec's hands bunched Magnus's shirt as his strong arms reeled Magnus in closer.

Magnus was lost in sensations when his foot made contact with something. It was the book on the floor where Alec had dropped it. Magnus’s smile broke the kiss. He remembered that kissing Alec was now part of his life again. No need to rush things.

“So do you want me to read the rest of the notebook somewhere else?” Alec asked, picking it up off the floor.
“No,” Magnus said. “I am just being silly. Of course, I want you to stay.”

“For how long?” Alec asked. There was a strange note in Alec's tone that Magnus could not identify.

“As long as you like,” Magnus said, uncertainly. This was always his answer. What was Alec getting at?

“How about forever?”

“That is a relative term,” Magnus said.

“Magnus,” Alec said dropping all attempt at subtly. He had never been any good at it anyway. “Can I move in?”

“Oh, that’s what you are getting at!” Magnus laughed. “My couch is your couch.”

“You are going to make me sleep on the couch!” Alec said in mock horror.

Alec wasn’t doing that good a job at pretending to be upset, but that was one of the things Magnus loved about his shadowhunter. He was honest to a fault.

Alec blushed beautifully, and Magnus decided a little rushing never hurt. He pulled Alec in by his jacket and kissed him. Magnus heard a soft thud as the book in Alec's hand fell back to the floor.

Magnus lay back on the couch pulling Alec on top of him as he did so. Alec followed eagerly attacking Magnus's neck with kisses. Magnus got Alec out of his jacket; Alec's hands moving under the warlock’s shirt pulling it up over his head. Magnus, eager to get his boyfriend's torso equally as bare, quickly pulled Alec's shirt off before Alec started kissing his chest. Magnus felt Alec's hands run over his smooth stomach, not even slightly reacting to Magnus's lack of a belly button. Magnus felt the bare skin of his chest against Alec's and moved his hands to get at Alec's belt.

The notebook lay forgotten on the floor under their scattered clothes.

Alec was awake now, but that didn’t mean he wanted to move either. Moving meant bursting the happy bubble that came from being here in Magnus's apartment again. The warm glow in his chest from making love to Magnus's again. From falling asleep next to Magnus. Alec always slept better with the warlock’s even breathing there beside him. Alec realized then he couldn’t hear the Magnus breathing next to him. He opened his eyes and saw Magnus standing by the bed wearing one of his glittering robe that was just a little too short. Alec’s eyes lingered for a moment.

“You’re up early,” Alec said once his eyes had found their way back to Magnus’s face.

“I haven’t slept so well in weeks,” Magnus said, a huge grin on his face from watching Alec’s eyes move over his rather exposed body.

“Me neither,” Alec said, smiling.

“Not even at the Institute?” Magnus asked. Alec shrugged. “But it’s still your home.” Magnus continued, his words coming out rather shakily. “I don’t want to take you away from your home or… I mean you don’t have to move in just because I want you to.”

Alec could tell Magnus meant what he said, but he knew the warlock well enough now to know Magnus was also nervous that Alec was going to listen to him.
“I asked you remember,” Alec said. “Besides, you are my home.” Magnus’s breath caught in his throat. The boy has done it again, Magnus thought. A simple truth spoken in so few words had cut through everything else.

“My silly Magnus,” Alec smiled. “Did you think I only said all those things down in Edon because we were all about to die?”

“Well, I…” Magnus started. He sat down on the bed as if he needed the support.

“Sure the whole about to die thing made them easier to say I will admit but not any less true.”

“You really want me over the world,” Magnus said in a small voice. He had believed the words at the time. He had had no choice but to believe when he saw the sincerity in Alec’s eyes but now that the danger had passed. Now that they weren’t about to die Magnus had doubted.

Alec nodded “But your Nephilim,” Magnus continued, “You exist to protect the world. You exist for the world.”

“What can I say,” Alec said. “I am a selfish creature.” He leaned in and kissed Magnus sweetly.

“And you really want to live here with me,” Magnus said. It felt like a dream to him. He had always wanted Alec here. Had given Alec a key and bought a coffee maker. He had been so thrilled every time Alec had just walked into his loft as if it was his own.

“I really do,” Alec said. “Why else would I have asked?”

“Didn’t you want to run the Institute someday?” Magnus asked. Alec got up, put his jeans from yesterday over the boxers he had slept in, stretched and went over to the coffee machine.

“Nah,” Alec said, as he started cleaning up Magnus’s mess from last night. “I would rather let Jace run it. I’ll just visit.” Magnus came up behind Alec and wrapped his arms around him. Kissing his neck.

“What was that for?” Alec asked, holding a coffee-stained rage but to distracted to notice it was dripping coffee on the floor.

“For being perfect.”

“I think you are a little bias,” Alec said.

“Maybe just a little,” Magnus said. “Here let me help.” He snapped his fingers, and the coffee mess was gone. The rag was clean and dry in Alec’s hand.

Alec put the rag down on the counter and turned to the coffee maker. Alec stood facing it for a long time before he spoke again.

“Is it horrible,” Alec asked, looking down at the now brewing coffee pot rather than at Magnus. “To feel glad, Simon took your place? Jace is sullen. Clary’s worse, and Izzy’s a wreck. I feel so guilty being happy when everyone else is miserable.”

“It’s not horrible,” Magnus said. “It’s human.” Alec turned to face him, all his shame plain on his face. “If it had been me instead you would be miserable and they wouldn’t. It isn’t your fault, how you feel.”

“I never even noticed Simon,” Alec said, a plea in his voice. “But he was always there. He got the
sword that saved Jace. He saved Isabelle too. In Edom. She was dying, and I was helpless. Then he
saved you and now he’s gone. I owe him so much, but he isn’t even the same person. There is
nothing I can ever do that could come close to repaying him.”

“I know how you feel,” Mangus said. “If there was anything I could do to help bring our Simon
back I would.”

“There isn’t a spell you can think of that would bring his memories back,” Alec asked. “Nothing in
the book of the white even?”

“I could restore some of his memories, I think,” Magnus said. “But it would be cruel. He would only
have parts of himself mixed with the fake memories. I can’t image how confusing that would be. At
least he is happy not knowing. Happy and human.”

“I suppose you’re right,” Alec said.

“On to brighter topics, I think,” Magnus said. “You never did get a chance to read last night if I
recall.”

“You are rather distracting,” Alec teased.

“How much more do you have to read?” Magnus asked.

“Not much,” Alec said. The notebook. He had forgotten it. Forgotten all the questions he had
intended on asking. The sudden joy of being with Magnus again had temporarily driven from his
mind.

“Well then I will bring you your coffee as soon as it’s ready,” Magnus said. “So you can read. I
promise not to hover, this time, love.”

“Umm,” Alec said.

“Yes?” Magnus inquired.

“I have some questions.”

“I thought you would have questions,” Magnus said. “My journal not detailed enough for you huh?”

“I just wanted to know. I mean...” Alec paused then tried again. “The journal makes it seem like
Camille was really cruel to you so why did you...”

“Why did I date her in the first place?” Magnus asked.

“Yes,” Alec said. “But also, why did she know so much about you? Stuff you never told me. You
told me you don’t usually give up information so I wondered...”

“Why she had so much?” Alec nodded. Magnus took a deep breath before answering. Alec tried
very hard not to think about the swell of Magnus’s shoulders while he did so. “I didn’t realize how
manipulative she was. I thought I was choosing to trust her but looking back on it now I believe she
wanted power over me. I didn’t realize she thought of me as nothing more than useful. She was less
like that in the beginning. I am still not sure if she changed or if it was an act. And maybe I had too
much hope.” Magnus paused as if trying to find the words. “Hope that if I could make this love work
it could last forever. It was foolish. I was foolish.”

Alec could see the shame and regret on his boyfriend’s face, the discomfort from speaking on this
topic at all and a sense of sadness. But Magnus had agreed to share. Alec plunged on.

“And did you actually sell a house to buy that necklace for Camille?”

Magnus laughed slightly as he answered. “I don’t like having too much money you see,” he said. “It makes life boring. At the time, I had too much of it, and I was done with the house anyway. Besides it was worth it. Izzy looks great in that necklace. She reminds me of Anna wearing it.”

Alec blinked at him. “Wait that’s the same necklace?” Who’s Anna?”

“Oh, Anna was a good time. One of my favorite Lightwoods present company excluded of course,” Magnus said. “She had green eyes like most Lightwoods, smoked cigars and laughed easily. Always dressed like a boy if I remember correctly. Had a few girlfriends too. It’s a shame she was born into such an unforgiving century. I think she would have enjoyed the Gay Pride Parade.” He smiled his eyes glazing over.

“Is the past what you are always thinking about when you get that look on your face?”

“What look?” Magnus said snapping back into the present.

“Like you are far away,” Alec said. “Unreachable.”

“Sometimes I do get lost in my memories,” Magnus said. “It’s quite a lot to sift through.”

“That look used to make me so frustrated,” Alec said. “Like you were slipping away from me.”

“Is that why you wanted to know my past so much, love,” Magnus asked.

“That was part of it,” Alec said.

Magnus took a deep breath and let it out slowly before he continued. “Alexander, I was never slipping away. I felt you start to slip away from me. Now I know it was while you were seeing Camille.”

“She made me second guess why you were with me,” Alec said. “She said mystery was exciting, but I am an open book.”

“One of the first things about you that attracted me was that you are an open book,” Magnus said. “You are without guile. Even when we first met, you were kind to me. Telling me, it wasn’t my fault what happened to my parents.”

“I haven’t gotten that far yet,” Alec said. “Did you write about your parents in the book?”

“I did,” Magnus said. “But you know all of that already. I told you most of it the first day I met you, to my great surprise at the time.”

Alec nodded. He remembered that day. He had just met Magnus, but the way he had spoken had reminded Alec too much of his being gay and unable to not be. You can’t help what you are born. He had known that only too well and couldn’t stop himself from comforting a kindred spirit.

“You missed one of my questions,” Alec said, suddenly as if the words came out as the thought formed in his mind.

“Oh the necklace,” Magnus said. “Yes, it’s the same one. And please don’t tell your parents that their cherished Lightwood heirloom was a gift from a warlock to a vampire a century and a half ago. It might unnerve them even more than that same warlock dating their son.” He winked at Alec
suggestively. They were still standing in the kitchen. The coffee forgotten.

“How did it end up being a Lightwood Family Heirloom then?” Alec asked confused. “Why doesn’t Camille still have it?”

“When I broke up with her, she returned the necklace, and I gave it to Will to help during a battle. His sister must have taken it from him. And she married a Lightwood so…”


“That isn’t a question,” Magnus said, but Alec didn’t reply. His blue eyes were fixed on Magnus now, waiting.

“I only did it to make Camille jealous,” Magnus said. “She had cheated on me, and I was mad.”

“You said I was your first shadowhunter.”

“You are,” Magnus said. “As I mentioned in the journal I convinced Will he had hallucinated the whole thing. Besides Will was straight and in love with Tessa.”

Magnus tried to shrug and move on but he could tell from the look on Alec’s face that wasn’t an option. Magnus’s tired again.

“I took pity on Will,” Magnus said. “He came to me desperate for help and I assisted him. I hadn’t been able to do anything to help Will’s father years before but Will was within my power to aid so I did. Then after I had saved him the first time I felt responsible for him. I wanted to see him happy with Tessa. I felt if he wasn’t happy I had failed somehow. There was nothing romantic about the relationship. Not like us. From the beginning we were romantic, Alec. No matter what you were thinking on our first date, pity was in no way a part of it for me. I didn’t help you fight Valentine out of a sense of responsibility. I did it because I loved you. I did it because I couldn’t bare the fear that you might die fighting if I wasn’t there.”

Magnus knew now that he had said the right thing. Alec’s face relax into a smiled.

“So if Will’s sister married a Lightwood,” Alec said, brightly. “Am I related to him at all?”

“Distantly,” Magnus said. “This was a hundred and thirty years ago remember? That’s a lot of generations of shadowhunters.” Magnus paused his eyes glossy again as he tried to recall. “You might be named after one of his nephews though. Now that I think about it. But I lost track of the details long ago. Not that I really paid close attention to Nephilim family trees. Will was the first time I got mixed up with Shadowhunters. Once the generation I considered friends all grow old and died I kept my distance from shadowhunters. That is until Jocelyn showed up at my door with biscuit.”

“Why do you call Clary that?” Alec asked.

“In full honesty,” Magnus said, “I can’t remember.” He smiled but it didn’t quite reach his eyes.

“When I ask you questions,” Alec said, moving his hand to hold the warlock’s smooth face. “Please tell me what that look on your face means?”

“I am so used to dancing around questions,” Magnus said. “Every time you ask now I have to focus on remembering the actual answer rather than how to avoid answering.”

“They do start to fade away don’t they,” Alec said. “Like you said.”
Magnus nodded. “I forgot her name you know.”

“Whose name?”

“My first love,” Magnus said. “After our first fight about Camille. While I was pointlessly looking for her I remember thinking about them all. I remember thinking of all the people I had loved. Why was the immortal one the one I never wanted to see again. Of course the rest are gone now, long ago turned to ash. It didn’t seem fair. I let them flood my mind like I don’t usually do but I couldn’t remember her name. It terrified me.”

“You wrote her name in the notebook,” Alec said, not sure how to comfort such ancient pain.

“When I was writing the book,” Magnus said. “Writing it, knowing you might read it, her name came back to me, and I knew I had made the right decision. Knew I needed to tell you everything, not just for you, but for me. But it’s hard. Being so exposed. Hard when I reach for the memories, and they aren’t here.”

“I’m sorry,” Alec said. He didn’t know what else to say.

“It’s alright, love,” Magnus said. “Do you have any more questions?” Alec nodded. “Ask away.”

“So I’m related to Will at least a little but Jace is too right?” Alec said. “I mean Jace is a Herondale like Will.”

“Yes. Will was Jace’s great great great grandfather I believe. Jace is a lot like Will in fact.” Magnus said. “Both headstrong ruled solely by their heart but a fighter at the core. I don’t know why I didn’t see it before. It had just been so long, and his surname was Wayland at first and then Morgenstern so I didn’t realize.” Magnus paused, taking a breath as if readying himself for a confession. “Thought to be fair I may have noticed if I had been paying even the slightest attention to Jace. I used to call him stupid blonde in my head.” Magnus laughed, humorlessly.


“Because I was jealous of him,” Magnus said, some reluctance in his voice. Sharing was hard. “You thought you were in love with him remember?”

Alec blushed. He was again amazed at how Magnus could totally overlook Jace and focus solely on him. It had been that and Magnus’s coming to heal him that had given Alec the courage to arrive at Magnus’s door and ask the warlock out in the first place. Nevertheless it still made Alec’s heart sing to hear. He continued his questions as he had not the words to express his thoughts.


“I hadn’t thought of Will for decades when I met you,” Magnus said. “Maybe later I remembered Will also had black hair and blue eyes. But that was much later. And I never compared the two of you just because you look similar.” Alec nodded.

“Woosley Scott,” Alec said. “You had a relationship with him?”

“No,” Magnus said. “I mentioned him in my journal but we were never emotional. I was still hung up over Camille then.”

“But you slept with him?”
“Not in the way you are thinking,” Magnus said with a sigh.

“How can you have been with so many people you can’t count them?” Alec asked. He was getting dangerously close to the last question he had. The question he didn’t know how to ask but desperately wanted to.

“I have always been loyal to the one I am with,” Magnus said. “But when you go decades or half centuries between romantic relationships…” Magnus paused trying to find the best way to describe meaningless sex to someone who had only ever been with someone they loved. “Sometimes the loneliness is too much, and you try to ease it as best you can.”

“And did it work?” Alec asked. Magnus studied his face. Magnus wanted to make sure he wasn’t alarming Alec; he found only honest curiosity and concern in shadowhunter’s expression.

“No,” Magnus said. “There is no replacement for loving someone and being loved in return.”

“Does that mean,” Alec started then tried again. This was the question he didn’t know how to phrase. His words were scattered. He was suddenly very aware that Magnus was only wearing a robe and he wasn’t wearing a shirt. “I wondered. I mean… the first time we were together in France for me it was… but for you, it must of seemed... ordinary.”

Magnus’s next breath froze in his chest as he realized this wasn’t a recent question. Alec must of had this one stashed away since their trip to France or possibly been worrying about it before. Magnus remembered the way Alec had been so determined to return to the hotel early. Magnus hadn’t once thought that Alec could be thinking anything like this. Hadn’t once imaged Alec could have come to such a conclusion. No wonder Alec had been so upset when he had found out how many people Magnus had been with.

Magnus placed his hands on either side of Alec’s face. Locking eyes with the shadowhunter. Magnus felt horrible. It hurt somehow to know Alec had thought their time together had meant less to him.

“Nothing about that day was ordinary for me, Alexander;” Magnus said, willing the works to sink in.

“Really!” Alec said his blue eyes sparking. Magnus saw real relief in Alec’s face and the tension in his chest relaxed.

“Of course,” Magnus said. “Everything is new with you. The opposite of ordinary.” Magnus leaned in and kissed Alec, his hands on the back of Alec’s neck pressing him close, before moving down the bare skin of Alec’s back.

“Thanks,” Alec said when they broke apart. “For answering. It’s nice to have those worries off my mind.”

“I wish you had not had those worries at all,” Magnus said. “If you had just told me before...”

“I am not good at talking about this stuff,” Alec said. “Sharing is hard. You’re right. But I feel I know you better now. Like the centuries that separate us are smaller somehow.”

“Alexander,” Magnus said, sweetly. “Centuries don’t matter.”

“They do,” Alec insisted. “The past makes us who we are.”

“Yes,” Magnus said. “But that wasn’t what I meant. The centuries you see as separating us are quite the opposite. We are here together now because of them. If I had not been born immortal I would
have died long before you were born. We would never have met. The long road of my life has lead me here to you. It doesn’t separate us, love, it brought us together.”

Alec was lost for words. Everything he had wanted to know for so long. Everything he had needed clarification on and more Magnus had given him.

“I love you,” Alec said. It was all he could think of to say. Simply, honest and blunt.

“Oh my love,” Magnus said, his voice rich with feeling. “I don’t deserve you.” He pulled Alec close and kissed him before Alec could say another word.

Magnus kissed Alec until he couldn’t remember what he had been talking about before. Magnus kissed Alec until he wasn’t sure where he was or how he had gotten there. He kissed Alec until he lost his sense of reality.

Alec kissed him back in all the right ways. Their kiss wasn’t heated like it had been before. It was sweet and romantic. Magnus thought Alec was just as lost as he was until Alec whispered in his ear.

“You deserve every happiness, my Magnus,” Alec said. Magnus gasped. His breathing forgotten entirely he wrapped his arms around Alec, not to kiss him, just to hold him tight.

“Oh Alexander,” Magnus breathed. His arms were wrapped around his love where they stood in their kitchen. “Never think you are ordinary to me. You are extraordinary. In my life usually, I am the one who cares too much. Usually I get hurt because the person I love values something else or someone else over me. But you… you…” For once the warlock was lost for words.

“Me what?” Alec whispered.

“You chose me first,” Magnus murmured. “You are the love of my very long life. I have said it before but I will say it again. There won’t ever be a next time. You are it for me, my love.”

Alec was once again lost for words. He moved with lightning speed kissing Magnus with everything he had. Pushing the warlock against the kitchen counter. The romantic mood vanished instantly with Alec’s passionate movements.

Alec could feel his own heart pounding in his chest, his hands exploring every inch of the beautiful man in his arms as his mind digested the words Magnus had given him. As his hands moved over Magnus’s chest Alec could feel the warlock’s pulse, just as fast as his own. And Alec didn’t care about anything else in that moment except Magnus. He made a low desperate sound in his throat. He could feel Magnus’s desire coming up to meet his own. Could hear the moans coming deep from Magnus’s chest. Alec knew now this meant just as much to Magnus as it did to him; somehow that made it sweeter.

Alec’s grin broke their kiss, and he quickly switched focus. His hands moving down to undoing Magnus’s robe.

“Again, my love,” Magnus said. His voice soft loving while full of desire.

“I have missed you,” Alec breathed into Magnus’s neck as his hands moved down the warlock, under the now open robe. Magnus couldn’t answer; his breathing was too erratic. His hands moving down to unzip Alec’s jeans.
Impromptu Guests

Chapter Summary

This takes place just the next morning after the end of the previous chapter sharing and in some ways is a continuation of that chapter. It features Tessa Grey and Jem Carstairs and also has many spoiler from The Infernal Devices.

Magnus could smell coffee in the air. He breathed in deeply rolling onto his back in bed. It was probably too early for him to really be awake. Last night had been rather magnificent and Magnus was feeling zen from the experience. Alec’s warm body next to to him in bed. Alec here in his apartment this morning. Alec moving in. If Magnus didn’t know better he would have thought it all a beautiful dream. A dream he never wanted to awake from. However if he got up he would get to kiss Alec good morning. Magnus finally opening his eyes saw the light from behind the curtains. Magnus pulled himself out of bed and went into the kitchen.

“Do you have any food here?” Alec asked opening cupboards as he did so.

“Hmmm,” Magnus said sleepily.

“Magnus,” Alec said. “There is nothing for breakfast.”

“What would you like, love?” Magnus asked with a yawn holding up his hands as if about to magic breakfast from the nearest cafe.

“Do you steal all your meals?” Alec asked. “How long has it been since you bought groceries.” Magnus blinked at him. Alec shook his head. “Unbelievable.”

“Come back to bed,” Magnus said wrapping his arms around Alec. “We can worry about that later.”

“Nope,” Alec said. “We are worrying about it now. Besides I have to go pack.” He grinned. Magnus let his arms fall. Lot’s like he wasn’t going to get a kiss after all. Why had he gotten out of bed again?

“I know that look,” he said. “If you must, you must. I however am going back to sleep. It is too early to be awake.”

Alec chuckled. “Are you sure you want to live with such an early bird? Last chance to change your mind.” Magnus could tell Alec had already been awake quite a while since the shadowhunter appear to have already showered and dressed for the day. Though Magnus noticed he was wearing the same clothes. Maybe Alec did need to pack.

“I have never been so sure about anything,” Magnus said.

“Good,” Alec said and kissed him lightly on the cheek before swiftly turning to leave. Magnus heard the door close behind Alec and walked slowly back to this bedroom. The sun wasn’t quite up yet and his bed was calling him. Magnus drifted off to sleep almost as soon as he laid down. His mind full of pleasant dreams he couldn’t quite remember but they had a central theme of warmth and happiness and Alec. The loving bliss of his dreams was interrupted by the intercom. Alec may not have a key anymore but surely he wouldn’t think he need to ring the bell?
With a great sigh Magnus got up and snapping his fingers to change his clothes he went to answer the door. Magnus considered himself a good host and wouldn’t answer the door in boxes. Though he had been known to greet people at the door in almost any other attire. A kimono for instance.

“Oh Magnus!” And his vision was obscured with long brown hair. This was definitely not Alec.

“Tessa?” Magnus asked as he extracted his face from the brown curls to see how was hugging him.

“Who else would it be!” She was beaming like the very sun shone from her skin.

“You look good,” Magnus said. “I mean you look really good. What happ--” He stopped, seeing for the first time the person standing behind Tessa.

“Jem?”

“Hello, Magnus,” Jem said.

“But,” Magnus said, stunned. “You’re not-- What have I missed?”

“A great deal,” Jem said as he and Tessa walked into the apartment.

“Oh sorry,” Magnus said. “Come in please!”

“I heard you were missing when I awoke,” Jem said. “I am glad you are alright.”


“It was that Jace Herondale's heavenly fire,” Jem said.

“Isn’t it wonderful!” Tessa said, still beaming. “If only Will was here.”

Magnus was distracted from inquiring further about how Jem had encountered the heavenly fire previously inhabiting Jace by Tessa’s words. Magnus had never quite understood these three. He could tell Tess was being entirely genuine with her words and from the look on Jem’s face it was evident he agreed wholeheartedly with her. Yet it would seem only natural for their to be great jealousy within this group since both men had fallen in love with the same women and all. Then again Jem and Will had been so close as to almost be the same person. Maybe it made sense they fell in love with the same women.

“Would you like something to drink?” Magnus asked pulling his mind back to the present and remembering he was the host.

“We want you to come to our wedding,” Tessa said eagerly ignoring his question.

“It is good too see you so happy!” Magnus said, with animation. It was truly amazing. He had not seen her so happy in a long long time. Not since Will was alive.

“Oh and how about you,” Tessa said. “There was that shadowhunter boy last I saw you.”

“Alec,” Magnus said, fondly.

“He was staring at you when I saw you in Alicante,” Tessa said. “With possessiveness.”

“Magnus Bane,” Jem said. “Dating a shadowhunter.”

“Life is full of surprises,” Magnus said. “Alec is Jace’s Parabatai.”
“Speaking of Jace,” Tessa said. “When would be a good time for me to overwhelm him with a hundred and thirty years of stories about the Herondales?”

“Maybe later,” Magnus said. “He did just get back from a hell dimension.”

“So did you,” Jem said.

“Yes but my family tree is far less confusing,” Magnus joked. The subject of his fallen angel of a father somehow seemed less painful to him recently. Now that Alec knew and didn’t care. Now that Alec saw him as good no matter who had sired him.

Just then the door swung open and Alec came in. Holding many bulging bags and a backpack on his shoulders.

“Ah hi,” he said, frozen in his doorway looking at the two strangers in his living room.

“Speaking of Alec,” Magnus said.

“Ah yes I recognize him,” Tessa said.

“Ah,” Alec said. “Sorry have we met?”

“I think you saw me talking to Magnus back in Alicante after the Mortal War.”

“Oh,” Alec said, with some relief. “So we haven’t actually met then.”

“Oh come in Alexander,” Magnus said, moving forward to take a few bags from Alec’s hand. “And let’s put those silly groceries away. And then these impromptu guests of mine can introduce themselves properly.”

“You know,” Tessa said. “You have the same eyes as Will. And your hair too is almost the exact same shade of black.” Jem seemed to be nodding his agreement behind her. Magnus suspected he wasn’t quite used to speaking aloud yet after over a hundred years speaking only in thoughts.

“You must of known Magnus a long time then,” Alec said. “If you know what Will looks like.” Magnus was surprised; Alec hadn’t blushed or yelled at being so compared. He would have expected a much more animated reaction out of Alec than this.

“Yes quite,” Tessa said. “I am Tessa Grey. I was Will’s wife once upon a time. And if I understand Magnus correctly your parabatai Jace is my descendant.”

“Alec Lightwood,” Alec said, holding his hand out now that all the grocery bags were on the counter. “Nice to meet you.”

Jem gave a little chuckle and turned to Magnus. “All Lightwoods look the same to you huh?”

“Well they did all look the same a hundred and thirty years ago,” Magnus said, defensively. “It’s not my fault Will’s silly sister married into the family and gave them blue eyes. How am I supposed to know how my casual remarks will come back to haunt me centuries later?”

Tessa’s light laughter was like a gentle bell.

“It's nice to see you so happy as well my old friend,” Tessa said.

“My name is James Carstairs,” Jem said to Alec. Jem was alway so polite. “But you can call me Jem. I was once known as Brother Zachariah.”
“Oh,” Alec said. “I remember you. Jace told me what happened. He was worried he had hurt you but the fire healed you instead.”

“Leave it to a Herondale to think of me while he was the one burning,” Jem said.

Magnus was helping put away groceries or to be more accurate putting them all away very quickly by magic. His hands guiding the groceries to their places on the shelves as if he were conducting an orchestra.

“You know,” Alec said. “You could just use your hands.”

“What is the point of being a warlock if I can’t put groceries away by magic?” Magnus asked.

Alec just rolled his eyes.

“You two are so cute,” Tessa squealed.

“You know,” Magnus said. “For a great great great grandmother you are an awful lot like a giggling schoolgirl.”

“I am calling it my second childhood,” Tessa said.

“I had one of those once,” Magnus mused. “Didn’t so go well.”

“Oh,” Alec inquired. “And why not?”

“Never matured enough to leave my first childhood,” Magnus said grinning. Alec hit him with a dish towel.

“I commend you on your choice of target,” Tessa said. “But may I suggest in future you use a better weapon. That one doesn’t seem to have done any damage.”

“Since when do we have dish towels?” Magnus asked, ignoring Tessa.

“Since I went shopping,” Alec repeated.

“We,” Jem said. “That sounds serious.” Alec was grinning but Magnus was again surprised he hadn’t blushed. “Well Magnus you definitely have a plus one and therefore no excuses.”

“Yes,” Tessa said. “The wedding is set for next year. We will send you the details soon but we wanted to come invite you in person.”

“Why next year,” Magnus said. “I mean you guys did get engaged over a century ago didn’t you? Talk about a long engagement.”

“I was raised a good proper lady you know,” Tessa said.

“And if I recall correctly I caught that good proper lady in a rather compromising position once with a certain Herondale,” Magnus said. “During a rescue mission.”

“We thought we were going to die,” Tessa said with dignity. “Besides you are not one to talk, Magnus.”

“I am not nor have I ever claimed to be a good proper lady,” Magnus said. He thought he heard Alec
mutter under his breath, “Thank the angel,” and smiled despite himself.

“It is true I have been out of touch for some time in the Spiral Labyrinth,” Tessa said. “There are these new metal devices everyone shadowhunter, downworlder and mundane alike seems to carry around everywhere like they need them to live or something. They talk into them as if speaking with a person and then stare at them while touching them repeatedly with their thumbs.”

“Cell phones,” Magnus explained to Alec who was looking rather confused. He turned back to Tessa as he continued. “Electricity was a rather novel thing once remember. I am sure you will adapt to the technological age.”

Alec busied himself with making lunch. He had bought himself a light breakfast while out that morning but knew at least Magnus wouldn’t have eaten anything. Making food for his guests seemed a good distraction from thinking about how he was the youngest person in the room by centuries. It was a rather interesting conversation to listen to as well.

“I have heard a humor that they might re-open the shadowhunter academy,” Tessa said.

“You can’t believe everything you hear on the grapevine,” Magnus said.

“Well if it is true,” Tessa said. “I hope they ask me to lecture.”

“You are an excellent source of information,” Magnus said. “They would be foolish not to ask.”

“I think the word you are looking for is wise,” Tessa said. So am I allowed to talk to Clary yet?”

“You are just determined to overwhelm the children aren’t you?” Magnus said with narrowed eyes.

“Maybe,” Tessa said. “I remember her when she was so little. All red hair and dimples.”

“Have you been invited to Jocelyn and Luke's wedding?” Magnus asked. “You could talk to Clary then?”

“Alright,” Tessa said, with a sigh. “I guess I can wait until May. Do you think Jace will accept the Herondale ring as well?”

“Probably,” Alec said from the kitchen. Everyone turned to look at him then.

“Thank you,” Tessa said. “I will bring it. Don’t tell him.” Alec made as if to zip his lips shut. Tessa smiled at him but turned back to Magnus when he spoke next.

“Did Catarina even tell you she saved a Herondale in the 1800s? It was before Will’s time but still a Herondale,” Magnus said after a moment. “You will have to ask her for specifics. I can’t quite recall the whole story. I think it was something like Will’s great uncle's son so some such thing. I was never as good at keeping track of shadowhunter family trees as are you.”

“It helps when you are on the family tree,” Tessa said.

“You are the only warlock about to have children,” Magnus said, reminded her. “Most people who are part of shadowhunter family trees are mortal.”


“Ah I remember her. She is very close with the poor Blackthorns family,” Magnus said. “Jessamine saved their uncle who was at the London Institute when Sebastian attacked.”
“Jessamine!” Tessa said. “Oh she used to have far too much fun switching people’s clothes back when I lived there.” She paused her tone sobered. “I hope she has found peace now.”

“Me too,” Magnus said.

“Is she a warlock too?” Alec asked as he came over with a plate of sandwiches.

“A ghost,” Tessa explained. “Tied to the London Institute where she died.”

“Oh,” Alec said. “I’m sorry.” He was feeling very young in his room full of people with smooth ageless skin and old eyes.

“You are very kind,” Tessa said. “Sorry if we aren’t including in it.” Alec just shrugged and held out his tray of sandwiches. She and Jem each took one. “And you made lunch!” She turned and looked Magnus straight in the face. “Magnus I feel this boy is probably too good for you.”

“Don’t I know it,” Magnus said grinning. Alec blushed. “Ah! Finally!”

“You did that on purpose!” Alec muttered under his breath as he put the tray of sandwiches down on the coffee table. Magnus chuckled.

“Come sit with us, love,” Magnus said. Alec sat, though he looked a little more awkward than usual.

“I know some of your ancestors,” Tessa said. “Back when Lightwoods had green eyes.” Alec didn’t know what to say to this.

“You are named after one of them Alec,” Magnus said. “You middle name: Gideon.”

“It’s okay,” Alec said. “You don’t have to try and include me in the conversation.”

“Oh now I feel bad for barging in,” Tessa said. “Sorry.”

“Oh no!” Alec said. “It’s fine I just don’t know how to have a conversation about-- I mean I don’t really know my ancestors so--”

“It is a rather strange conversation,” Tessa said. She and Jem both turned their attention to finishing their sandwiches.

“These are rather good,” Jem said. “Thank you Alec.”

“It’s nothing,” Alec said.

“You are too modest,” Tessa said. “It is quite a contrast to Magnus here.”

“You know the saying,” Magnus said, putting his arm around Alec who to his delight blush. Alec leaned into Magnus only slightly but enough to tell Magnus the affection wasn’t unwelcome even in front of guest. “Opposites attract.”

“I will see you at the wedding,” Tessa said when she finished her sandwich. She and Jem both stood up at the same moment. As if they could read the other’s mind.

“You aren’t leaving because of me are you?” Alec asked. The conversation had after all died quite quickly when he had joined them in the living room.

“Don’t worry,” Tessa said. “We aren’t. I only wanted to invite Magnus to our wedding and show him how Jem has changed before he found out some other way. I wanted to see that look of shock
on his face. He is so rarely shocked it seemed too good an opportunity to miss.”

“I will have you know,” Magnus said. “This last year has been a rather surprising one for even me.”

“I look forward to talking about it with you old friend,” Tessa said. “But we will leave you for now.” Tessa held her arms out to him; Magnus stood and accept the hug. The two of them left hand in hand, closing the door behind them.

“I feel bad,” Alec said. “They didn’t have to leave. I was quite enjoying listening to your conversation.”

“Don’t feel bad,” Magnus said, sitting back down next to Alec. “They were planning on leaving anyway.” Alec just muttered under his breath and leaned closer into Mangus. “I am rather surprised at your reactions to them. Tessa flat out compared you to Will but you didn’t even blink.” Magnus remembered once suggesting Alec wear a blue scarf had promoted Alec to yell and storm out.

“That was before,” Alec said.

“Before what love?”

“Before I knew you better,” Alec explained. “I loved you the same then as I do now but you were a mystery. Sometimes you seemed more like a force of nature than a person able to give and receive love. You were larger than life and I felt small and unimportant beside you. But it was nice listening to you talk to your friends. It makes you more down to earth somehow. That was why I kept going to see Camille even after I had told her I wouldn’t do what she asked. She was the only person who knew you the way I did.”

“Oh Alec,” Magnus said, wrapping both his arms around Alec and holding him close. “Camille never knew me as you do.”

“She was your girlfriend,” Alec said.

“Yes but,” Magnus said. “she--I mean I saw her that way but she didn’t see me that way. She loved Ralf Scott but he had been killed by vampires who didn’t like the idea of a vampire dating a werewolf. She wanted revenge and used the shadowhunters and me to get it.”

“I see,” Alec said. “That must of hurt.”

“It did,” Magnus said. “But knowing you are not loved in return makes it easier to heal. Knowing there was no hope from the beginning.”

“When we broke up,” Alec said. “You thought you cared more than I did. Did that make it easier or…”

“No love,” Magnus said. “Nothing about that was easy for me.” He didn’t want to explain to Alec that it had been the worst break up of his life. He didn’t want to burden Alec with a detailed description of how his heart had been ripped out of him as he had walked away from Alec. They were together again and that was what mattered.

“That friend of yours,” Alec said. “The one you mentioned when you came to see me before we left for Idris. The one who’s love died. Was that Tessa and Will you were talking about?”

“Yes,” Magnus said.

“But you made it sound like she was miserable?”
“She was,” Magnus said. “When Will died she came to find me in Paris. She stayed with me for a long time before going back to her grandchildren. She would wake every night screaming and cry in my arms for hours.”

“That must of been awful,” Alec said.

“I hadn’t thought about it in ages until I fell in love with you,” Magnus said, his voice shaky. “Then it terrified me.”

“I guess I never looked at it like that before,” Alec said. “I was just scared of me growing old and you not. Scared it would separate us.”

“Why would that separate us, love?” Magnus asked.

“Well I would be old,” Alec said. “And wrinkly and ug--”

“Not possible,” Magnus interrupted. “Old yes but you could never be ugly.”

Alec’s huge smiled light up his beautiful eyes as he gazed at Magnus. He didn’t seem to have any words. Magnus leaned in and kissed him gently, his hands moved to the shadowhunter’s waist and the small of his back. Magnus felt Alec’s hand in his hair as Alec kissed him back.

“Are you alright, love,” Magnus said, when they broke apart. “I know this can all be a bit much. A lot to take in.”

“It’s okay,” Alec said. “It is but I like it. I don’t want you to ever feel like you can’t tell me something. I don’t want you to have to hold back anymore. I don’t want you to worry that anything you saw will change how I feel.”

“You are a wonder, my Alexander,” Magnus whispered.

“So,” Alec said, after a moment. His tone light. “Tessa loved Will enough to break apart when he died but now she loves his Jem?”

“Those three were always a rather odd group,” Magnus said. “Parabatai who fell in love with the same women. It is just lucky for them that women loved them both as well. It always surprised me how none of them seemed to be jealous. Each of them tried to let the other’s happiness matter more than their own.”

“Why did Will end up marrying her instead of Jem,” Alec asked. “You said they were engaged a century ago.”

“Jem was dying,” Magnus said. “The only way he could live was by becoming a Silent Brother and they can’t marry. When I brought their very drunk son home one night Will called Brother Zachariah and Tessa made it sound like Will would never accept any other Silent Brother’s help. He was uncle Jem to them. When those three were together it seemed somehow like they were one. One force of love.”

“If Jace was in love with you I don’t think I would be so kind,” Alec said. Magnus couldn’t stop the image from forming in his mind. He laughed so hard he almost fell off the couch.

“That is a rather disturbing image to say the least,” Magnus said still laughing.

“And I am sure if I was in love with Clary,” Alec continued mercilessly. “Jace would probably kill me. Sacred bond and all.” Magnus fell off the couch then holding his stomach.
Alec started laughing then as well, falling to the ground next to Magnus who held onto Alec as if he needed the support.

“Oh Alexander,” Magnus said, catching his breath. “Living with you is going to be the greatest joy of my life.” Alec blushed as he got up off the floor.

“Do you want any help packing,” Magnus asked eagerly as he joined Alec on the couch again.

“I have almost all my stuff in that backpack,” Alec said motioning to where he had left it by the door.

“Really?” Magnus asked incredulous. “That’s it?” Alec nodded. “You must have very few clothes indeed.”

“Some of my clothes didn’t fit,” Alec said. “I will go back for them later. I will still be over to the institute often enough I am sure.”

“Your key,” Magnus said, snapping his fingers. “Is here.” The small silver key had appeared in the warlock’s hand. Alec took it smiling and put it in his pocket.

“And your draw is as you left it if you want to unpack at all,” Magnus said then continued with a little too much enthusiasm. “Or I could make you your own closet!” Alec suspected this idea would involve glitter and decided to ignore the statement entirely.

“You never used the draw?” Alec asked.

“Couldn’t bring myself to look at it actually,” Magnus said. “If you left anything in there I wouldn’t know about it.”

“I wanted to leave something,” Alec said. “For you to remember me by. I just didn’t know what.”

“Oh Alexander,” Magnus said. “As if I need anything to remember you by.” Magnus moved his hand to cup Alec’s cheek and pulled Alec in for a kiss. A deep contented noise rose from Alec’s throat as he wrapped his arms around Magnus and pulled the warlock closer.

“I love you,” Alec whispered into Magnus’s ear. Magnus felt a shiver run all over his body.

"Aku cinta kamu," Magnus whispered back.

“I know what that means now,” Alec said. “But what language is that?”

“The first language I ever learned,” Magnus said. “The language my mother spoke to me in. Indonesian.”

“What was your mother like?” Alec asked.

“I don’t remember much about her,” Magnus confessed. “I can sometimes remember her voice but her face faded from my memories long ago. Her presence I remember the most. She loved me before she knew what I was.”

“Do you remember her name?” Magnus shook his head.

“Is that why it’s so hard to talk about?” Alec asked. “Because of how much you can’t remember?”

“Probably,” Magnus said. “It’s no fun being reminded how much I have forgotten. But at some point it became habit. Like lying about my age. Or doing magic or being sarcastic whenever the opportunity presented itself.”
“Break that habit is hard for you,” Alec said. “I can tell. Thank you.”

“It is worth it,” Magnus said. “To have you here with me again.” Magnus leaned in closer, his arms going up under Alec’s loose shirt as he whispered. “Enough talking.” Magnus started kissing Alec’s neck, his arms moved up to pull the shirt off Alec. Alec’s body moved into every touch, his breathing quickening. Magnus would have been happy to just kiss Alec like this for hours but Alec it seemed had other ideas.
Typical Morning

Chapter Summary

As the title suggests this chapter is a nice normal morning with Magnus and Alec living together. It is also based off something Magnus says Alec told him in the epilogue of City of Heavenly Fire.

One of the many joys of living with Alec Lightwood was waking to the smell of coffee. Magnus inhaled deeply as he rolled onto his back. Alec was always an early riser so he stretched out using up all the space in the bed before rising.

“Good morning,” Magnus said, as he came into the kitchen and saw Alec. Magnus quickly came around behind Alec and wrapped his arms around his boyfriend.

Alec made a soft contented noise in the back of his throat and leaned into Magnus.

They had been living together for months now, but Magnus was still marveling at Alec’s constant presence in his life. Alec had gone and packed up his things from the Institute the day after Magnus had happily said yes to Alec moving in. Magnus was still a little surprised Alec had asked. Realistically Alec could probably have just shown up with a suitcase, and Magnus would have taken it in stride.

But that wasn’t the way Alec did things, Magnus knew. Alec was a traditional sorta fellow. A traditional fellow whose very nature had made being traditional quiet a challenge.

Alec turned in Magnus’s arm and kissed him good morning.

“Anything on the agenda today?” Magnus asked.

“I have to meet up with Jace later,” Alec said. “Something about a demon nest.”

“You will be careful right?”

“Always,” Alec said, giving Magnus a quick peck on the lips.

“You are not allowed to get killed by demons, Alexander,” Magnus said sternly. “No jumping in front of Jace and taking the hit for him, understand!”

Alec chuckled; releasing his arms from around Mangus he picked up his coffee and took a sip.

“I mean it,” Magnus continued, crossing his arms over his bare chest. He had only slept in boxers and hadn’t bothered dressing before greeting Alec.

“You think I am that bad at my job,” Alec said. Alec was, of course, fulling dressed, shower and ready for the day.

“No,” Magnus said. “I think you are that selfless when it comes to the people you love.”

“Hmmm,” Alec said, absently staring at the ceiling. He couldn’t believe how fun it was to tease
Magnus like this.

Magnus huffed a little more while Alec made breakfast. Alec was fond of cooking and once he had moved in it had become apparent Magnus wasn’t. Magnus didn’t even keep food in the house it seemed. Alec had quickly rectified this situation once he had moved in. He took all the ingredients he needed out of the fridge and began chopping green onion.

“I do love it when you cook,” Magnus said. “I don’t like it when you tease me, though,” Alec smiled. “I am serious! Why can’t I be worried when you run off to fight demons? The second time I saw you, you were dying of demon poison, remember?”

“I remember,” Alec said. “And you are allowed to worry,” He paused. “I don’t though. This is just my life. It’s just part of me. Fighting demons, it’s who I am.” He shrugged as he cracked eggs into a bowl.

“All I am saying,” Magnus said. “Is that I will be very cross with you if you don’t live to a hundred and three.”

Alec’s care-free laugh filled the room mixed with the sound of cooking eggs.

“What are you making?”

“Omelettes.”

“Yum,” Magnus said, sitting down at the breakfast bar to watch Alec, cook.

“My mom told me they are reopening the Academy,” Alec said as flipped the eggs. “She got it from dad, so I don’t think it is just a rumor this time.”

“Really!”

“Yeah. We have lost so many shadowhunters. Two wars in less than a year. And that second war we lost twice as many with them being turned and sent back to kill more of us.”

“The academy, though,” Magnus said, taking his plate from Alec as they sat to eat breakfast. “I remember Ragnor going on and on about the Academy. He taught there for centuries until it closed the 1990s.” Magnus paused to chew. He was used to this now. Speaking the whole truth when Alec asked a question. “I think it was the circle that did it. They might have been worried the school provided a place for naive Nephilim to form dangerous groups. That was just my theory, though. I don’t remember there ever being an official reason for the school closing.”

“Ragnor would have been happy to see the school open again I think,” Magnus continued once he had eaten most of his breakfast. “He had a rather grumpy ‘get off my lawn’ attitude toward children but for some reason he loved to teach them.”

“I wish I had met your friend,” Alec said. “He sounds like an interested character, to say the least.”

“He was,” Magnus said. “Though he used to tease me something awful.”

“Oh yeah,” Alec said. “About what?”

“Anything I wasn’t good at,” Magnus said. “Music, biking, the tango, dating, being a pirate.”

“You were a pirate,” Alec said, stunned. That had not been in one of Magnus’s journals.

“Well no,” Magnus confessed. “I just pretended to be one while transporting bird poop on the open
sea with Ragnor once in Peru.”

Alec started laughing, and he couldn’t stop.

“What’s so funny?”

“Bird poop,” Alec managed to get out between breaths.

“It’s called guano,” Magnus said. “And it was a valuable commodity back then. Used for fertilizer, I think.”

“You have lead a spectacular life, Magnus Bane,” Alec said, once he could speak.

“I do try,” Magnus said, returning his attention to his breakfast.

“Why haven’t I read that in your journal’s?”

“That wasn’t anything important,” Magnus said. “Just shenanigans. I thought the events that defined me were more important.”

“Okay well don’t leave out shenanigans in future,” Alec said.

“Why you like to hear about the stupid things I have done I will never know,” Magnus sighed.

“That is because you are always the one with all the answers,” Alec said. “You don’t know what it’s like to be out of the loop.”

“It has been known to happen occasionally,” Magnus said.

“So what are you going to do today?” Alec asked, still with the shadow of a laugh in his voice as he cleared away dishes.

“I am still working on a way to help Simon,” Magnus said. “I know it’s foolish but--”

“It’s not foolish,” Alec said, quickly.

“You know month’s ago when I told you I could get some of his memories back, maybe.” Alec nodded. “Well now it is only possible if Simon has retained at least the smallest sliver of his memory from his old life. I still think doing that would be cruel.”

“If only he was a shadowhunter,” Alec said. “The Clave is so desperate for new shadowhunters right now they might help us get him back.”

“Desperate…” Magnus said staring at his empty plate. “Desperate for shadowhunters” Magnus’s eyes were far away Alec observed.

“What are you thinking?” Alec asked.

“That’s it!” Magnus said jumping out of his chair and running to his desk. Alec rolled his eyes.

“I am off to meet Jace,” Alec said.

“Don’t forget the wedding is tomorrow,” Magnus called after him. Jocelyn and Luke had finally decided to tie the knot. Only took them two decades. “And I already picked out your suit so you can’t refuse to wear it.” Alec was chuckling as he walked out the door.
Magnus rifled through the papers on his desk. Simon could be a shadowhunter. It would be a lot of work for Simon and might take years--they would have to make sure Simon understood, really understood, what he was getting into to be fair to him--but there was a way to help him.
Epilogue (CoHF)

Chapter Summary

This is Magnus's point of view of the Epilogue of City of Heavenly Fire. It also links the two chapters around it.

Magnus knew who his greatest allies would be in the matter of Simon. He texted Isabelle and Clary at once. They both agreed to meet him the next day. If Simon didn’t have any of his old memories still intact, the spell might not work. But Magnus was going to try none the less. The Clave’s rules be damned. Magnus was no shadowhunter bound to such things. No one needed to know Izzy and Clary were involved. And technically he hadn’t told Alec, most of it anyway.

When they arrived at Simon’s school the next day it didn’t look like Simon remembered anything at all. Clary disappointed left for her mother’s wedding. It wasn’t until Izzy saw the new name of Simon’s band--The Mortal Instruments--that Magnus let her explain everything to him. Simon stared at them as they talked. Especially at Isabelle. Magnus had a feeling Simon knew there was something there even if he didn’t understand what.

“The choice is up to you,” Magnus said, once they had finished telling him how he could be a shadowhunter if he wanted. Or he could have a normal life with his normal family. Magnus knew this boy deserved this choice more than anything. Some are born great but for those like Simon, who rise to an impossible greatness from nothing more than average he believed there should be exceptions made.

Simon didn’t speak for a long moment. Magnus wondered what he was thinking. The hero who didn’t know he was a hero trying to decide if he wanted to be a hero again.

“Alright,” Simon said finally.

“Really!” Izzy said beaming.

“In that case,” Magnus said. “Are you ready to learn who you are, at least a little?” Simon nodded. Magnus opened the Book of the White and read the spell aloud. Simon seemed to glow for a moment and then fade back to normal.

“How do you feel, Simon?” Magnus asked.

“Mostly the same,” Simon said. “Just a little. I don’t know--less foggy. I think I remember that red haired girl more.”

“Well that’s a start,” Magnus said.

“Would you like to accompany me to your best friend’s mom’s wedding?” Izzy asked him. Simon took the hand she offered, but he did still look rather confused Magnus thought. And perhaps stunned someone as pretty as Izzy was offering him her arm in the first place.

They took a taxi to the wedding. Explaining portals would have been a bad idea. Expecting him to use one an even worse idea. When they arrived, Magnus set off to find Clary knowing she would want to see Simon. Magnus saw Izzy lead Simon into the crowd as he went in the opposite direction.
Magnus found Clary wrapped around Jace up against a wall, and couldn’t stop the grin from spreading over his face. Another scene flashed before his eyes. The brown haired girl with a shocked look on her face while the black haired boy lay sleeping beside her. It seemed his luck in life to catch Herondales in compromising situations.

“Interesting,” he said as he pictured Tessa and Will together in Wales all those years ago. The situation was rather similar he mused. Though Tessa and Will had accomplished quite a lot more before they were interrupted. Proper lady indeed.

“Magnus, what are you doing here?” Jace said.

“Came to get you,” Magnus said. “There’s something I think you should see.”

“WE ARE BUSY,” Jace almost roared.

“Clearly,” Magnus said amused. “You know, they say life is short, but it isn’t all that short. It can be quite long, and you have all your lives to spend together, so I really suggest you come with me, because you’re going to be sorry if you don’t.”

“Okay,” Clary said, breaking away from Jace with a trusting look in her eyes.

“Okay?” Jace said. “Seriously?”

“I trust Magnus,” Clary said. “If it’s important, it’s important.”

“And if it’s not, I’m going to drown him in the lake,” Jace said. Magnus just caught Biscuit’s grin before she hide it behind her hand. He suspected Clary had had a similar thought but was too polite to voice it aloud. She was a sweet girl really. Shame about Jace though. Magnus suppressed a laugh as he lead them back to Simon.

Rejoining the rest of the guests, Magnus saw Alec talking to his father but before he had time to register more than that Clary saw Simon. Magnus had to quickly put a hand firmly on her shoulder to stop her from bolting.

“Be careful,” he said. “He doesn’t remember everything. I could give him a few memories, not much. The rest will have to wait, but, Clary—remember that he doesn’t remember. Don’t expect everything.” When Clary nodded, Magnus let her go, and she went tearing across the lawn to Simon, who was standing awkwardly near a tent. Magnus watched to make sure Clary didn’t tackle Simon to the ground. She did hug him so fiercely that Magnus worried she would crush him. Simon seemed to take it well enough however so Magnus switch his focus to locating Alec.

Magnus hadn’t been looking for long before he saw Alec coming towards him up the hill. Alec looked gorgeous in the suit Magnus had selected. It had a slender strip of blue that brought out his eyes beautifully.

They stood and watched the gathering around Simon together. Only Isabelle stood apart from the crowd.

“You’d almost think she didn’t care,” Alec said. “But I’m pretty sure she does.”

“You’re correct,” Magnus said. “She cares too much; that’s why she’s standing apart.”

“I would ask you what you did, but I’m not sure I want to know,” Alec said leaning into him. Magnus rested his chin on Alec’s shoulder. They stood motionless enjoying each other presences as they watched the happy crowd below.
“It was good of you,” Alec said.

“You make the choice you have to make at the time,” Magnus said in his ear. “You hope for no consequences, or no serious ones.”

“You don’t think your father will be angry, do you?” Alec said, and Magnus laughed dryly.

“He has a great deal more to pay attention to than me,” Magnus said. “What about you? I saw you talking to Robert.”

“Dad told me he is proud of me,” Alec said. “I didn’t believe him at first, but then he told me about his parabatai Michael Wayland. And how he had been in love with my dad. Dad wasn’t kind to him, and they were never close again.”

“You know, I would not have guessed that,” Magnus said. “And I’ve met Michael Wayland. Goes to show. ‘The heart is forever inexperienced’ and all that.”

“What do you think? Should I forgive him?”

“I think what he told you was an explanation, but it wasn’t an excuse for how he behaved. If you forgive him, do it for yourself, not for him. It’s a waste of your time to be angry,” Magnus said. “when you’re one of the most loving people I’ve known.”

“Is that why you forgave me? For me, or you?” Alec said, curiously.

“I forgave you because I love you, and I hate being without you. I hate it, my cat hates it. And because Catarina convinced me I was being stupid.”

“Mmm. I like her.”

Magnus placed his palms on Alec’s chest, the steady beat of Alec’s heart under his hands. The rhythm seemed to strengthen him somehow. He needed Alec’s strength to ask his next question.

“And you forgive me,” Magnus said. “For not being able to make you immortal, or end my own immortality.”

“There’s nothing to forgive,” Alec said. “I don’t want to live forever.” Alec intertwined his hands with Magnus’s on his chest.

“We might not have that much time,” Alec said. “I’ll get old, and I’ll die. But I promise I won’t leave you until then. It’s the only promise I can make.”

“A lot of Shadowhunters don’t get old,” Magnus said almost choking on the words. Magnus didn’t have the ability to keep talking about this. To explain how worried he was. He was trying to accept only having Alec for fifty or seventy years, but that was still impossible for him. Thinking Alec would die before that made it hard to breathe.

Alec turned in Magnus’s arms and faced him. Those blue eyes seemed to be memorizing every detail of his face.

“Even if it were just days, I would want to spend them all with you. Does that mean anything?”

“Yes,” Magnus said. “It means that from now on we make everyday matter.” Time had been nothing but rain to Magnus most of his life. Something to take note of but not worry about. Something that happened around him more than to him. There had been brief periods where time had mattered more.
The first mortal he had loved. Other times he had settled down but never so long as that first ti. Magnus had a feeling, this time, it would be different. Now time would be like water evaporating in the sun. Every second a grain of sand slipping through his fingers.

They stood holding each other in silence for a while. Then went back down from the hill, holding hands. Magnus saw Jem getting up from his seat next to Tessa and come over to them.

“Hello Jem,” Magnus said, looking past Jem to the redhead sitting beside Tessa. “I see Tessa has finally had her chance to speak with Clary.”

“Indeed,” Jem said. “She is glad of it.”

“I can tell,” Magnus smiled.

“It is, of course, nice to see you again, Alec,” Jem said.

“You too,” Alec answered clearly surprised Jem had remembered his name. Magnus wasn’t surprised by this. Jem had always been kind.

“You and Tessa should come over for dinner sometimes,” Alec said. “I could show you how to use a cell phone. They are very useful.” He smiled, and Jem laughed.

Maia and Bat come up to Alec then joining in the conversation. Magnus suddenly felt ancient. Talking about immortality had him thinking about the future again. He moved away from them back up the hill and leaned against the barn. Being with Alec made him so happy but he couldn’t stop himself from worrying about that was coming.

“You look worried,” Catarina had appeared beside him and placed her hand on his shoulder companionably. She had blue flowers in her white hair that complimented her sky coloured skin nicely. “What is it? I saw you kissing that Shadowhunter boy of yours earlier, so it can’t be that.”

“No. Everything with Alec is fine,” Magnus said shaking his head.

“I saw you speaking to Tessa, too,” Catarina said. “Strange to have her here. Is that what’s bothering you? Past and future colliding; it must feel a bit strange.”

“Maybe,” Magnus said, though he didn’t think it was that. “Old ghosts, the shadows of might-have-beens. Though I always liked Tessa and her boys.”

“Her son was a piece of work,” Catarina said.

“As was her daughter,” Magnus said. “I feel the past weighing on me heavily these days, Catarina. The repetition of old mistakes. I hear things, rumblings in Downworld, the rumor of coming strife. The Fair Folk are a proud people, the proudest; they will not take the shaming from the Clave without retaliation.”

“They are proud but patient,” Catarina said. “They may wait a long time, generations, for vengeance. You cannot fear it coming now, when the shadow may not descend for years yet.”

Magnus didn’t speak. He just looked out over the sea of mortal’s who had somehow become precious to him.

“Ah,” Catarina said. “You worry about them; you worry about the shadow descending upon those you love.”
“Them, or their children,” Magnus said. Alec was walking toward him now up the hill.

“Better to love and fear than feel nothing. That is how we petrify,” Catarina said, and she touched his arm. “I am sorry about Raphael, by the way. I never got a chance to say it. I know you saved his life once.”

“And then he saved mine,” Magnus said, but he didn’t say more. Alec had joined them. Alec nodded to Catarina then addressed Magnus.

“Magnus, we’re going down to the lake,” he said. “Do you want to come?”

“Why?” Magnus inquired.

“Clary says it’s pretty,” Alec said shrugging. “I mean, I’ve seen it before, but there was a huge angel rising out of it, and that was distracting.” He held his hand out to Magnus. “Come on. Everyone’s going.”

“Carpe diem,” Catarina said to Magnus. “Don’t waste your time fretting.” And with that, she picked up her skirts and wandered off toward the trees. Magnus took Alec’s hand and let himself be lead to the lake.

Magnus summoned a collection of blankets and jackets for the group once he and Alec arrived at the lakeside. He knew were Bed Bath & Beyond kept their warehouses. Alec was it seemed in too good a mood to annoy Magnus about paying for them.

Magnus lay on a blanket next to Alec listened to his voice as Alec named all the constellations in the sky. This was such a happy moment. Simon and Izzy whispering together. Her face brighter somehow. Clary was in Jace’s lap, and she was leaning against him. He watched as she showed Jace a book that looked very old. He suspected it was Tessa’s copy of the Shadowhunter Codex. He watched as she gave Jace the ring Tessa had been dying to give him for months. After that, they were kissing, and Magnus turned away.

“When did you learn so much about the sky, Alec?”

“One of my tutors,” Alec said.

“Shadowhunting is quite the well-rounded education it seems,” Magnus said.

“I guess,” Alec said. “I know some demon languages too. But only how to read them.”

“I sometimes forget how many languages I know,” Magnus said. “I know that sounds strange.”

“I always want to hear everything about you Magnus,” Alec said. “Strange or not.”

Magnus pulled Alec in closer. He could feel a chill in the air and only momentarily released Alec to use his hands to create a magical blue fire at the center of their group.

“What are you worrying about?” Alec asked.

“What do you mean?”

“The friend you were talking to when I came to get you,” Alec said. “She said you were fretting.”

“Oh that,” Magnus said. “The faerie trial and its consequences. I worry about the future now more than before. Now that there are so many people I care about.”
“Did you not used to have so many friends?”

“No so many friends were are always in danger,” Magnus said. “Though Ragnor always played it safe and yet he died. Raphael was also clever and caution. I never really worried about them but they are gone. There is no way to know. You can die in your bed or survive fighting on the front lines every day.”

“I am too happy to worry about anything right now,” Alec said. “With you here and Simon back. Maybe being mortal means you are better at being in the present.”

“You are wise beyond your years my Alexander,” Magnus said.

They sat in silence after that. The others moving and talking around them. Magnus wanted to freeze this moment in time. Alec here in his arms. All this friends safe and whole.

Time, of course, would not freeze. The fire faded, and the sun went down. Everyone was reluctantly getting up and heading home.

Magnus walked hand in hand with Alec as they left the wedding. Most of the guests were long gone now, but Luke and Jocelyn were still there entertaining a few stragglers. Magnus was surprised to see Catarina. He thought she would be back at her beloved hospital by now. Alec had called her his friend but not used her name. He realized he had never introduced them. This he felt needed to be rectified at once.

Magnus released Alec’s hand quickly saying he would be right back and went over to the blue skinned warlock.

“You are still here,” he told her.

“Really,” she said grinning. “I hadn’t noticed.”

“Would you like to come over to my place sometime soon?” Magnus said. “I realized you haven’t actually met Alec. At least not properly.”

“That is true,” Catarina said. “I would like to meet this love of yours that is as you say not like any other.” She smiled. “He must be a remarkable person indeed.”

“He is.”

“On one condition,” Catarina added. “You don’t cook.”

“Done,” Magnus said. “Alec likes to cook anyway.”

“And he cooks,” Catarina teased him. “Quite a catch indeed.”

“I am leaving now,” Magnus said turning his back on her.

“I’ll text you,” Magnus heard her call to him as he skipped back to Alec. Taking his hand again.

“What are you smiling about?”

“Oh that was Catarina,” Magnus said. “The women I was talking to when you came to ask me to join you at the lake.”

“The one who convinced you, you were stupid to break up with me?”
“The one and only,” Magnus said. “I invited her to come over and see us.”

“I look forward to meeting her,” Alec said.
Catarina

Chapter Summary

Alec meets Catarina. This chapter was inspired by something said in 'What to get the shadowhunter who has everything' from the Magnus Bane Chronicles and has many references from the Shadowhunter Academy Series.

Catarina sent Magnus a text the next day saying she was free on Sunday after her shift. When she arrived at their door she was still wearing her scrubs and Magnus suspected she had come straight from the hospital.

“It’s nice to finally meet you,” Alec said holding out his hand to the blue skinned women standing in front of him.

“You as well,” she said, taking the handshake he offered. “I have heard a lot about you.”

“What have you heard?” Alec said looking over at Magnus dubiously.

“All good things promise,” Magnus said, waving his hand.

“Mostly I have heard Magnus fretting about you actually,” Catarina said as she entered their loft, closing the door behind her.

“Is that so,” Alec said. He gestured for her to follow him into the kitchen and she did. Magnus trailing behind, watchfully. “And what has he been fretting about?”

“Oh all sorts of things,” Catarina said, sitting in a chair at the breakfast bar Alec had indicated. “Calling to pester me at work mostly. Please help I need a fake emergency in case my date with Alec goes horribly wrong. Please help me I don’t know what to get Alec for his birthday? I can’t do that job without seeing Alec could you please do it for me? But I am going to show up anyway cause I’m Magnus. I don’t want to go to Alicante cause I might see Alec so can you go instead? Nevermind I have to go cause, Alec.”

Alec started laughing before she finished speaking. He couldn’t help it. Magnus sounded like a teenage girl the way his friend described him.

“Would you like something to drink?” Alec asked once he had his laughter under control.

“An iced tea?” Catarina said. “If you have any?”

“We do,” Alec said, pulling a glass down from the top shelf. “I had no idea my relationship had affected you so much.” Then after a moment's thought, he added. “Wait so he did have a plan for getting out of our first date then?”

“He never told you?” Catarina grinned. “He called me in hysterics. Telling me you were a dating hazard who was into blondes and he needed my help.” She chuckled.

“Yep,” she said, taking the drink from him. “I made him call in all his dating favouring for a century.”

“But since there was a real emergency,” Magnus said. He was standing in the kitchen doorway. Alec had almost forgotten he was there since he hadn’t spoken a word throughout their conversation “I don’t think you can hold me to that.”

“And why not?” Alec teased. “Planning some dates I don’t know about?”

“I am starting to rethink this whole ‘Alec should meet Catarina thing,’” Magnus said.

“My dear friend,” Catarina said, but she couldn’t keep the humor from her voice. “This was your idea.”

“Yes but I suddenly feel outnumbered,” Magnus said. “Which is strange considering I know both of you but you two just met.” His eyes were narrowed like he was accusing them of something.

Catarina got a glint in her eye had made Magnus nervous.

“Since it all worked out so very well,” Catarina said, to Alec. “I think I should inform you, I expect to be best women at your wedding.”

Magnus remembered Catarina saying this before when she had agreed to help him with the fake emergency. He hadn’t taken it seriously then. Now was different.

Alec watched as Magnus sputtered.

“Sure,” Alec said. Magnus’s gaze snapped to Alec. His eyes going wide. Alec’s tone was so casual. Like he was talking about the weather. “I think you will have to share that honor with Izzy though.”

“Oh Izzy yes,” Catarina said. “I met her at the wedding. She is your sister, correct.” Alec nodded.

“Just give me enough warning to get my shifts covered and I am there. Any particular time of year in mind?”

“I am thinking fall,” Alec continued. “Or early spring.” Magnus stopped breathing. Were they joking? It wasn’t possible that Alec was serious. The whole thing wasn’t possible. A warlock and a shadowhunter couldn’t get married in the eyes of the Clave. Magnus found himself leaning against the wall for support.

“Lovely time for a wedding. Fine weather. Do you have a venue in mind?”

“Outdoor park,” Alec said. “Or maybe a destination wedding. I mean with a portal it wouldn’t even be hard to transport guests right?”

“Portals are convenient,” she said sipping her tea. Alec glanced at Magnus. He stood frozen. Alec wasn’t even sure Magnus was breathing. He was so still.

“How long do you think we can keep this up before he actually faints?” Alec asked her, grinning from ear to ear.

“Oh I don’t know,” Catarina said. “Not long. He isn’t made of very sturdy stuff.” She laughed.

“I can see what you meant about this one, Magnus,” she said, turning her gaze to the slightly traumatized warlock behind her. “He is rather brilliant.”

Magnus mumbled. His legs gave out, and he sank down the wall to the floor. Alec thought maybe he
“Magnus,” Alec said, leaning down next to him. “Are you okay?”

“So you were joking the whole time then?”

“Yeah,” Alec said. Alec decided not to tell Magnus that he was only half joking, that he had wanted to see how Magnus would react to the idea.

Magnus took a deep breath and got up off the floor. He was relieved but also somehow felt diminished. No one had ever wanted to marry him before. No one had teased him about it before either.

“This place does look different I have to say,” Catarina said, changing the topic. “More homey. Less bachelor pad.” Alec laughed, pulling Magnus up off the floor and depositing him in a chair.

“You think?” Alec said. “I was going for food in the house, and you know clean.”

“Well you have succeeded in that,” Catarina said.

Magnus put his hand in his hands. “Just please don’t become pen pals that talk about be when I’m not there,” he said barely loud enough to be heard.

“Magnus,” Alec said, his hands going to massage the warlock’s shoulder. “Relax.” Magnus moaned, but it was a happy sound from the motions of Alec’s strong hands.

Magnus’s phone rang, and he reluctantly got up and went into his room to answer it.

“That was too fun,” Catarina said. “He just reacts so well.”

“I owe you one,” Alec said. “Anytime you want to tease Magnus just let me know.”

“Owe me for what?”

“For talking sense into Magnus for me.”

“Oh that doesn’t count,” she said, laughing. “I called you a helpless bunny rabbit.”

“I am a shadowhunter,” Alec said firmly, rethinking this whole debt thing. “Not a rodent.”

“Well Camille was a manipulative woman,” Catarina said. “As far as messing with people’s emotions in evil ways she is definitely the python to your bunny rabbit.”

“Is that the argument you used to talk sense into him?”

“Basically,” Catarina said. “He is usually miserable when he’s in love, you know. He had such lousy luck. All his friends hated Camille, and he still dated her.”

“When you say usually…” Alec began. “You don’t mean with me right?”

“That was my other argument,” Catarina said. “He wasn’t miserable with you. I could tell. Actually, I have never seen him so happy.”

“Never,” Alec said, his face lighting up.

“Never,” Catarina said. “But surely he has told you that.”
“He has in his way,” Alec said. “But it means something different coming from someone who has known him for so long.”

“Sometimes it’s not the length of the relationship that matters so much,” Catarina said. “But the power of it.”

“What are you too gossiping about now!” Magnus said coming into the room, his posture defensive.

“Nothing,” Alec said. “Who was on the phone?”

“No one important,” Magnus said, then rounded on Catarina, his expression suspicious. “What have you been telling him?”


“I am not a bunny!” he said. Magnus relaxed. Laughing, he came over to Alec and kissed him on the cheek.

“You are adorable enough to be a bunny,” Magnus said.

“I am a shadowhunter,” Alec said. “I am not adorable.”

“I will have to agree with Magnus on this one,” Catarina said. “You are kinda adorable.”

“He is taken,” Magnus said gleefully wrapping his arms around Alec. Alec’s blush deepened.

“Oh Magnus,” Catarina said, rolling her eyes. “That is not what I meant.”

“I know,” Magnus said. It had been a great excuse to hug Alec, however.

“Who was the not important person on the phone?” Alec asked, clearly getting uncomfortable with the PDA in front of company despite his history of making out with Magnus in front of the Clave.

“Oh, just some shadowhunter asking if I would lecture for them at the academy.”

“And what did you say?”

“I said I had better things to do,” Magnus said kissing Alec’s neck from where he stood, arms still wrapped around his boyfriend from behind. Magnus felt the shivers his kiss created as they run down Alec’s spine.

“Magnus!” Alec said, his face very red now. “We have company.”

“I have already agreed to teach there,” Catarina said, ignoring the PDA. She had know Magnus a long time. “You know Ragnor would have wanted you to.”

That ruined Magnus’s mood. He let go of Alec and turned to Catarina. “Guilt really Catarina?” he said. “Low blow.”

“You might enjoy it you know,” Alec said his face returning to normal now. “What topic did they want you to lecture on?”

“I--,” Magnus said. “Didn’t really listen to that part. I was worried about what you were up to all alone.” His eyes narrowed.

“I will come with you,” Alec said. “If you go teach. It might be fun.” Magnus groaned.
“Oh all right,” Magnus said. “If you are both going to gang up on me.”

“It’s settled then,” Catarina said. “You should call them back.”

Magnus went back to his room grumbling.

“He is quite the character,” Catarina said, as Magnus closed his bedroom door.

“He is,” Alec said, adding to himself. He is all mine.

“I am so glad he met you,” Catarina said. “It is wonderful to see my friend happy again.” She beamed at Alec.

“Thanks,” Alec said. “That means a lot.”

“Though if you break his heart again, I will have to have words with you,” her tone was still teasing.

“You don’t have to worry about that,” Alec said.

“I know,” Catarina said. “I see the way you look at him.” Alec blushed.

“Is it that obvious?”

“Your emotions are written on your face you know,” she said.

Alec sighed. “I know,” he said. “Sometimes it’s really annoying.”

Magnus’s door opened, and he walked out with a sullen expression.

“There you happy now,” he said. “I am going to be lecturing at the Academy for weeks!”

“What’s the topic?”

“I--” Magnus started. “Nope wasn’t listening.”

“How are you going to plan lessons if you don’t know what you’re teaching about?”

“I will just wing it.” Magnus shrugged.

“You are crazy,” Alec said. “I could never do that.”

“I know,” Magnus said. “You would have every lesson planned well in advance and hand back everyone’s homework early. They should ask you to lecture not me.”

“It must be a topic they want your perspective on,” Alec said. “You really should find out what it is.”

Magnus just waved his hand, dismissively.

“So what’s for lunch?” Magnus said, looking at Alec.

Alec cooked while Catarina and Magnus sat at the breakfast bar watching. It was a pleasant afternoon. Catarina ended up staying for dinner as well.

“I know you would like her,” Magnus said, once the door closed behind his friend.

“She is an amazing person,” Alec said. “So dedicated to her work.”
“She is that indeed,” Magnus said. “I have never seen healing magic to match hers. I would never have been able to wake up Jocelyn without her.”

Alec turned away from the door and looked at Magnus.

“I am glad you have at least one person you love that you won’t lose.”

“Oh Alec,” Magnus said. “It doesn’t work like that. She is immortal but so were Ragnor and Raphael. There are no guarantees in life.”

“I guess,” Alec said. He forced himself back into the present. “Are you going to go find out what topic you are supposed to be teaching?”

“Oh that,” Magnus said. “I would rather not worry about that.” He pulled Alec closer, kissing his neck. A soft moan of pleasure escaped Alec. “There are so many other things we could be doing.”

“Is that so?” Alec murmured into Magnus’s ear.

“Indeed,” Magnus purred as he moved his hands up under Alec’s shirt pulling it over his head. Magnus felt Alec’s grin under his kiss. Lips pulling tight over his teeth.

“If you keep smiling like that it is going to make kissing you rather difficult.”

Alec’s grin didn’t break. Magnus started kissing Alec bare chest. Alec’s hand had found his shirt now, and Magnus was forced to abandon Alec’s perfect chest when his shirt came up over his head with lightning speed.

Alec seemed to have gotten his grin under control now as he spun them around with shadowhunter speed and pressed Magnus against the door, kissing him on the mouth now. The bare skin of Alec’s chest pressed against his felt warm. Magnus could feel Alec’s chest rising and falling fast and knew his breathing was just as erratic.

“Not that the door isn’t lovely,” Magnus breathed as Alec released his lips for a moment to caught his breath. “But we have the whole apartment to work with. The bed.”

Alec answered the way he usually did, with action rather than words. Magnus felt Alec’s hand just slightly graze the skin on his stomach as Alec grabbed hold of the fabric at the top of his pants. Alec pulled him, not breaking the kiss. Magnus’ hands were in Alec’s hair and the small of Alec’s back as they moved through the apartment. Reaching their room Alec flung him onto the bed.

Alec was so different now than he had been. So much more confident. Alec knew what he was doing. And Magnus love it. Loved that Alec could be forward and commanding. He had loved Alec’s shy innocence as well it’s true but one of the beautiful things about a once in a lifetime love is that it changes. It grows with time and experience.
Idle Thoughts

Chapter Summary

This takes place during the Shadowhunter Academy story 'Bitter Tongue' but is based off prompts from 'Born to an Endless Night.' It is mentioned at the end of 'Bitter Tongue' that Simon sees Alec sitting with Jace so I wrote Alec with Jace at the wedding.

Alec was at Helen Blackthorn and Aline Penhallow’s wedding. He had seen Simon walk off with Izzy and Clary and thought again how he really should find something to say to Simon. He knew he was hopeless at that however and let it go.

“So when’s your wedding?” Jace teased Alec hitting him in the shoulder. “Cause I was hoping I could reuse my tux.” Alec gave his parapati a very annoyed look.

It had been over a year since he and Magnus had started living together and Alec had thought about it. Had teased Magnus about it with Catarina even. Alec still wasn’t sure if Magnus would say yes even if he asked. Magnus had not taken the teasing well. And if Magnus did say yes they could only ever have a mundane or downworlder wedding. He would never get married in gold. It would mean just as much to him if Magnus was there. It would be enough to have that. Someday he thought.

“You will get married before I do,” was all Alec said. He pushed Jace as if to make him chase after Clary. “Go ask her now!” Jace knew he was joking but answered the question anyway.

“Clary says we are too young,” Jace rolled his eyes.

“Well you're not eighteen, yet so she’s kinda right.”

“Yeah but that doesn't matter,” Jace said. “I am ready for it all. I wanna teach my little golden haired whippersnappers how to fight demons.”

Again Alec noticed that he would never have a child either. No women in the picture made conceiving a child rather tricky. Stupid world he thought. Laid out just to make his life different from everyone else’s. I guess he could adopt but where would you find a child no one wanted. And for some reason he wanted to be married first. It didn’t make any sense really but some part of him put the events in that order.

“They may have red hair you know?” was all he said out loud.

“Nah,” Jace said. “Blond all the way.” Alec knew Jace well enough to know he probably wanted all his kids to look like Clary.

“So Clary given you a number yet?” Alec asked.

“What?”

“How many kids she is willing to give you?” Alec said. Jace just started.

“You have to pick a number?” Jace looked non-plussed. Alec laughed at the look on his friend’s
“With you two I doubt that will matter,” Alec said. “You will get carried away and have twelve I’m sure.” Jace hit Alec in the shoulder.

“Don’t tell Clary that!” Jace said. “She will never let me touch her again.” Alec laughed.

“I really don’t think Clary is capable of doing that,” Alec said still sniggering. “Even when you guys thought you were siblings we were like magnets.” Jace had the decency to look a little abashed. He seemed to decide the topic had been on him for too long.

"Oh yeah," Jace said. "You and Magnus weren’t so proper either. I recall a certain hickey."

"Okay okay," Alec said, surrendering. "Maybe I am just as bad."

"Darn right," Jace said. After a moment, he added. “Where’s Magnus anyway?”

“He’s busy. Some important warlock thing I think,” Alec tilted his head in a thoughtful way. “Maybe I should have paid better attention when he told me.”

“Oh,” Jace teased. “Were you guys doing something distracting when he told you he had plans?”

Alec glared at his parapati, unable to stop the blush on his face.

“I thought he just agreed,” Alec said, darkly. “That you and Clary are just as bad.”

“We did,” Jace said. “But that was too good an opportunity to pass up.”

“Sometimes I wonder why Clary even puts up with you?” Alec asked. “You are kinda a jerk.”

“Says the guy who used to be totally in looove with me,” Jace said, grinning. Stretching out the word love in the most ridiculous way possible.

“What did I ever see in you I don’t know,” Alec said, shaking his head. “Poor Clary.”

“Still think you were stupid for worrying about me finding out,” Jace said casually. “I was serious about that kiss you know.”

“What?”

“I would have kissed you to prove my point,” Jace continued.

“How did you know I wasn’t in love with you when I didn’t anyway?”

“Cause I know you,” Jace said.

“What wasn’t an answer.”

“Okay fine,” Jace said. “It was because of Clary. Once I fell in love with her and realized I was in love with her, I know how to recognize it. I knew the way you looked at me wasn’t anything like the way I looked at her.” He shrugged.

“Well I am glad one of us figured it out at least,” Alec said.

Alec turned away from Jace and looked out over the wedding. Two women getting married in gold. He had realized, once he had heard about this wedding, that it was possible for same-sex couples to
marry like this. It just wasn't possible for shadowhunters to marry downworlders like this. If he had fallen in love with a shadowhunter man instead of Magnus he could be the one getting married. He knew even as he thought it that he would rather have Magnus no matter what but still he couldn't help the ideal thought from crossing his mind. Maybe Magnus would be willing to marry him in a mundane or warlock way, and that would be enough.
Unexpected Friendship

Chapter Summary

This chapter has a little direct dialogue from the Shadowhunter Academy story 'Born to an Endless Night' mixed with my dialogue and is based on prompts from that story as well.

Magnus heard the door before he saw Alec arrive home.

"Welcome home, love," Magnus said. Alec just grumbled. Magnus noticed the way Alec was holding his arm and was instantly worried. "What's wrong?"

"Jace is stupid," Alec said. "Stupid and reckless and stupid."

"I told you to let him take the hits," Magnus said reaching for Alec's arm to anxious Alec was hurt to bother making a sarcastic comment about Alec's parabatai. "What happened?"

"Oh he didn’t do his research and just headed straight into a situation like always," Alec said. Alec’s tone shifted then to imitate Jace. "Dragon demons are extinct. It will be easy." Magnus had to admit Alec’s Jace impression was spot on.

"Will you at least let me heal your arm?"

"I put an iratze on it already, thanks," Alec said, stomping off.

Magnus could tell there was nothing he could do to prevent Alec’s foul mood. He sighed. Alec had his phone out now and Magnus suspected Jace was getting some rather rude texts.

"I am expecting Maia any minute," Magnus said. "She called this morning for help."

"Alright," Alec said not looking up from his phone.

When the buzzer went off Magnus let Maia up into his apartment only to discover Lily was with her.

"Hi Magnus," Maia said. "I hope you don’t mind but I brought Lily with me."

"By all means," Magnus said, gesturing for them to come in. "What seems to be the problem?"

"Mermaids!" Lily growled, as she sat at Magnus’s table.

"And possibly dead tourists," Maia said, sitting down next to Lily who looked really happy she was here.

"How can I help?"

"Well," Maia said. "Advice maybe? I am still really new to this leadership thing."

"Of course," Magnus said. "Why don’t you explain the problem in detail for me."

Maia launched into the explanation with little to no help from Lily. In fact Lily keep contradicting her
and made the whole thing take far longer than strictly necessary.

“Can’t we just kill the pesky mermaids and be done with it!” Lily yelled. “This whole thing is giving me a headache!”

“I don’t care about your stupid headache,” Maia yelled back. “You can’t just kill people cause they give you a headache you selfish bloodsuc—”

“Now just calm down,” Magnus said, before Maia could finish her insult. “We can work on the problem.”


“You wanted to come,” Maia said. “You said we needed help and I mentioned Magnus and you said it was a good idea.”

“You literally dragged me here.”

“That is not the point,” Maia said. “The point is the mermaids.”

“I already told you what we should do. It is the fastest way to solve the problem,” Lily said pompously.

“You can’t just kill someone, Lily!” Maia said again.

“Explain why,” Lily said.

“The Clave for one thing,” Maia yelled. “Oh and morals and decency and…”

“Oh puft,” Lily said. “The Clave won’t care unless it’s a mundane.”

“Do you know, Lily,” came a cold voice from the corner. Mangus did a double take. It was Alec. “that you spend more than half the time you are speaking baiting Magnus and Maia, instead of offering suggestions? And you make them spend about the same amount of time arguing you down. So you’re making everything last twice as long. Which means you’re wasting everyone’s time. That’s not a really efficient way for a leader to behave.”

“Nobody asked you, Shadowhunter,” Lily hissed.

“I am a Shadowhunter,” Alec said, still calm. “The issue you’re having with the mermaids. The Rio de Janeiro Institute was having the same problem a couple of years ago. I know all about it. Do you want me to tell you? Or do you want to end up with half a dozen tourists on a boat to Staten Island drowned, at least that many Shadowhunters asking you embarrassing questions, and a little voice in your head saying, ‘Wow, I wish I’d listened to Alec Lightwood when I had the chance’?”

Lily had her arms crossed over her chest, sulking.

“Don’t waste my time, Lily,” Alec said. “What do you want?”

“I want you to sit down and help me, I suppose,” Lily grumbled.

Alec sat down and calmly worked out the problem with them. Magnus was amazed. He watched and slowly realized he wasn’t needed. Alec totally had everything under control all of a sudden. Even the yelling had stopped. He got up and went to get more cookies since Maia had eaten them all.

“That could work!” Magnus heard Maia say with relief less than a hour later. Magnus was still in the
kitchen but had watched the group work intently. “Thanks Alec.”

“No problem,” Alec said. He looked at Lily who was still huffy.

“I don’t thank shadowhunters,” she said.

“Fine,” Alec said, coolly. “Good luck figuring out your next problem on your own then.” He got up from the table.

“Bye, Magnus,” Maia said, absently waving in his general direction as she and Lily left.

Once the door closed, Magnus walked over to Alec and stared at him.

“How did you do that?” he said. Alec shrugged.

“They were being stupid,” Alec said. “They are very inexperienced to be leading such huge clans of downworlders.”

“They are,” Magnus said. “But you took charge.” He pulled Alec in and started kissing his neck. “It was kinda sexy.”

“Oh yeah,” Alec said, his mood was much improved. Magnus continued his kisses along Alec’s neck until Alec too charge. Removing Magnus’s shirt swiftly Alec grabbed Magnus but the loops in his pants and dragged his over to the soft.

_____

It had been over a week and Maia and Lily hadn’t come back. Magnus was just starting to think it would be an isolated incident when they both appeared at his front door again. This time it was about pixies. Again Alec reacted to being relied upon. He got them communicating. Lily even looked calmer this time Magnus thought.

“Do you think they will come back again?” Magnus asked as the vampire and werewolf could be seen walking down the street below their front window.

“Maybe,” Alec said. Magnus turned Alec from the window to look at him.

“You love it,” Magnus said grinning at the look on Alec’s face.

“What?”

“You love that they come here for your help.”

“It is kinda flattering,” Alec said. “In a weird way.”

“In all my years I have never see a shadowhunter, werewolf and vampire work together quite like that,” he said. “You have a knack for it.”

“You think?”

“I know.”

_____

After that it was a common occurrence for Lily and Maia to appear at Magnus’s front door. Usually a couple times a month they would arrive with an emergency.
It was a Thursday evening when Magnus noticed the change in the nature of their meetings. He heard the doorbell and walked from his room to answer it only to see Alec laying out glasses for company. He blinked.

“Who’s at the door?” he asked.

“Do you mind getting the door,” Alec asked. He was still laying out glasses. Magnus walked over and opened the door. There stood Maia and Lily.

“What’s the emergency?” Magnus asked.

Lily shrugged and pushed past Magnus to get inside. Maia followed but much less rudely. She even gave Magnus an apologetic look as she passed.

Magnus watched as Lily and Maia took seats at his table, pulling out maps of New York and laying them out. He listened as the three of them debated the problems areas in the city. Trying to stop the next emergency before it happened. Lily did make some rather unpleasant werewolf jokes but the overall feeling of the gathering was productive. These people were starting to rely on each other Magnus realized.

Magnus was even more surprised when he saw the effect this group in his living room was having on New York. He sometimes came home to new faces. Downworlders and Shadowhunters alike coming to get aid from the group who had power and a willingness to cooperate and use that power to solve problems.

Magnus watch Alec mostly though. Alec didn’t realize how big a deal this was. He didn’t realize how amazing it was that this group existed. It had all been because of Alec that it did. Magnus knew Alec didn’t have a clue how remarkable his behaviour was. Alec had, whether deliberately or not, become a liaison between the nephilim and downworlders of New York City.

Company at this point was getting to be a rather common occurrence in Magnus’s life. But today had had been a rare quiet day at home with Alec. Magnus was feeling rather zen actually. When he heard a knock on his door he decided to be lazy and snapped his fingers rather than get up from his spot on the couch, where his cat was curled up on his lap.

“Ah hi Magnus,” Lily said her hand held up in front of her as it she was going to knock again. “Is Alec here?”

Magnus gestured to where Alec was standing in the kitchen.

“Where’s Maia?” Alec said walking toward the door. “I thought our next meeting was tomorrow?”

“It is but this can’t wait until tomorrow,” Lily said.

Alec sat down his expression clearly indicating he would help. Magnus always loved the way Alec did this. The way Alec could just help without ever judging the other person for needing it.

“With Maia and I working together more,” Lily said. “And working together with nephilim. Well some of the more traditional members in our clans don’t like it.”

“I see,” Alec said. “How many people in your groups think this way?”

“More than I thought,” Lily said. “I am worried someone will challenge Maia’s or my leadership. If
they do win this temporary alliance. This peace will crumble.”

“That wouldn’t be beneficially for either group,” Alec said. “Even if they are too stupid to see it. Where’s Maia?”

“One member of her pack was being particularly roudy.”

“Do you think she will be challenged?”

“I don’t know.”

“What if I went with you to the pack headquarters.”

“Not sure seeing a shadowhunter working with their leader will help the situation.”

“What do you suggest?”

“We could kill the challengers.”

Alec gave her a look Magnus recognized. Lily had called it his disappointed look before at one of their earlier meetings.

“Alright fine,” Lily said. “Scratch that plan. What do you suggest?”

Magnus listened as Lily and Alec spoke. They were both calm both working the problem as efficiently as they could.

Magnus still marveled at this. This strange new life of his. Magnus was very thankful he had lived long enough to see the twenty first century. Not only because of Alec but because of this. This huge improvement in the relations between nephilim and downworlders. Magnus was alive before the accords and he remembered all too well the horrors of it. The trophies shadowhunters kept on the walls of downworlders they are killed. After the accords it was better but this was something more. Something he never thought he would see.

“Let’s got help Maia,” Lily said, once they had agreed on a plan. Alec turned around on the couch to face Magnus kissing Magnus quickly on the check. Then he stood up and left with Lily.

______________

“It’s still feels kinda weird you know,” Lily said to Alec as they walked.

“What does?”

“All of it,” Lily said. “Coming to a shadowhunter for help. Seeing that shadowhunter kissing a warlock. So weird!”

Alec laughed. “My life is indeed rather odd.”

“I think you like it odd,” Lily said.

Alec laughed. She had come to know him quite well this last year. He wouldn’t have wanted any other life than his life with Magnus. No other love than Magnus. So she was right. He liked his life odd.

They arrived at the werewolf’s headquarters which was a chinese restaurant. Maia was indeed in a tricky situation but Lily and Alec had figured out a plan and jumped in to help. The three of them
Alec thought could solve most problems when they worked together.

Magnus had lit a fire in the grate, blue and smoke-free like usual. Alec sat next to him on the couch his head in Magnus’s lap. Magnus remembered another time they had sat like this over two years ago while Jace had been missing.

“You know,” Alec said his eyes closed while Magnus stroked his soft black hair absently. “I don’t think you have had a party since the day I met you.”

“I have you,” Magnus said casually. Alec sat up turning to read the warlocks expression.

“What do you mean?” Alec asked.

“I thought it was obvious,” Magnus said. “I only throw those parties because I was lonely.” Magnus couldn’t quite read the expression on Alec’s face then but he knew he didn’t have the words to express his feelings. Alec pulled Magnus toward him, wrapping his arms tightly around his boyfriend, and kissed him. Magnus held Alec close his hands under Alec shirt over the swell of his shoulders.

“Why didn’t you ever tell me that before,” Alec asked when they broke apart.

Magnus shrugged.

“I think you should throw a party,” Alec said. “We can co-host it.” He smiled.

“I know you aren’t a party kinda person, love,” Magnus said. “I am more than happy just being here with you. A quiet evening at home.”

“One party won’t kill me,” Alec said. “Come on. We can invite Lily and Maia.”

“You have certainly changed a lot from the shy boy who didn’t know any vampires socially who came to ask me out all those years ago.”

Alec blushed.

“Ah but thankfully that hasn’t changed,” Magnus said stroking Alec’s red cheek with the back of his hand.

“Do you miss that guy?” Alec asked. “I mean who I was before?”

“Alec,” Magnus said. “That’s a silly question.”

“It is not!” Alec said. “You are right. I have changed so much. I hardly recognized the person I was. The person you remember me as. The person you fell in love with.”

“You are the same person,” Magnus said. “Don’t worry love. You are just more confident. More understanding. More happy. These are all good things. I loved the shy insecure Alec and I love the commanding and confident Alec too.” He kissed Alec softly on the lips.

“You are of course the same,” Alec said calming down enough to settle into Magnus’s arms.

“I am not,” Magnus said absently. Like he was stating nothing of importance.

“How have you changed?”
He laughed. “So many ways. I don’t know if I can count them.”

“Try, please.”

“Alright,” Magnus said then after a moment of thought he continued. “Catarina called me a hero. I had never thought of myself as that before. I realized much later that it came from you. You are the hero Alec but I have picked it up from proximity it seems.” He smiled. “My life was always very sparsely populated but now I am used to people around all the time. Your family and friends come and go. There are downworlders/shadowhunters meeting in my living room on a regular basis. There is an entire generation of shadowhunters who I care for. Jace, Clary Izzy and Simon. I worry for their children and their children’s children. And it’s scary. I have never gotten this mixed up with shadowhunters before. You are such fragile creatures. My life has changed so completely. I have told you my life, written it down as best I can. But can you understand how totally you have changed me?”

“I think so,” Alec said. “It’s like the way you have changed me.”

“Exactly,” Magnus said. Alec snuggled closer into Magnus on the couch. It was quite a few moments before anyone spoke.

“I still think you should have a party,” Alec said.

“If you want,” Magnus said.

“I think it could be fun,” Alec said, yawning. “I will ask Lily and Maia at the next meeting.”

Magnus looked down at Alec snuggled up against him and stroked Alec’s face with his hands. Alec closed his eyes leaning into the caress.

They sat together as the fire slowly died. Magnus stroked Alec’s cheek as he slowly fell asleep in Magnus’s lap.

--------------

Maia and Lily of course thought a party was a great idea and before Magnus knew it he was organizing one. The guest list was at least a bit nicer than his old parties. Maia and Lily were coming along with some of the members of their respective pack and coven. Alec had also invited Catarina. Since their first official meeting the two had become good friends but to Magnus’s relief had never teased him quite so badly as that first time.

Magnus noticed as the planning continued, and Izzy, Jace, Clary were invited. that this was going to be a rather strange party indeed. A mix of shadowhunters and downworlders at a social event. Jace probably wouldn’t even put holy water in any vampire bikes this time. Probably.

The day of the event arrived and Magnus was still a little dubious about the whole thing.

“You are sure about this right?” Magnus said to Alec before their first guest arrived. “Cause its not too late to call the whole thing off and run off to India or something.”

“Seeing you in a sari once was enough I think,” Alec said, laughing.

“It wasn’t that bad,” Magnus said but Alec gave him a look that clearly said it was. “Oh alright. I promise not to make you go out in public with me in a sari again. Happy now?”
“Always,” Alec said, giving Magnus a peck on the lips as he spoke. Magnus didn’t have time to do more than swoon a little before the door burst open and Lily announced her presence. She was followed by about five or six other vampires. Once they were through the door Maia arrived with about the same number of werewolves. Magnus watched as the shadowhunters arrived followed by Catarina.

As the party started without any riots or disasters Magnus was suddenly feeling more in a party mood. He snapped his fingers and glitter started falling from the ceiling. Magnus saw Alec give him a look of deep exasperation from across the room and laughed as he headed over to the bar.

He had agreed to be the bartender while Alec played host. Magnus suspected Alec wanted to play host and had given up the job eagerly.

As Magnus poured drinks both, blood and regular, he watched in slight surprise at how smoothly the party was going. Alec was good at this like he had been good at making Lily and Maia work together in the first place. Magnus was starting to wonder if there was anything Alec wasn’t good at.

Lily came up to the bar then. From the way she was moving Magnus could tell she was slightly drunk and she had glitter in her hair.

“’I like Alec so much,” Lily said. “Especially when he gets snippy with me. He reminds me of Raphael.”

“How dare you,” Magnus said teasing. “You are speaking of the man I love.”

Magnus stopped moving. The glass in his hand frozen in place. He had forgotten for a moment that Raphael was dead. Had spoken of his friend as if he were still alive.

“Well, I loved Raphael,” Lily said. She had been Raphael’s back up for decades and Magnus knew she had been utterly loyal to him. “And Raphael never loved anyone, I know that much. But he was my leader. If I compare anybody to Raphael, it’s a compliment. I like Alec. And I like Maia.”

Lily didn’t know who Raphael had loved. All the time working with Lily and he had never told her about his family. His mortal family had been sacred to the vampire.

Lily’s expression changed; she regarded Magnus with her dark eyes. “I’ve never been terribly fond of you. Except Raphael always said you were an idiot, but you could be trusted.”

That was a fairly accurate description on Raphael’s opinion on Magnus he was sure. The idiot who could be trusted. Magnus missed his friend. It was nice knowing that Lily did do.

“How do you want another drink?” Magnus asked. “I can be trusted to make you another drink.”

“Bring on the party O neg, I’m feeling frisky,” Lily said, turning from Magnus and staring off into the party.

Magnus got the canter of blood out and poured her drink.

“I never thought I’d have to lead the clan,” Lily said. “I thought Raphael would always be there. If I didn’t have the sessions with Alec and Maia, I wouldn’t know what to do half the time. A werewolf and a Shadowhunter. Do you think Raphael would be ashamed?”

Magnus slid Lily’s drink across the bar to her.

“I don’t,” he said. She smiled and he saw a flash of fangs beneath her plum-colored lipstick. Lily
picked up her drink and wandered back into the party toward Alec.

It was an unexpected friendship Lily and Alec, but Magnus’s suspected a very beneficial.

“Are you having a good time, love?” Magnus asked Alec when he came over to the bar a little while later.

“Yes,” Alec said. “This is fun.”

“And even better than that,” Magnus said. “None of the guests have killed each other.”

“Very funny,” Alec said. “I only invited shadowhunters I could trust for a reason you know.”

Magnus chuckled while he fixed Alec a drink.

“This isn’t like any of your old parties is it,” Alec said a little disappointed.

“No,” Magnus said. “It is far better.” All traces of disappointment on Alec’s face vanished as he smiled.

“Here is your drink my gorgeous host,” Magnus said, holding Alec’s drink out to him. “Your guests await.”
Blue Bundle of Joy

Chapter Summary

This chapter is Alec's point of view of the story 'Born to an Endless Night' from the Shadowhunter Academy Series which is from Magnus and Simon's point of view in the Shadowhunter Academy Series story. All the dialogue where Simon or Magnus are in the scene is direct dialogue that was not written by me.

Alec awoke in a strange cold bed. He was in Alicante and Magnus was already gone just like he had promised. Alec sighed. It was strangely kind of Magnus to politely avoid his parents though Alec hated it. Alec dressed and went down for breakfast.

“Good morning,” Izzy said brightly. Alec knew she was excited to talk to Simon later. They had a phone date. Alec hadn’t spoken more than two words to Simon in years, and he didn’t know what to do about it.

“Good morning, Izzy,” Alec said. “Where’s dad?” His sister gestured to the living room where Robert Lightwood was sitting.

There were so many things Alec wanted to say to his father--stop making the love of my life so uncomfortable that he can’t be in the house for starters--but Alec couldn’t say any of them.

“What’s for breakfast?” Alec asked. His father smiled and putting down his book he turned and faced his son.

“What ever you like Alec,” Robert smiled. “It is so rare I have both my children here with me I am up for anything.”

His father’s smile was so sincere. Alec decided to enjoy the morning. He decided to forget all the bad times and focus on breakfast with his family like Magnus would have wanted. Izzy joined them in the kitchen and decided she was cooking.

“No,” Alec said firmly.

“Why not?”

“I don’t want to be sick,” Alec said.

“I am way better than I was before,” Izzy complained. “I even got mom to give me lessons!”

“How did you manage that,” his father asked. “Your mother never wanted you to be domestic.”

“I made her,” Izzy said. “It is just so annoying how everyone hates my cooking!” Alec chuckled.

“Just let me cook,” Alec said. “Okay.”

“You cook?” Robert asked.

“Yeah,” Alec said. “Magnus is a hopeless cook so I took the job.” If Alec had been alone with Izzy,
he would have made a joke about how Mangus couldn’t steal all their meals, but his father was here. Alec feared he had already said too much.

“You were always the responsible one,” Robert said, still smiling. “Always taking on anything that needed doing.” The slight tension in Alec’s shoulders relaxed. Maybe he hadn’t said too much.

Alec headed to the fridge to do an inventory of what they had that he could make for breakfast, but his father cut him off.

“As wonderful as it is that you want to cook Alec,” Robert said. “I am cooking. You kids can just sit and watch me.”

Alec sat in the kitchen next to Izzy, who kept checking her phone, and watching his father make waffles.

They sat and ate in relative silence. Some small amounts of conversations of no real importance were exchanged. Alec was relieved to find the atmosphere wasn’t awkward. When Alec left he didn’t say where he was going. His father knew Alec was going to stay with Magnus at the Academy while Magnus lectured there but Alec didn’t want to remind his father of this either way.

When Alec entered the Academy, he saw Magnus talking to a girl. An attractive girl who was giving off some rather flirtatious body language. Alec remembered a time when this would have made him crazy. Very very crazy. Before he truly had time to ponder the ways in which his insecurity had changed Alec was greeted a student.

“You’re Alec Lightwood,” the mundane Indian boy said. Alec nodded. “I’m Sunil. I know all about you. So brave coming out like that and then standing by what you did. And not to mention going to Edom, a hell dimension, to save downworlders!”

“Hi,” Alec said lamely.

“Sorry I am rambling,” Sunil said. “It’s just that you inspire me, and I am kinda nervous talking to you.”

“I know the feeling,” Alec said. Sunil looked shocked.

“But you’re Alec Lightwood.”

“Doesn’t mean I am not nervous sometimes,” Alec said.

“Wow,” Sunil murmured, then shook his head. “I just wanted to tell you that you make me understand that there are many different ways to be a shadowhunter. That you can be a shadowhunter and still be you know… you and I just umm…. wanted to say thanks.”

Alec didn’t know what to say. You’re welcome seemed kinda arrogant. Like he had done it all for the attention or something.

“What kind of shadowhunter do you wanna be?” Alec asked the recruit.

“I wanna be me, but help others at the same time just like you,” the boy said. Alec smiled at him, again stunned into silence. How had he become such an inspiration he didn’t know.

Alec saw Magnus then and couldn’t help but be distracted. Their eyes met, and Alec felt himself smile involuntarily. Magnus headed toward him through the crowd.
“I just wanted to say thanks,” Sunil said again and left quickly nodding to Magnus as he did so.

“Do you know him?” Magnus asked.

“No,” Alec said. “But he knew all about me. We were talking about—all the ways there are to be a Shadowhunter, you know?”

“Check you out,” Magnus said. “My famous boyfriend, inspiration to the masses.”

“So, that girl was flirting with you,” Alec said with a smile changing the subject. It had been very flattering being recognized and praised like that. He could feel a slight warmth in his face. But Alec didn’t want to think too much about this. It was kinda weird.


“Well, it has been known to happen. I’ve been around for a long time,” Magnus said. “I’ve also been gorgeous for a long time.”

“Is that so?” Alec said, grinning. Magnus never used to tease him like this. Alec remembered how careful Magnus had been during the beginning of their relationship. Sometimes too careful. Thinking Alec didn’t care as much as him. I mean really! Though in Magnus’s defense Alec was horrible at talking about his feelings.

If Alec had caught Magnus being flirted with like this back, then Magnus would have spent a very anxious ten minutes trying to make sure Alec wasn’t upset all the while resisting the urge not to be too sappy or else scare Alec off. It all seemed rather silly to Alec now. Teasing was fun, and he was getting better at it all the time. Their relationship had become so much easier during the last few years. It had been bliss before, but now it was a secure bliss.

“I’m in high demand,” Magnus continued. “What are you going to do about it?”

“This,” Alec said, reaching out he tugged Magnus to him by his robe. Alec leaned back against the door frame and pulled Magnus with him. Kissing the warlock slowly.

Alec felt Magnus’s lean body press up against his and remembered waking up without Magnus his morning. Missing him.

“Is our room ready?” Alec whispered into Magnus’s ear.

“Good idea,” Magnus whispered back, pulling out of the kiss, but taking Alec’s hand. Alec let Magnus lead him through rooms and up many flights of stairs before they entered the attic suite that was to be their home for the next few weeks.

When Alec walked in he recognized most of his own furniture. It seems Magnus had already redecorated. Alec also noticed some food ideas that were probably not store bought but decided not to worry about that right now. Once the door closed behind them, Alec spun the warlock around and pressed him against the wall. Kissing him in a much less publicly appropriate way than he had downstairs. Alec could hear the soft moans coming from Magnuss’s throat as he kissed his neck and chest. Alec had already removed Magnus’s shirt. Magnus didn’t seem to think this was fair and quickly got his hands on Alec’s shirt and flung it across the room with a grin on his face. Laughing Alec dragged Magnus over to the bed. While Magnus worked on removed the rest of Alec’s clothes Alec working on removing Magnus’s. It was a tie Alec decided while he kissed his naked boyfriend lying underneath him.

Alec froze. He sensed a presence and turned his head to see Simon. Simon of all people standing
staring at them. Alec was suddenly so grateful he had thrown a sheet over them.

Alec was still frozen, but he felt Magnus turn and ask Simon with an amused tone, “Can we help you?”

“Oh my God,” Simon said. “Oh wow. Oh wow, I am really sorry.”

“Please leave,” Alec said, trying to control his voice. This was not the situation he wanted anyone to walk in on him. Anyone! Let alone the person he had failed to talk to for years because he sucked at emotions.

“Right!” Simon said. “Of course!” He paused. “I can’t leave.”

“Believe me,” Alec said. “You can.”

“There is an abandoned baby on the front steps of the Academy and I think it’s a warlock!” Simon blurted out.

“Why do you think the baby is a warlock?” Magnus asked. Alec could tell this situation wasn’t phasing Magnus in the slightest. Magnus was composed as if Simon had walked in on them eating dinner.

“Um, because the baby is navy blue,” Simon said.

“That is fairly compelling evidence,” Magnus admitted. “Could you give us a moment to get dressed?”

“Yes! Of course!” Simon said. “Again, I’m very sorry.”

“Go now,” Alec suggested his face so red he could feel the blush down his arms. Simon went, closing the door behind him.

“Relax love,” Magnus said. “It isn’t the end of the world. These things happen.” Alec rolled off Magnus and throw his arms over his face, but he heard Magnus’s chuckle and the creak that meant Magnus was getting out of bed.


“I am going to go down,” Magnus said, still with the trace of a laugh in his voice. “Come join me when you have got yourself sorted out.” Alec heard the door open and close. He groaned and rolled out of bed to dress. Once Alec had his clothes on he headed out the door after Magnus.

Alec followed cutting through the crowd of people as politely and quickly as he could to get to Magnus, who was holding a little blue baby.

“This is the warlock child Simon was talking about,” Alec said quietly.

“As you see,” Magnus said. “The baby would not be able to pass for a mundane. His mother clearly does not want him. He is in a nest of the Nephilim, and I cannot think, among faeries or Shadowhunters or werewolves, where in the world he could possibly belong.”

Alec could hear the strain in Magnus’s voice. He could image only too well what this reminded Magnus of. Alec put his hand on Magnus’s upper arm, just above the elbow. He wanted to take away the fraying edge in Magnus’s voice. Wanted to reassure him. Alec always hated thinking about
Magnus as a scare lonely child.

Alec looked down at the baby then. An abandoned baby no one wanted. Every child should feel wanted. Every child deserved to be loved.

“Can I hold him?” Alec asked. Alec saw the surprise on Magnus’s face for just a second before he handed the infant over.

Alec was wearing an old sweater that had once been dark green but like most of his clothes it had faded. The soft material though seemed to sooth the baby because the unhappy noises it had been making since Alec had arrived stopped. Alec gazed down the baby in his arms, and the baby gazed back at him. Alec was stunned that the baby had settled into his arms so effortlessly. The child seemed to fit there somehow. Alec couldn’t take his eyes off the infant's face.

“Should we contact the Clave and put this matter before them, or what?” It was a woman who had spoken. She was probably in charge of the school from the commanding way she spoke, but Alec was still too focused on the baby to care. That is until Magnus reacted to her words.

“I do not intend to leave a warlock child to the tender mercies of the Clave,” Magnus declared, his voice extremely cold. “We have this, don’t we, Alec?”

Alec glanced up as if out of a daze. Did Magnus mean that? Was Magnus thinking what he was thinking? Could they do this?

“Yeah,” Alec said. “We do.” He didn’t want to let go of this baby. And he definitely didn’t want to give it over to the Clave. Magnus put a hand on Alec’s upper arm, and Alec drew strength from the contact, his eyes moved back down again to fix on the infant. He suspected the baby was less than a year old. His eyes were open and curious about the world. Alec walked, the child still in his arms, back to the attic.

Was it possible? The hope in his chest was sitting next to the crushing fear. What would Magnus think about it? Would he be any good at it? What if he messed up?

Alec walked into the attic suite, his thoughts a jumbled mess. Magnus wordless conjured up a crib and Alec placed the baby into it. For a moment, Alec just stared at the baby. He could sense Magnus standing behind him, but he didn’t know how to say any of the things he was thinking and before he got the chance the baby started crying.

Alec picked the baby up right away and started walking back and forth rocking him and murmuring softly. But the baby kept crying. Somewhere in Alec’s mind, almost drowned out by the child’s screams, was the horrible thought that he wasn’t doing something right.

Magnus summoned formula and Alec was too tired and anxious to care who paid for it. Once Magnus had tested the milk, Alec tried to feed the baby. He drank, but once he was done, he was crying gain. Alec never put the baby down. He just walked back and forth holding him. Trying to comfort the poor soul who had been abandoned by the person he wanted more than anything. His mother. Alec couldn’t be a mother. He was so overwhelmed. All he wanted was to sooth the child’s cries.

The cries continued for hours and hours; Alec forgot about the rest of the world. The infant's cries had drown everything out. The sun was setting by the time the cries finally stopped. The baby was in his crib and Alec lay down beside the crib half asleep already. Magnus told him he was going for a walk and Alec nodded before he passed out.
When Alec awoke, he knew he hadn’t slept for that long. In one day this child had worn him out. Maybe he couldn’t do this after all.

Alec’s thoughts drifted back to Simon. Simon who he hadn’t talked to for years. Simon whom he owed his happiness too. Simon, who his sister loved. What could he say to Simon? Izzy had spoken to Simon on the phone just yesterday. Would Simon tell Izzy about this child and what would his family think?

A knock on the door pulled Alec out of his circular thoughts. He went to open it with the baby in his arms. It was Izzy. But she had brought a few other people with her.

“Dad?” Alec said, surprised.

“Alec,” Robert said. “Izzy told us. This is him?” Robert wasn’t looking at Alec. He was watching the baby in Alec’s arms.

“He’s so sweet!.”

“Mom?” Alec said.

“Oh Alec,” Maryse said, joyfully. “Can I hold him?!” She hadn’t even entered the room yet, but her arms were held to take the baby. Alec instinctively held the baby closer to his chest. Her face was too eager to be safe.

“Come on in guys,” Alec said.

“I know you needed help,” Izzy said, smiling. “When Simon explained what had happened to me. So I rounded up the troops.”

“We are here for you bud,” Jace said coming in behind Izzy. Clary following right behind him. Alec was surprised to see Clary, but he figured Jace had dragged her along.

Alec surrendered the baby to his mother. He had become worried if he didn’t she would resort to prying the baby out of his cold dead arms. And the baby needed a change of clothes. He knew Magnus had magicked up some baby clothes last night at the same time he had summoned up the crib and formula. But where were they?

“Aren’t you the cutest little thing!” Maryse cooed. “Little blue darling!”

“Mom,” Alec said, returning with the bright orange onesie in his hand. “What did Izzy tell you?”

“That you had a baby,” Maryse said, but from the look on Alec face she added. “Or were thinking about having one.”


“He is the same blue as your eyes,” Robert said standing over Maryse’s shoulder. Alec noticed that his parents hadn’t stood this close together in years. There was usually this awkward presenced between them when they were in a room together but the baby in his mother’s arms seemed to disperse it somehow.

“We were talking on the way over here,” Maryse said. “You could call him Max.”

Alec smiled despite himself. He liked the name. Though he had an uneasy feeling in his stomach about Magnus not being here.
His sister caught Alec attention. She had returned from his and Magnus’s temporary bedroom holding a shirt.

“What are you going to do with that?”

“It’s called babyproofing,” Izzy said happily and to Alec’s surprise she starting ripping up the shirt.

“Izzy!” Alec said.

“What?” Izzy said. “Magnus has a bunch of these!”

“Yeah but,” Alec said.

“And they don't look that good on him anyway. I left all his nice shirts alone.”

"Izzy," Alec continued his protest. "You can't just destroy people's clothes!"

"And when we are done here we are going to baby proof your apartment."

“Are you going to use Magnus’s clothes for that too?” Izzy shrugged. “Please don’t Izzy.”

“I have a key,” Izzy said.

“Yes which I gave you for emergencies,” Alec said. “Not to destroy my boyfriend's clothes.”

Izzy just grinned and ran over to Jace. Alec heard her start to give Jace orders to fix the floor. He groaned.

Alec was too busy getting, maybe his baby back from his mother to stop the destruction of Magnus’s clothes. Alec could see Jace laying on the ground plugging holes with strips of Magnus’s shirt out of the corner of his eye as he prying the baby from his mother's grip.

Once Alec had managed to get the baby back from his mother he dressed the baby in the new clothes. Alec had thought about this before, about adopting a child, but there was one thing he wanted before this. It was a silly thing in many ways these days especially for same-sex couples but Alec couldn’t help it. He was a traditional guy.

Once the baby was dressed Alec noticed his family had become the very definition of chaos. Alec stood in the middle of the room, the baby in his arms. His mother was waving a bottle around in her hands and saying something about feeding schedules. His father’s booming voice could be heard but there were too many other voices mixing with his for Alec to listen to what he was saying. Izzy was standing on a stool directing Jace who was still laying on the ground. Clary was sitting watching Jace with an amused look on her face.

Then Alec saw Magnus. He was standing in the doorway taking in the scene like he had just arrived. Alec barely had time to register this before he heard another familiar voice.

“LIGHTWOOD!” Lily charged in her eyes fixed on Alec. Alec suspected she hadn’t noticed the scene at all. But that was very Lily of her.

Alec watched the confused looks on his parents faces and she dismissed them. She hadn’t come here to talk to the Inquisitor or the head of the New York Institute.

Alec focused on Lily. If she had bothered to come to Idris to speak with him, then she must have been some kind of emergency back in New York.
“Alec! You know that faerie dealer, Mordecai?” Lily said. “He’s been selling fruit to mundanes at the edge of Central Park. Again! He’s at it again! And then Elliott bit a mundane who had partaken.” Alec relaxed. The problem wasn’t so big. Lily ignored his parents continued questions and concerns.

“Elliott performed a dance called the Dance of the Twenty-Eight Veils in Times Square,” Lily continued. "It is on YouTube. Many commenters described it as the most boring erotic dance ever performed in the history of the world. I have never been so embarrassed in my unlife. I’m thinking of quitting being leader of the clan and becoming a vampire nun.”

“As the current head of the New York Institute,” Maryse said with some firmness in her voice but Alec was surprised how hesitant she seemed. He was so used to Lily and Maia coming to him for assistance now he forgot how weird it was to others. “If there is illegal Downworlder activity happening, it should be reported to me.”

“I do not talk to Nephilim about Downworlder business,” Lily said severely.

His parents swung their heads to stare at Alec, but Lily waved her hand dismissively.

“Except for Alec, he’s a special case. The rest of you Shadowhunters just come in, lay down your precious Law, and chop off people’s heads. We Downworlders can handle our business ourselves. You Nephilim can stick to chopping off demons’ heads and I will consult with you as soon as the next great evil occurs, instead of the next great annoyance, which will occur probably on Tuesday, and which I, Maia, and Alec will deal with. Thank you. Please stop interrupting me. Alec, can these people even be trusted?”

“They’re my parents,” Alec said. He wasn’t sure if a yes or no answer to that question was in his best interests. Either way, he was likely to offend someone. “I know about the faerie fruit. The fey have been taking more and more chances lately. I already sent a message to Maia. She’s got Bat and some other boys prowling the precincts of the park. Bat’s friends with Mordecai; he can reason with him. And you keep Elliott away from the park. You know how he is with faerie fruit. You know he bit that mundie on purpose.”

“It could have been an accident,” Lily muttered.

“Oh, it could have been his seventeenth accident? He has to stop or he’s going to lose control under the influence and kill somebody,” Alec said with a very skeptical look. “He didn’t kill the man, did he?”

“No,” Lily said sullenly. “I stopped Elliott in time. I knew you’d kill him, and then I knew you’d give me your disappointed look.” She paused. “You’re sure the werewolves have this in hand?”

“Yes,” Alec said. “You didn’t need to charge to Idris and spill Downworlder business in front of my whole family.”

“If they’re your family, they know you can handle a little thing like this,” Lily said dismissively. Alec was flattered. When Lily said stuff like this with that casual air, it meant more somehow. Like it, was such an obvious thing he saying it was the very definition of pointless.

Alec remembered when he first met Lily. He had been on a date with Magnus, and she had come over with Raphael. At the time, Alec had just worried Raphael would tell his parents he was out with Magnus. Alec had never dreamed she would become his friend. Life sure could surprise you sometimes. And speaking of surprises, it was only then Lily noticed the baby in Alec’s arms.

“You’re holding a baby,” Lily said. “Hello, baby.” Lily came closer and hovered over the child. Her
fangs out. Alec was not terribly proud of his family’s reaction to this. Jace got up on his feet, eyes intend on Lily. Alec’s parents and sister put their hands on their weapons.

Did none of them remember that his baby was also a downworlder? And that Lily had come here to seek Alec’s help? Why would she attack the baby he was holding in front of a bunch of his crazy over-protective family? Nephilim family no less! Did they think she was stupid?

Alec was glad Lily remained unaware that his family was mobilizing to stop her from trying to entertain the baby. Alec looked out at this family and willed them to catch a hint. He shook his head in a small but what he hoped was a firm way.

Alec saw his family relax and was grateful they could at least listen to him. The baby was giggling happily at Lily’s fangs. Alec noticed Lily was quite good at this. At make the baby smile.

“What?” Lily asked. She had strange look on her face. Alec had never seen the vampire shy before. “I always liked children, when I was alive. People said I was good with them.” She laughed. “It’s been a while.”

“That’s great,” Alec said. “You’ll be willing to babysit occasionally, then.”

“Ha-ha, I’m the head of the New York vampire clan, and I’m much too important,” Lily told him. “But I’ll see him when I drop by your place.”

Alec would get her to babysit. He was sure of it. She wasn’t so very busy. Besides, without him and Maia, she would be way busier. She owed him. Alec smiled at the thought and found his gaze once again fixed on the baby. Lily’s as well. The two of them had their heads bent low over the infant and were murmuring. Alec was amazed by the warm feeling the child’s giggles created in him.

“It occurs to me that I might be intruding,” Lily said when she pulled her head back and took in the room.

“Oh really?” Isabelle said, her arms crossed. “Do you think?”

“Sorry, Alec,” Lily said. “See you in New York. Come back quick or some fool will burn the place down. Good-bye, Magnus, random other Lightwoods. Bye, baby. Good-bye, little baby.” Lily stood on her tiptoes and kissed Alec’s cheek before she left the room.

“I do not like that vampire’s attitude,” Robert said in the silence following Lily’s departure.

“Lily’s all right,” Alec said. He tried to sound mild. Alec didn’t want to upset his dad, but he wanted his dad to understand that Lily, in some strange twist of fate, was his friend.

Alec saw Jace was back down on the floor again taking orders from Izzy. Magnus seemed to inquire as to why. Alec moved closer to hear what they were saying. The look on Magnus’s face was worrying him.

“You did what?” Magnus said. He looked almost dizzy. Alec suspected Magnus had learned of his clothes sacrifice.

“We’re child-proofing the whole suite,” Izzy said from atop her stool where she was still giving Jace orders. “If you could call this a suite. This whole Academy is a baby death trap. After we get finished here, we’re going to childproof your loft.”

“You’re not allowed in our apartment,” Magnus said.
“Alec gave me a set of keys that says different,” Isabelle said.

“I did do that,” Alec said. “I did give her keys. Forgive me, Magnus, I love you, I did not know she was going to be like this.” He felt bad. Poor Magnus had not volunteered his wardrobe for this.

Alec had never said ‘I love you’ to Magnus in front of his parents before. But somehow it wasn’t bothering him. The child in his arms changed the whole feeling in the room somehow.

“Why are you being like this?” Magnus asked Isabelle.

“Think about it,” Izzy said. “We had to deal with the crevices. The baby could crawl around and get his hand or his foot stuck in a crevice! He could be hurt. You don’t want the baby to get hurt, do you?”

“No,” Magnus said. “Nor do I intend to tear my whole life into strips and rearrange it because of a baby.”

Both Alec’s parents laughed at his but Alec started to worry. What if Magnus didn’t want to try and do this with him?

“Oh, I remember thinking that way,” Maryse said. “You’ll learn, Magnus.” Alec was happy to hear the note of fondness in his mother’s voice when she spoke to Magnus. He had never heard it directed at Magnus before. It was wonderful.

“I expected this,” Izzy said. “Simon told me all about the baby on the phone. I knew you guys would be stunned and overwhelmed. So I got hold of Mom, and she contacted Jace, and Jace was with Clary, and we all came right away to pitch in.”

“It’s really good of you,” Alec said. Alec was so touched his family had just shown up like this. To help him. He hadn’t even asked, but they had come.

“Oh, it’s our pleasure,” Maryse said sweetly her hands outstretched for the baby again. “What do you say you let me hold the baby? I’m the one in the room with the most experience with babies, after all.”

“That’s not true, Alec,” Robert said. “That is not true! I was very involved with all of you when you were young. I’m excellent with babies.”

Alec blinked. His dad had appeared at his side with lightning speed to one up his mother about who was better with babies. His parents continued their debate about this, but Alec heard Magnus's voice over the others.

“I need to sit down,” Magnus said in a hollow voice. Alec turned and saw Magnus was holding the door frame for support. Alec was momentarily distracted. That had not been the reaction Alec had hoped for. Was Magnus okay?

Jace came to Alec’s aid like he always did and took the baby before Alec’s parents pounced. Alec placed the baby in Jace’s arms so he had two hands to ward off his parents. He was started to worry the baby was feeling crowded and overwhelmed.

“Mom and Dad,” Alec said. “Maybe don’t crowd him,”

Everyone moved in unison when Jace almost dropped the baby. Alec seconded guessed his decision to let Jace hold the baby for only a second before he saw that Jace had kept a good grip on the baby all along, despite the baby’s sudden wriggle.
“He’s fine,” Jace said once the look of fear faded from his face. “He’s tough.” Jace started cooing to the baby and Alec’s mother went over to try and get the baby from him.

Alec listened to his family and Magnus talk about the baby. His attention half on Magnus’s reactions and half on the baby. Okay more like almost entirely on the baby and a little on Magnus. They were talking about names.

“Max Lightwood,” Izzy’s voice rang clear above all the others. There was a long silence following his. It was like everyone was trying to see how Magnus would react. Alec watched Magnus then too and saw shock and awe on his face but he couldn’t tell what had shocked him. They needed to talk about this.

“Or if you don’t like that . . . Michael. Michael’s a nice name,” his dad said when Magnus didn’t say anything.

“Or you could hyphenate,” Izzy said. “Lightwood-Bane or Bane-Lightwood?”

Alec remembered his Max and all the ways he had failed his brother. Thinking of naming his son after Max brought a smile back to his face. He reached out and touched the baby in Jace’s arms. Alec felt the baby curl his tiny fingers around his own, and it warmed his heart.

“Alec and I haven’t talked about it yet, and we need to,” Alec said quietly but with authority. It was not fair to Magnus that he was getting everything thrown at him like this. “But I was thinking maybe Max as well.”

Alec saw his parents nod. He saw Magnus finally sit down like he had threaten to before. But Alec’s gaze was fixed on the child. The little blue baby.

Alec didn’t have long to stare in awe of the baby however until Izzy seizing her chance snatched him with a bottle in her hand. Once Alec was satisfied that Izzy was doing fine in her new task his eyes drifted to Magnus.

Magnus was sitting on the same chair he had collapsed into before. His face blank. It worried Alec. What was Magnus thinking?

Worry was not his strongest emotion however as his family took over. Alec watched with a warm family feeling he hadn’t had in a long time. And this one was different somehow. That family feeling of him, Izzy, Jace and his parents happy when he was young was different than this feeling. This feeling was better somehow. More his own.

After feeding the baby Izzy left to see Simon. Alec saw Clary speaking to Jace before the two of them left. But not before Jace came over and gave Alec a hug and a wink.

Alec’s parents, on the other hand, were an endless supply of baby advice.

“You should stick to a schedule,” Robert was saying. “It’s hard, but it gives the baby a sense of structure and security.”

“Always sleep when the baby is sleeping,” Maryse said. “Or you will never sleep.”

“Yes but you can take shifts,” his father continued. “One parent sleeps and then the other. You don’t see much of each other it’s true but sleep is important.”

“And never underestimate the importance of a diaper disposal system,” his mother continued. “You have a dirty diaper in one hand and a clean one in the other. You put the dirty one down and before
you know it the baby has opened his dirty diaper and thrown it across the room.” Alec grimaced. "Ick! But his mother laughed.

“Alright now Lightwoods,” Magnus said. “It’s time to go.”

“Oh but,” Maryse said.

“No buts,” Magnus said with more force. “It’s midnight!”

Alec watched as Magnus shooed his parents out the door with relief. He had been so glad they had come but he was so exhausted. Alec was pretty sure at this point it was his family that had drained him more than the baby!

Alec stumbled over to the bed already half asleep and passed out instantly. The baby was in his crib. The baby was fine.

When Alec awoke, he could tell it wasn’t quite morning yet. But he did feel like he had slept for several hours at least. He opened his eyes and saw Magnus leaning over the baby’s crib. Oh right, Magnus. He hadn’t talked to Magnus about this yet.

Alec put his hand on Magnus’s shoulder. He couldn’t read the look on the warlock’s face.

“If you thought I was asking you to keep the baby,” Magnus said. “I wasn’t.” And Alec suddenly realized how much he had been counting on those words. Magnus had said they had this. Like he and Alec could do this. Alec felt his eyes widen in surprise. He didn’t speak but there was a sinking feeling in his stomach.

“You’re . . . still really young,” Magnus said. “I’m sorry if sometimes it seems as if I do not remember that. It’s strange to me—being immortal means both being young and being old are strange to me. I know I must seem strange to you sometimes.”

“You do,” Alec said. He leaned forward one hand gripping the side of the crib and kissed Magnus softly before adding, “And I never want anything but this. I never want a less strange love.” He knew he needed Magnus no matter what. Magnus was his home.

“But you don’t have to be scared I would ever leave you,” Magnus said. “You don’t have to be scared of what will happen to the baby or that I will be hurt because the baby—is a warlock, and was not wanted. You do not have to feel trapped. You do not have to be scared, and you do not have to do this.”

Alec was surprised by Magnus’s reasons. They were so wrong. He turned to face Magnus before he spoke.

“What if I want to?” Alec said. He was a shadowhunter after all. Nephilim knew they might die young so they lived young too. Alec remembered how he had once felt trapped. Trapped within himself and believed with his whole being he would never love, never have a family. Never be himself. He wasn’t trapped now. He had Magnus and his place in the world as the connection between the Institute and the Downworlders. He told Magnus this and that he wasn’t scared of any of the things Magnus had said.

“What are you scared of, then?” Magnus said, after taking a deep breath.

Alec voiced the worries that had been there in his mind since he had held the baby. Worries that he wasn’t good enough. He had failed his little brother so what gave him the right to think he could be a parent? Jace had been the one Max had liked after all. Alec had been so jealous of their relationship.
Alec had thought that once Max was older, he would have gone on missions with them and learned his older brother wasn’t boring and good for nothing. Max would have known then he could have relied on Alec.

“He was able to count on you,” Magnus said, once Alec had explained his thoughts. “I know that. He knew that. Nobody who has ever met you could doubt it.”

“He never even knew that I’m gay,” Alec said. “Or that I love you. I wish he could have met you.”

“I wish I could have met him,” Magnus said. “But he knew you. He loved you. You know that, don’t you?”

“I do know that,” Alec said. “I just . . . I always wished I could be more for him.”

“You always try to be more, for everyone you love,” Magnus said. “You don’t see how your whole family turns to you, how they rely on you. I rely on you. Even Lily relies on you, for God’s sake. You love the people you love so much that you want to be an impossible ideal for them. You don’t realize that you are more than enough.”

Alec shrugged. Magnus saw him sometimes as if he was perfect. Alec knew he wasn’t, but that didn’t stop Magnus’s words from warming his heart as he finally answered Magnus’s question directly.

“You asked me what I was scared of. I’m scared he won’t like me,” Alec said. “I’m scared I’ll let him down. But I want to try to be there for him. I want him. Do you?”

“I didn’t expect him,” Magnus said. “I didn’t expect anything like this to come, for me. Even if I thought sometimes about what it might be like if you and I did have a family, I thought it would not be for years. But yes. Yes, I want to try as well.”

The sinking feeling in Alec’s stomach was suddenly a soaring feeling. He felt great relief and a smile spread across his face as he looked at Magnus over his son’s crib. Alec it seemed could have everything he ever wanted after all. Well, almost everything.

“It is quick,” Alec said. There was one more thing that he wanted. Had wanted for a while now. “I thought about having a family, but I guess I always thought . . . Well, I guess I never expected anything like this to happen before we got married.”

“What?” Magnus asked. Alec studied his face and found only genuine shock. He fixed his gaze on Magnus and waited for his answer.

“Alec,” Magnus said. “My Alec. You have to know that’s impossible.”

Alec’s heart plummeted again. Even after the way Magnus had almost fell over when Alec teased him about marriage. Even thought Magnus had never once brought up the idea in all their time together. Even so Alec had been more sure of Magnus answer than he had realized. The rejection shocked him. Before Alec had time to worry why Magnus didn’t want him, the warlock started speaking again. The words tumbling out of him very fast.

“Shadowhunters can marry Downworlders, in Downworlder or mundane ceremonies. I’ve seen it happen. I’ve seen other Shadowhunters dismiss those marriages as meaning nothing, and I’ve seen some Shadowhunters bow under pressure and break the vows they made. I know you would never bow or break. I know that type of marriage would mean just as much to you. I know that any promises you made me, you would keep. But I was alive before the Accords. I sat and ate and talked with Shadowhunters about peace between our people, and then those same Shadowhunters threw
away the plates I ate off because they thought I irredeemably tainted whatever I touched. I will not have a ceremony that anyone looks down on as lesser. I do not want you to have any less than the ceremony you could have had, to honor your vows to a Shadowhunter. I have had enough of making compromises in the name of trying to make peace. I want the Law to change. I do not want to get married until we can get married in gold.”

Alec understood. Just because he would have been happy to marry Magnus in any ceremony didn’t mean Magnus was. Alec bowed his head. Letting the disappointment set in.

“Do you understand?” Magnus asked. Alec could hear the desperate tone in the warlocks voice now. “It’s not that I don’t want to. It’s not that I don’t love you.”

“I understand,” Alec said. He took a deep breath and looked up. He understood he couldn’t help being disappointed. “Changing the Law might take a while.”

“It might,” Magnus said, then after a moment of silence added. “Nobody ever wanted me to marry them before.”

“I never asked anyone to marry me before,” Alec said. “So that’s a no, then?” He had so wished Magnus had said yes but it was okay. Nothing was really going to change between them. Magnus was still his and he was still Magnus’s. He would get over his disappointment without burdening Mangus with it. When Magnus lifted his hand, Alec caught it in midair, intertwining their fingers.

“It’s yes, one day,” Magnus said. “For you, Alec, it’s always yes.”

Alec’s disappointment was fading. Magnus had said yes. Even if not now. The yes was what mattered. Alec pulled Magnus in close and kissed him sweetly. The kiss was broken by Alec’s yawn.

“We should sleep,” Magnus said. “It was the most sensible piece of advice your mother gave us after all.”

“Sleep when the baby is sleeping,” Alec said with a smile. “Our baby.”

“Our baby,” Magnus said. He got up, stripped down to his boxes and climbed into bed. Alec followed suit and within minutes they were both asleep in each other’s arms.

Alec awoke to the sound of a baby crying. He got up and picked the baby up out of his crib. Max stopped crying instantly upon being in Alec’s arms. Alec couldn’t bare to put him down and made Max’s bottle with one hand.

Once Max had finished eating he fell asleep in Alec’s arms. Alec rocked him for a few moments, but the sky outside the window was dark, and Alec could tell it was probably still very late or possibly very early. He put the sleeping infant back in his crib and went back to sleep.

Alec awoke again to the cries of his son. Magnus was stirring, but he seemed to be a heavier sleeper than Alec. Alec quickly got up and scooped Max out of his crib before Max could wake Magnus.

In Alec’s arms Max stopped fussing, and Alec fed him again. He also smelt something foul and realized Max needed new a diaper.

Once Max was happy again Alec laid him in his crib, and rocked the cradle slowly. Hoping the baby would sleep again. He didn’t. Max seemed very awake and was looking up at Alec with wide eyes.
Alec picked Max up, going over to the sofa he laid the child on his chest.

The baby seemed content there. As if the rising and falling of Alec’s breathing soothed him somehow. Alec tried to stay awake but suspected he dozed in and out. Once when he woke Max was touching his face with curious fingers. Alec smiled, his eyes still closed. He could feel the baby safe in his arms. No need to open his eyes.

Alec woke again when the sun came up to find Max asleep on his chest. Alec suspected it was still very early. He got up, cradling Max to his chest with both hands and lay Max gently in his crib before climbing back into bed with Magnus.

Alec heard soft unhappy baby noises that woke him faster than that volume of noise would under normal circumstances. Magnus still sleeping beside him. Alec got up and went to Max’s crib. The baby was making sucking noises and Alec knew he was hungry. Alec picked Max up carrying him in one arm went to the kitchen to prepare a bottle. Alec had just finished feeding Max when Magnus emerged.

“Alec,” Magnus said, sleepily. He had entered the living room wearing his boxes and one of Alec’s old t-shirts. His hair was a mess and he had circles under his eyes.

“I’m here,” Alec said.

Magnus smiled at Alec then went blearily over to the coffee. Alec had never seen Magnus so tired before. Not even when he had been staying up all night going over Lilith’s runes when Jace was missing all those years ago.

Magnus sat and drank the coffee as if in a stupor. He was staring at the wall.

“Good morning Magnus,” Alec said. Magnus made a noise somewhere between a sigh and a groan.

“This is quite the change of pace,” Alec said, laughing. “Usually you kiss me good morning.” Magnus turned to look at Alec suddenly serious. Alec had been joking but Magnus forgetting his coffee got up and wrapped his arms around the shadowhunter who was still holding the baby and kissed him. Alec closed his eyes and tried not to fall asleep standing up. When Alec felt Magnus wobble a little he knew Magnus was too. Alec laughed lightly.

“Sorry,” Magnus muttered.

“Did you wake up every time I did?” Alec asked. Magnus nodded. Alec sighed. He had tried to let Magnus sleep.

“This is all so new to me,” Magnus said. “This is the longest I have ever had a child around me before.”

“It’s been less than two days,” Alec said. “Really?” He had been in charge of watching his younger siblings for longer than that before.

“Yes,” Magnus said.

“Well we are in this now,” Alec said. “So get used to it.” He grinned. He would work on being quieter at night in future so Magnus could sleep.

“I will,” Magnus said. “Promise.” He kissed Alec again quickly before going back to his coffee.
Alec finished feeding Max, who drank only half his second bottle before becoming bored with the whole thing. Alec sat in a chair, too tired to stand, and placed Max in his lap. The baby was obviously bored. He was wriggling around a lot. It wasn’t until the third time Alec had fallen asleep sitting up that he finally surrendered.

“I have to go to sleep,” Alec said, his words slurred.

“I did get more sleep than you last night,” Magnus said. “It’s okay, love. I’ll watch the baby.”

“Wake me in a couple hours,” Alec said. “I don’t need too much sleep.” And without waiting for a reply Alec put Max in Magnus’s arms, went back into his bedroom and collapsed. His mind blank with exhaustion he fell asleep instantly.

Alec wasn’t sure if he was awake or not. There was a voice he knew. One he was sure was important but also difficult. Alec started to really wait up as he recognized Simon’s voice.

“I’m really sorry to interrupt,” Simon said. “I was wondering if I could have a word alone with Alec.”

“Alec’s sleeping,” Magnus said. Alec was suddenly very awake. If Simon wanted to talk to him he owned Simon that much at least.

“No, I’m not. I’m awake,” Alec said stifling a yawn. “I can talk to Simon.” He got up and saw Magnus was halfway through closing the door on Simon. Alec quickly opened it and turned to face Magnus. Magnus looked horrible. Circles under his eyes, stress in the set of his shoulders and baby snot on his shoulder. Magnus must of let Alec sleep for too long. Magnus needed a break.

“Go out and take a long walk,” Alec told Magnus. “Get some fresh air. It’ll wake you up.”

“I’m great,” Magnus said. “I don’t need sleeping. Or waking. I feel great.” If Alec hadn’t known better he would have thought Magnus was drunk.

Max then waved his hands in Alec’s direction obviously wanting him. Alec was started by the recognition and felt an unexpected smile on his face as he reached out for Max. Alec was again pleasantly surprised when the baby stopping fussing once he was in Alec’s arms.

“I find your attitude insulting,” Magnus said waving a finger at the baby. Then he kissed Alec briefly. “I won’t be gone long.”

“Take as long as you need,” Alec said. “I have this feeling my parents might be coming to help very shortly.” Magnus left. Alec with Max in his arms went to stand by the window. He owed Simon. He would talk to Simon if Simon wanted to talk but he was so bad at this.

“So,” Alec said. “What did you want to talk to me about?”

“I’m really sorry again about the other day,” Simon told him.

“It’s okay,” Alec said, and he meant it. Magnus was right; it didn’t really matter in the grand scheme of things after all. “I once walked in on you and Isabelle. I guess turnabout’s fair play.” He frowned. “Although you two were in my room at the time, so actually I think you still owe me.”

“You walked in on me and Isabelle?” Simon said alarmed. “But we haven’t... I mean, we didn’t... . Did we?”

Alec realized he shouldn’t have said anything. Simon had memory problems and Alec had forgotten
and now Simon was asking him questions he really didn’t want to answer. But the look on Simon’s face was so pleading. Alec tried for Simon to talk about this.

“I don’t know,” Alec said at last. “You were in the process of taking your clothes off, as I remember. And I try not to remember. And you seemed to be engaging in some sort of role-play.”

“Oh. Whoa. Like advanced role-play? Were there costumes? Were there props? What is Isabelle going to be expecting here, exactly?”

“I won’t discuss this,” Alec said.

“But if you could just give me a tiny hint . . .”

“Get out of here, Simon,” Alec said. Alec couldn’t help it. He had tired, but it was impossibly weird talking to Simon about anything, let alone his sex life with Alec’s little sister.

“I’m sorry,” Simon said after a moment. He seemed more composed now. “I mean, I’m sorry for the inappropriate questions. And I’m sorry for walking in on you, er, yesterday morning. I’m sorry for everything. I’m sorry for whatever it is that went wrong between us. Whatever you’re angry about. I honestly don’t remember, but I do remember how you are when you’re angry, and I don’t want things to be like that between us. I remember you don’t like Clary.”

Alec stared at Simon like he was truly crazy. Where had Simon gotten that idea?

“I like Clary. Clary’s one of my best friends,” Alec said.

“Oh,” Simon said. “I’m sorry. I thought I remembered . . . I must have gotten it wrong.”

Then Alec felt guilty. He knew what Simon had remembered. He didn’t use to like Clary. The look on Simon’s face was so confused. Alec took a deep breath. He could do this.

“No, you didn’t get it wrong,” Alec said. “I didn’t like Clary at first. I got—rough with her once. I slammed her up against a wall. She hit her head. I was a trained warrior and she didn’t have any training at all, back then. I’m twice her size.”

Simon looked mad, and Alec couldn’t blame him. Alec was ashamed he had ever been so mean to Clary.

“It’s no excuse,” Alec continued. “But I was afraid.” Alec tried to explain why he had been so scared of what Clary would say. This was not his favorite topic, but he did his best. Simon still looked mad; Alec tried to explain better. He knew Clary better now. He knew Clary would never have done anything so spiteful. She never even told Jace what Alec had done. Jace would have punched him in the face if he’d known.

“So you like Clary,” Simon said, when Alec was finished. “I’m the only one you don’t like. What did I do? I know you have a lot on your plate, but if you could just tell me what I did so I can apologize for it and so we can maybe be okay, I’d really appreciate it.”

Now Alec felt really guilty. Simon thought Alec didn’t like him. It was a cruel sort of irony. Alec walked away from the window toward a chair, putting Max on his knee. He owed Simon this. He owed Simon an explanation. He owed Simon everything. He hated talking about it but he could do it. He would. Simon sat in the chair across from Alec. Alec’s free hand was absently playing with Max’s hands.

“What did you do?” Alec said. “You saved Magnus’s life.” He paused trying to find the words to tell
Simon what he should have told Simon ages ago.

Simon had done everything Alec had meant to do. He had saved Izzy, saved Magnus. Simon had protected the people Alec loved instead of Alec. He had never even given Simon a second thought until Simon had taken it upon himself to save the love of Alec’s life. Then to make it worse Simon was gone. Everyone Alec loved was miserable about it. Then he was back in their lives but only a little. Like half a stranger. Half a really complicated stranger Alec didn’t know how to talk to.

“I owed you more than I could ever repay,” Alec said finishing his monologue. “I didn’t even know how to thank you. It wouldn’t have meant anything. You didn’t even remember.”

“Oh,” Simon said. “Wow.” Then after a pause added. “So you don’t hate me, and you don’t hate Clary. You don’t hate anyone.”

“I hate people forcing me to talk about my feelings,” Alec said, and he really did. He could feel the stress his confession had created in his body. But somehow it hadn’t been as bad as he had thought it would be. Having Max in his arms made it easier somehow.

Simon grinned at Alec and Alec smiled back, relieved.

“I’ve been doing it way too much since I got to the Academy,” Alec said. The memory of proposing to Magnus still fresh in his mind.

“I can imagine,” Simon said.

“I would like,” Alec said, “not to talk about feelings again for about a year. Also maybe to sleep for a year. Do babies ever sleep?”

“I used to babysit sometimes,” Simon said. “As I recall babies do sleep a lot, but when you least expect it. Babies: more like the Spanish Inquisition than you think.”

Alec didn’t know what the Spanish Inquisition was but he got the idea. Babies didn’t really sleep. He was going to have to develop an addiction to caffeine.

“Hey,” Alec said. “I’m sorry that I made you think I was mad at you, just because I didn’t know what to say.”

“Well,” Simon said. “Here’s the thing. I was helped along in my assumption.”

“What do you mean?” he asked. He stopped the small movements of his hands with Max’s. Freezing the clapping movements he had been absently entertaining the baby with.

“You didn’t talk to me a lot, and I was a little worried about it,” Simon said. “So I asked my friend, between us guys, if you had a problem with me. I asked my good friend Jace.”

“You did.”

“And Jace,” Simon said. “Jace told me that there was a big, dark secret issue between us. He said it wasn’t his place to talk about it.”

“Leave this to me,” Alec said calmly. “He’s my parabatai and we have a sacred bond and everything, but now he has gone too far.” That was a relief to be able to joke with Simon. The tension of the last few years seemed to be gone. Alec was relieved.

“That’s cool,” Simon said. “Please exact awful vengeance for both of us, because I’m pretty sure he
could take me in a fight.”

“Well,” Alec said, nodding in agreement at Simon’s words. Jace wouldn’t actually try to hurt Simon but he definitely could. “Like I said . . . I do owe you.”

“Nah,” Simon said, waving his hand. “Call it even.”


“I will let you get back to your baby,” Simon said. “I am glad we talked.”

“Me too,” Alec said. Simon got up and made to leave but when he opened the door Alec’s parents were standing there.

“Oh,” Maryse said “Simon.”

“I was just leaving,” Simon said quickly moving past her and into the hall.

“What did Simon want?” Robert asked.

“We were just talking,” Alec said. He really didn’t want to explain it all to his parents. He was done talking about his feelings.

“How’s the baby?” his mother asked, happy to be distracted when Max was involved.

“He’s wonderful,” Alec said, with a yawn.

“You look tired,” Maryse said. “Here let me take him.” Alec was tired and this time his mother’s expression didn’t create that instinctive protective feeling. Despite the exhaustion, he reluctantly handed the baby over.

Maryse held Max expertly in her arms, looking down at him with a loving smile. Robert stood close beside her gazing at the baby as well.

Alec marveled for a moment at the fact that he had everything. The love of his life. An important job to do that would help the people he loved. A child to turn his relationship into a family. A child who had managed to bewitch both his parents so completely. And he had finally talked to Simon.

“Oh Alec,” his mother said, lovingly. “This baby somehow suits you.”

“What do you mean?” Alec asked while he ate a yogurt from the fridge that he knew Magnus had stolen from a local grocery store, but he was too tired to care at the moment. Alec wasn’t sure when he had last eaten a full meal.

“I don’t know,” Maryse said. “I mean he’s blue and your eyes are blue but it’s more than that. He just fits, somehow.”

Alec smiled hugely at his mother, trying to convey without words that he agreed.

“Your father and I were thinking,” Maryse said. “Well, we should celebrate. Max joining the family I mean.”

“What did you have in mind?”

“A get-together,” Robert said still looking down at Max. “Here with just the family and friends.”
“That sounds great,” Alec said. Alec made himself something to eat while his parents watched Max. He also thought he might sneak a nap in while they were here.

Alec kept losing track of who had his baby but he wasn’t worried. He loved everyone in this attic, and he trusted them with his son. His sister, his parents, his parabatai, his friends and his Magnus. Max couldn’t be in a safer place on earth.

Alec saw Clary with the baby and overheard his mother demanding she give him up. Alec saw Simon trying to suck up to his dad, probably for Izzy’s sake and smiled. Simon really cared about his sister and he was glad. He really didn’t want to know the details, by the angel he never wanted to walk in on them again, but he could tell his sister was happy.

Alec thought he saw a look on Jace’s face and recognized it. He remembered talking to Jace at Helen and Aline wedding. Alec saw Clary get up and go dance with Izzy. Jace was still talking to Simon. Alec remembered he was supposed to exact revenge.

“No, you won’t.” Simon was saying as Alec approached. “You would never leave me to die at the bottom of an evil boat.”

“Simon, normally it’s a pleasure to talk to you,” Alec said, trying not to laugh at the outraged look on Jace’s face “But could I have a word with Jace?”

“Oh, right,” Simon said. “Jace, I’d forgotten what I was trying to talk to you about. But now I remember very clearly. Alec and I had a little talk about his problem with me. You know, the one you told me he had. The terrible secret.”

“Though I realize that you are both a little annoyed with me, and this might not be the time to shower myself with praise,” Jace said slowly, “Honesty compels me to tell you: Yes. Yes, I do think I am hilarious. ‘There goes Jace Herondale,’ people say. ‘Cutting wit, and also totally cut. It’s a burden Simon could never understand.’”

“Alec’s going to kill you,” Simon told Jace, while patting him on the shoulder. “And I think that’s fair. For what it’s worth, I’ll miss you, buddy.”

Alec advanced on Jace, as Simon moved away.

“Now Alec,” Jace said. “You aren’t really going to attack me.”

“I am rather annoyed at you,” Alec said.

“Yeah but,” Jace said. “Come on. You have an adorable baby now. You don’t want to go killing off babysitters do you?”

Alec laughed. He couldn’t help it. He was tired. He probably had baby spit up in his hair but he was lighter and happy than ever. He threw himself on Jace and hugged him. He could exact revenge for Simon later.

“Your kid does look like an alien after all,” Jace sniggered. “Does tend to scare most babysitters away.”

Alec decided he would make it up to Simon now. Pulling out of the hug he started hitting Jace around the head.
“What is wrong with you?” Alec demanded as he kept raining down blows on Jace, who was flailing on the sofa. “Seriously, Jace, what is wrong with you?”

Jace was starting to become sandwiched into the sofa when the music stopped, allowing his father’s voice to fill the room.

“Have you decided on his name?”

Alec forgot about securing Jace in the prison of the sofa cushions and locating Magnus in an instant went to his side.

Alec realized he had been calling the baby Max in his head this whole time. He looked at Magnus, hoping.

“We did talk about it, actually,” Magnus said. “And we thought that you had the right idea.”

“You mean . . . ,” Maryse said.

Magnus was holding Max so his sweeping bow wasn’t very low but he inclined his head and said, “I am delighted to introduce you all to Max Lightwood.”

Alec couldn’t define the amazing new feelings of warmth, gratitude and love that filled him. He rested his hand on Magnus’s back, trying to convey with the touch all he felt.

Magnus was looking down at Max while feeding him. Alec could hear his parents start to quibble about middle names but paid no attention. Alec could hear Jace call out to Clary from the sofa cushions. But his total focus was on his family. His Magnus and his Max.

“Don’t magic a bottle, make a real one,” Alec said as Max finished eating. “If he gets used to you being faster at feeding him, you have to feed him all the time.”

“That is blackmail!” Magnus said then quickly shifting his tone he added to Max. “Don’t cry.”

Magnus went back into the kitchen and started making a bottle the slow way. Alec followed a little behind, watching Magnus with their son.

“Don’t cry,” Alec heard Magnus say softly to the baby in his arms. “And don’t spit up on my shirt. If you do either of those things, I will forgive you, but I will be upset. I want us to get along.”

Alec watched and Magnus made his fingers dance in front of Max’s face and the baby stopped crying. Just like he had for Alec earlier. Magnus’s rings were creating sparkling lights and Max’s eyes were transfixed on them.

“I knew we were going to get along,” Magnus said. Then Alec heard sucking sounds and new Max was drinking his bottle which Magnus had made up the proper way.

Alec moved out of earshot of the warlocks. He had seen what he wanted to see. Magnus had bonded with Max just as Alec had. Alec went to join his parents conversation about middle names. He was tired; he probably had spit up in his shirt, but he had never been happier.
A New Kind of Tired

Chapter Summary

This chapter is how I imagine things would go after the end of 'Born to and Endless Night.' It has no direct dialogue but interestingly is the first chapter I wrote when I started this story. I just had an image of Magnus standing in front of a classroom too tired to teach and being dramatic about it.

“Little Max’s wanna figh demons with uncle Jace yes he does,” Jace cooed at Max while Alec collapsed on the couch. The sofa Alec had almost crushed Jace with just days ago had been replaced magically by Magnus with the couch Alec was currently laying on.

“You look tired,” Jace said. Alec gave him a look.

“Okay okay,” Jace said. “Daddy’s a little bit grumpy from lack of sleep isn’t he Maxes waxes.”

“Do not call my son waxes,” Alex said but he had his eyes closed. Jace looked at his friend's face and sniggered.

“You love saying that don’t you,” Jace said grinning.

“What?”


“It’s kinda the best,” Alec said.

“I can’t wait!” Jace said.

“I’m guessing Clary can,” Alec said. Jace’s face fell but only a little he noticed.

“Yeah,” Jace said. “It’s annoying but what’s a guy to do.”

“You know,” Alec said. “You do have an advantage I wouldn’t know anything about.”

“Yeah what?”

“You could have a kid my accident,” Alec said. Jace just stared the look on his face was like oh right.

“Well I guess the world doesn’t work that way,” Jace said. “Since Mr and Mr can’t have kids by accident got one before the horny teenagers.” He smiled.

“You better he referring to yourself and not by sister and Simon,” Alec said.

“Okay let’s go with that.” Alec groaned and put his hand over his eyes remembering how tired he was.

“I am still annoyed at your for making Simon think I was mad at him,” Alec said eyes still closed.
“Yeah but it was just too fun,” Jace said. “I had to have my fun”

“You mean your fun with Simon,” Alec said. “You missed bugging him admit it.” Jace said nothing but his face gave him away.

“We are a funny bunch aren’t we,” Alec observed. “For five people thrown together half hating the other half for liking zed first half we sure did become pretty tight.”

“Six people,” Jace corrected him. “Magnus.”

“Magnus isn’t some silly teenager who isn’t sure who he loves or who he is,” Alec said. “He always knew what he wanted.”


“Where is Magnus anyway?” Jace said.

“The reason he came here was to give lectures,” Alec said. “So that’s where he is.”

Jace pretended to look shocked. “You mean you didn’t come here to adopted this adorable little blueberry!” He twirled Max around and blow a raspberry on his tummy. Max make happy baby noises.

“Nope,” Alec said. “Happy accident.”

“Ha!” Jace said. “So you can have kids by accident just like us straight people.” He grinned at Alec in a haha got ya kinda way. Alec smiled. Jace always had a way of making Alec feel totally normal and himself at the same time. Like him being gay was just something else that was a thing. No more interesting or disinterested than who had blond hair or green eyes.

He remembered the story his dad had told him about his parabatai. Alec could easily imagine just how horrible it would have been for Michael Wayland to tell his parabatai that he was in love with him and then be told to never speak of such filth again. To lose not only his friend but someone he loved so completely and permanently. Alec know he was lucky to have Jace. Best parabatai anyone could have as far as he was concerned.

_________________

Magnus was tired. He wasn’t even sure if he was still Magnus he was that tired. His half awake brain knew he was supposed to be somewhere and had carried him in a stupor to a classroom where he looked out at about thirty students and groaned. Right he was supposed to lecture that’s why he was here. He had not come to the academy to adopt a loud albeit adorable baby. Magnus sat at the front of the class and looked out at the eager faces.

“I am tired,” he said though he knew how obvious that was. He was again wearing one of Alec’s shirts which he had slept in and he suspect now may have some spit up on it. He found it amazing he didn’t even care enough to magic it clean.

“And don’t mistake this for oh I had one too many drinks last night my bad, tired,” He continued. “I have never been so tired in my entire life. And before you say ‘big deal’ remember I probably met your grandparents before they could talk.” He paused for effect. “Now you are going to have to help
me out. What is this lecture supposed to be on?"

I student put up his hand grinning. Of course it was Simon. No one else had raised their hand so Magnus prompted Simon to speak.

“How’s fatherhood treating you?”

“You were supposed to answer the question,” Magnus said. “Not ask another one, especially one whose answer is so obvious.”

“Okay okay,” Simon said. “The lecture is on Shadowhunter downworlder relations.”

Magnus groaned. “And I agreed to this!” Simon nodded.

“Who got me drunk enough to agree to that?” Magnus said, then he remembered he had agreed to this never knowing the topic he was to lecture on because of Catarina and Alec messing with him. He groaned.

Another student raised her hand. Magnus motioned for her to speak thinking this whole raising hand business rather stupid. Why don’t people just talk when they want to?

“Do you not know much on the subject?”

Magnus started at her. He didn’t recognize her features as distinct of any shadowhunter families and figured she was a mundane recruit. If he had given her a second glance he could probably have figured out for sure but he was too busy laughing. Hands holding his stomach laughing. They were all staring at him but he really didn’t care.

“That’s Magnus Bane,” Simon said. “High Warlock of Brooklyn. He is probably the most knowledgeable person about downworlder and shadowhunter relations... ever.” Simon finished lamely.

Magnus stopped laughing. “Thanks whatever your name is,” he said. “I really needed that.”

He sat behind the desk at the front of the class and decided a break from Max crying and Jace being Jace was worth the ridiculous task at hand.

“Very unique lesson plan for today,” Magnus said. “What do you want to know about downworlder and shadowhunter relations? It’s an ask and you shall receive kinda lecture. Oh and please stop raising your hands. Just talk.”

“Have your in-laws totally overwhelmed you yet.” Oh course it was Simon.

“That is not on topic,” Magnus said.

“Actually it is,” Simon pointed out. “Since they are shadowhunters.” Magnus groaned. If he didn’t owe this boy his life and Alec’s happiness twice over he would probably have turned him into a rat... again.

“New rule,” Magnus said. “Simon is the only one who has to raise his hand to speak.”

Over the next hour Magnus answered questions about the The mortal war and the dark war and about the role downworlders had played in them. He found himself remembering how much that first one had meant to him. Alec kissing him infront of everyone he had been so sure would never know he was gay let alone in love with a warlock. He smiled without thinking. Then came back to his
“Sorry what was that?” Magnus said.

“Why are you smiling?” a student asked.

“Sorry lost in memories,” Magnus said. “Was my smile very inappropriate for the topic at hand?”

The student nodded. But to Magnus’s relief the class was over.

“No homework,” he called out. “Just come up with better questions alright.” And slowly tiredly he walked out the door and headed back up to his attic suite where he knew Alec and Max were waiting for him.

Jace left right when Max had started fussing. Jace, Alec knew, was perfectly capable of staying and helping but in his usual Jace fashion had preferred to be well Jace about it and skip out. Max was asleep finally now, and Alec laid out on his bed instantly asleep as well. He wasn’t sure if he had slept for a week, an hour or a mere second when the door opened and Magnus came in. To Alec’s great relief Max didn’t wake up.

Magnus didn’t greet him. He just lay on the bed next to Alec and snuggled up.

“I have never been his tired,” Magnus mumbled. “Simon was teasing me the whole time. Don’t like lecturing.” He sighed as he cuddled up next to Alec. “Better here.” Alec pulled him close. And they slept until Max’s crying for food woke them.

Simon had enjoyed messing with Magnus a little more than he thought he would. He felt a little bit guilty but Alec and Magnus kept saying they owed him so…

Simon was kinda feeling bad about it though. Maybe he would lay off Magnus today. But to Simon’s surprise it was Alec who was standing at the front of the classroom when he went in. Unlike Magnus who had showed up almost ten minutes late for class Simon suspected Alec had been here early setting up.

“Hello class,” Alec said. “Since this series of guest lectures is about shadowhunters and downworlders relations, Magnus and I will each be doing half of the classes. Originally it was only supposed to be Magnus but he isn’t handling the lack of sleep very well.” Alec grinned with a hint of superiority in his face.

“I don’t get it?” One of the students said.

“We will each cover the topic from the different points of view,” Alec continued, “And we will each do half the lectures. What don’t you understand?”

“Why are you qualified to teach us about downworlders?” A different student this time had asked the question. These students weren’t very respectful of their guest teachers Simon thought. He couldn’t help but laugh but he tried to stifle the noise. Alec gave him a look.

“I am good friends with the leaders of the vampire and werewolf pack of brooklyn and have regular meeting with them.”
Alec sighed. “Magnus is a warlock. He can cover that if you think me ill equipt,” he said coldly. “So will you stop questioning me and get out a notebook.” The end of his sentence was so commanding it instilled all the students to do exactly what they were told. Simon did noticed Alec managed to be commanding while not being rude which he had to commend. That was a fine line. Simon decided it was very Captain Picard of him and resolved to not only introduce Alec to Monty Python but also Star Trek.

Alec lectured more like a professor than his centuries old boyfriend. He started with the accords being signed. Very little progress was made for a long time then he went on about the two recent war and how without downworlders the shadowhunter race and indeed the whole world may have been wiped out entirely. It had been downworlders who had warned the Shadowhunters during the second war and it had been downworlders who had fought side by side with the shadowhunters during the first war. It had been a downworlders who had summoned the only weapon that had been able to kill Jonathan/Sebastian Morgenstern. Simon was very relieved that Alec didn’t say which downworlder. He didn’t remember summoning an angel and didn’t want everyone in the class asking him about it afterwards.

Alec spoke of how most of them are shunned by humans and looked down on my shadowhunters. He said he is amazed they even helped at all when he tried to think about it from their side. Simon noted Alec seemed to be very good at this part. Alec could put himself in their shoes in a rather unique way.

Alec’s final piece of advice was the best way to have a successful alliance with a downworlder was to treat them like a person.

Simon thought Alec’s lecture was very well planned. He even explained the homework was to think of one time in their life that someone had done something nice for them for no reason. To be talked about more next lesson with him. He also said Magnus would be back tomorrow.

Over the next two weeks Magnus and Alec both lectured or at least Alec did, Magnus stuck to his ask and you shall receive strategy. Simon was pretty sure Alec was the more mature of the two even though he was hundreds of years younger. He thought that was pretty hilarious actually. Turns out maturity had nothing to do with age, go figure.

“I can’t wait to go home,” Magnus said. “Longest two week ever!” It was there last night in their attic suit at the academy. They were set to leave the next morning.

“You know,” Alec said. “That might have nothing to do with where you are and everything to do with Max.” Alec was holding little Max in his arms while feeding him.

Magnus went over to stroke his son’s hair. “I think I shall have the opposite problem there,” He said. “Time is going to fly with his little one. Soon he will be walking and talking and getting into all kinds of magical mischief.”

After a moment of quiet baby admiration which seemed to have become a norm in Magnus’s life so quickly it still amazed him he added, “Did I tell you that your father asked me if I magicked Max into existence for us?”

“He what?” Alec almost laughed. “Doesn’t dad know where babies come from?”
“That was my thinking exactly.”

“Though you have to admit it is pretty perfect,” Alec said. “I mean what are the changes a blue skinned baby would be abandoned on the steps of his school during the brief window of time we would be living here?”

“About the same chance that I shadowhunter and warlock would fall in love,” Magnus replied.

“So a sure thing then.” Alec said.

Magnus laughed. “I guess in our case you would be right.”
They were home. Magnus had magicked all his furniture back from the academy and was feeling much better. He had turned one of his guest bedrooms into Max’s room with a flick of his wrist.

“You know that still feels like cheating,” Alec said. “Just decorating the kid’s room with a flick. Isn’t it get boring with everything coming so easy?”

“If you want I can undo it and we can decorate it together?”

“I am sure you have done a beautiful job,” Alec said with an alterer motive in his eyes. He was still holding Max but Max was asleep. Alec leaned into Magnus and whispered something in his ear.

Magnus smiled and froze where he was. Alec walked into Max’s new room and put Max in his crib. He walked slowly out of the room gently closing the door. When he was sure it was safe he turned and flung his arms around Magnus and kissed him full on the mouth. He kissed Magnus like he was the only thing in the world. They had both gotten about half their clothes off when they hear crying coming from the closed door.

“He needs to learn to self-sooth?” Magnus said half-heartedly but Alec was already up and headed to the door.

Alec came back out with Max in his arms and the two of them sat on the couch fully clothed and entertained their son.

Magnus was making twinkling stars fly around Max’s head and Max was laughing and trying to swat them with his hands.

“He is going to like you more than me,” Alec said miserably. “You have more in common and you can make anything he wants appear right in front of him.” Alec sighed.

Magnus, to Max’s annoyance, stopped the stars and turned to Alec.

“My crazy beautiful blue eyed boy,” Magnus said. “How is it you always have everything backwards?” Alec looked up. Magnus’s expression was one of open honest love.

“You are far better at this than I am,” Magnus said. “The closest I ever got to watching a child grow up was the appointments I had with Jocelyn to wipe Clary’s memory. Ever two years I saw her for about 20mins and that was it. That is all I know of children. You saw Max and knew you could give him a home right away. It hadn’t even occurred to me that we could keep him until I saw your family babyproofing the place.” Magnus brought his hand up and touched Alec’s face looking deep in his
amazing blue eyes.

“This little blue boy is going to love you,” Magnus said. “The first time you held him he stopped crying remember? You are a natural.” The sadness had faded from Alec’s eyes. “That’s better.”

Just then there was a knock at the door. Magnus didn’t even bother doing his usual who dare disturb the high warlock of brooklyn bit. He didn’t even turn his face from Alec. He just flipped his fingers and the door swung open.

“Huh hi,” came a female voice from the open door, “Hope I’m not interrupting.”

“Not at all,” Magnus said, turning to look at her. “I was just reminding your son how awesome he is. But I think you already knew that.”

Alec blushed and turned to Magnus with a funny look on his face that seemed to be reminding Magnus that this is his mother.

Maryse giggled just for a second.

“I have never seen you two like this?” she said.

“Like what?” Alec said puzzled turning to look at her.

“Unguarded,” she said. “The way you look at each other. I don’t think Robert ever looked at me that way.” She sounded almost envious but Alec winced.

“Sorry! Sorry! Sorry!” Maryse said quickly. “I didn’t mean… I just… You are lucky to have someone who makes you so happy Alec. That’s all I meant.”

“I know,” Alec said looking at Magnus all signs of his wince gone. He turned to his mom, “Thanks,” he said. “But is that the only reason you came down here?”

“Alec,” Maryse said looking at Magnus all signs of his wince gone. He turned to his mom, “Thanks,” he said. “But is that the only reason you came down here?”

“Just like our first date huh?” He grinned. Then turning to his mom he said, “Will you babysit while we are gone?”

“I’d love to,” She said and walked forward to take Max out of Magnus’s arms. Magnus was still surprised every time a shadowhunter other than Alec didn’t flinch at his touch. The world was changing and he had a unique long term perspective to know that it was changing for the better.

Maryse was cooing happily over her grandson when Magnus walked back into his apartment. He marveled for a moment at the absurdity of leaving Maryse Lightwood previous Circle member alone in his home would have been only a few weeks ago.

“Where’s Alec?” she asked without looking up from Max.

“He decided to stay and finish up,” Magnus said. “He is more of a diplomat than I am.”

“You are allowed to say it you know,” Maryse said.

“Say what?” Magnus said sitting down next to her and greeting Max with a funny face.
“That you missed him,” Maryse said, clearly meaning Max.

“I was gone a couple hours,” Magnus said, avoiding the question. He hadn’t taken his eyes off Max since he’d walked in the door though which kinda ruined his facade.

“I know,” Maryse giggled. “But that's what it's like with kids. An hour is like a century when you're away from them.

I guess you can’t fool a parent Magnus thought. “It is longer than a century,” Magnus said. “Trust me, I know.” He laid back on the couch and turned to stare at his basically mother-in-law and his son.

“I can't imagine,” Maryse said. “What it’s like to know how long a century is.”

“Immorality,” Magnus said. “It isn't so different really. I have to live day by day just like everyone else.”

“But you know you have so many more days,” Maryse said. “It must change your perspective.”

“Can’t really avoid that. I mean worrying about killing your friends ancestors in a fight can get pretty distracting,” Magnus said then switched his tone from joking to serious. “But since these last two great wars I have come to realized no one is guaranteed any number of days. I had four immortal friends before the war. They were constance's in my life. It never occurred to me that I would lose them, immortal as they were. I Met Catarina Loss around 1690 something. Ragnor Fell was older than me I am sure. Tessa Grey once Herondale you probably have hurt of. She is Jace’s great great great grandmother it seems. And Raphael who I met in the 50s when he was human.” He turned to Maryse now.

“Ragnor and Rachael are dead now. It still confuses me sometimes. I find myself talking about them in the present tense. Something that’s been there for so long just gone all of a sudden. I try not to think about fifty or seventy years from now. Of losing Alec like that. Whether mortal or immortal now is all we ever have.”

“But does it put a wedge between you and Alec,” Maryse asked. “Your age gap I mean. He must seem very young to you.”

Magnus laughed a little at that. “Yes and no,” he said. “In age and life experience perhaps but Alec is definitely my senior when it comes to maturity. When I was 21 I was nowhere near ready to raise a child and he is.”

“Do you mind me asking,” Maryse said. “When was that?”

“Was what?”

“When were you 21? I mean I have heard a lot of different things about how old you are...and you just said you were around meeting people in 1690 so...” She was looking rather sheepish Magnus thought. Like she really wanted the truth but would rather not have to ask. Magnus thought about it for a moment. Alec knew everything about him now. And though he would never tell Alec’s whole family everything he supposed there was no harm in telling her this one thing.

“I was born in 1604,” Magnus said. “If indeed I am remembering that date correctly.”

“Why are there so many different humors. I mean I heard once you were 800.”

“That's my fault,” Magnus said. “I started lying about my age when I was 17. It’s hard to sell your magic when everyone thinks you’re a stupid kid, you see. And there was no other way I had to make
a living.”

“I see,” Maryse said. Magnus could tell she wanted to ask more questions but he wasn’t about to help her get more information out of him. He was already feeling rather vulnerable. Telling Alec all this was one thing but his mother. Then again he had told Alec far more than this, maybe Maryse having a few pieces of him didn’t make him weak.

Max at his exact moment reached up and batted his hands at Maryse’s face. He was making sucking noises with his lips.

“He’s hungry,” Magnus said. Magnus snapped his fingers and a bottle appeared in Maryse’s hands. She jumped.

“Sorry!” Magnus said. “I wasn’t thinking.”

“It’s okay,” Maryse said, her shadowhunter reflexes meant she hadn’t dropped the bottle or the baby. “Making things appear from nothing while not thinking would have been a highly useful skill when my kids were young.”

“Well I can’t make things from nothing,” Magnus said. “No one can. I can transport things from other places.”

“I guess shadowhunters really don’t know how warlock magic works huh?”

“Nope,” Magnus said. “Robert thinks I can make babies appear from nowhere it seems.” He laughed a little then remembered he had vowed to forget that whole conversation. Oops.

“So where did Max’ milk come from?” She asked.

“Grocery store,” Magnus said.

“Do you pay for these things?” Maryse asked with a grin.

“Well if you have asked me that years ago I would have said no but Alec, Clary and friends had guilted me into sending money after the theft.”

“You are in it now Magnus,” Maryse said. “You have a whole family and a bunch of friends to go with it. You will never be alone again.” She laughed.

Magnus didn’t say anything. He knew there was a chance he and blueberry would outlive everyone else. Maryse seemed to realize what she had said.

“Sorry Magnus,” She said. “I didn’t mean to… I mean I… don’t really know what to say.” She finished lamely. “I have never tried to have this long a conversation with an immortal before.”

“And why would you,” Magnus said kindly. “Shadowhunters lives are so fast and bright.” Maryse could hear a familiar fear in Magnus’s voice. She knew it well. The fear of those you love dying in battle without you. It was strange to think that this warlock had the same fear that all shadowhunters did.

“I have known some old shadowhunters,” Maryse said. “They retired. It isn’t a really common occurrence but it does happen more than you’d think.” Maryse smiled and then realized she was trying to comfort Magnus about how long her son would live. This was possibly the strangest conversation she had ever had.
Magnus smiled. It was a polite smiled that didn’t reach his eyes.

Max broke the moment by wailing loudly that he wasn’t being fed. Maryse quickly snapped out of it and turned her attention to Max.

Magnus decided to lighten the mood.

“Hey do you remember the time I told you I had no interest in a better world or your repellent brat?”

Maryse blinked at him. It seems like a lifetime ago but yes she had said that to him.

“Times change huh,” Magnus said with humor. His attempt to lighten the mood had clearly failed. Magnus thought the irony of it was quite funny now considering how things had turned out but the humor seemed to be lost on Maryse.

“Thank you for not telling Alec,” Maryse said. “About when we first met in New York.”

“Telling Alec would just hurt him,” Magnus shrugged. “And that’s the last thing I want to do.”

“I am glad we had this talk Magnus,” Maryse said. “It’s amazing how a baby changes things it’s true but I would like to hope we would have gotten to this point either way. I know Alec would like it if you didn’t have to avoid his whole family.”

“Well it seemed like the polite thing to do,” Magnus said. “I am kinda a stranger crashing your family party after all.”

“Not anymore you aren’t,” Maryse said. “Now you’re the reason I’m a grandmother.” She smiled looking loving down at Max.

“Alec is the reason you are a grandmother,” Magnus said. “I sometimes think he would have adopted Max even if he had been single when he’d found him.”

“You’re wrong,” Maryse said, “He didn’t think so well of warlocks before you. He would have given the abandoned baby to the clave like any other shadowhunter.”

“I can’t image Alec doing that,” Magnus said.

“When he was less secure in his own skin he was much more… let’s say willing to go along with the rules and what he was supposed to do,” Maryse said.

“I didn’t realized I changed him so much,” Magnus said.

“You did,” Maryse said. “I--” she broke off looking down at Max again.

“What is it?” Magnus asked. She looked conflicted.

“Oh just out with it,” Magnus said. “It can’t be that bad. Whatever it is I am sure I have heard worse.” He found he was truly curious what she wanted to say. Max had finished his bottle now and Maryse put it down on the table.

“Oh thanks for babysitting by the way,” Magnus said and made to take the baby from her arms.

She looked up at him with the most serious expression. Magnus froze his arms outstretched.

“Thank you,” she said so sincerely Magnus just started. She looked pleased with herself. “There I said it.”
“For what?” Magnus said bafalled.

“What do you think silly,” Maryse said handing Max over rather unwillingly.

“I have literally no idea,” Magnus said, now holding Max. “Which is not my favorite thing I can assure you.”

Maryse seemed confused. “I thought it was obvious.” She laughed. “I always knew Alec was… well not really unhappy but not really happy either. Ever since Alec was little… it was like he was resigned to only be content, never happy. Like he was holding himself back. I realize now that even then he knew he was gay and knew he couldn’t tell anyone. And I am only now realizing how much that hurt him.”

“He was in love with Jace,” Magnus explained a hint of annoyance in his voice.

“Ah,” Maryse said. “That does make sense. The one thing he really couldn’t have: his very very straight parabatai.” She smiled.

“Anyway when I came home from Idris after Hodge left I noticed a huge change in him. He walked like a weight had been physically lifted from his shoulder. I remember thinking maybe it was just an after effect from his injuries but he didn’t go back to the way he had been. I thanked whatever had brought about a change in him.” She paused. “When he kissed you in front of everyone I still didn’t put the pieces together. I was way too shocked. But now these last few weeks seeing you around each other so much I noticed that it all came from you. He won’t live out his whole life thinking he can never be happy and that’s because of you so Thank you.”

“The lightwoods of his generation never cease to surprise me,” He said in a shocked voice. Then he turned to Maryse.

“Please don’t thank me,” he said. “There was nothing selfless about it. I met a cute guy and that was that. You don’t need to thank me.”

“I know what you tired to do for them in Edun,” Maryse said. “I know you were willing to die to save them all. To save my son. My daughter.” He was still getting used to Maryse and Robert treating him like family. Heck even them treating him like a person was weird.

“Alec didn’t want me to do it,” Magnus said. “He would have tried to die down there with me if not for Simon.” Maryse seemed to be holding her breath. Magnus still wasn’t sure why he was telling Maryse Lightwood former circle member so much about him. If things had gone differently he could have killed her during the fight in New York that killed the Whitelaws. He realized that he wasn’t thinking about it that way. He was talking to the mother of the man he loved. The man he was raising a child with. He was holding her grandchild in his arms.

“I didn’t look at it as saving everyone,” Magnus said. “I only thought of saving Alec and all of the people Alec cared about. His sister, his parabatai. Once I was gone he would need someone left…” Magnus trailed off.

“That is worth thanking you for,” Maryse said. She smiled. “The more I get to know you the more I understand what Alec sees in you. Alec sees the human in you.” Magnus just started at her in shock.

“Half human,” He said in monotone.

“Well it’s the half that counts,” Maryse continued. “I know my son sees good in you. So I want to Thank you Magnus Bane for making my son happy.” There was a finally in her tone. Magnus found he had no argument for it. He smiled.
“Does Robert feel the same as you?” Magnus asked. “Does he want to have me stop politely avoiding him as well?”

“He wants to repair his relationship with Alec,” Maryse said. “He is trying.” She paused. “Alec doesn’t like to talk about this stuff,” Maryse said. “But can I ask you, is Alec and his dad doing any better. I mean….has Alec said anything or…”

“Yeah I think so,” Magnus said. “And what do you mean Alec doesn’t like to talk about what?”

“He’s such a private person,” Maryse said. “I am not sure if he would answer if I asked him outright.”

Magnus laughed. “That’s funny,” He said magically a second bottle out of thin air while also vanishing the empty bottle Maryse had left on the table had. Alec wasn’t here to tell him to do it the slow way. “I thought Alec was the opposite. Straightforward to a fault. He always says exactly what he means. He can cut through any amount of misdirect or evasion with just a simple sentence.” Magnus said in a matter of fact way. It was after all a very obvious fact about Alec but Maryse hadn’t know it. Magnus thought his rather odd.

Neither of them spoke while Max finished his second bottle. Magnus was just about to burp him when Alec came bursting into the room and snatched Max out of Magnus’s arms. He lifted him high into the air and hugged him tight.

“Careful,” Magnus said as Alec started spinning around still holding Max. “I just fed him and he hasn’t burped yet.” And just then Max burped/spit up all over Alec’s face looking up at him.

Magnus and Maryse were laughing. Alec looked down at Magnus who held his hand up in a do you wanna be magicked clean gesture. For once Alec nodded and Magnus snapped his fingers. The spit up vanished and Alec sat down on the couch between his mother and Magnus putting Max on his lap.

With all eyes fixed on Max, Alec said, “So what have you two been up to without me.” He had been a little worried I mean his mother and Magnus had never been alone together before.

“What do you think?” His mother said. “We were talking about you.”

Alec groaned. “I knew I should have hurried back,” He said. “What’s the damage.” He looked at Magnus.

“Nothing to worry about really,” Magnus said. “We were getting along.” More than getting along he thought.

Alec mumbled something while yawning and laying his head on Magnus’s shoulder. He closed his eyes. He was asleep.

“I do envy him his ability to fall asleep anywhere,” Magnus said. Max was yawning too. Magnus picked him up out of Alec lap and started rocking him.

“He didn’t used to do that,” Maryse said. “When he was little getting him to go to sleep was far trickier let me tell you. He was scared of the dark.”

“Alec scared of the dark is hard to picture,” Magnus said. “I wish I know more about him then.”

Maryse told Magnus a very adorable story about the night Alec wouldn’t sleep cause Isabelle wasn’t home. Max had fallen asleep in Magnus’s arms to the sound of his grandmother’s voice.
Magnus yawned hugely.

“I will go,” Maryse said. “And let you guys get some sleep. Good night Magnus.” She got up and left closing the door behind her.

Magnus carried Max to his crib by their bed. He came back and picked Alec up and put him in their bed then he curled up next to Alec and fell asleep almost at once.

He remembered vaguely before he drifted into unconscious how strange and yet normal it was to talk to his mother-in-law/previous circle member about his life with her son. He would have to tell Alec about it in the morning. Tell Alec that his mother really does accept him and his dad really was trying his best. Magnus smiled as he drifted off. Alec would like that news and he loved giving Alec good news.

Chapter End Notes

In this chapter, it says Magnus was born in 1604. Though all the research writing this story I couldn't find an exact year for Magnus's birth. The Wikia page said the early 1600 so I picked a year.
Toys R Us

Chapter Summary

This chapter was inspired by a scene in the Shadowhunter Academy Series in which Simon and Izzy are at Magnus's and Alec's place and notice all the toys. It is also based off of how overwhelmed Magnus was by the Lightwood family invasion during the Shadowhunter Academy story 'Born to an Endless Night' along with the reference in another chapter of the Academy series in which Magnus and Alec are known to have taken their new son on a vacation to Bali.

At this point, Magnus had lost track of how many shadowhunters were in his apartment. He did not remember sending out any baby shower invitations and yet here they all were holding gifts and playing 'It's my turn to hold the baby.'

“Blueberry goes up,” Robert said swinging a giggling Max up. “And blueberry goes down.” And swinging him back down again with shadowhunter agility.

Max wiggled in his grandfather’s arms obviously asking to be swung again. Magnus remembered something about how babies spit up with joy and quickly went to rescue his son.

“Robert,” Magnus said, “Perhaps not right after he has eaten.”

“Good point, Magnus,” Robert said settling Max in his arms instead. Max did not look happy about this. Before he had time to start fussing about it, however, Maryse scooped him out of Robert’s arms and hugged him tight. Max seemed pleased and forget to whine over the loss of his game.

Magnus decided Maryse could be trusted not to swing Max and searched the crowd for Alec, who it turned out was being forced to open presents.

“Shouldn’t Max open these?” Magnus heard Alec say as he came closer.

“He is too young,” Izzy said. “Besides, I don’t think Mom is going to give him up anytime soon.” Alec groaned turning to see his mother with her arms very securely around his son.

“Can I help, darling?” Magnus asked. Alec handed him the gift. Magnus did not understand Alec’s aversion to opening presents.

“Don’t mind if I do,” Magnus said and swiftly removed the wrapping paper to reveal a box full of the most adorable baby clothes he had ever seen. Granted baby clothes were not one of Magnus's areas of expertise. These clothes did, however, seem designed to compliment Max’s skin. “Oh, these are beautiful. Who are they from?”

“Me,” Izzy said. “And Simon.”

“Thank you,” Magnus said. “And thank Simon for me as well.” Izzy nodded.

“Mine next!” Jace said running up to shove a rather inexpertly wrapped package into Magnus’s hands.
“Clary wouldn’t wrap it for me,” Jace explained. Magnus opened the strangely shaped thing to reveal a harness of some sort with many ropes on it that it seemed to Magnus were going in the wrong direction. He blinked at it. Was he supposed to strap his son to the ceiling?

“Its for him to bounce in,” Jace explained. “You hang it in a doorway, and the baby goes in the harness so they are safe, but they can still stand and bounce.”

“I am sure Alec will know what to do with it,” Magnus said.

“I can set it up for you,” Jace said and without waiting for an answer he took the present from Magnus’s hands and ran off. Magnus suspected the strange contraption was being strung up in his kitchen doorway right now.

“Alec,” Magnus called from across the room. “It is your turn to open presents.”

“No way,” Alec said from where he stood at the other end of the room. Magnus sighed. It was a burden but someone had to do it. He eagerly went to open the next present on the table. Which turned out to be a rather strange looking cylinder with a lid on top.

“Its called a diaper genie,” Robert said from behind him. Magnus turned instantly alert. He still wasn’t used to Robert being so nice to him. It made him jumpy. “Or so the lady at the store told me.”

“I have never met a Genie, who wore diapers,” Magnus said. Robert laughed, but Magnus wasn’t quite sure why.

“Here Magnus,” Clary said handing him another package. Magnus opened it and a huge grin spread across his face.

“Oh Biscuit!” Magnus said. “You know you are my favorite.”

“I thought you would like it,” Clary said grinning. Magnus snapped his fingers and was instantly wearing what was going to be his favorite shirt of all time.

“I think it has too much glitter,” Jace commented from behind Clary. “That’s why we got you separate gifts.”

“You can never have enough Glitter,” Magnus said. “Just ask Henry Branwell.”

“I know that name,” Robert said. “I read about him. Didn’t he invent the form of Portals we use today back in the late 1800s?”

“Yes, with my help,” Magnus said. “Though I am not surprised I have been cut out of your history books.” Robert looked rather stunned, but Magnus ignored him and turning to Clary he gave her a big hug.

“Magnus!” Jace said. “You got my girlfriend all covered in Glitter!” Magnus winked at him. Clary was laughing.

“Where is my world’s best dad shirt?” Alec asked loudly from across the room as he saw Magnus’s shirt. Biscuit picked up another package and throw it at him with shadowhunter agility. Alec caught it out of the air so fast Magnus didn’t even see his hand move. Alec quickly ripped open the package to reveal the non-glittery version of Magnus’s shirt.

“Thanks Clary!” Alec said. “I love it.” He turned and walked straight into their bedroom. Magnus suspected to put on his new shirt.
By the time all the presents were opened Magnus’s apartment looked like a Toy R Us commercial. Magnus kept losing track of his son in the dim of family, but was fairly sure Max had fallen asleep in someone’s arms and been put to bed. His family. It was still a marvel to him that this was his life now. It was wonderful. It was the first family Magnus had been a part of since his own very short-lived happiness with his mother almost four hundred years ago. He knew which Island he had been born on, but it was even more changed than he was. Still he suddenly wanted to show his new family his beginnings. To come full circle as it were.

Alec returned wearing the, in Magnus’s opinion, boring version of the shirt Magnus was wearing. Maryse had a strange expression on her face as she looked from Alec to Magnus. Like she was trying to hold back giggles.

“Now Maryse,” Magnus said. “Do try to contain your excitement. We can find you a extra glittery Best Grandmother shirt if you like.” With that, Maryse burst out laughing. She was holding the back of the couch for support in moments.

Alec looked down at his shirt, a goofy grin spread on his face. “Maybe I just won’t wear this outside,” he said.


“Clary!” He said. “Why did you do this to me?” Clary just shot him a wicked grin.

“Its revenge,” Jace said. “For sandwiching me into the sofa.”

“But you deserved that,” Alec said. “What did I ever do to you?”

“Aren’t you listening Alec,” Jace said. “You stuck me in a sofa!”

Magnus stopped listening to the bittering friends. He thought he could hear noises coming from Max’s room. When Magnus walked in he saw Max awake in his crib and holding on to the sides of the crib. Magnus was amazed to see he was standing. He fell back down as Magnus entered the room, however.

“Don’t worry my little blueberry,” Magnus cooed. “We don’t tell them you fell. It will be our little secret.” He reached down to pick Max up, and Max reached his little blue arms up and wrapped them around Magnus’s neck. Magnus loved it when Max did this. He didn’t know how to describe the feeling of love it involved in him.

Magnus carried Max back into the living room full of Lightwoods. He placed Max on the ground next to his blocks. Magnus sat down next to him. Magnus quickly learned Max preferred to knock structures down than build them. Magnus used magic to stack the blocks quickly so Max could knock them over. Everytime he did so he squealed in delight.

“Magnus,” Izzy said as she sat down on the other side of Max. “Max is supposed to be building with the blocks, not you.”

“But look how happy he is?” Magnus said.

"You are such a sucker, Magnus," Izzy said. "That little boy is going to wrap you around his little finger twice over."

"Fine by me," Magnus said, as he flicked his wrist and made a giant castle of blocks two feet high. Max screamed with joy, as he made the whole thing come crashing down.
Magnus stayed on the floor with Max while Alec said goodbye to his family. Robert and Maryse had to get back to work, and Jace whisked Clary away shortly after. Izzy left reluctantly once everyone else was gone.

“It’s so quiet,” Alec said. “We’re my thought’s always this loud?” Magnus chuckled. Alec came and took his sister place beside Max on the floor.

“I would like to take this image and capture it forever,” Magnus said, kissing Alec and Max on the forehead.

“Me too,” Alec said. “It’s kinda perfect isn’t it.” Then after a pause he added. “Do you really intend to wear this shirt all the time?”

"Not if it bothers you, love," Magnus said. "Though it is officially my favorite item of clothing of all time."

"Really?" Alec asked. "What about the Sari?"

"I am never going to live that down am I?" Alec shook his head. Magnus chuckled.

"Let’s show Max the world," Magnus said after a moment.

"How you mean?" Alec asked as Max happily knocked over Alec’s very small tower over blocks.

"A trip."

“That seems to be your answer to everything,” Alec said, grinning. “We won the war and came out to my boyfriend’s parents let's go on vacation.” He laughed. “You know he is too young to remember it anyway."

“Who is to say he won’t,” Magnus said half laughing. “And anyway we will remember what it’s like to travel the world with a baby strapped to our backs.”

“You just want a break from my family,” Alec teased. “Admit it.”

“Oh alright fine,” Magnus said. “They are wonderful but they are a bit much.”

“They are indeed,” Alec said laughing. “What great vacation destination did you have in mind?”

“Bali,” Magnus said.

“Why?”

“First place I thought of.” But Alec wasn’t fooled. He gave Magnus a look of clear disbelief.

“Okay fine it’s an indonesian island.” Alec smiled. "The one I was born on."

“Want to share your roots with your son huh?” Alec said.

“No I want to share my roots with my whole family,” Magnus said. “My Alec and my son.”

“Works for me.”

“I will call Maia to cat sit for us then.”

“Oh, you mean now?" Alec said as Magnus reached for his phone.
“No time like the present,” Magnus said.

“Okay, but let’s let Izzy cat sit,” Alec said. “I am trying to be a good brother here.”

“Oh yeah and how is getting Izzy to cat sit being a good brother?”

“Well she has plans to see Simon before he ascends and I think she would like... privacy.”

“Shame on you Alec Lightwood!” Magnus said. “Enabling you sister’s sex life!” Alec cringed.

“Don’t remind me,” Alec said. “I was going to bring it up with you sometime later today. But if you want to go on vacation that works perfectly.”

Magnus opened his mouth to tease Alec something awful about how his little sister would be naked on his couch with a boy but stopped himself before he started. Even if Max probably was to young to get it he decided he wasn’t going to give him any premature ideas.

“She is a grown up,” Alec said. “And she loves Simon and he loves her.”

“And we both know Simon is a pretty decent guy,” Magnus added. “She could definitely do worse.” He smiled.

Alec laughed. “She has done worse, don't forget.”

“I will tell Izzy she can cat sit,” Magnus said. “And that we will come back for Simon’s ascension.

“Thanks.”

“Anything for you.”
Firsts in Bali

Chapter Summary

This chapter was inspired by the fact Magnus was born on an Indonesian Island and it was known he and Alec went to Bali in the story 'Angels Twice Descending' from the Shadowhuntter Academy series. I couldn't find anything to contract that being the island he was born on so I decided it would be cute if Magnus was showing Alec more of his past.

Alec inhaled and tasted salt in the air. Through the window, he could see the beautiful blue water where it met the light blue sky in the straight sharp horizontal line. Alec could see the waves crashing against the rocks, but he couldn’t hear them. He couldn’t hear anything over his son’s wailing cries.

“Maybe this was a bad idea after all,” Magnus yelled over the noise. “Sorry!”

“He’s fed,” Alex said. “He’s changed. He isn’t cold or hot. I rock him, and he cries. I set him down, and he cries. I don't know what's wrong!”

“Maybe he's bored?” Magnus suggested.

“With this view?”

“You never know.”

Alec got up off the bed and rummaged through his suitcase while Magnus leaned over this shoulder. “You brought seraph blades on vacation? Magnus said dubiously.

Alec gave him a look as if saying, of course, and held up his witchlight.

“How’s that going to help?”

“Just take it,” Alec said.

“What am I supposed to do with that?

“Show it to him.”

Magnus took it with an air of extreme patience. The soft white light it had made in Alec’s hand changed to red, greens and pinks now it was in Magnus’s grip. The light shone reflecting off the mirror on the wall by the dresser.

Magnus carried the now glowing witchlight over to his son’s crib. And to his surprise, the cries stop. This son looked up at the light with wide eyes.

“Finally!” Alex sighed and collapsed onto to bed. “Don't move Magnus.”

“You want me to just stand here, indefinitely?”

“Just stand there while I sleep, yes.” Alec had his arm over his eyes and was sprawled out on the
bed. Magnus smiled. He leaned down close to Max in his crib.

“Daddy is being very selfish,” Magnus cooed at his son. “All that greedy sleeping.” Magnus waved the light over Max’s face and was rewarded with the baby’s giggle.

“Oh, you are so cute!” Magnus cried and scooped Max into his arms. “Do you wanna hold the light, blueberry?”

Magnus transferred the witchlight to Max’s hand and was relieved to see it go dark. At least he wasn’t sired by a fallen angel.

“Papa can make it shine again,” Magnus said, taking the light back. Max giggled as the bright lights shone again.

Magnus could tell Alec had actually fallen asleep. He decided to let him sleep and walked out the door onto the beach, Max in his arms.

They had rented a small cottage near the water. Magnus had decided to book it for the whole month even if they had to be back in a few weeks for Simon’s ascension.

“You know blueberry,” Magnus said, softly to his son. There was no one else on the beach. “I was born here. On this island. It was a very very long time ago, and it had a different name then.”

“I don’t know how I am going to answer your questions,” Magnus continued, rocking Max back and forth in his arms. Max’s eyes were closing. “Once you are old enough to ask them. The world is a big scary place and your dad, and I will probably be very over-protective and annoying, but that’s only because we love you. But I know we can’t protect you from everything, however, hard we try.”

Magnus couldn’t believe how much he loved this child. In next to no time it had happened. Faster even than falling in love with Alec had been. Loving a child. Loving your child was different than any other love in the world. It was the ultimate in unconditional. It was a new and marvelous experience for him. A new experience he owed to Alec.

Max fell asleep in his arms as Magnus walked down the beach. He had started heading back when Max’s eyes closed. Opening the door to the cottage with a flick wave of his hand Magnus stepped in and gently put Max in his crib where it sat next to the bed and tucked him in. When Magnus was sure, Max was actually asleep he collapsed into the bed next to Alec and closed his eyes.

Magnus awoke to the sound of the waves crashing. He took a moment to rejoice in the fact that the baby wasn’t crying.

When he sat up, he saw why. Max was in Alec’s arms being fed his morning bottle.

“You’re awake,” Alec said.

“Morning,” Magnus said groggily.

“Thanks for taking over last night,” Alec said.

“You don’t have to thank me,” Magnus said, incredulously. “We are doing this together right?” He got up out of bed and walked blearily to the coffee.

“Yeah,” Alec said. “But it was my idea. I mean…”

Magnus poured himself a cup of coffee and walked back over to Alec.
“Don’t think like that,” Magnus said kissing Alec on the cheek. “I am so glad it occurred to you we could keep him. I never thought I would raise a child. I can’t have children and I am not a popular babysitter.” He smiled. “I had given up the idea as impossible centuries ago. That’s why it didn’t occur to me. It doesn’t mean I don’t love every minute of it.”

“I know,” Alec said. “You have been great I guess I figured—”

“You figured like you do with everything,” Magnus said. “That you should take the greater responsibility.” Alec’s face told him he was right. “You are so old sometimes you know.”

“That’s rich coming from you.”

“That’s not what I meant,” Magnus said. “You are more an adult than I am.”

Alec gave him a funny look, but before he could speak Max finished his bottle and started fussing.

“Here let me burp him,” Magnus said, holding his hands out. “Go get some coffee.”

“Magnus I—” Alec said, still trying to find words.

“I was merely stating a fact,” Magnus said, putting a towel over his shoulder. “You do not need to reply.” He picked Max up out of Alec’s arms and laid him over the towel on his shoulder. Then Magnus started rubbing Max’s back gently with the ease of practice.

Alec shook his head as if to clear it.

“I wasn’t always such an adult you know,” Alec said, walking over to the coffee.

“Oh yes I remember,” Magnus said. “You were quite the innocent one when I met you.” He laughed. “I guess I kinda corrupted you after all.”

“Says the man burping an infant,” Alec said.

“Fair point.”

“Did you want to corrupt me,” Alec asked, a glint in his eyes as he sipped his coffee.

“I am not terribly proud of it but yes,” Magnus said. “I saw you at that party and wanted to do some rather naughty things to that beautiful innocent blue-eyed boy.”

“You dirty old man,” Alec teased.

“Not anymore,” Magnus said. “Now I am papa.” He smiled down at Max in his arms still swaying back and forth without really being aware of it. It had become natural to him.

Alec stared out the window while he sipped his coffee.

“You told me you were born here,” Alec said. “But do you remember where?”

“Like which house?” Magnus said. “No. I bet it has long since been torn down or build over or some such thing.”

“Do you know what part of the island?”

“I don’t remember,” Magnus said. “I can remember what the inside of the house I lived in look like, at least a little. Mostly just details. Like the scratches on our table made by years of use. Or the way
the light came in through the window.”

“I wonder sometimes,” Alec said. “If we should try and find Max’s biological parents. In case, he asked us.” Alec turned his head away from the window and turned to Magnus with a desperate look on his face. “And he will ask.”

“I know,” Magnus said. “It’s scary.”

“Very scary,” Alec agreed. He walked over and held his hands out for Max. Magnus gave him up, reluctantly but he needed to change his shirt. It had baby spit-up on it.

“Maybe your parents can help,” Magnus said.

“You think?”

“Maryse at least,” Magnus said. “She loves Max. And she might be able to give us some advice.”

“When we get back I will ask her,” Alec said. “But for now let’s just be on vacation. Max is too little and adorable to question his place in the world right now. Let’s just enjoy it.”

“To the beach then?” Magnus said. Alec nodded, his face lighting up with a smile.

“You are the first lover I have ever taken a family vacation with,” Magnus said as they walked down the beach taking turns holding Max. Max was wide eyed and seemed to be enjoying the view at last.

“Aren’t I the first person you have ever raised a child with as well,” Alec said. “So that would explain why there were no family vacations for you.”

“True,” Magnus said. “But whenever I think of a first you are for me I like to tell you.”

“I love it when you do,” Alec said.

“I know,” Magnus said. That’s why he did it after all. “You are the first person I have ever taken to this island as well. The first person I showed my birth place to.”

Alec looked at Magnus with so much emotion on his face. So much love and wonder. Magnus knew Alec didn’t know what to saw. He was aware that his words meant so much to Alec even if Alec didn’t have any words of his own. Magnus tried to think of them all then. All the firsts Alec was too him.

“My first shadowhunter,” Magnus said. “The first person I ever healed who refused to let go of me. You thanked me for healing you as well.”

“Had no one really ever thanked you before?” Alec asked.

“No shadowhunter,” Magnus said. “And not so sincerely. You thanked me like I was a person. Like I didn’t owe you the healing just because you were born with angel blood and I wasn’t.”

Alec was silent. He didn’t want to think about Magnus to be treated so horribly. It made him defensive. He wanted to help but of course, he couldn’t. Alec didn’t say anything and Magnus continued with his list.

“You were the first one to ever defend me. You did it on our first date when you wouldn’t let me get in front of you. And again at Taki’s when that fight broke out. Jumping up you put your body between the danger and me.”
“Is that what that kiss was for then?” Alec asked softly. He remembered that kiss. It had been different than all those previous. More urgent. More emotional.

“Yes,” Magnus said. “That one action, you trying to protect me, invoked so many emotions in me all I wanted to do was share them with you but I was worried it would drive you away so I put everything I couldn’t say into that kiss.”

“You could have told me even then you know,” Alec said. “It would have been welcome.”

“Yes well, I know that now,” Magnus said. “But at the time, I was still under the false impression that I cared far more than you did.”

“And you really didn’t realize you were wrong until you saw me in Edom.”

Magnus nodded.

“So you stayed with me all that time thinking I cared less for you than you did for me?” Alec said. “Why did you stick it out so long?”

“Well I did try and do the sensible thing once, but you won me over by kissing me in front of everyone in the Accords Hall.” The memory brought a smile to his face.

“That was another of my first you know,” he continued before Alec could speak. “The first person to show me he wasn’t ashamed of me. The first person to introduce me to their parents after shocking the crap out of half the shadowhunter population like that.”

“And that didn’t make you realize how much I loved you?”

“What can I say,” Magnus said. “I am a foolish old man. Maybe I didn’t think someone so young and new to love had the capacity to love like I did.”

“Very foolish thinking indeed. But you are my foolish old man,” Alec said. “My ageist foolish old man.”

Magnus loved the possessive tone in Alec’s voice. He loved the feeling of belonging he always felt when Alec used it. Magnus wanted to make Alec feel as good as he did so he continued down his list of firsts.

“You have saved my life more times than anyone else I have ever known,” Magnus continued. “Saved me from petrifying, saved me from bleeding to death take your pick. But what still takes my breath away is that you want me more than the world. No one else ever did. You are the first person I tried to die for. I have risked my life so many times for so many things, but it was always a risk not a guarantee.”

“That makes a big difference it’s true,” Alec said. “The hope you can survive a fight rather than total surrender.”

“Then there are the obvious firsts you know about,” Magnus said. “First person to get me to open up and share my past. The only one who wanted to marry me. Raise a child with me. The first person to make me part of their family. Their whole family.”

Magnus knew there were more first Alec was to him, but they were harder to put into words. More difficult to define so in black and white.
“Thank you.” Alec packed so much emotion into those two words. Magnus could see the look in Alec’s blue eyes. Those blue crystals were so full of gratitude for Magnus’s words. The words Magnus knew always brought Alec joy. To know how important Alec was to him.

“Anytime my love,” Magnus said.
Simon

Chapter Summary

During 'Born to an endless night' from the Shadowhunter Academy Series Simon decided as Alec's new friend it is his job to show Alec Monty Python. In my story 'A new kind of tired' Simon takes it one step further and decides to show Alec Star Trek. This chapter also makes references to Simon's new job and graduation from the academy. His job is mentioned in the short story published in Lady Midnight called 'The Long Conversation' and his graduation is from the last story in the Academy series called 'Angels Twice Descending.'

“So,” Alec said slowly. “The Spanish Inquisition is a bunch of guys in red coats failing to speak?”

Alec was sitting on his couch Max on his lap watching Magnus’s TV. Simon was sitting next to him. Simon had shown up on Alec's doorstep carrying what Alec had thought to be little perfectly rectangular books but had turned out to be what Simon referred to as DVDs.

“No,” Simons said, laughing at the tv. “They are referencing the Spanish Inquisition in the skit, see. But they can’t get the line right!” Simon was laughing too hard for speech now. Alec still didn’t get it.

“You are fighting a losing battle there Simon,” Magnus said. He was standing behind the couch holding Max’s bottle. “In all our time together I have never managed to make Alec appreciate the finer things in life.”

“Yeah but you wanted him to wear designer clothes,” Simon said. “I think I have a better chance with nerdy TV shows that you did with prada.”

The warlock laughed as he leaned over his partner on the sofa to scoop his son into his arms. Alec was used to this now. He and Magnus had developed a system of sorts. Though Alec still got lectured by Magnus from time to time for trying to take on more than his share.

“Why have they tied her up with a wire rack?” Alec asked, exasperated.

“They brought the wrong prop.” Simon was still laughing a dorky grin on his face, his eyes glued to the screen.

“Then why did they not redo the scene?” Alec asked, in a sensible voice. “I have never seen mistakes this bad on the other videos I have been forced to watch.”

“The mistakes are what make it funny,” Simon explained.

“If you say so,” Alec answers. Alec could hear Magnus chuckling quite animatedly as he fed Max his bottle.

“What’s so funny?” Alec asked Magnus turning to face the warlock.

“Oh it’s just nice to have an ally,” Magnus said, smiling. “In the never-ending battle to expose my Alec to popular culture.”
“I also brought Star Trek!” Simon exclaimed.

“That I don’t know much about,” Magnus said. “The Beatles though! I could tell you some stories about them.”

“Then I shall have to enlighten you in the ways of Trek as well Magnus,” Simon said with the air of explaining one plus one equals two.

“I will make you listen to Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds,” Magnus said.

“Have I heard that one?” Alec asked.

“Yes love you have,” Magnus said. “Though you didn’t seem to appreciate it.” There was only slight disappointment in his voice. He hadn’t really expected Alec to love The Beatles.

“Ah well,” Alec said. He decided Magnus wasn’t upset and turned his attention back to Simon. “I still don’t get what you said about babies being like the Spanish Inquisition.”

“Well you see,” Simon explained. “When the Spanish Inquisition you capture you they torture you. Never being allowed to sleep is a form of torture you know. Also strung up to the walls with chains and stuff.”

“So you compared raising my son to torture?” Alec asked with an unwavering calm that made Simon shrink back.

“Technically yes,” Simon said. “But it was just a joke. No need to take my head off or anything.”

Alec pounced. To be fair to Simon, he did have Nephilim reflexes now and being a graduate of the academy he was quite well muscled—unlike how he had been before—but Alec had a lifetime of training on him. Alec had both Simon’s arms pinned behind his back with ease.

“Alec,” Magnus said with amusement. “Your sister will probably attack you with that whip of hers if she thinks you hurt him. And you are also setting a bad example for our son.”

“He is too young to remember this,” Alec said laughing but he released Simon’s arms. Before letting Simon go completely, Alec messed his hair up quite expertly with his knuckles.

“Ow,” Simon grumbled. “Did you just give me a noogie?” Alec didn’t know what a noogie was, but he couldn’t help but laugh at the expression on his friend’s face. “Just for that, I am going to make you watch ALL of Star Trek.”

“That is quite the threat,” Magnus said. Max had finished his bottle and was being rocked in Magnus’s arms. “If I recall there is quite a lot of Star Trek.”

“Yes, there is,” Simon said, with what he hoped was an evil grin.

“Fine by me,” Alec said, a laugh still in his voice.

“I will hold you to this,” Simon said. The credits rolled on the TV and Simon jumped up to change the little silver disc. “You will regret the day you promised to watch all seven seasons of Star Trek the Next Generation with Simon Lovelace!”

“How do you like your shadowhunter name?” Magnus asked Simon while he chooses an episode to inflict on Alec.

“I am still getting used to it. I keep thinking Lewis in my head.”
“Did you ever consider using Lightwood?” Alec asked. He had thought it was an obvious question given Simon’s relationship with his sister. An obvious question of no real importances but to his surprise Simon blushed and bent lower over the table.

“Isn’t that a little presumptuous?” he muttered his head down over the DVDs.

“It’s funny,” Magnus mused looking down at his son with a tone as if speaking to the universe. “Since you didn’t it seems the only Lightwoods for the next generation will be a warlock.” He laughed.

“That is the strangest opinion on the matter I have ever heard,” Simon said looking at Magnus with a strange expression.

“Sorry,” Magnus said, looking up and snapping out of his daze. “Force of habit.” He smiled.

“I have cousins,” Alec said. “There will still be shadowhunters with the last name Lightwood, Magnus.”

“I am just marveling at the strange surprises of life,” Mangus said, lifting Max in the air and wiggling his nose at his giggling son. “Don’t mind me.”

Just then the door burst open revealing Isabelle in a towering temper.

“Alec!” she yelled. “Stop stealing my boyfriend!”

“I didn’t!” Alec said shrinking under Izzy’s furious gaze. “He just showed up!”

“Izzy!” Simon said with real feeling. He got up, running over to her and put his arms around her. As Alec watched his sister relax into Simon’s arms he let out the breath he hadn’t realized he had been holding. Sometimes his sister was scary.

“Alec didn’t steal me,” Simon said. “We were just about to watch Star Trek!”

“But you are starting your new job tomorrow,” Izzy complained. “And I won’t see you for ages!”

“Sorry,” Simon said. He had the decency to look ashamed of himself at least a little Alec noted.

“Why don’t you join us, Izzy,” Alec suggested from the couch.

“I want alone time with my boyfriend,” Izzy said.

"I didn’t need to know that,” Alec groaned. Izzy stuck her tongue out at him. Simon, ducking out of Izzy’s grip, shot Alec an apologetic look that was somewhat ruined by the grin on his face.

“Sorry man,” Simon said. “Looks like I shall have to introduce you to the awesome that is Captain Picard some other time.” And with that, he let himself be dragged from the room by his girlfriend.

Alec got up and closed the door his sister hadn’t bothered to shut in her haste to leave.

“They are rather adorable,” Magnus noted.

“Yeah,” Alec said. “What is Simon’s new job anyway?”

“Oh,” Magnus said. “He decided to be a recruiter. He is rather perfect for the job since he has his own experiences to draw from. He will be able to be honest about the risks and rewards.”
“Yeah,” Alec said. He remembered all too well Simon’s ascension. The look on Simon’s face when the mortal cup had killed his friend.

“Even if I am sure mom would have preferred he was a Lightwood,” Alec said. “It was a good way to honor his friend. Taking his shadowhunter name.”

“I had a feeling Simon would do that the moment I saw George drink from the cup,” Magnus said soberly. “He is a very honorable person.”

Max’s happy giggle broke the tension. His arms wiggling in Alec’s direction.

“You are his favorite,” Magnus sighed, handing Max over. “And you were worried he wouldn’t like you.”

“Are you asking if I will let you magic up all his meals,” Alec asked in a teasing tone. Max, secure in his arms was pulling on Alec’s ears.

“That won’t change anything,” Magnus said, but he was smiling. A genuine smile that lite up his golden-green eyes. “You will always be better with him than me.”

“I can’t teach him magic,” Alec said. “You just wait till he’s a little older.”

“We shall see,” Magnus said. He walked over to Alec and wrapped his arms around them both. His family in his arms. “Either way, I am in no hurry for him to grow up.”

“Me neither,” Alec said.
This is mostly just a cute scene I wrote but I did research ancient nursery rhymes to write it. I decided Magnus would be surprised he remembered the songs his mother used to sing to him since it is mentioned in 'The Infernal Devices' that he has forgotten what his mother looked like.

“Its bedtime, Max.”

The stubborn toddler just shook his head mutely. Ever since Max had upgraded from his crib to a big boy bed, he had been rather reluctant to sleep in it. Magnus sighed.

“See it’s easy,” Magnus said, as he laid down in the twin bed. Magnus patted the space beside him on the bed trying to encourage Max to join him. Max reluctantly got up into the bed but as soon as Magnus made to move Max made to follow.

“You are supposed to stay, Max,” Magnus said. “It's bedtime.”

Max banged his little fists hard on the space beside him. Magnus smiled and resigned himself to a snuggle. He didn't really need to work after all, right?

Magnus lay down next to his son who snuggled up close to him. Magnus put his arm around Max and closed his eyes. Moments later Magnus felt tiny warm hands on his face. He opened his eyes to see Max both hands outstretched touching Magnus’s face as if he were a blind. As if he were trying to see his papa’s face with just his fingertips. Max’s fingers running over Magnus’s eyelashes. Moving over his eyebrows and pulling slightly at the hairs. Magnus couldn’t believe the slight but overwhelmingly powerful feelings those small hands were creating. Tingling sensations were running all over him. Gentle family feelings of warmth and unconditional love.

Magnus started singing softly. It was a lullaby his mother had once sung to him four lifetimes ago. Max’s hands slowly became heavy with sleep. His small blue arms lay over Magnus’s chest now still. Max’s eyes closed, his breathing slowed, and he fell asleep.

Magnus didn’t move. He closed his eyes as well not willing to give up his moment just yet. He could sleep in a twin bed with a toddler if he wanted to right?

Magnus was somewhere between awake and asleep when he heard the door creak open and saw a beam of light split the room.

“Magnus.”

“Shh,” Magnus whispered back. “He’s asleep.” Magnus gently disentangled himself from Max’s sleeping form and left the room gently closing the door behind him.

“Did I hear you singing?” Alec asked softly as the warlock turned from the door to face him.

“Yes,” Magnus said.
“I didn’t recognize it,” Alec said.

“It was a lullaby my mother used to sing to me,” Magnus said. “It isn’t in English.”

“You never told me about it,” Alec said, but he was smiling so Magnus figured he wasn’t going to get a lecture about the thoroughness of his journals.

“I didn’t think I remembered it,” Magnus said.

“Can you translate it for me?”

“I am not sure,” Magnus mused. “Though it is must like other ancient lullabies. That is to say, it’s about death and destruction.”

“And you decided this was appropriate for the two-year-old?”

“It’s not like he knew what the words meant after all. You do know that Ring A Around the Rosie is the great plague in London called the black death? Oh and Rock A Bye Baby is basically about a baby falling out of a tree.”

“Okay I get your point,” Alec laughed.

“That’s not all,” Magnus continued as they walked back into the living room. “Ba Ba Black Sheep is about racism and taxes. Three Blind Mice is about corrupt some Bishops who wanted to overthrow the Queen. And The London Bridge is Falling Down… well, that one is rather obvious.”

“I am going to go out on a limb here and say it’s about a bridge falling down,” Alec said, sniggering.

Magnus pulled out his phone. Alec blinked at him.

“What are you going?”

“Googling it.”

“Why?” Alec asked. “Weren’t you there when the silly song was written.”

“Google says the song is most likely based off a bridge the Vikings destroyed in 1014 so I wasn’t born for about six-hundred years.”

“Five hundred and ninety years,” Alec corrected him. Magnus rolled his eyes.

“Okay technically yes,” Magnus said. “But you’ll excuse me for rounding.”

Alec chuckled. “I guess I still love that I know the exact date is all.”

“Still really?” Magnus said. “You have had all your questions answered for years. And that still makes you happy.”

“Yep,” Alec said.

“Alexander Lightwood,” Magnus said. “I don’t know what I am going to do with you.”

“Oh you know,” Alec said. “Just live with me, raise a child with me, and love me for all time. Nothing too fancy.”
Chapter Summary

There are many references to the short story 'The Long Conversation' from the first edition of the book Lady Midnight in this story as it was my reference for where the characters are at. This chapter takes place right before Alec and Magnus adopt Rafe. I am currently writing that chapter but it is taking longer than I thought. (Sorry) What inspired me to write this was an image that popped into my head of Magnus jumping in front of Alec without thinking and getting hit.

Magnus watched Max walk into his room carrying a handful of crayons. He suspected the bedroom wall was the crayon's destination. Magnus understood that most parents frowned on his sort of thing, but most parents had to do more than flick their wrist to clean up the mess afterward.

Maia, Lily, and Alec were sitting in Magnus’s living room around a table. This, though once a common occurrence, had become less so since Clary had very kindly given up space for Alec’s little downworlder Alliance at the Institute. Magnus had even been able to perform some spells so that Lily could enter the Institute despite it being hallowed ground. Clary had only recently taken over the New York Institute when Maryse had stepped down and discovered neither of her children wanted the job.

Magnus half listened to Alec’s meeting as he busied himself making lunch for his family. Alec usually cooked but since Alec had been called upon short notice to help Lily and Maia when they had appeared at the door twenty minutes ago, Magnus decided he would brave the kitchen.

It was so much easier just summoning take out, but Alec didn’t like to feed Max too much, and Magnus supposed Alec was probably right. Every now and then Magnus did persuade Alec to treat the family to a summoned take out dinner. Usually, when Alec was really tired or too grumpy to cook.

Magnus was not by any stretch of the imagination as talented cook as Alec. He did his best, though, pulling out bread and cheese from the fridge. He was making sandwiches as he had decided they were too easy a meal to truly screw up.

Magnus just had a tray finished when Mac came running out of his room.

“Papa,” Max said wrapping his arms around Magnus’s leg and holding on as if his life depended on it.

“Max,” Magnus said patiently. “I can’t walk with you stuck to me like a barnacle.” Max just giggled and held on tighter.

“Ouch!” Magnus complained as Max’s tiny horns dug into his leg. Max’s horns were a new part of his warlock mark. Much like Magnus’s late friend Ragnar fell who has green skin and horns. They had just started to grow a month or so ago, and he wasn’t used to them yet. “He careful, blueberry! Your horns are sharp!”
Max jumped off Magnus’s leg and stood, his head down. Magnus couldn’t bare to see Max looking so guilty. He leaned down and locked eyes with his son.

“Max, darling,” Magnus said. “It’s okay. You didn’t really hurt me. See.” Magnus picked up his leg and put it back down in a very exaggerated walking movement. He realized then that his leg actually did hurt but worked very hard not to show it. Max looked up at him with sorrowful eyes, worried he had armed his papa. Magnus moved some magic down into his leg and repaired the slight scrap then showed Max his leg was fine.

“Your horns are just new,” Magnus said. "You will get used to them." Max smiled shyly and reached out to grab Magnus’s hand. He pulled Magnus toward his bedroom.

When they entered the room with his small twin bed and picture books piled in every corner, Magnus saw the drawing Max had done on his wall under the window. Max pointed to it a huge grin on his face.

“I see Clary has been trying to make an artist out of you,” Magnus said smiling. “It is beautiful Max.” Max pointed to the red haired stick figure in the drawing. “Cary,” he said.

“That’s right,” Magnus said. “That’s Auntie Clary.”

“Ace,” Max said pointed to the blonde next to her.

“Uncle Jace,” Magnus said. Max was still learning words and liked it when you said them back to him.

“Papa and daddy!” Max said pointing to the two figured in the foreground of the drawing. One with blue eyes and one yellow, both with black hair.

Magnus leaned down to Max’s height, smiling widely. It still sometimes amazed him how wonderful it was to be called papa.

“This is splendid Max,” Magnus said. “Where do you want to put it?” Max looked around his room for a few moments before he pointed to the wall above his bed.

“Excellent choice,” Magnus said. He waved his hands and the drawing on the wall vanished from under the window. Instead, the draw was on a white canvas with a silver frame and hung centered above Max’s bed. Max turned and giggled happily; he ran onto his bed jumping up and down and pointing up at where the picture was now then pointing at where the picture used to be.

“It’s magic Max,” Magnus said. “You will be able to do that too someday.” Max gestured to his own chest and then pointed at Magnus.

“Yes,” Magnus said. “We are alike.”

“Daddy’s not,” Max said, a question in his voice.

“Daddy can’t do magic like papa,” Magnus said. “But he has magic of his own.”

Max smiled and jumping down from his bed, he ran from the room. Magnus hurrying after him.

“Daddy!” Max yelled as he ran into Alec.

“Hi Blueberry,” Alec said, turning to see his son.
“Come!” Max said pulling Alec’s arm in the direction of his room.

“I am trying to work,” Alec said but with little authority. Magnus knew Alec prioritized Max over everything else.

“Daddy come!” Max repeated.

“I shall return,” Alec said to Lily and Maia as he got up from the table and followed Max down the hall. Magnus sat down in Alec’s vacated chair.

“You know you guys spoil him rotten right?” Maia said. Lily nodded her agreement.

“I know,” Magnus said, grinning guiltily. “We can’t help it.”

“Just watch that he doesn’t turn into a spoiled brat okay,” Maia said.

“The world would never let him,” Magnus said. “No matter how loving a childhood Alec and I create for him it won’t change the outside world he will one day have to live in.”

“Oh cheer up,” Lily said. “He’s immortal. He has lots of time to figure out life. Childhood trauma can’t last forever right?”

“Lily,” Magnus said pointedly. “Did you know you are rather tactless.”

Maia laughed. “She is that.” Lily looked huffy but was spared having to answer by a knock at the door.

Magnus was used to visitors in his life now. Maryse liked to drop by often as well as Jace, Clary, Simon, and Izzy. Magnus’s friends weren’t above an announced visit either. For most of Magnus’s life, he had been a rather solitary person. Magnus had learned quite quickly after he and Alec had adopted Max, once you have a family being alone was a rare status indeed. But he found he rather liked it that way.

Despite Lily’s comment it had been a rather pleasant morning and Magnus was smiling when he opened the door. In the doorway stood Maryse, Izzy, Jace, Clary, and Simon all in gear with new runes on their skin. Magnus’s good mood vanished instantly.

“What’s happened?” Magnus said, urgently.

“Nothing to worry about,” Maryse said, calmly though Magnus thought he saw alarm under her tone. “We are just here to collect Alec.”

“Why?” Magnus said his worry in no way lessened.

“A demon downtown has actually caused some serious structural damage,” Clary said. “We have to take it out before it starts flattening buildings.” Every since Clary had taken over the Institute Magnus had seen something different in her. Something in her stance and tone of voice.

“And you need six shadowhunters for one demon,” Magnus said, seeing through their casual tone. “So it’s a Great Demon correct?” A tight knot formed in Magnus’s stomach. Alec would go he knew even if Magnus begged him not to.

“Yes,” was all Clary said but it was written on her face. The same fear coursing through Magnus: that someone wouldn’t come home. It was the feel all shadowhunters lived with everyday Magnus knew. And since he had fallen in love with Alec Magnus had become quite familiar with that fear
himself.

Before Magnus could decide what to say next, Alec emerged from Max’s bedroom with blueberry in his arms.

“Grandma!” Max cried wriggling in Alec’s arms so much Alec set him down. Max ran straight to Maryse, who knelt to receive him and lifted him into the air. Magnus suspected Maryse had remained in New York, after stepping down from running the New York Institute, mostly to be near her children and grandson. Maryse was excellent with her grandson despite the fact he isn’t a shadowhunter and Magnus had become rather fond of her for it. Robert was in Idris busy being the Inquisitor. Alec had told Magnus his parents finalize their divorce just after the Dark War, but Magnus suspected Alec wished his father was here more. They were still working on their relationship, but it was hard to do that from across the ocean.

“Hey Mom,” Alec said. “What’s up?”

“We are all headed downtown,” Maryse said. “A large demon is doing some serious damage there.”

“I’ll get my gear,” Alec said. Magnus wasn’t surprised Alec didn’t ask any other questions. He wasn’t surprised Alec didn’t look worried. Alec would always go help those he loved no matter the risk to himself. Magnus remembered when it was him Alec had come to save without the slightly regard for his own life. That was the way Alec loved. Magnus loved him for it but today Magnus wished Alec was just a little more selfish.

Magnus took back the thought even as he thought it. Alexander wouldn’t be his Alexander if he were different. Magnus would just have to be selfish enough for both of them.

“Can I ask you guys a favor?” Magnus whispered to Lily and Maia as he came over to the table.

“Sure,” Maia said. Lily’s expression clearly said no you can’t. Magnus addressed his question to only Maia.

“Can you watch Max for me?”

“Why? Where are you going?”

“I think they are in over their heads,” Magnus said, nudging his head toward the shadowhunters still standing in his doorway. “I just wanna follow and make sure everything goes okay in case they need help.” It wasn’t just Alec Magnus was worried about. Biscuit was dear to him. Izzy was almost his sister in law, but she was also a lovely fiery woman who wore his ruby around her neck. Maryse was so important to his son. Magnus would owe Simon for the rest of his life, plus the kid was kinda cool and his ally in trying to expose Alec to mundane popular culture. Jace, well Jace was dear to Alec and Clary, so he had to live as well.

“Don’t be an idiot Mangus,” Lily said. “They are shadowhunters. This is what they do. I am just annoyed Alec is leaving before we finished figuring out what to do about the territory dispute over on main street.” Lily sighed, like Magnus’s worry was a huge inconvenience to her.

“Just watch Max please,” Magnus murmured so the shadowhunter’s couldn’t hear.

“Okay okay!” Maia said. “But hurry back. I am no good with kids.” Maia turned to look at Lily. “And you have to stay and help.”

“I do not,” Lily said. “I have far more important things to do than babysit.”
“Yes but you want Alec’s help,” Maia said. “And mine so suck it up and help. You are better with kids than I am even if you are dead.”

“Alright fine,” Lily said annoyed. “But you owe me.” She narrowed her eyes at Maia as if thinking of how best to collect on her debt later.

“Don’t go getting any ideas,” Maia said. “There are some things I won’t do.” Before Lily could turn the rather heated whispered conversation into a full on fight Magnus interrupted.

“Just so long as he’s alive and whole when I get back,” Magnus said, silently thinking he wouldn’t care if they trashed his entire apartment as long as Max was okay.

“I am going to portal us there,” Clary said in a commanding voice to the whole group as Alec returned in gear. “The faster we get rid of this thing the less damage it will cause downtown. But first Jace, Alec needs runes.”

Magnus watched Jace pulled out his stele and drew runes on Alec. Magnus knew runes from your parabatai were stronger than those drawn by anyone else. When Jace finished Alec, in turn, drew runes on Jace. Magnus suspected Simon and Clary had already done this before they left the Institute.

Once Jace and Alec were done, Clary drew her portal rune on his living room wall. Magnus watched as Maryse, Izzy, Clary and Jace went through it. Alec gave Mangus a kiss on the cheek and hugged Max before following his family through the portal.

“Where daddy and grandma go papa?” Max asked, pulling on Magnus’s clothes to get his attention. Magnus leaned down to talk to Max.

“There are things in the world that aren’t very nice,” Magnus told his son. “Things that hurt people. Daddy went to help.”

“Daddy okay?”

“Papa is going to go make sure daddy’s okay,” Magnus said. “Can you stay here with Maia and Lily, my little blueberry?”

“Papa okay too.”

“Don’t worry my little one,” Magnus said, he kissed Max on the forehead. “Now be good for Lily and Maia.” Max nodded soundlessly.

Magnus knew about the damage downtown but not the exact place they would be facing the demon. He would have to portal as close as he could and then find the exact spot once he got there. Magnus opened a portal in the same spot Clary had and stepped through it.

Magnus emerged in a dark alley. He did a quick spell to locate large demonic activity in the immediate area. There was an enormous demonic presence in the building behind the one to his left. Magnus quickly starting running, knowing that would be the fastest way to reach Alec across so short a distance.

He heard them before he saw them. The sounds of blades crashing against something hard and bouncing off. Magnus heard a soft whizzing sound like arrows moving through the air and knew that was Alec.

When Magnus reached the abandoned warehouse and walked through the open door, he saw the
demon from where he stood in the shadows. Enormous and dark with glowing red eyes and many limbs ending in claws and tentacles. There was a mouth as well. Full of teeth and it was cackling. Laughing at the six shadowhunters surrounding it.

“You will not defeat me, foolish Nephilim,” the demon roared. “You’re blades can’t pierce my armour.”

And Magnus saw the demon was right. His gazed shifted around searching. He found Alec standing near Jace slightly behind and higher up as if he were standing on a box, arrows flying from his bow fast as lightning. But they were bouncing off the demon. Jace’s blade too was being deflected. Izzy’s whip ricocheted off the demon so violently it almost sliced off Maryse’s arm.

“Ah Nephilim blood,” the demon said. “It smells so sweet. Ah but there is other blood here is there not.” The demon paused, and there was a slight sucking sound as if it was sniffing at the air.


Magnus saw Alec and the others whirl around looking for the new enemy the demon was referring to. Magnus stepped out of the shadows not wanting their attention to be divided. A moment's lapse in concentration could mean life or death in a fight.

“Ah,” the demon said looking right at Magnus, who was looking right back. Magnus could tell every eye in the room was on him now. “I know of you. You father is not happy with you.” The demon pointed a massive talon at Simon. Magnus saw in his peripheral vision Izzy take a step forward and in front of Simon, but he didn’t turn his head.

“My father’s opinion matters little to me,” Magnus said, causally but his gaze never wavered. As long as the demon was fixed on Magnus, he wasn’t attacking the others. Magnus didn’t have much more of a plan than that at the moment but one thing at a time.

“Magnus!” Alec cried. “What are you doing here? Where’s Max?”

“Safe,” Magnus said not turning to look at Alec.

“Oh, I see,” the demon said with relish. “You are not here to help me, son of Asmodeus. You are here for them.”

“I know you are well, Eligos,” Magnus said. “Great Duke of Hell.” The demon laughed, a high evil sound.

“Shall we dispense with the formal introductions,” Eligos said. “I am rather busy.” He lashed out at Simon, but Izzy was too quick for him and took the hit herself falling to the ground. “Killing Nephilim is fun you see. Watching the looks on their faces as the ones they love die before them.” Eligos’s huge mouth seemed to be grinning but with no lips it was a rather gruesome sight.

Magnus saw red. Fury seemed to radiate from him as his hands flew up shooting blue sparks. He may not yet have a plan, and he may not be able to break the demon's impressive defenses, but he wasn’t useless either.

“Foolish warlock,” Eligos said, as he reached out a tentacle to finish off Izzy and found a wall of blue fire in his path. “Wasting energy on shields. You love these mortals do you not, Son of Hell. They are of the angel, they are not for you.” The demon’s eyes seemed to roam around watching the faces of every shadowhunters. Magnus willed Alec not to look at him but knew it was hopeless. The demon turned his gaze to Alec, who was staring right at Magnus his face as it always did showed his every emotion.
“Between hell and heaven,” Eligos’s said. “There should be only hatred. Love I will not abide.” The
demon lashed out then with all his limbs. All of them directed at Alec.

Suddenly Magnus’s stomach wasn’t tied up in knots because it wasn’t there. His whole body seemed
disconnected from him at this moment as he realized the demon was going to kill Alec just to punish
him for being loved by an angel. Magnus ran, shifting his protective spell to focus around Alec as he
did so.

Magnus felt the demon’s claws shatter his shield and reach for Alec. He was almost there. Just one
more step and Magnus stood facing Alec the demon at his back. He had just one instance to realize
this had been an idiotic thing to do before he felt his back being ripped open from his right shoulder
down to his left hip. He heard bones brake and knewed into pieces. Magnus’s legs gave out. The
muscle’s no longer connected to his nervous systems through his spine he fell forward with the
power of the blow. Alec’s arms came up to catch him, but the force was enough to knock even Alec
back. He sunk to his knees cradling Magnus in his lap.

Magnus had learned something from the way the demon had gotten through his shield, however. The
way the armor worked; it had a weak point. But he was now too weak to exploit it. Unless...

“Alec,” Magnus said, “Give me your hand.” Alec’s hand was instantly in Magnus and Magnus
started to draw strength from Alec as they had done before. Using all the magic he had left and all
the strength, Alec was giving him Magnus lashed out from where he lay on the ground, a great wave
of blue fire hurled itself at Eligos.

“Stop it!” Eligos cried. “Foolish warlock. Die or give up this pointless endeavor. You can’t harm
me.” A sly grin formed on Magnus’s face as he heard the desperation in Eligos’s voice. He could
taste his own blood in his mouth. Magnus felt lost in his own body. His legs weren’t there it seemed.
The only part of his body he was truly aware of was his hands grasping Alec’s. A glow of energy
surrounding their joined fingered. Unlike his body, Magnus’s magic he could sense completely. He
felt it when Eligos’s shield was obliterated.

Magnus was empty now. His hand fell from Alec, and he closed his eyes. The world was dark and
sticky with blood. Magnus was vaguely aware that Alec was calling his name, but it seemed rather
far away. He could feel pressure on his hand now as it someone was squeezing his fingers. Magnus
could still hear Alec’s voice, and he made an effort now to listen.

“Take it,” Alec was screaming at him. “Heal yourself!” Magnus registered then that Alec was also
the one squeezing his fingers. Both his voice and his actions matching up, saying use me and get
better. But Magnus wouldn’t. He had already drained Alec as much as was safe. Taking more might
stop Alec’s heart. No body was designed to have all his energy pulled away from it with no time to
recover. Not even a shadowhunter as strong as Alec. Magnus’s life wasn’t worth more to him than
Alec’s.

“Please,” he heard Alec say no longer screaming but just as desperate somehow. “It’s always been
yours. Just take it.”

“To take more could kill you,” Magnus managed to choke out through the blood in his mouth. He
wanted Alec to understand; he didn’t want to die but he didn’t want to live if it meant his life for
Alec’s.

“I don’t care,” Alec said. Magnus knew Alec was nothing but serious. Knew Alec would give his
life to save Magnus without thinking twice about it. But it wasn’t Alec’s choice.

“I do,” Magnus said weakly. Magnus reached up with the only limp in his body he could find and
touched Alec’s face. One stroke down Alec’s perfect cheek then Magnus’s hand fell and his eyes closed again.

Magnus felt something hard under his head then and decided his head was on the ground. Alec was gone. Magnus hadn’t realized when he had gotten between the danger and Alec what would happen. He hadn’t thought of anything past Alec being targeting by Eligos. But he was glad of one thing while he lay on the cold ground, his own blood pooling under him. He would never now have to watch Alec die.

A voice in the back of his mind reminded him that he was dying instead which was hardly any better. If he didn’t wish to watch Alec die he knew Alec didn’t wish to watch him die either. And there was Max. Max who didn’t want anything to happen to Papa. Magnus would miss his family terribly wherever he went next. If there was anything next at all. Would his father find a way to torment him ever more or would death be nothing but black. No conscious mind, no nothing. Either way he wasn’t going where Alec would be likely to join him.

Magnus heard yells and weapons clashes even through the haze of his dying thoughts. He thought of the young brave souls he had saved by following them and knew he would have done the same thing even knowing how it would end. Nothing but magic could have brought down that armor. Without him this attack would have been a slaughter and he would have been left alone with Max far too early.

Magnus’s head was suddenly resting on something soft and warm. There are worse ways to go he thought. Blood loss was certainly better than drowning. Even almost drowning had hurt a lot as far as he could remember. And Max would be alright because he still had Alec and his family. A warlock whose family were shadowhunters just like Magnus. There were lesser legacy’s to leave. Magnus could feel the darkness coming up. Blood was leaving him very fast and he was losing consciousness.

Not only was his head resting on something warm now but there were warm points on other parts of his cold bloodless body. He searched until he found them all there on his arm. The one arm he still felt connected to had almost six warmer spots. Somewhere in the not yet faded part of his consciousness Magnus realized this was body heat. They had all gathered around him so the fighting must be over. They must of won and Magnus was glad. He knew they could still have lost even without Eligos’s armor. Greater demons were incredibly powerful.

“Magnus, love,” Alec said sweetly in his ear. “Take our strength and heal yourself.” Magnus wasn’t entirely sure what Alec was talking about. They had already been over this. He wouldn’t take Alec’s strength. But he could hear the terror in Alec voice and worked harder to stay awake. To focus through the darkness.

“Let us help you as you helped us,” someone said. Magnus guessed it was Jace or maybe Simon.

“You won’t take strength from Alec. So take it from us.” This time Magnus was fairly sure it was Clary talking. And he realized why there were so many hands on him. Magnus listened as Jace, Izzy, Simon, Clary and Maryse gave their consent to have him drain their life force.

“Please,” Alec’s voice. “I need you. We need you.”

Magnus started to take strength from them. The hope of living coming alive inside him as he made himself stay conscious through sheer force of will.

Five shadowhunters was a lot of power. He could sense each of their distinct energies. Magnus did noticed two that were different than the others. Brighter somehow. He knew they must be Jace and
Clary, with their extra angel blood.

Magnus’s body jerked violently as his spine knit together with a loud snap and his legs came back, to him. His vision cleared and he opened his eyes. They were all staring at him. Identical looks of concern on their faces. And he knew they weren’t all doing this just for Alec. It warmed his already glowing heart. Literally glowing. The light emanating from the places their hands were touching him and he was drawing on their energy seemed so intense as to make him glow from the inside out.

Magnus had never before taken energy from more than one person and it was a high. His head rang with it as his blood replenished itself and the gaping hole in his back closed. Magnus realized his head was in Alec’s lap, he tried to sit up.

“Magnus!” Alec exclaimed, his voice full of intense relief.

“My head,” Magnus said holding his temples. “World spinning.” Alec ignored Magnus’s words and flung himself on his boyfriend almost knocking him over.

“Didn’t I just say my head hurt,” Magnus complained but Alec wasn’t listening. He was laughing with relief. Magnus looked up helplessly at the others, kinda embarrassed.

“Ah thanks,” he said lamely. “For the energy.”

“You are welcome,” Biscuit said smiling at him. “You would have done it for me. Have done it for me.”

“Don’t even mention it buddy,” Jace said. “Plenty of Jace to go around. Felt weird, though. Made me hungry.”

“I think Magnus’s life is worth you being hungry,” Izzy snapped at her brother. “Since you are always hungry.”

“It’s true mate,” Simon said. “But I could really go for a pizza.”

"I am glad you are alright,” Maryse said kindly.

Suddenly Alec hit Mangus hard on the shoulder.

“Ouch!” Magnus complained.

“You idiot!” Alec yelled. “Why did you come?”

“My shoulder was just torn open, and you are hitting it,” Magnus said. “Are you crazy?”

“Am I crazy!” Alec yelled. “I am not the idiot who jumped into a demon’s attack!”

“I tried to use my shield but it failed,” Magnus said with as much dignity as he could muster covered in blood and sitting on the floor.

“What happened to letting Jace take all the hits huh! If I am not allowed to get killed stupidly neither are you!” Alec yelled furious.

“I wasn’t planning on getting killed,” Magnus tried to defend himself.

“I have good reflexes. I could have moved!” Alec yelled. Magnus decided he didn’t need to confess he hadn’t been thinking that rationally at the time.
“You wouldn’t have been able to break though it’s armor if I hadn’t come,” Magnus said. “Why don’t you just thank me and then we can move on.”

“Thank you!” Alec yelled incredulously. “For almost dying! I think not!”

“Hate to interrupt this lover's spat,” Jace said. “But there was talk of pizza. And I would kill for a shower.” Magnus noticed then that all of them were covered from head to toe in black demon ichor. And so was he since Alec had hugged him.

“Yeah,” Clary said. “Let’s go home.” Magnus tried to stand up but barely got his legs under him before he fell over, lightheaded.

“No you don’t,” Alec said, moving forward and putting Magnus’s arms around his shoulders.

“I will portal us home,” Clary said. “Save your strength Magnus.”

“Thanks, biscuit,” Magnus said leaning on Alec heavily. Clary once again got out her stele and drew her portal rune on the back wall of the huge warehouse they were in.

“One portal to the Institute,” Clary said, standing next to the shimmering portal. “After you.”

“Can’t I just go home?” Magnus moaned.

“Nope,” Clary said. “You almost died defending the shadowhunters of my Insitute. You are going to be seen by the Silent Brother’s whether you like it or not.”

“But Max is with Lily and Maia,” Magnus said. “And I am worried.”

“I will check on them,” Alec said. “Don’t worry.” He kissed Magnus on the forehead.

“Oh alright fine,” Magnus said. “But you don’t need to bother the Silent brothers. I am fine.”

“I insist,” Clary said. “You were very badly injured Magnus. And who knows what effects taking so much strength could have. Do you know of any other time a warlock has draw on strength from so many?”

“No,” Magnus admitted. “Can I just call Catarina instead?”

“She is a warlock healer,” Alec said to Clary. “She may be better equipped to help a warlock than the silent brothers anyway.”

“Oh all right,” Clary said. “But Alec will call her so you can’t don’t and say you did.”

“I would never!” Magnus said, in mock horror.

“No all you did was scare the hell out of me instead!” Alec said. “Don’t you dare do that again!” The look Alec was giving him now was somehow both one of pure fury and the deepest love.

“I can’t make any promises,” Magnus said, grinning teasingly at Alec. “Love makes you do the wacky and all that.”

“That is enough,” Jace said, pretending to gage. “Or I may vomit.” Magnus rolled his eyes. Jace was such a mood killer.

Magnus let Alec hold him up as they went through the portal. They emerged into the entrance hall of the Institute. Alec supported Magnus all the way down the hall and to the infirmary where Alec laid
him in a bed.

“You know,” Magnus said conversationally. “I think I am only the second warlock to ever be treated at an institute. At least that I know of.”

“Who was the other one?” Alec asked, though Magnus thought only out of habit. Alec was busy putting extra blankets on the bed.

“Tessa,” Magnus said. “Though she doesn’t have a warlock mark so they probably didn’t know she was a warlock.”

“Now,” Alec said sternly cutting off Magnus’s musings. “You are going to stay put while I check on Max.”

“Sure,” Magnus said, absently.

“I mean it,” Alec said. “I will be back. Don’t move.” Magnus froze but couldn’t keep the position long enough to really make the joke work since his back was aching.

“Ow,” Magnus said. “My back ruined my joke.” Alec laugh lightly before kissing Magnus on the lips gently and leaving the room.

Magnus had just decided he didn’t need to sleep when he woke up. Surprised he had fallen asleep so fast Magnus opened his eyes. The light had moved around the room the way it does when the sun has changed positions in the sky. He had probably slept for hours. Magnus turned his head and saw Alec standing over him with Max in his arms.

“Papa!” Max cried his arms waving in Magnus’s direction as if desperate to get closer to him. Alec put Max down on the bed next to Magnus and Max flung his arms around Magnus then laid his head down on the crock of Magnus’s neck, still hugging him tight.

“He was worried about you,” Alec said.

“You shouldn’t have told him there was anything to worry about?”

“I couldn’t lie to him,” Alec said. “You aren’t at home. What was he gonna think?”

“Maybe I am out running an errand,” Magnus said, but Alec gave him a look that clearly said we are not lying to our son no matter what. Magnus was distracted then by Max lifting his head and looking at Magnus with a somber expression on his small toddler face.

“No worry daddy, papa,” he said scoldingly. “Bad.”

“Yes, blueberry sir” Magnus said, as if addressing a commanding officer. Max giggled.

“Am I interrupting?” They turned. Maryse was standing in the doorway to the infirmary. She and Alec Magnus noticed had showered and changed into ichor free clothes. Magnus, however, was still covered in blood and black ooze.

“Oh course not,” Magnus said. “Come on in Maryse.”

Magnus felt around in his body and decided his magic levels weren’t too low. He snapped his fingers and cleaned the blood and ichor off himself and Max, who had gotten some on him from hugging Magnus. Magnus then waved his hand and repaired the massive tears in his clothes.
"Magnus!" Alec said. "Stop."

"My magic levels are fine," Magnus said. "Don't fuss."

"Papa clean," Max said.

"Blueberry clean too," Magnus said. "Papa got you all dirty."

"Grandma," Max said turning to her but not letting go of Magnus.

"Papa got hurt," Max said to Maryse.

"He did," Maryse said, walking right closer to Magnus's bed and pointing at Magnus as she spoke. "But he’s okay. Look see." Max nodded in all to grown up a way for Magnus’s liking. He was only three!

"But," Max said, he didn’t seem to really know how to explain what he wanted to say. "He isn’t okay okay."

"I will be all better soon," Magnus said soothingly. "Not to worry."

"Hey mom," Alec said softly leaning toward his mother so as not to let Max hear. "Do you wanna watch Max for a moment. I need to talk to Magnus."

"Of course," Maryse said, smiling. "Max do you wanna spend some time with grandma?" Max turned to Magnus with a reluctant expression.

"Papa will be here when you get back," Magnus said. "Promise." Max looked at him for a moment then turned to his grandmother and accepted being lifted into her arms.

Maryse hugged him tight to her chest her face down as she kissed his head, avoiding his tiny horns. They heard her telling him how cute he was as she walked out of the infirmary. Max’s happy giggling slowly faded as she moved farther away.

"I wish Max hadn’t been so worried," Magnus said looking down the hall where Max had vanished with Maryse.

"Of course he worries," Alec said. "He isn’t stupid."

"I know," Magnus said. "I just wish I could protect him more I guess."

"I know what you mean," Alec said, then after a pause he added. "Why did you come? The real answer."

"I had his horrible feeling," Magnus said, soberly. "My stomach was all tied up in knots. When you went through that portal it felt like I would never see you again."

"But I go to hunt demons all the time," Alec said.

"This time felt different," Magnus said. "I can’t explain it."

Alec sighed. He leaned down and kissed Magnus deeply before whispering, "Next time don’t give up so easily."

"It wasn’t easy," Magnus said.
“I thought of a way,” Alec said, standing straight again.

“How did you think of that?” Magnus said. “I mean how did you guys finish the demon so quickly. I was losing blood so fast. If you hadn’t come back when you did. I may have been unconscious.” To Magnus’s surprise Alec blushed.

“When you were dying,” Alec said. “I kinda freaked out. I charged the demon without a plan. Jace followed naturally. He never was much for plans. I think it surprised him quite a bit that I was suddenly team no-plan. Clary followed Jace, Simon followed Clary, and Izzy followed Simon and Mom followed Izzy. We all charged together and hit it at the same time in the same place. Thanks to you it’s defenses were down, and it took the hit. We broke into pairs attacking it from all sides until it twisted and died.”

Magnus smiled. “My my,” he said. “You must be rather fond of me to be so foolish.”

“That’s rich coming from you,” Alec said. “Mr I wasn’t thinking and almost got myself killed.”

“Fair enough,” Magnus said. “How was Max when you got back home? Was he okay with Lily and Maia?”

“Yeah,” Alec said. “Though the apartment is rather a disaster considering we only left them alone for a short time. There is paint on the walls. At least I think it’s paint.” Magnus laughed and then winced.

“Don’t make me laugh Alexander,” Magnus said. “It hurts.”

Alec leaned in and put one hand on the warlock’s face the other resting gently on his shoulder. Alec’s warm lips were soft and Magnus lost himself as he sat up to get closer to Alec. His arms coming to rest on Alec’s lower back. Magnus made a contented purring noise in the back of his throat. His hands moving up Alec to the smooth skin of his neck, Alec’s lips moving with his. Magnus forgot about the ache in his back. He was lost in the sensation of kissing the one he loved. Oh it was good to be alive.

“Doesn’t hurt so much anymore,” Magnus mumbled as Alec pulled away.

“Good,” Alec said. “Now go back to sleep. We are taking Clary up on her hospitality.” Magnus groaned and fell back on his pillows. All his aches reasserting themselves.

“I am fine really!” Magnus said.

“Sleep,” Alec said, firmly. “I will come back later. I must go get our son back from mom before she decides to keep him.”

Alec stroked Magnus’s cheek gently before turning to leave. Walking down the hall he poked his head in every room looking for his mother. He found her in the library sitting at a desk with Max playing at her feet. Max still had a few of his toys here from when Maryse used to run the Institute. His mother wasn’t looking at Max however. She was reading a book, her face blank.

“Thanks for watching Max for me, mom,” Alec said as he entered the room. Max looked up at him with a smile but his mother jumped and quickly hide the book she had been reading among the other books on the desk.

“Oh Alec,” Maryse said. “I didn’t see you there.”
“Mom,” Alec said suspiciously. “What are you reading?”

“Nothing,” his mother said too quickly. Alec was not fooled. His archer’s reflexes snatched the book from the desk just as his mother made to move it. Alec read the title and his heart sunk.

“So you heard what that demon said then,” Alec said, tonelessly.

“Yes,” Maryse said softly. “Did you?”

“I already know,” Alec said. His mother’s eyes went wide.

“For how long?”

“For years,” Alec said. “It was Asmodeus that sent us back from Edom in exchange for Simon’s memories and immortality.”

“But in the official report,” Maryse said. “There was no mention of what demon made the deal with you.”

“Magnus doesn’t like people to know,” Alec said.

“It was good of all of you to lie for him,” Maryse said.

“It wasn’t lying technically,” Alec said. “Just not revealing a trust that wasn’t important to the clave anyway.” Maryse nodded.

“Mom, please don’t tell anyone. You weren’t down there with us,” Alec said his voice breaking. “You didn’t see Magnus and his father.”

“I won’t say a word,” Maryse said. It would have been a cruel irony Maryse thought if she were to judge Magnus for the fallen angel that had sired him when Magnus himself had never once judged Alec for being the child of circle members. Alec seemed to be searching her face then. Making sure she meant what she said.

“Thanks,” Alec said finally. To her surprise he moved closer and hugged her. She wrapped her arms around her eldest child feeling the waves of both relief and gratitude coming off him.

Alec pulled away and saw the huge smile on his mother’s face. He didn’t often hug.

“Me too,” Max said raising his arms up in the air toward Alec, who bent down to pick up Max.

“Yes Max,” Alec said holding his son close to his chest. “Of course you get a hug too.” Max giggled.

“There you guys are.” Alec turned to see Jace standing by the door to the library. “Clary is looking for you, Maryse.”

“Oh,” his mother said surprised. “I thought you were talking to Alec.” But she got up and left quickly, eager to be of assistance to the new Institute leader.

“Ace!” Max said pointing at Jace.

“You need another letter there, Max,” Alec said. “This is Jace.”

“He can call me Ace if he wants to,” Jace cooed at Max.
“Alright,” Alec said. “But don’t say I didn’t try.”

“I would never accuse you of not trying,” Jace said, “Oh ye who jumped into the fight without a plan.” Jace was grinning in a rather annoying way Alec thought.

“I know I know,” Alec said. “Just let it go okay.”

“I shall not!” Jace announced. “You officially can’t tease me about that time with the dragon demons anymore!”

“How about I promise to never mention the dragon demons again and you let this go?” Alec said.

“Umm,” Jace said his hand under his chin and looking up at the ceiling in an exaggerated thinking motion. Alec knew he had seen this on tv when Clary or Simon had forced him to watch the strange black box. “I think not.” Jace looked back at Alec still grinning. Alec sighed.

“Thank god I don’t live here then,” Alec said. “Note to self. Avoid Jace for the next fortnight.” Jace laughed.

“How is Magnus?” Jace asked once he had stopped laughing.

“He says he is fine,” Alec said. “And he magiked his clothes clean. But I will feel better once Catarina tells me he is fine.”

“You called her?”

“Yes. She said she would be over as soon as she could.”

“Cat,” Max said turning in Alec’s arms to look at his dad. “Come to see papa?”

“Yes Max,” Alec said. “She is gonna make sure papa’s okay.”

“Cat fun,” Max said. “Blue like me.” Max pointed one navy blue finger at his chest.

“Yes she is,” Alec said smiling. “But she’s light blue and you are dark blue.”

“Why papa not blue?”

“Papa’s eyes are yellow instead,” Alec said.

"Why?"

“He was born that way.”

“Why?”

“Because everyone is different.”

"Why?" Alec turned to Jace as if asking for an assist.

“Everyone is just different Max,” Jace said. “That’s just the way life is. Doesn’t mean they are bad for being different. They just are.”

“Why?” Max repeated.
“It's totally you buddy,” Jace said. “Ace is out.” And with that Jace turned and left the room.

“Do you wanna go see grandma?” Alec asked trying to distract Max from repeated the word why. Max nodded. Alec followed Jace out of the room and again found himself searching the Institute for his mother. This time, she was to be found with Clary and Jace at the entrance greeting Catarina.

“Hello blueberry,” Catarina said when she saw Alec enter the room.

“Cat!” Max exclaimed then he turned to see the others and waves his arms toward Maryse. Alec walked to his mother and put his son in her arms.

“He wanted you,” Alec said. Max wrapped his little arms around Maryse and settling into her arms.

“Where is my foolish friend,” Catarina asked.

“This way,” Alec said. “I will take you to him.” Alec started back down the hall leaving his mother with the curious toddler. Catarina followed him.

Alec wasn’t surprised to find Magnus not sleeping as instructed, but sitting up in bed looking bored. Alec suspected the warlock would have already been up and walking around if Alec had not been so firm with him.

“Ah,” Catarina said. “This is the culprit.”

“Hello Catarina,” Magnus said. “How lovely your skin looks today.”

“Flattery won’t get you anywhere, Magnus Bane,” she said.

“Can’t blame a guy for trying,” Magnus said. “Though I am quite fine. Really. You didn’t need to come all the way down here.”

“Quite fine?” Catarina said. “Alec said he saw your spine in multiple pieces just hours ago. Not two clean pieces but lots of little bits.”

Magnus turned to look at Alec. “Was it really that bad?”

“Yes,” Alec said, cooly. Catarina went right up to Magnus’s bed and forced him to laydown. She then held her hands over him and a soft pastel blue light shone from her palms. Alec watched biting his lip.

“You are one lucky warlock,” Catarina said after a minute. “One damn luck warlock.”

“What’s wrong?” Alec asked.

“Nothing,” Catarina said. “He must have sapped you all dry. His spine is fit together perfectly. I can tell it was damaged but it seems to be in one piece now. The muscles in his back are sore and he still hasn’t replenished all the blood he lost, but he is fine.”

Alec suddenly noticed how tense his shoulders were and made a conscious effect to relax them.

“Thank you Catarina,” Alec said, gratefully.

“No problem,” Catarina said. “How many shadowhunters did he take energy from at once?”
“Six,” Alec said.

“Five,” Magnus corrected. When Alec blinked at him Magnus explained. “I didn’t take any from you the second time.

“Oh,” Alec said.

“And how are you feeling Alec,” Catarina said after a very pointed glance from Magnus.

“Me?” Alec said. “I’m fine.”

“You did have all your strength drained,” she continued.

“So did everyone else,” Alec shrugged.

“I took more from you than anyone else,” Magnus said. “I couldn’t have broken through Eligos armor without you.”

“I thought you were going to heal yourself when you asked for my hand,” Alec said.

“Draining you to heal myself wouldn’t have won us the fight,” Magnus explained. “We would have all been killed.”

“Maybe,” Alec said. “But I still wish you wouldn’t have-- I mean seeing you like that-- Seeing you broken--I just--”

“I am sorry love,” Magnus said. “Come here.” Alec came over to the bed and let Magnus wrap his arms around him. Over Alec’s shoulder Magnus watched as Catarina held one glowing hand over Alec’s back for just a moment before pulled away and giving Magnus a slight nod. Magnus relaxed. Alec was fine.

“Let’s go home,” Magnus said. “We can put Max to bed and cuddle up on the couch.”

“Sounds good,” Alec said.

“See you later, boys,” Catarina said. “I have to get back to the hospital.”

“Thank you again,” Alec said, she just waved a hand like it was nothing and turned to leave. Magnus got up off the bed and he and Alec followed her out. Getting their son from his grandmother was rather easier than usual since Maryse was running out of ways to answer the question why.

The trip home was beautifully uneventful. Soon Max was asleep and Alec was in bed snuggled up to Magnus who was whole and breathing beside him.
Chapter Summary

This is part one of three chapters I am going to write about Rafe being adopted. Please review and tell me what you think! Also very small reference to the first cameo with Magnus in Lady Midnight

Alec was in South America, Buenos Aries to be precise. Due to Alec’s new position of influence with Lily’s Clan, he had been asked to come investigate the vampire attacks here. Magnus had insisted he come as well until Alec had reminded him The High Warlock of Brooklyn had agreed to be at the Spiral Labyrinth when Alec would be in leaving. Magnus was to help put the finishing touches on the new dark magic tracking map. Ever since the Dark War, the Clave had been putting advanced warning systems in place to prevent anything like the Dark War from ever happening again.

Alec was therefore in Buenos Aries alone doing the routine check on a vampire-worshiping cult. Magnus had said he would stop by once he was finished at the Labyrinth and Alec was looking forward to seeing him.

The vampire attack problem had turned out to be more of a miscommunication than anything. Alec did not understand the need to worship anything let alone vampires. He tried to be diplomatic while doing his investigation in spite of this. The attacks had turned out to be due to a new member of the cult. A new member who had not been willing to follow the rules. Alec discovered the only one at fault was the new vampire. Not that this vampire was actually new by any stretch of the imagination. He was, in fact, ancient. Many hundreds of years old probably. Alec had to admit he almost feel sorry for the vampire. It must have been very different living before the accords. Yet Alec knew Magnus lived before the accords. Alec was going to have to include the vampire’s name in his report--once he found out what it was--and knew the vampire would be located and possibly killed. Alec was trying not to feel bad about it.

He missed his family. Little Max running around holding onto that bright red toy truck that clashed horribly with his blue skin. The toddler never seemed to let go of that truck recently. Carrying it around with him all over the house. His mother was when Max right now. When Alec had asked his mother to watch Max she had been overjoyed by the idea. Alec loved the relationship his mother had with his son. His father was the inquisitor so he lived in Idris. Alec didn’t see him often. But when he did visit he also doted on Max.

As Alec entered his hotel room, he looked around hoping to see the glittery man he missed, but he wasn’t surprised to find no one there. Resigned to sleeping alone again tonight, he climbed into bed.

Alec awoke the next morning to soft hands tracing lines on his arms. He smiled as he opened his eyes to see Magnus beaming down at him.

“Good morning love,” Magnus said. “Sorry, I am late.” Alec grabbed Magnus by the shirt and pulled him down for a very passionate kiss.

“Maybe I should be late more often?” Magnus mumbled into the kiss, half laughing.
“No, you shouldn’t,” Alec muttered as he snuggled up close to the warlock. “What kept you?”

“Got a spike on the map,” Magnus said. “Dark magic in Los Angeles so I went to check if Malcolm knew anything about it. Julian and Emma were there with him when I arrived. Emma seemed rather happy to see me actually.”

“Oh, and what were those two doing with the High Warlock?”

“Not totally sure,” Magnus said. “They didn’t seem to want to tell me.”

“Did Malcolm know anything about the dark magic?” Alec asked.

“He seemed to have it in hand,” Magnus said. “A rogue necromancer he said. I think Malcolm is helping them, with something. Not quite sure what, though.”

“Well hopefully Emma isn’t getting in over her head,” Alec said.

“Oh she probably is,” Magnus said. “You Nephilim always are. Remember what you were getting up to at her age?”

“Yes,” Alec said. “But we had you helping us remember?”

“What would you Nephilim do without us warlocks?”

“No idea,” Alec said. “But I am sure I wouldn't know what I’d do without you.” He reaching up to kiss Magnus again. They stayed like that, laying on the bed arms wrapped around each other lips moving together, until Alec’s stomach rumbled.

“Breakfast is in order I think,” Magnus said smiling. He got up pulling Alec with him and into the kitchen.

“How close are you to completing your job here?” Magnus asked.

“Very close,” Alec said as he started fixing breakfast. “I found out who was behind the attacks I just need his name to add to my report.

“Oh,” Magnus said. “Can I help?”

“Depends have you ever met the vampire that has been causing all the trouble,” Alec said. “Eyewitnesses have described him as dated so I am guessing he is old.”

“Maybe not,” Magnus said. “The seventies is dated technically, and that's only forty years ago.”

“Fair point,” Alec said, taking a break from cooking breakfast to rummage in the pile of papers on the desk. "Here." Alec handed Magnus the sketch. "This is the best picture we have of him."

“He does look a little familiar,” Magnus said. "Don't remember his name, though."

“You're a great help," Alec said sarcastically.

“I have met a lot of people, Alexander," Magnus said. "You can't expect me to remember them all."

“Oh all right," Alec said, resigned. "I just want to be done. I miss home. And Max."

“I know how you feel, love,” Magnus said. "I will help you identify the vampire."
“Thanks,” Alec said. "I am sick of not being able to talk to people probably.”

“Well amigo,” Magnus said. "You could always let me teach you the language of love.”

“I know a little Spanish,” Alec said knowing exactly what Magnus meant and choosing not to comment on the way Magnus said it. “And with everything else going on, when will I find time to do that?” Magnus chuckled as he accepted the food Alec handed him. “Besides, I won’t need Spanish once we get back home.” Magnus agreed, and they ate their breakfast in comfortable silence. After breakfast, Magnus helped Alec research the vampire.

"Wait a minute!" Magnus said getting up to look over Alec's shoulder. "I am remember something. Lots of disco lights and that vampire bragging about something." Magnus shook his head. "Sounds like a party to me but don't ask me when it was."

"Well disco lights didn't exist hundreds of years ago right," Alec said without looking up from his work.

"Not, the electric ones no," Magnus said. "But I am a warlock."

"Magic disco lights?" Alec said absently.

"Of course," Magnus said, then added as if to himself, "Bragging about..." Magnus started pacing back and forth his hands at his temples.

"If you can't remember, you can't remember," Alec said. "Don't wear a hole in the carpet."

"But the sooner you finish that report, the sooner we go home,” Magnus said.

Magnus was never able to remember more from that party, but Alec couldn't blame him. It was a bit of a stretch that Magnus remember one face from who know long ago during a party where no one exchanged names. Alec was able to track down the vampires name with a little traditional detective work and by the end of the day he had only one meeting left before he could go home.

“It’s a short meeting,” Alec said. Magnus was watching Alec prepare to leave with a woebegone look on his face. Magnus ignored Alec, exaggerating his pout even more. Alec rolled his eyes.

“Read a book,” Alec said. “I won’t be long.” He kissed Magnus briefly before leaving. Magnus decided to follow Alec’s advice. He summoned the book he had left on his bedside table back in Brooklyn and settled down to read.

_________

Alec had a bit of a headache. He didn’t much like Clave meetings. He was eager to get back to the hotel. As much as he teased Magnus for his clinginess, Alec had to admit he was just as bad. It was a testimony to how much he loved the man that Alec could miss Magnus after only being away from him for a few hours.

Alec’s gaze unfocused as his mind wondered, thinking of Magnus waiting for him just a few blocks ahead. Probably reading a book like Alec had suggested. Or Mangus might be only going through the motions of reading all the while worrying about what was happening in Los Angeles with Emma. Magnus always cared more than he let on. Alec doubted most people knew this about Magnus since the warlock was so good at downplaying his emotions.

Alec’s head snapped around. Movement in the shadows of the alley ahead pulled his attention. Alec stared fixedly at the entrance to the dark alley; he could just make out a small figure standing there. A
very small figure. Alec moved forward trying to get a better look and realized was a child, leaning over looking into a garbage can.

Alec felt drawn forward until he stood just feet away. The figure was still mostly in the shadows; Alec wasn’t wearing a sight rune so he couldn’t make out any details.

“Hello,” Alec said, gently. The child’s gaze snapped up to fix on him. Alec was reminded of a deer in the wood. He held out his hands and whispered as if speaking to a wild animal that might bolt at any minute.

“I am not going to hurt you,” Alec said. The child moved out of the shadows toward Alec’s voice, and Alec squinted trying to see the child in the darkness. From his skin, Alec guessed the child was a local. He stood out here like a white blade in a sea of wooden practice swords. The child also seemed to be barefoot and wearing some sort of shapeless brown clothing.

“Friend,” Alec said. “Take you home safe.” Alec could see the child didn’t understand him. He repeated his words in what little Spanish he knew.

“No home,” the child said in shaky Spanish, but he did come a few steps closer. Alec suspected he was wearing a potato sack that had holes in it. This child was homeless, and judging from the way he had been digging through the garbage, starving. Alec’s heart hurt to see a child, any child, all alone in the world, cold and hungry.

“Come with me then,” Alec said, trying to communicate more with his tone of voice than his words since he knew his Spanish wasn’t good. “I will take care of you.” Alec could make sure the child was safe and off the streets. Magnus spoke perfect Spanish. Alec knew it was the second language Magnus had learned. He had probably had to keep updating his dialect over the centuries. Alec wished Magnus was here to help him speak to the child. The boy was looking up at him with wide brown eyes, but he didn’t move.

“Amigo,” Alec said pointing to his chest. It was one of the only Spanish words he was sure he knew. The child stepped back into the shadows, shaking his head.

“Please don’t go,” Alec said. The boy took one more step back and disappeared into the darkness. Alec pulled out his witchlight, illuminating the dark corners of the alley, but he couldn’t see the boy anywhere.

Alec wanted to follow the child; make sure he was safe. It was a compulsion he couldn’t ignore, but he also knew he wouldn’t be able to find the child without help. It was evident the boy knew this place and Alec didn’t. The boy’s scared face seemed to be burned into Alec’s mind. That look of loneliness had touched his heart. Alec quickly ran back to his hotel and found the one person he could always rely on lounging majestically on a large chair by the window. Magnus had dressed casually today as if he had no plans to leave the hotel at all. And as Alec suspected Magnus had his head bent over a book.

“Hello darling,” Magnus said, putting his book down as soon as Alec walked in. “How was the meeting?”

“I need your help,” Alec said and watched as Magnus’s casual posture quickly stiffened and focused on him. “On the way home I saw a homeless starving child. But he ran away from me.” Alec could hear the hurt in his own voice and knew Mangus understood. “I want to help him. Can you find him?”

“I don’t know,” Magnus said, standing up and moving toward him. “You don’t have anything of his
I presume.” Alec shook his head, smiling weakly at him. Magnus could tell the child’s misfortune had affected Alec profoundly. Alec was after all one of the most loving people Magnus had ever met.

“Just let me look something up,” Magnus said and waved his hands. A rather large illuminated spell book he kept at the bottom of his desk at home appeared in his hand.

“I almost never have to look spells up,” Alec said.

“It’s been ages since I tried this.”

“How many ages?” Alec asked, grinning. He never missed an opportunity to tease Magnus. The teasing was helping to lighten his mood, at least temporarily.

“I am not that old, Alexander” Magnus said, his gaze never leaving the book in his hand as he spoke. “An age is thousands of years.” Once he found the page he was looking for, he vanished the book back to his loft and turned to Alec.

“Can you show me where you first saw the child,” Magnus asked. Alec nodded, soberly all the laughter leaving his eyes as he turned and lead Magnus from the hotel and down the street. Alec stopped when they reached the alley.

“He ran that way,” Alec said pointing. Magnus waved his hand over the ground in the direction Alec indicated, muttering under his breath. Trails of yellow footprints appeared all around them. Not one set of tracks but many.

“This spell shows the trails of everyone that walked this way,” Magnus explained. “We will have to identify which are the child you saw. Where was he standing?”

“There,” Alec said pointing to the garbage can where a small set of prints were clustered. The same footprints lead away deeper into the alley.

“Follow that trail,” Magnus said theatrically. Alec gave him a look. Magnus, however, refused to look abashed and held out his hand. Alec took it and together walked in the direction of the footprints. From the way, the footprints were clustered they could tell the child stopped at every mundane food establishment in the area and most of the garbage cans. Eventually, the footprints vanished through a hole in the wall of what could only be an abandoned building. There was an old for lease sign sitting crooked in the window. The hole was too small for them so Alec circled around until he found a door. Magnus soundless magicked the lock open, and Alec walked inside.

Alec had put a night vision rune on his arm while they had followed the child’s tracks and Magnus already had excellent vision in the dark. Therefore, both men could clearly see the small shivering figure curled up in the corner.

“Is that him?” Magnus asked, softly.

“Don’t know,” Alec whispered.

“I think he is asleep,” Magnus whispered.

“Maybe we should show him we mean no hard by giving him something to eat,” Alec said remembering how the child’s tracks had been focused on restaurants.

“Are you giving me permission to steal food,” Magnus whispered back. Alec nodded. Magnus flicked his wrist and summoned a sandwich from the local deli which appeared in Alec’s hand. Alec
walked a few steps closer to the small quivering child in the corner.

“Hello,” Alec said in his sad excuse for Spanish. “Friend. Remember me? I have food for you.”

“Alec darling,” Magnus whispered, with a slight grimace. “Let me translate. Your Spanish isn’t very good.” Alec smiled at Magnus. He knew the warlock would know exactly what he wanted to say. No one had ever known him better.

“Are you hungry,” Magnus said, in flawless Spanish. “You can have this sandwich if you like.”

The boy slowly got up and came into the light. His eyes fixed on the sandwich. Alec held it out, and the boy inched closer. He stood quite a few feet away as he reached out for it. His arms fully extended as he snatched the sandwich and then scurried back several steps to start eating it.

“My name is Magnus, and this is Alec. We are friends. You are safe.”

The boy shook his head as he started eating, still standing quite far from them.

“We are here to help you,” Magnus said. “What is your name, little one?” The boy just shook his head again, too focused on eating to speak. Magnus didn’t speak again until the child finished eating which didn’t take long. Alec suspected it was all he had eaten that day. Or at least the best thing he had eaten.

“What’s your name?” Magnus asked again. “So we know what to call you.”

“Me,” the boy said pointing to his chest.

“Is that all you call yourself?” Magnus asked. The child nodded, licking mustard off his fingers. “Do you want something more to eat?” The boy nodded again and came a little closer in anticipation of food. Magnus flicked his wrist, and another sandwich appeared in Alec’s hand. Alec moved forward to give it to the child but he was staring wide-eyed at Magnus now, the sandwich forgotten. The boy pointed right at Magnus fear creeping onto his face.

“Don’t be afraid,” Magnus said, in Spanish holding out his arms. “Please.”

“What’s wrong?” Alec asked, in English.

“I think I am scaring him,” Magnus said sadly switching back to English. Alec turned from Magnus to look at the boy. He smiled widely at the child then put his hand on Magnus’s shoulder.

“Amigo,” Alec said

“Scary,” the boy said. Alec took a step in front of Magnus so the boy was looking at him instead.

“Amigo,” Alec repeated, his hand still touching Magnus’s arm. He was displaying his trust of Magnus by having Magnus at his back. The boy seemed to understand this though he still looked wary; he switched his focus back to the sandwich, curiosity in his eyes instead of hunger.

“It’s magic,” Magnus said from behind Alec. He didn’t move to see the child but spoke instead to the back of Alec’s head. “I can control it.” The boy ventured forward slowly to take the sandwich from Alec again only coming as close as he had to get the food then darting back again.

“You speak first,” Magnus whispered in English to Alec. “I will just translate. He likes you more.” Alec didn’t like that the child was scared of Magnus. He didn’t like it one bit.

Another nod. Before Alec had to ask, Magnus already knew. He waved his hand, and a thick, soft blanket appeared in Alec’s arms.

“Take this,” Magnus said as Alec held out the blanket. “So you aren’t cold.” The boy took the blanket being less cautious this time about how close he got to Alec even knowing Magnus was standing right behind him. The light through the window shifted, and Alec saw how dry the child's lips were. The skin cracked in places.

“Are you thirsty,” Alec asked and once Magnus translated the child licked his lips as if he knew what they meant to do. Magnus summoned a bottle of water again into Alec’s hand.

“You give it to him,” Alec said turning around and handing the bottle to Magnus.

“He is more comfortable with you,” Magnus whispered back in English.

“I want him to be comfortable with us both,” Alec replied. Magnus took the bottle somewhat wearily and stepped out from behind Alec.

“This is for you,” Magnus said, his arms out holding the bottle. “If you are thirsty.” Magnus didn't move, letting the boy set the pass. Slowly the child moved toward Magnus his gaze shifting to Alec only twice as he did so. Alec had a warm smile on his face and rested his hand on Magnus’s shoulder again encouraging the child to trust Magnus. To Magnus’s delight, the boy came closer, closer than he had ever come to Alec, and took the water. He still took a step back before drinking it, however.

Alec was starting to worry they were overwhelming the boy. He felt better knowing the child had eaten. That he had something warm to sleep with. To build trust, you must fulfill promises.

“Is it okay if we came back later?” Alec asked, and Magnus translated though with a slightly confused look on his face. The child looked up from his water bottle and studied them for a moment.

“More food?” he asked. Alec nodded with a smile and the boy smiled back at him. Alec’s heart lifted at the carefree way the child was smiling. Like any child would. The way Max smiled when he was happy. This boy had been through something horrible he was sure. Even though he was entirely alone in the world, this child was still able to smile with simple joy.

“We will see you soon then,” Alec said, and after Magnus had finished translating, they both turned slowly and left.

“Why are we leaving?” Magnus asked as they walked back down the street to their hotel.

“I don’t want to overwhelm him,” Alec said. “He is okay now. Food and a blanket. Let him get used to that first.”

“Good thinking Alexander,” Magnus said.

“Do you think he is a mundane?” Alec asked.

“No,” Magnus said. “There is something supernatural about him. I am just not sure what.”

“He can’t be anything else,” Alec said.

“Faire?” Magnus said.

“I don’t think so,” Alec said.
“I believe he has been on the streets for years,” Magnus said. “He doesn’t remember his name.”

“But how could no one notice him,” Alec asked his voice breaking.

“I think he survived something horrible,” Magnus said. “At a very young age.”

“We need to help him,” Alec said.

“I agree he needs help but what about the boy has you so…” Magnus paused to find the right word. “Attached.”

“I don’t know,” Alec said.

“Yes you do,” Magnus said. “I recognized that look on your face.”

Alec grinned at Magnus. His heart already felt lighter. They would come back soon and maybe Alec would get to see the boy’s light up with joy again.

_______

Magnus and Alec awoke early the next day. This time, Alec had food delivered to their room and packed it rather than have Magnus steal from the local deli. Checking out of the hotel they walked together back down to the abandoned building where the boy slept. When they entered the boy was awake and almost looked like he had been waiting for them.

“You came back,” the boy said surprised as they entered the building. He was wrapped in the thick blanket they had left for him.

“We said we would,” Magnus said. Alec held out the food he had brought and to his delight the boy came right up to him and took it without the shy tentative movements from the day before. They watched the child eat his breakfast hungrily.

“How are you today,” Magnus asked in Spanish when the boy had finished eating.

“Warm,” the boy said touching the blanket around him.

“I am glad you like the blanket,” Magnus said. “Are you still hungry?” The boy shook his head. “Would you like something different to wear? Warmer maybe?” The child stared at them as if he didn’t understand. He plucked at the potato sack like thing that covered him as if to say ‘this works okay.’ Magnus guessed the boy’s size and snapped his fingers. A neat pile of clothes appeared in his arms. A white knit shirt. Khaki pants. Socks, sneakers and a warm jacket with fur trim.

“Do you want them?” Magnus asked, stretching out his arms and the boy came closer, eyeing the clean white fabric. He picked up the corner of the shirt, tilting his head with a funny look on his face.

“How?” the boy asked. Magnus wasn’t surprised the child didn’t know how to get dressed. He suspected the boy had just found the potato sack-like garment he was wearing in a garbage can and pulled it over himself.


“But he can’t understand me,” Alec said.

“Trust me, darling,” Magnus said. “You are better at this than me.” Alec took a deep breath and leaned down to a crouch. He took the shirt from Magnus’s arms and held it out. The child seemed to understand enough because he started to pull his arms out from the potato sack, with no notions of
indecency. Standing naked the child stared at the white shirt. Alec was horrified by how skinny the boy was. His ribs sticking out and his stomach distended.

Alec helped get the boy’s arms into the sleeves and buttoned it up for him. The clean white shirt looked so bright against his dirty copper skin. The boy seemed to trust Alec to his amazement. The child even held onto Alec’s shoulder to get his legs into the pants. Letting Alec put his socks on and ties his shoes.

Soon the child was dressed. Alec stood up and took a slow step back. The boy spun around in his new clothes, a grin on his face.

“No digging in garbage cans with those new clothes,” Alec said, and Magnus translated.

“Where get food?” the child said.

“We will bring you food,” Magnus said.

“Why?” the boy asked, tilting his head at them again. “Why you help me?” Magnus turned to Alec and repeated the boy’s question.

“We don’t want to see you suffer,” Alec said and listened as Magnus translated. “We want to make sure you are okay.”

“Why?” the child asked again.

Alec wanted to say because we aren’t as horrible as all the other people who have ignored you living on the streets all this time. He wanted to take the child in his arms and hug him tight, whispering that he would never again be cold and hungry. Alec took a deep breath and tried to control himself.

“Everyone deserves to be cared for,” Alec said. “We want to know more about you. Why were you scared of Magnus?”

The boy looked down at his feet and shifted them back and forth.

“Eyes,” the child said to his laces.

“Have you seen others with eyes like him?” Alec asked, and Magnus translated.

“Different,” the boy said, nodding. “Scarier.”

“Where did you live before you slept here,” Magnus asked. The child looked up and started walking toward them but before Alec had time to do more than be surprised the child passed them. Alec turned and saw the boy disappear through the little hole in the wall. Alec was half way through worrying he had offended the boy when the child’s face reappeared through the hole.

“Alec and Magnus quickly exited through the full sized door and turned the corner to see the child waiting for them. When they come close enough, the boy turned and lead them through the city. They passed winding alleys and busy streets. They had been walking for almost an hour, and Alec was starting to worry they were going in circles when the boy stopped in front of a large old style building with spirals and towers. It almost looked like a church to Alec until he felt a familiar protection coming from it.

“That’s an Institute,” Alec said, breathlessly.

“Yes,” Magnus confirmed. “I can feel the wards.”
“You lived here?” Magnus asked switching back to Spanish. The boy nodded.

“He’s a shadowhunter,” Alec said, awed. “Or at least a mundane with the sight. No wonder he has been seeing scary things.” Magnus nodded. Alec turned his attention back to the child.

“This building could protect you.” Alec listened as Magnus translated his words into Spanish. “Why are you on the streets when you could be safe in there?”

“Building empty,” the boys said. “No food.”

“They must not have sent anyone to take over the Institute after Matthias Gonzales died,” Alec said to Magnus. The boy was staring at Alec with a look of recognition on his face.

“Matthias Gonzales,” Alec said again guessing what word the boy had recognized. The child nodded. Alec had a guilty feeling in his stomach. He remembered shooting an arrow at Gonzales. Remember watched all the other endarkened shadowhunters fall dead as the infernal cup was destroyed. How had this boy survived the attack that had killed or enslaved every other shadowhunter at this Institute?

“Thank you for showing us,” Magnus said. The child nodded at them then Magnus turned to Alec and spoke in English.

“Darling,” Magnus said. “We are due back home very soon. We should get going.”

“We can’t leave for New York yet,” Alec said a plea in his voice.

“Max is waiting for us,” Magnus answered.

“Do you think... I mean do you know this place well enough to portal us back?” Alec asked.

“Yes,” Magnus said. “I can portal us back whenever you want, love.”

“Alright,” Alec said, with a deep breath. “Max is waiting.” Alec turned back to the child who had been watching them intently. He knew they were communicating and seemed to understand more than they first thought.

“You go?” the boy said.

“We will come back soon,” Alec said and paused for Magnus to translate. “But we will leave food for you.” The child didn’t speak or move; Alec worried he didn’t believe them but before he could say more the boy melted into the shadows. Even with the boy’s bright new clothes and Alec’s witchlight he couldn’t be seen.

“We have to come back very soon,” Alec said. “Or he will lose faith in us. And I need to learn more Spanish.”

“I presume you want me to conjure us some food for him while we are gone?”

“If you wouldn’t mind,” Alec said. “I don’t like the idea of him dumpster diving.”

“Neither do I,” Magnus said. He made a complicated gesture with both hands and muttered under his breath while slight blue flames danced around his fingers.

When the door rang, Alec jumped up fast and answered it before Magnus had time to blink. They
were home in their Brooklyn apartment, and Maryse was due to drop Max off any minute.

“Daddy, daddy!” Something solid hit Alec. Looking down he saw his son’s small blue arms wrapped around his leg.

“What am I?” Magnus complained getting up from his desk and closing the distance between him and his family. “Chopped liver?”

Max giggled and releasing Alec’s leg he ran over to Magnus. “Papa!” he said.

“That’s better,” Magnus said smiling as he scooped Max into his arms.

“How was your trip?” Maryse asked.

“Fine,” Alec said. He didn’t yet want to voice his thoughts about the small boy whose happy smile he could not get out of his head. “We will be going back again soon to finish up if you don’t mind watching Max for us again.”

“I will be happy to,” Maryse said beaming. “He is a joy.”

“That he is,” Magnus agreed. “Aren’t you blueberry?” Max giggled as his papa started tickling him.

“Just let me know when you need me and I will be there,” Maryse said her eyes fixed on her grandson.

“Tomorrow?” Alec asked.

“I’d love to.”

“Thanks, mom,” Alec said.

“Yes thank you Maryse,” Magnus said. “It is wonderful to know Max is so happy with you.”

“I know how hard it is to leave your children,” Maryse said. “Even for work.” She paused. “Those horns of his are sharp.” Alec noticed the new iratze on his mother’s arms. “Do you think we should maybe…I mean could we…” She paused as if she wasn’t really sure what she wanted to say was appropriate. “Maybe file them down so they aren’t dangerous?”

“Mom!” Alec said, outraged.

“Nevermind,” Maryse backtracked quickly.

“Alec,” Magnus said, calmly. “Don’t be like that. It isn’t a bad idea.”

“Really?” Alec and Maryse said as one.

“Really,” Magnus said. “If he wants to play with kids his age we can’t very well have them being cut to shreds.”

“His horns aren’t that sharp,” Alec said. “I don’t want to hurt him.”

“It’s just like cutting nails or hair, darling,” Magnus said. “It won’t hurt him.”

“Papa,” Max said. “Horns bad?”

“No. They aren’t bad,” Magnus said, quickly. Max held up his hand and touched his horns. He
seemed to be trying to prove them wrong since he pressed down very hard then yelped in surprise and stuck his finger in his mouth.

“Max!” Alec exclaimed reaching out involuntarily as he saw the blood on his son’s finger.

“Shh,” Magnus cooed as he coaxed Max to remove his injured finger from his mouth. Magnus ran his healing hands over Max’s fingers, and the small injury was instantly gone. Magnus then moved his hands to Max’s horns and the ends smoothed as if they had been sanded down.

“There now,” Magnus said. “No more ouchies.” Max put his hands up again to touch his horns and pushed down as he had before. His fingers were undamaged by the experience.

“See Max,” Magnus said. “No hurt anymore.” Max grinned at Magnus and wrapped his arms around his papa’s neck. Magnus felt the smooth edge of Magnus’s horns on his neck and was grateful they were no longer so sharp.

“It was a good idea Maryse,” Magnus said. “Thank you. I should have thought of it.” Maryse smiled shyly at him then confirmed times for watching Max tomorrow with Alec and left.

“We were not gone long,” Alec murmured. “But I missed him so much.”

“I know the feeling,” Magnus said, tightening his grip on Max, who was still resting comfortably with Magnus’s arms wrapped around him.

Alec tried to put the small starving boy out of his mind for the remainder of the day. He and Magnus stayed in the loft and spend the whole day with Max. It wasn’t until Max was asleep and they were alone together sitting on the futon in their living room that they talked about what had happened in Buenos Aries.

“You lied to you mother Alexander!” Magnus teased.

“It was easier,” Alec said sheepishly.

“I presume we are going back tomorrow then,” Magnus said.

“Yes,” Alec said. “Just for a little while. I am worried if we stay away too long…”

“He will eat out of dumpsters?”

“Yes but also,” Alec said, biting his lip. “I am worried he will forget us.”

“Why?” Magnus asked. “Since he is a shadowhunter all we have to do is alert the Clave and they will take him in. He won’t have to live on the streets.”

“I don’t want to alert the Clave.” Magnus raised an eyebrow at him. “I want to adopt him,” Alec whispered.

“Are you sure,” Magnus said. “This isn’t like Max. This child has seen great horrors. He is fragile.”

“But his smile is so--” Alec paused trying to find the right word. “He is all alone and yet he is so bright. He needs parents,” Alec said. “Needs someone to love him. Not just someone to house him. The Clave would put him in an orphanage. I--” Alec’s words were failing him again, but Magnus didn’t speak. Giving Alec space he knew Alec needed. “I knew I wanted him from the moment I saw him smile.”

“I saw that in your face,” Magnus said. “I knew what you were thinking.” He sighed. “But Alec, he
was scared of me. How will he react to Max?"

“I know I am asking a great deal--,” Alec started but this time Magnus didn't let Alec finish.

“Oh Alexander,” Magnus interrupted. “When will you learn. That is not what I meant at all. I just
want us to go into this with our eyes open. Of course, I am with you in this as in all things.” Alec
beamed at him.

“He learned to trust you,” Alec said. “At least a little. We can show him Max is good too. I know we
can. The boy has a good heart.”

“I agree,” Magnus said. “He is a remarkable child.”

“If he doesn’t have a name,” Alec said. “Could we name him?”

“Raphael,” Magnus said, so fast Alec was stunned. Magnus must have been thinking about this
before now. “The child reminds me somehow of my friend. The way he has saved himself for so
long. There is an inner strength about him.”

“It’s an angel’s name, perfect for a shadowhunter.” Alec smiled at Magnus with so much love
Magnus again thanked whatever fates had brought them together. “But let’s spell it with an f instead
of ph so it isn’t the exact same.”

“That seems fair,” Magnus said. “Middle name Santiago acceptable?”

“Rafael Santiago Lightwood-Bane,” Alec said. “I like the sound of that.”

“It does have a nice ring to it,” Magnus said.

“Look at us,” Alec said, laughing. “We just never want to sleep again it seems?”

“Or have sex?” Magnus added.

“Oh really?” Alec said, his voice full of humor. Magnus could see the joy coming from him. The
sheer relief that Magnus was again willing to do this with him again. “Denying you sex, am I?” Alec
teased. “I must not be a very good boyfriend.” Magnus just shook his head.

“You are the best boyfriend,” Magnus said lovely. “Idiot! You are actually relieved. You thought I
would say no.” Alec looked guiltily at him, biting his lower lip. “I mean when we adopted Max I
could understand why. But after the joy, Max brought into our lives how could you doubt my
answer?” Alec couldn’t stop the grin from spreading across his face as he gazed at Magnus.

“Well at least you are my idiot,” Magnus said grinning back. “Now what were you saying about
denying me sex?”

“Oh just me being an idiot I am sure,” Alec said.

“Ah as I suspected,” Magnus said and leaned forward to capture Alec in his arms. Magnus kissed
him and Alec sighed softly as Magnus’s hands pressed on his lower back changing the angle of their
kiss. Alec’s hands quickly found their way under Magnus’s shirt and the rest as they saw is history.
Max was eating his breakfast—a peanut butter and jam sandwich without the crusts—when he thought maybe his truck wanted some breakfast too.

“No Max!” daddy said, not quite fast enough to stop the truck from getting covered in sticky.

“Vroom!” Max said as he ran the truck over Alec’s arm.

“Blueberry,” Magnus said coming around to Max’s other side. “You have gotten daddy all covered in sandwich.” Max grinned hugely as he continued driving his toy truck over every inch of Alec he could reach from where he sat buckled into his highchair. The doorbell rang and Magnus, leaving Alec to his own devices, went to answer it.

“We are just in the middle of breakfast,” Magnus said to the women standing in his doorway. “Max seems to have decided he would rather Alec wear it.” Magnus chuckled.

“Izzy used to throw her breakfast across the room. She had wicked aim too.”

“I don’t doubt it!” Magnus, still chuckling, lead Maryse into the kitchen to find a piece of bread stuck to Alec’s face with peanut butter and Max giggling.

“Grandma!” Max exclaimed, twisting in his highchair to reach for Maryse, the bright red truck waving in the air.

“He never puts that truck down,” Alec told his mother as he peeled the food off his face.

“I noticed that,” Maryse laughed. “Hello Max. Why is daddy wearing your breakfast?” Max just giggled and reaching his arms up. Maryse, unable to deny him anything, unbuckled him from the
chair and secured him on her hip.

“Thanks again mom,” Alec said. She was too busy tickling Max to do more than mumble something about my pleasure.

“I am going to go get changed,” Alec said, getting up and heading into his room.

“Little blueberry,” Magnus said helping Maryse tickle the giggling child. “You really shouldn’t throw food at daddy you know.”

“But funny!” Max said between breaths.

“Well at least we know he isn’t starving,” Maryse said, then she caught the strange look on Magnus’s face. “What are you thinking Magnus?”

“Oh just thinking how he might have been just that if we hadn’t found him.” Maryse was sure though technically true that wasn’t what he had been thinking at all. She decided to let it go. Alec would have told her if there was trouble.

“How long will you be gone?” Maryse asked.

“Not totally sure,” Magnus said.

“If you have to stay overnight will you text me?”

“Of course,” Magnus said. “And feel free to stay over here if you want. Or take Max to your place. He has toys there.”

“Vroom,” Max said as he drove his bright red truck up his grandmother’s arms leaving a trail of jam.

“Max,” Magnus said leaning forward. “We need to clean that truck of yours it seems.” Magnus snapped his fingers and after a flash of blue the truck sparkled.
“That must be so convenient,” Maryse said.

“Why do you think I let him draw on the walls of his room?” Magnus chuckled.

“But those drawings are framed?”

“Once he finishes one I move it and pick out a frame,” Magnus said. “He draws them all on the one wall though. Under the window.”

“You guys are doing so well with him,” Maryse said.

“And by that you mean me?” Magnus said but his voice was kind. He knew she had never doubted her son’s skills as a parent and why should she.

“Sorry,” Maryse said as bent her neck and Max ran his truck over her head.

“It’s alright,” Magnus said. “I didn’t think I’d be any good at this either.” He smiled at her. “Here hand over the little rascal. Or your neck will be stuck like that.”

“Why did you do it then?” Maryse asked as she passed blueberry over.

“Alec,” Magnus said, simply. He didn’t want to explain to Maryse anymore. Didn’t need to tell her there wasn’t anything Magnus Bane wouldn’t do for Alexander Lightwood. He could see in her eyes however that just using Alec’s name had communicated enough.

“Do I still have peanut butter in my hair?” Alec said coming back into the room. Magnus flicked his wrist in Alec’s direction and then said. “No.”

“Magnus,” Alec said. “What did you do?”

“There was still peanut butter in your hair, love,” Magnus said. “But now there isn’t.”
“Papa,” Max said. “Down.” Magnus reluctantly set his son down on the floor. Max ran over to Alec, his bright red truck swinging from one hand as he wrapping his arms around Alec’s leg.

“Stay,” Max said, his face set with determination.

“We don’t be gone long Max,” Alec said. “And grandma’s here.” Max shook his head vigorously. “Stay,” he repeated. Alec looked up at his mother.

“Did you know Max,” Maryse said, bending down and looking Max in the eye. “Once daddy was attached to my leg telling me to stay.”

“Daddy too big,” Max said shaking his head at Maryse now.

“Daddy used to be little too,” Maryse said.

“Really?”

“Yes, really,” Maryse said. “But now daddy is big and has important stuff to do. But he will always come back.” Max let go of Alec slowly turning past his mother to Magnus.

“Okay but Papa stay,” Max said.

“Papa would love to,” Magnus said, touched by Max’s words. “But I have to help daddy.” Max walked over to Magnus looking up at him with pleading eyes.

“Alec,” Magnus said. “Help I can’t say no.”

“We will be back soon Max,” Alec said, moving forward to hold pick Max up. Max started sniffling, his eyes filling with tears.

“Please don’t cry!” Magnus said. “We can stay right?”
“Magnus,” Maryse said. “You are such a softy. Have a little back bone. If I stayed home every time my children threw a fit I wouldn’t ever have left the house.”

“Mom has you there Magnus,” Alec said chuckling. He put Max down. “Now Max be good for grandma.” Max sniffled dramatically. Magnus gave Alec a pleading look which Alec ignored. He could still picture the boy’s face in his mind. Rafe needed him more than Max at this moment.

“Let’s go Magnus,” Alec said. Magnus looked torn but he put his hands together and created the shimmering portal all the same. Before Magnus step through the portal he caught one last glimpse of his son’s sad tear stained face.

“Papa makes doors,” Max said to his grandma as he rubbed tears out of his eyes. “Go away.”

“Max will make doors one day too,” Maryse said. “Maybe someday you can follow them.”

Magnus and Alec stood in a dimly lit alley. They could hear traffic in the background as well as people's voices as they walked through the streets to the abandoned building.

“I hope Max is okay,” Magnus said.

“Mom is right,” Alec chuckled. “You are soft.”

“He was crying!” Magnus said.

“He is fine with mom,” Alec said. “I bet he has already stopped crying.” Magnus pulled out his phone.

“What are you doing?”
“Texting Maryse.”

“You’re adorable,” Alec chuckled. Sure enough a moment later Alec heard the phone buzz and saw the stress leave Magnus as he read the message.

“You’re right. Max has stopped crying,” Magnus said. “He is playing with his truck while Maryse is watching cartoons.”

“Told you,” Alec said. They walked the rest of the way in silence. When they reached the door Alec finally voiced his thoughts.

“I hope he still remembers us,” Alec said.

“We were here yesterday,” Magnus reminded him.

“But a day is a long time when you’re a kid,” Alec said. “And he didn’t believe we would return. I saw it in his face.”

“The more we come back the more he will believe,” Magnus said. “Relax.”

“He has no one here,” Alec said. “We just have to earn his trust.”

“I think the trick will be convincing him he wants to live with us on the other side of the world,” Magnus said.

Alec took the first step into the building and looked around. He felt, more than saw, Magnus follow behind him. Alec couldn’t see anyone in the room. He pulled out his witchlight and held it up. The child was nowhere to be found but there was a pile of opened non-perishable food items in the corner. The boy had at least eaten the food they had left for him.

“Do you think we should go look for him?”

“No,” Magnus answered. “We wouldn’t know the first place to try to find him.
“But what if he doesn’t return?”

“He will,” Magnus said. “Some of those food items haven’t been opened. I doubt he would waste food. We can wait here.” Magnus waved his hand and two chairs appeared to his right.

“I am so nervous,” Alec said. Magnus knew this already. Alec’s leg had not stopped twitching since they had sat down.

“Calm down, love,” Magnus said.

“What if he doesn’t like us?”

“What’s not to like?” Magnus tried teasing but was silenced with a look. Alec it seemed was not in the mood for teasing.

Alec got up off the chair and started pacing about the room. Magnus was relieved at least Alec’s leg wasn’t twitching anymore. He was nervous as well, of course, he just had more experience being composed no matter his emotional state. Though when an hour went by with no sign of the child Magnus found even he wanted to get up and pace with Alec.

When they heard a small noise they both whirled around to see the child standing frozen in front of the small hole in the wall he uses as a door. He was carrying something in his arms but seemed to have forgotten it completely at the sight of Magnus and Alec. There was shock written plainly on his face.

“We said we would come back,” Magnus said in Spanish. “We have been waiting for you.” The boy didn’t speak but after a moment seemed to snap out of his shock. He continued on his path to the pile of food in the corner. He placed whatever it was in his arms there and turned to face them.

“Why back?” he said.

“We want to take care of you,” Alec said and Magnus translated. The boy’s eyes filled with unshed tears as he gazed at Alec. Alec couldn’t help it, he leaned down and hugged the child. The boy didn’t even hesitate to wrap his arms around Alec. Alec lifted him off the ground and held him tight.
The child cried in earnest now and Magnus found himself standing beside them, his hand on the child’s shoulder unable to stop himself from offering comfort.

“Whatever you need,” Alec said. “Just ask. We are here.” Alec released his grip on the child to look in his eyes as Magnus translated.

“If you don’t know your name,” Alec said. “Can we call you Rafael? Rafe for short.” The child looked at Alec as he heard Magnus’s translation.

“Raf-il,” the child said pointing to his chest.

“That’s right!” Alec said happily. They stayed for most of the day but returned home to Max that night. Magnus portaled them back just two days later. They always promised to return when they left but Alec had the impression Rafe didn’t quite believe them until he saw them the next time.

Alec didn’t want to alarm Rafe with too much magic or change all at once. Magnus summoned food, drink, clothes and blankets but that was all. They wanted to build Rafe’s confidence in them with regular visits in an environment he was familiar with. Alec and Magnus wanted to ease Rafe into the idea of being part of their family. Just moving to a new city was enough to overwhelm anyone let alone having a blue skinned brother, two fathers, aunts, uncles and grandparents to contend with. Better Rafe was comfortable with them first.

When they weren’t working, sleeping or visiting Rafe, Alec was working in his Spanish. Magnus was a good teacher and Alec felt he was improving. As the visits continued Rafe started picking up some words in English.

“Rafe,” Alec said leaning down to speak to him. “Can I talk to you about something?” Rafe looked wary but walked up and gave Alec his attention. They had been visiting Rafe for weeks now and Alec finally thought Rafe was ready to come home with them.

“You know we have been coming to see you as often as we can,” Alec said and Rafe nodded. “And we said it was because we wanted to take care of you.” Rafe nodded again. “Well that is because we want to be your parents. What do you think about that? You could come live with us and our son. You would be our son too.”

“Home?” the child asked.
“We can be your home if you want,” Alec whispered. “Would you like that?” The child ran to Alec
his arms outstretched and Alec scooped Rafe to his chest. Rafe’s thin arms wrapped around his neck.
Rafe clung to Alec so tight Alec felt his breathing constricted. Alec forgot about his breathing as felt
Rafe nod into his shoulder. Alec brought his head down to kiss the top of Rafe’s head.

“In that case,” Magnus said. “It is time to redecorate.” He waved his hands and sparks flew from his
fingers to engulf the room. The dirty floor was suddenly clean and the dark shadows lit up as if new
ceiling lights were shining from every part of the ceiling. In the new brightness you could make out a
bed in the corner and a fridge humming magically as there was no electricity. A couch stood in the
corner big and comfy looking up against a wall. The child stared wide eyed at the suddenly
transformed space in which he lived. Alec put Rafael down and he immediately started exploring.

“Magnus,” Alec said with a look, “Why have you turned the room into a well lit stage?”

“Well he should get used to less impoverished surroundings before he comes to see our apartment,”
Magnus defended himself. “Otherwise he will be overwhelmed.”

“Uh huh,” Alec said knowing Magnus never missed an opportunity to redecorate. Alec was
ginning. Even Magnus stealing couldn’t ruin his mood right now; Rafe wanted to come live with
them. Alec would be sending quite a lot of money to a great many furniture and grocery stores soon
but for now he watched the look of wonder on Rafe’s face as he approached the couch. Rafe got up
onto the couch and started jumping. The joy on his face was such that Alec didn’t have the heart to
make him stop. Who cares if the couch was ruined really. Next Rafe went over to big white fridge
and pulled on the handle.

“That’s where we keep food, Rafe,” Magnus said. “So it stays fresh.” Rafe pulled on the handle and
stared at the food Magnus had filled the fridge with. He pulled something out and immediately
started eating it.

“And this is a bed, Rafe,” Alec said, walking over and showing Rafe that the blanket they had
previously given him was now one of many neatly laid over a twin sized bed. Rafe still had food in
his mouth but he walked over to the bed.

“You sleep here,” Alec said. “See, this is your blanket.” Rafe momentarily forgot about the food and
he reached for the blanket with his free hand.

“Sleep?” Rafe said.
“Yes,” Alec said. “It’s more comfortable than the floor.” But the expression on Rafe’s face wasn’t of excitement like it had been before. Now he looked resigned. Alec couldn’t figure out why.

“Do you want to be clean?” Magnus asked Rafe who turned from Alec to give Magnus a puzzled look. “See like this.” Magnus waved his hand at Alec and all the dirt and grime that Rafe’s clothes had covered him in vanished. Rafe stared down at himself. The shirt that had been white just recently was far from it now.

Rafe turned to Magnus and held out his arms as if waiting for a jet of water to hit him. Magnus smiled as he waved his hands and the dirt vanished from Rafe as it had from Alec. Rafe looked down at himself with an unhappy expression. Dropping his food on the bed he went into a corner and found some of the only dirt left in the whole room, taking it in his hands he patted his shirt. Leaving behind two hand prints. He beamed at them, the grin on his face lighting up his eyes.

“That isn’t clean anymore Rafe,” Alec said, with laughter in his voice. “Do you like to be dirty?” Rafe nodded turning back to the food he had left on his bed and resumed eating where he had left off.

“We have a fridge at home as well,” Alec said. “And our son lives with us. His name is Max.”

“Max?” Rafe asked. “Like me?”

“Max is more like him,” Alec said pointing to Magnus. “He has blue skin and tiny horns.” The boy shuddered. “He isn’t scary though Rafe.”

“Dreams scary,” Rafe said. “Monsters.”

“They may look like monsters,” Alec said, Magnus still translating. “But most of them aren’t.”

Rafe didn’t answer. A fear was starting to rise in Alec. A fear that Rafe wouldn’t be able to accept Max no matter what they did to convince him. Magnus seemed to pick up on Alec’s rising anxiety and stepped in.

“It is easy to be scared of things you don’t understand, Rafe,” Magnus said. “You can see all the things in the world that most people can’t. They look kinda scary but you don’t have to be scared.”
“Why?” Rafe said pointing to his own eyes but looked right into Magnus’s.

“I am a warlock,” Magnus explained.

“Wa-roc,” Rafe said.

“That’s good Rafe,” Magnus said. “But let’s try again, war-lock.”

“Waroc,” Rafe said.

“That’s better,” Magnus said smiling. “Max is a warlock as well. Instead of eyes like mine he has blue skin and tiny horns.”

Rafe didn’t shudder as he had before but he didn’t respond in any other way either. Rafe returned his attention to the items in his hand. Alec pulled out his phone and brought up a picture of Max.

“This is Max,” Alec said holding out the phone. Rafe was very interested in the cell phone. More interested in the lit up screen than in the photo it displayed.

“Do you think he understands,” Alec asked, looking up from where Rafe was trying to find the light source behind his phone to gaze at Magnus.

“Only time will tell,” Magnus said.

Alec tried to consciously relax the muscles in his shoulders. Magnus was right. They wouldn’t know how much Rafe understood until he met Max. When Rafe finished eating he lifted his arms up toward Alec who lifted the small boy onto his shoulders. This had become a very common action for them and Alec reminded himself to relax. Rafe was comfortable with them. He could learn to be comfortable with Max as well. The piggyback ride entertained Rafe for hours but as the sun went down he started yawning.

again shook his head then quickly as if he wanted to change the topic ran to the couch and started jumping again. Alec smiled and moved over to the couch holding Rafe’s hand as he jumped. Rafe was laughing again, no indication he was tired.

It was a few hours later when Rafe was almost asleep on Alec’s shoulder that Alec tried to lay the child down in his new bed. Rafe quickly woke up and wriggled out of Alec’s arms. He stood swaying slightly from tiredness but with a determined look on his face.

“It’s bedtime Rafe,” Alec said. “I know you are tired.”

“Dream,” Rafe said shaking his head.

“No bad dreams tonight,” Magnus said, “I promise.”

“Dream,” Rafe repeated. Alec leaned down to look Rafe in the eyes.

“What do you mean by dream, Rafe?” Alec asked. Rafe waved his hands as if to indicate the changes in the room.

“Wake up,” Rafe said. “Gone.”

“Oh no Rafe,” Alec said. “You are not dreaming. We are really here. And we really want you. We will be here when you wake up.” The child studied Alec for a moment then turned to Magnus.

“Real?” he asked. Magnus nodded.

“Always,” Alec said and quickly scooped Rafe into his arms, slowly rocking him back and forth. Rafe couldn’t fight his tired eyes anymore and was soon fast asleep in Alec’s strong arms. Alec gently laid Rafe into his bed and tucked him in.

“We have to be here when he wakes up,” Alec said very firmly.

“But Max?”
“At least one of us has to be here when he wakes up,” Alec corrected. “You Magnus.”

“But he likes you more, Alec,” Magnus said. “I don’t think it’s wise—”

“It has to be you,” Alec said, with such finality that Magnus didn’t know how to argue. “You promised him no bad dreams, remember?”

“Oh,” Magnus said. He walked over to the child’s bed and lay his fingers gently on Rafe’s forehead for a moment. Soft blue light flowed from his fingertips to shine on Rafe.

“Make a portal for me and I will check on Max,” Alec said, as he rested a hand on the small of Magnus’s back.

“But Alec—” Magnus said, turning from Rafe to Alec.

“Convince him we aren’t a dream,” Alec said. He was beaming at Magnus, all the trust in the world in his eyes. Magnus quickly closed the gap between them and wrapped his arms around Alec, kissing him only once softly on the cheek.

“I know how the boy feels,” Magnus said. “You are a dream Alexander Lightwood.” Alec rolled his eyes.

“You are a sap,” he said, then he kissed Magnus on the mouth silencing his reply.

“Now make a portal home for me,” Alec said as they broke apart.

“Alright,” Magnus said. “But ask Catarina to make you a portal back if you need one, alright?”

“I will,” Alec said. He kissed Magnus once more before giving the warlock enough space to create the shimmering blue portal. Alec walked through with a smile on his face.
Magnus felt rather like a stalker as he watch Rafe sleep. When the child’s sleep became restless Magnus was about to perform the peaceful dream spell again when he had a better idea. Moving his chair very close to Rafe’s bed he sat down and started singing a slow lullaby in Spanish. Rafe’s restless movements stopped almost at once as his breathing evened out.

Magnus woke abruptly sitting up in his chair. He had no recollection of falling asleep. Blinking sleep out of his eyes he turned to find a small child staring at him with curious eyes.

“Good morning, Rafe,” Magnus said. “How did you sleep?”

“Where,” Rafe said looking around for Alec.

“He had to go home to see Max,” Magnus explained. “But I am here.”

To Magnus’s great relief Rafe seemed to accept this without question. He got up off the bed and went over to the fridge. Then returned to Magnus holding two pieces of fruit.

“Waroc eat?”

“Yes, thank you Rafe.” Magnus accepted the fruit and they both ate in silence.

When Alec returned to his apartment he found his mother and his son sitting together on the floor playing with Max’s blocks. He couldn’t help the image forming in his mind as he pictured a second child there.

“Hey mom,” Alec said as she came over.

“Oh Alec!” Maryse said jumping in surprise. Alec had after all walked into the room from the direction of his bedroom rather than the front door.

“Sorry,” Alec said.
“It’s alright,” Maryse said. Alec went and sat next to her scooping Max into his arms.

“Daddy, no,” Max complained as he was distracted from building with his blocks. Alec reluctantly put Max down and he returned building his blocks as high as they would go.

“Where is Magnus?” Maryse asked.

“Had to stay a while longer,” Alec said. “But we thought someone should come home to check on Max.”

“Has Max been good for grandma?” Alec asked, switching his tone and attention.

“Always,” Maryse said beaming. Max was too intent on his blocks to pay attention to either his father or his grandmother.

“Thanks again for watching him,” Alec said.

“When are you going to tell me what you and Magnus are up to?” Alec looked up at her. “Oh please I know all that vampire business was sorted a while ago. You two have been going back and forth almost every other day for weeks now. I may not be the head of the institute anymore but I am not totally stupid.” She was smiling at him so Alec decided she wasn’t mad.

“You will find out soon,” Alec said. “But I promise you it’s a good thing.”

“Alright,” Maryse said getting up. “Do you need me to watch Max again later?”

“Maybe,” Alec said. “I will call you, okay?” His mother nodded.

“Does grandma get a hug before she goes?” Max didn’t look up from his blocks.

“It appear the novelty of grandma has worn off,” Maryse said. “He must see too much of me.”
“Max say goodbye,” Alec said. Max sighed dramatically then turned to Maryse.

“Bye, grandma,” Max said, quickly then returned to his blocks.

“He must be picking up a dramatic flare from Magnus,” Alec said. “Sorry mom.” Maryse came over and kissed the top of Max’s head before she left.

“Blueberry,” Alec said. “Are you excited to see Daddy?” Max nodded but kept his eyes fixed on his task. Alec sighed. One minute they are so distraught you are leaving that they are crying and then next they ignore you. He decided to make dinner.

Max it turned out could be distracted from his toys when food was involved. Alec was pleased to see the welcoming smile he had missed earlier on his son’s face. After dinner they watched some cartoons or rather Alec did while Max went back to his blocks. Max started yawning after a few hours and Alec put him to bed.

“Goodnight Max,” Alec said as he turned on the night light. “Sweet dreams.”

“Where papa?” Max asked refusing to lay down.

“He will be back soon,” Alec said. “Now go to sleep.” Max reluctantly laid down again and Alec closed the door behind him.

Alec was tired and rather than stay up decided to call it a night as well. It was strange being in his bed alone. It had been a long time since he had slept without Magnus. Alec lay looking up at the ceiling very aware of the empty space beside him as he drifted off into an uneasy sleep. He awoke the next morning with a rather unrested feeling. The door to his room flow open and a blue blur jumped into the bed.

“Papa back?” Max squealed as he jumped on Alec.

“Oomph,” Alec said when his son landed on his chest. “Not yet Max.”
“When, when!” Max repeated as he jumped on the bed.

“Soon,” Alec said still half asleep. “Please stop bouncing.” Max jumped once more and landed hard in Alec’s lap. Before Alec could do more than grunt in pain Max snuggled into him.

“Papa might bring a friend to meet you,” Alec said as he wrapped his arms around Max.

“Who?”

“A brother. He is going to come live with us.” Alec remembered all too well the day his mother had brought Jace into the household and couldn’t help comparing the two now.

“You will like him,” Alec said. Max pulled away from Alec’s embrace and crossed his arms over his chest in a defiant way.

“No share,” Max said.

“You won’t have to share a room, Max,” Alec said. “We can give you separate rooms.” Max shook his head.

“Papa Daddy Grandma,” Max said. “All mine. No share.” Alec took a deep breath.

“You will have to share a little Max,” Alec said. “But it won’t change how much we love you. Or how much Grandma loves you.” The stubborn toddler just shook his head. Alec sighed. He tried to stay calm remembering how reluctant he had been to accept Jace as his brother at first.

“Rafe has been through alot Max,” Alec said. “He needs our help.” Max wriggled out of Alec’s arms and off the bed. He then bolted out of the room and Alec quickly followed after him. Alec found Max in his room sorting his toys into two piles.

“What are you doing Max?”

“Mine,” Max said pointing to one pile. “Share,” he added pointing to the other. Then he looked up at
Alec and said, “No share daddy or papa.”

“It’s not like sharing toys,” Alec explained. “You won’t lose anything by opening your heart to a new brother. When Uncle Jace became my brother my parents didn’t love me any less for it.”

Max nodded in a resigned way, his lips still set in a pout as he reached his arms up to Alec. Alec carried Max into the kitchen and placed him in his highchair. Alec called Magnus while Max was eating his breakfast.

“Hey,” Alec said when he picked up. “How’s Rafe?”

“He is fine,” Magnus said. “We are having bananas for breakfast.”

“He doesn’t think we are a dream?”

“I don’t think so,” Magnus said. “When I woke up he was staring right at me.”

“Do you think they are ready to meet?” Alec asked. He was standing well out of earshot of Max now. With the tv on to try playing cartoons.

“Have you talked to Max about it?”

“He says he doesn’t want to share,” Alec said. “But I don’t think waiting till help. Us leaving all the time isn’t helping.”

“I agree,” Magnus said. “Should we come to you?”

“If you think Rafe is ready?”

“Do you want to see Daddy?” Magnus said to Rafe. “You know him. He was playing with you. Like this see.” Alec could almost picture Magnus mining his piggyback rides with Rafe earlier.
“Did he forget me already?” Alec asked.

“No,” Magnus said. “I just never called you daddy in front of him before. Just slipped out. Yes Rafe.” Alec waited, unable to hear what Rafe was saying. “We can go see him, would you like that?” Another pause. “I think Rafe wants to see you. We will portal home.”

“I can’t wait,” Alec said. “Love you.”

“Love you too,” Magnus said, blowing a kiss into the speaker before hanging up.

Max's bright red truck was running over the coffee table as a portal appeared in the living room. Magnus stepped out of it closely followed by a small skinny boy holding his hand. That small show of trust warmed Alec’s heart and made him believe they could do this.

“Daddy,” Max said still gripping his truck as he stood behind Alec’s legs.

“Papa is back with Rafe,” Alec told his son. “It’s okay. Don’t be scared.”

“Hi,” Max said slowly. Rafe was hiding behind Magnus still holding his hand.

“Say hi Rafe,” Magnus said. Rafe shook his head.

“Like trucks?” Max said coming out from behind Alec. Rafe was starting around the room now. Taking in the furniture, the toys everywhere. Max watched Rafe for a few more minutes before suddenly releasing Alec and making to run toward Rafe. Alec caught him around the middle.

“Slowly Max,” he said, lifting the toddler up into his arms and swinging him around to make Max giggle. Rafe’s eyes were watching the casual interaction with a curious expression.

“There is nothing to be scared of, Rafe,” Magnus said. “You don’t have to do anything you don’t want to do.” Rafe released Magnus’s hand and took a slow step closer. Alec put Max down but kept a firm grip on his son’s shoulder to stop him bolting.
“Max,” Rafe said slowly. Max giggled and tried to run forward again but Alec held him still. Rafe took a few more steps closer until he was just a foot from his brother.

“Play?” Max said and slipped out of Alec’s grasp. Alec wondered, as Max bolted for his room, how toddlers seemed to be the only ones who could best his superior reflexes.

Max returned a moment later dragging a blanket covered in toys; his favourite red truck in his other hand. Alec noticed all the toys on the blanket appeared to be from the pile Max had named share. Max stopped in front of the couch, cartoons still playing on the tv, and sat down on the blanket.

“Play?” Max said again. Rafe hadn’t moved since Max had bolted for his room.

“It’s okay Rafe,” Alec said softly. Rafe unfroze and walked very slowly toward where Max sat running his red truck up and down the side of the couch. Rafe sat down as far from Max as he could while still sitting on the blanket and picked up the toy closest to him.

Alec felt arms wrap around him from where he stood facing the children. He would have known that touch anywhere. Alec leaned back into Magnus resting his head on the warlock’s shoulder.

“I missed you last night,” Alec whispered.

“As did I.” Nothing else needed to be said. Both men stood in awe as they watched their children play. Rafe slowly loosening up and becoming comfortable. Alec didn’t dare move for fear of shattering the peaceful feeling in the room.

“Vroom vroom,” Max said as he ran his truck over the other toys on the floor. Rafe was examining a similar toy and started copying Max as he realized which way round the car was meant to be.

“Max will teach Rafe how to be a kid,” Magnus whispered into Alec’s ear. “He is already.”

“And what will Rafe teach Max?” Alec whispered back.

“I am sure there will be something,” Magnus said. “We will just have to wait and see.”
“I saw Rafe holding your hand,” Alec said. “He likes you more doesn’t he?”

“I think so,” Magnus said. “I sang him a Spanish lullaby when he had bad dreams last night. Didn’t have to use the spell again.”

“I bet he loved your singing.”

“It’s funny,” Magnus said. “I once played the charango so badly half a town had a huge festival to celebrate the end of my music career.”

“I remember reading that,” Alec chuckled. “You don’t mention it much though.” Magnus shrugged.

“I am not very good at music,” Magnus said. “I just thought something in Spanish would calm him down.”

“You don’t give yourself enough credit,” Alec said. “You are good at this too. Remember when I caught you singing to Max.”

“That was a fluke,” Magnus said. “I thought I had forgotten that lullaby centuries ago.”

“Just accept you are a wonderful papa,” Alec said, turning in Magnus’s arms to grin at him.

“Why would I do that,” Magnus said. “When it is so lovely to have you tell me.”

“Fishing for compliments?”

“Guilty,” Magnus said but Alec could tell the warlock was joking. He wasn’t nearly as confident in his skills as a parent as he appeared.

“You a great parent,” Alec said. “Don’t ever doubt it. Would I want to adopt another child with you if I thought otherwise?” Alec stared deeply into those cat’s eyes as he spoke trying to make sure his
words reached the warlock.

“You, my Alexander, would care for any lost soul you came across,” Magnus whispered. “You can’t stand to see suffering of any kind.” Alec rested his head on the taller man’s shoulder and closed his eyes. Magnus’s arms wrapped around him and his children’s voices filled the room. Everything was perfect.

That was until Max put his bright red truck down and Rafe picked it up. The screech jolted Alec into action. He was out of Magnus’s arms and between the two boys so fast Magnus wasn’t sure if he had blinked yet.

“Mine!” Max was screaming as he pulled on the red truck. “Give!” Rafe seemed too stunned to register that if he let the small toy go the noise would stop.

“Max stop!” Alec said firmly. Max let go of his truck but screamed even more.

“Max,” Magnus said coming over to pick Max up. Max wriggling in Magnus’s arms. Words muffled by his cries.

“Rafe,” Alec said gently. “Do you mind if I give Max back the red truck?” Rafe looked down at the toy in his hands then held it out to Alec. Alec handed it to Magnus quickly then sat down next to Rafe on the floor.

“Come on Max,” Magnus said giving the truck back. “Let’s go play on our own for a while.” Magnus, carrying Max, walking into the toddler’s room.

“I am sorry Rafe,” Alec said. “Max is very fond of that truck. Are you okay?” Rafe looked at the huge pile of toys still in front of him.

“So many,” Rafe said. “Why care just one?”

“I don’t know,” Alec said laughing. “He just does.” Rafe smiled at him and picked up another toy. Magnus and Alec entertained the kids separately for the rest of the morning. Alec decided some time alone would help calm things down but come lunch time they two boys were forced to interact again.
“Crusts!” Max said outraged.

“Sorry Max,” Alec said quickly taking the offending sandwich away and removing the crusts. “Here.” Max took his lunch and stuffed it into his smiling face. Rafe was looking at Max like he was crazy and Alec had an idea why. Rejecting offered food probably seemed crazy to him.

“Do you like your lunch, Rafe?” Magnus asked but before Rafe could respond Max interrupted.

“Daddy makes best,” Max said before stuffing more of his sandwich into his mouth.

“Daddy?” Rafe asked Max.

“Daddy!” Max said pointing at Alec with his sticky fingers.

“Daddy?” Rafe said pointing at Magnus.

“Papa,” Magnus corrected.

“Papa,” Rafe repeated pointing at Magnus.

“That’s right,” Magnus said smiling. Then Rafe pointed to Alec and said “Daddy.”

“Yes Rafe,” Alec said. “And who’s this?” Alec pointed to Max.

“Max,” Rafe said.

“Your brother, Max,” Alec said. “That’s right.”

Rafe could no longer be distracted from his lunch and started eating hungrily. Alec wondered how long it would be until Rafe stopped eating like he was starving.
“They may eat us out of house and home you know,” Magnus mused as he cleaned away lunch dishes. The two boys were playing together in the living area in view of the kitchen. Alec was watching carefully for any signs the red truck was in danger of changing hands.

“I wouldn’t have it any other way,” Alec said, filling the sink with soap and water. “Beside you can afford it.”

“I haven’t worked much since we adopted Max,” Magnus said. Alec chuckled.

“I am not worried,” he said, laughter still in his voice. “Rafe needs to eat. He is so skinny.”

“Do you think we should take him back tonight? I mean is he comfortable enough to stay overnight?” Magnus asked.

“Can you bring his stuff from Buenos Aires here?”

“I should be able to yes.”

“Then why don’t you go set up his bedroom,” Alec said. “And I will finish cleaning.” Magnus pecked Alec gently on the lips then waved his hands and cleaned the kitchen.

“You are done cleaning it seems,” Magnus said, pulling Alec closer and capturing his lips again. Alec surrendered under Magnus’s touch, pulling the warlock closer.

“You still need to set up Rafe’s room,” Alec said when they broke apart.

“Hmmm,” Magnus sighed. “But I also need to kiss you some more.”

“Is that so?” Alec said, grinning. “Who am I to stand in your way?” Before Magnus could initiate anything Alec had his hands on the small of Magnus’s back under his shirt. Magnus moaned softly before moving his hands over Alec. The soft scarred skin of Alec’s neck and shoulders under his hands... Magnus forgot there were children near by as he deepened the kiss. Parting Alec’s hesitant lips and entering his mouth. Alec’s gasp of surprise may have also had something to do with the small force that had just run into their legs.
“Papa Daddy,” Max said as he used his small hands to try and push the two men apart. “Come.”

Magnus chuckled as he released Alec and kneeled down to Max. The small toddler didn’t seem too traumatized and Magnus suspected this was not the first time he had caught his parents kissing. Though they didn’t usually let it go that far when Max was awake.

“What is it Max?” Magnus asked.

“Come!” Max said as he pulled on Magnus’s arm. They both followed Max back into the living room and saw Rafe holding a pair of sneakers.

“What’s wrong Max?” Alec asked.

“Those are mine,” Max said, pointing to the light up sneakers. Alec was relieved this time at least Max wasn’t screaming. It seemed his red truck was more important than his shoes.

“Rafe,” Alec said approaching the boy. “Those are his. They are too small for you.” Rafe stared at the shoes then dropped them. Max ran over and picked up the shoes off the floor looking huffy.

“Do you want a pair of your own?” Alec asked. Rafe looked down at his perfectly practical sneakers and then back to Alec.

“Light up,” he said.

“Yes,” Alec said. “Max’s sneakers light up. Uncle Simon gave Max those.”

“Light up,” Rafe said again pointing down at his shoes.

“Alright Rafe,” Magnus said. He pulled out his phone to text Simon and ask where he got the shoes.

“Would you like to stay here tonight Rafe?” Alec said. “We can bring your stuff here.”

“Me stay?” Rafe asked.

“If you want to,” Alec said. “We would love that.” Rafe smiled at him nodding his head slightly.

“I will go get the room ready,” Magnus said, as he headed down the hall. Magnus returned, a quarter of an hour later, to find Alec sitting on the floor between the two boys. Max was wearing his light up sneakers while playing with his red truck. Rafe was examining each of Max’s toys in turn then setting them down in a line.

“Room all set up?” Alec asked as Magnus approached.

“Yes,” Magnus said. “And...” He snapped his fingers and a pair of light up sneakers appeared in his hands. “These are for you Rafe. Uncle Simon finally told me where the warehouse was.” Magnus winked at Alec.

“You are going to send them money,” Alec said, firmly.

“Of course darling,” Magnus cooed as Rafe took the shoes from him. Alec helped Rafe put on his shoes then watched as the boy jumped up and down delighted with the way they lit up as his feet hit the ground.

“I think he likes them,” Magnus said, beaming.

“Hide Seek!” Max cried suddenly then ran off into the hall.
“Ah another game of hide and seek,” Magnus said, laughing. “Hasn’t he learned yet that I can always find him.”

“Do you want to play too?” Alec asked Rafe. The boy just looked confused.

“Everyone hides and then I look for them,” Magnus explained. “Whoever I find last gets to be the next person to search.”

Rafe nodded then ran off down the hall.

“You too Alec,” Magnus said. “Go hide.” Alec rolled his eyes but followed the children. Magnus saw Max’s truck sticking out from under the bed his room. Knowing Max was still holding it he made quite the show up looking for him before bending down and yelling ‘boo.’ Max giggled and came out from under the bed to hold Magnus’s hand while they looked for the others. Alec was found hiding behind the door in the bathroom. Magnus saw him reflected in the mirror.

“You can come out Rafe,” Magnus called. “You won.” There was no response. They continued calling and were just starting to worry Rafe had actually left when he appeared from behind them.

“Oh!” Magnus jumped. “Where did you come from?”

“Where did you hide Rafe,” Alec asked bending down. Rafe shook his head.

“Secret,” he said. “Me win!”

“You did indeed,” Magnus said.

“You hide,” Rafe said, holding his hands over his eyes.

The game of hide and seek lasted hours before Rafe and Max became bored. After dinner they watched cartoons. Rafe didn’t have as much patience for tv as Max did and quickly became distracted.

“Rafe,” Alec said. “Where are you going?”

“Boring,” Rafe said pointing to the tv.

“Would you like to help me in the kitchen?” Alec asked. Rafe nodded and followed Alec out of the living room leaving Magnus and Max on the couch.

Rafe watched Alec wash the dishes with much more interest than he had the tv screen. When Alec was done he saw Rafe yawn.

“Tired?” Alec asked. “You had a big day today.”

“Real?” Rafe asked.

“Yes,” Alec said. He leaned down and picked Rafe up, holding him tight. Alec walked with Rafe into the room Magnus had set up. He saw the same twin bed with the blanket they had first given Rafe in the corner. The couch Rafe had jumped on in Buenos Aires on the far wall. Magnus had also filled the room with a few new toys just for him. Alec smiled as he placed Rafe in the bed and tucked him in.

“Papa I will be just in the other room,” Alec said. “Don’t be scared.” Rafe held Alec’s hand and wouldn’t let go. Instead of leaving Alec sat and watched Rafe fall asleep. Slowly his grip loosened and his breathing slowed. Alec slowly stood and felt the room to find Magnus in the hallway.
carrying a sleepy blue boy.

“Rafe’s already asleep,” Alec said. “He was really tired.”

“I don’t blame him,” Magnus said. “He has had quite the day. I will tuck Blueberry in. Meet you out there in a minute.” Magnus walked into Max’s room. Alec headed down the hall and sat on the couch. He turned the tv off and sat back his eyes closed. He felt Magnus sit next to him and leaned his head on the warlock’s shoulder.

“I think that went fairly well,” Magnus said. “Aside from some toy stealing.”

“I think they will become the best of friends,” Alec said.

“I hope so.” Magnus wrapped his arm around Alec and they sat for a while enjoying the quiet.

“Can you teach me that lullaby?” Alec said after about twenty minutes.

“Which lullaby?” Magnus asked.

“The one you sang Rafe in Buenos Aires. When I tucked him in I-- Well I would like to sing to him too.”

“Worried he will like me more again?” Magnus teased. “Even though he was scared of me?”

“He’s warmed up to you now,” Alec said. “And you speak his language.

“Your spanish is improving.”

“My Spanish still sucks,” Alec corrected. “But Rafe’s English is better.”

“It’s easier to learn languages as a child,” Magnus said. “You have only been practicing for a few weeks, remember?”

“True,” Alec said. “Do you think Max will pick up some Spanish with you and Rafe speaking it?”

“Probably,” Magnus said. He closed his eyes and leaned his head back on the couch, focusing on Alec’s even breathing. The steady rise and fall of his chest.

Magnus awoke to the sounds of distress. It still amazed him what becoming a parent had done to his ability to sleep through anything. The slightest sounds could wake him now as long as they came from a child. Alec was stirring beside him as well.

“What’s wrong?” Alec asked sleepily.

“I got this,” Magnus said. “Go to bed love. I will join you in a moment.” Alec nodded and getting up headed down the hall. Magnus followed until he turned into Rafe’s room. Rafe was tossing in his sleep, obviously having a nightmare.

Magnus sat on the bed beside his son and started singing softly in Spanish. As Rafe slowly calmed Magnus reached forward and stroked the child’s hair all the while singing. He stayed like that until Rafe’s breathing was slow and his face relaxed. When Magnus was sure Rafe was peacefully asleep, he got up and went down the hall. Alec was already asleep. Magnus got into bed, snuggling up to Alec as he closed his eyes.
Max and Rafe could be heard playing together happily in the living room. Magnus was firmly at his side but Alec was nervous.

“Relax,” Magnus said. “Everyone will love him. And making up excuses why people can’t come over is silly. They will find out. Best we tell them.”

“I know,” Alec said. “I just--”

“Everything will be fine,” Magnus said.

“But--” Alec started.

“Breathe,” Magnus interrupted. The doorbell rang. Alec turned to see Rafe drop the toy he was holding and go hide behind the couch. Alec had a sudden desire to hide behind the couch as well but he didn’t. Alec took a deep breath and opened the door.

“Hey, Mom,” Alec said. “Iz.” Alec nodded to the others as they followed behind his mother and sister.

“What’s up man,” Jace said. “You sounded weird on the phone.”

“Can’t a guy just invite his whole family over all at once without an ulterior motive?” Alec said tentatively as Magnus tried and failed to hide his smile.

“No,” Jace said, grinning as he punched Alec’s arm.

“Ow,” Alec said, glaring at his best friend.

“Am I finally going to learn what you two were up to in Buenos Aires?” Clary asked.

“How do you know about--” Alec started.

“She is very persuasive,” Maryse said shrugging. “She noticed how often I have been babysitting Max.”

“So you told her?” Alec asked.

“Was it a secret?” Maryse shrugged.

“No, but--”

“What’s the deal Alec?” Izzy said. Alec took a deep breath again before speaking.

“There is someone we want you to meet,” Alec said.
“Come on out boys,” Magnus called.

“Cary cary!” Max cried as he dropped whatever he was doing and ran to his auntie.

“Hi Max!” Clary said. “How’s the drawing going?” It had been Clary after all who had given Max the crayons. Max grabbed her hand and started dragging her toward his room. Magnus knew he wanted to show her all this wall doodles.

“Not right now Max,” Clary said. “Later okay?” Max hung his head but didn’t say anything.

“Wait you said boys, as in plural?” Simon asked.

“I’ll go get him,” Alec said to Magnus. He walked away from where everyone was standing in front of the closed front door and poked his head around the side of the couch.


“Won’t like me,” Rafe said to the floor.

“Impossible,” Alec said smiling at him. Alec held out his hand to his son. “I’ll be there the whole time.” Rafe slowly come forward and took Alec’s hand.

Alec could feel all eyes staring at him as he emerged from behind the couch. Rafe was holding tightly to his hand while still managing to hide behind Alec’s legs.

“Who is this?” Maryse asked warmly.

“His name is Rafael,” Magnus said.

“Where are his parents?” Clary asked.

“They died during the Dark War,” Alec said, his hand resting protectively on Rafe’s shoulder. “The Institute in Buenos Aires was attacked.”

“He’s a shadowhunter?” Clary said, surprised. Alec nodded.

“How old is he?” Maryse asked.

“Five,” Magnus said.

“It’s okay Rafe,” Alec said. “These are friends.” Rafe took a step out from behind Alec but he was still gripping Alec’s hand very tightly. Alec slowly walked closer to the others.

“Hello,” Izzy said. “I’m Izzy.” Rafe smiled at her. “Oh he’s so cute!”

“I still don’t understand why he is here,” Clary said.

“We are adopting him,” Alec said, firmly.

“I see,” Clary said. She seemed a little stunned but otherwise unperturbed by the news. Alec tried to relax. He knew Clary would never have rejected Rafe. She was far too good a person to do that but she was the head of the Institute as well. Though that title paled in comparison to the Inquisitor. Alec was suddenly glad his father couldn’t make it today. Better to get everyone else on board before Robert met Rafe.
“A five year old and a three year old,” Maryse said, chuckling. “You guys are gonna be busy.”

“That’s why you asked about the sneakers!” Simon said with sudden realization as he spotted the shoes Rafe was wearing.

“He loves them,” Magnus said. “Never likes to take them off, even in the house.” Magnus turned to Rafe who was still standing very close to Alec. “This is Uncle Simon Rafe. He is the reason you have those light up shoes.” Rafe smiled up at Simon then and letting go of Alec’s hand jumped high in the air so that when he landed his shoes lit up. Everyone’s attention was on Rafe as he smiled shyly with his shoes still lighting up.

“I have light up shoes too,” Max complained. He still wasn’t used to not being an only child. Sharing the attention of adults is a hard thing to swallow when you are only three years old.

“And you look very good in them,” Izzy said, turning her attention to Max who beamed at her. He grabbed her hand and started dragging her toward his room.

“Okay Max,” Izzy said, and she let herself be led down the hall by her nephew. Alec knew Izzy was secretly happy Max now wanted her attention instead of Clary’s.

“Alec,” Jace whispered and grabbed his arm.

“What--” Alec started but Jace was already dragging him down the hall and into his bedroom, closing the door behind them.

“Alec,” Jace whispered to his best friend.

“I want to ask Clary to marry me,” Jace whispered to his best friend.

“Congrats,” Alec said beaming at his friend then hitting him on the shoulder. Alec made to move back out into the hall but Jace held his ground.

“What do you think she will say?” Jace sounded nervous but Alec couldn’t help but giggle at his silly friend.

“Come on Jace,” Alec said. “Didn’t she bring you back from the dead once because she couldn’t bear to be without you? That girl loves you. She will totally say yes, so stop worrying and do it.”

“But--”

“So what do you think of Rafe?” Alec asked.

“You have a kid problem,” Jace teased. “I will not be surprised to come here one day and found you have adopted half the country.” Alec hit Jace rather hard and quickly trapped him in a headlock.

“Boys!” They turned toward the now open door, not breaking the headlock, to see Izzy standing there.

“What are you doing?”

“Izzy said looking down. Alec suddenly noticed his son at her feet and quickly get go of Jace. “Daddy is very silly isn’t he?” Max nodded, beaming at her.

“One Ace silly too,” Max said grinning. “Which favourite!?”
“I liked all you drawing equally Max,” Izzy said. “Don’t ask me to pick a favourite.”

“Please!” Max said reaching his arms up to her.

“Well the one of your family is really cute,” Izzy said scooping Max up into her arms. She and Max left the squabbling parabatai and headed back down the hall.

“But seriously,” Alec said. “About Rafe?”

“I just met the kid,” Jace said. “And are you sure Clary will say yes?”

“You showed her the Herondale house right?” Alec said. Jace nodded. “You guys have always been seriously in love even when you thought you couldn’t be. All you can do is ask and find out.”

“Have you asked Magnus?” Alec nodded. “What did he say.”

“He said yes,” Alec said. “But not until the law lets us get married the same way you and Clary would be able to. In gold.”

“Were you nervous?”

“Yeah,” Alec said. “I was.” Jace beamed at him.

“Thanks,” Jace said. “I feel better now.”

“I’m glad,” Alec said. “Now let’s leave my bedroom before Magnus gets jealous.” He laughed. At one point in time this would have been a factual statement which made it funnier somehow.

“What was that about?” Magnus whispered into Alec’s ear as he re-entered the living room.

“Tell you later,” Alec whispered back.

As the afternoon slowly wore on Alec become more and more relaxed. He watched Izzy keeping Max company because Max was feeling left out. He watched Jace bonding with Rafe. He watched his mother give Magnus advice about raising young shadowhunter kids. Even Simon was a hit with Rafe, though Alec suspected that had a lot to do with the light up shoes. All in all things couldn’t have gone better.

After all his guests left and the kids were in bed Alec flopped down on the couch and closed his eyes. He was dead tired.

“What a day!” Alec said.

“Indeed,” Magnus said. “Oh what did Jace want?”

“He’s planning to propose to Clary,” Alec whispered.

“Little Biscuit is all grown up,” Magnus said.

“She’s been all grown up for a while,” Alec reminded him.

“I know, love,” Magnus said. “I’m just teasing.”

“Jace seemed really worried about it,” Alec said. “Like he thinks she’ll say no.”

“Oh well that’s just natural,” Magnus said. “You thought I’d say no too if I recall.”
“You did say no,” Alec corrected him.

“I did not!” Magnus exclaimed with rather more energy than Alec thought he had. “I just said I wanted a proper wedding.” Alec laughed.

“Let’s go to bed,” Alec said. “Or I am going to pass out on the couch.”

Alec stood staring at his phone. His finger hovering over the call button. Max and Rafe had just finished breakfast and were playing in the living room. There was only one phone that worked in Alicante after all and this was the time they turned it on. It was now or never.

“Just call him,” Magnus said leaning over Alec’s shoulder. “Staring at it won’t dial the phone.”

“I know,” Alec said, but he didn’t move.

“Do you want me to call him?”

“No.”

“Well then,” Magnus said and snatching the phone from Alec he quickly hit a button and handed it back. Alec fumbled with the phone as it dialed and just had it to his ear when the line picked up.

“Ah hi,” Alec said. “Is Robert Lightwood there?”

“One moment please,” the voice on the other line said. The Inquisitor did not wait around for the phone to ring.

“Alexander.”

“Yeah. Umm… Hi. It’s me.”

“Sorry I couldn’t come when you invited me. Something came up at work.”

“It’s alright,” Alec said.

“Was there something specific you invited me over for?” Robert asked.

“Yes,” Alec said. “Dad, Magnus and I have adopted another child. I wanted you to meet him.”

“Oh,” Robert said. “Is the child a warlock as well?”

“A shadowhunter orphaned during the war,” Alec said.

“Well it seems I have a new grandchild to meet,” Robert said, and Alec could almost hear a smile in his father’s voice.

“Thanks dad,” Alec said.

“Really Alec,” Robert said, obviously catching the relief in Alec’s voice. “After Max you think I wouldn’t welcome another?”
“Sorry,” Alec said. He had been nervous about telling his dad but now it seemed a very stupid thing to worry about.

“Izzy has some catching up to do,” Robert said. “Or does only my eldest child plan on giving me grandkids?”

“Please tell Izzy that!” Alec said. “It would be so funny.”

“Alright,” Robert said. “And I will try and come meet… what’s the child’s name?”

“Rafael,” Alec said. “But we have been calling him Rafe.”

“I will try and come meet Rafe as soon as I can.”

“Thanks dad,” Alec said warmly. “Means a lot.”

“I must go now Alec,” Robert said. “Someone is calling me.”

“Of course,” Alec said. “I am sure you are busy. See you later then.”

“Told you,” Magnus said as Alec hung up the phone.

“Yeah,” Alec said. “I was worried for nothing.”

It was so great having everyone know about Rafe. Alec’s life was no longer consumed with traveling back and forth from Buenos Aries or awkwardly hiding a small child in his apartment.

“You phone is ringing,” Magnus said as he picked up toys in order to make a toy-free path to the kitchen.

“What?” Alec said, whipping around. He hadn’t slept much in the last few nights. Rafe was having nightmares again and he and Magnus were taking turns staying up to watch him. Alec had been on duty last night.

“Hello?” Alec asked sleepily into the phone. A very loud squealing voice answered. Alec felt like his head split open and he almost throw the phone away like a dead spider.

“Here give it to me,” Magnus said, and Alec happily handed it over. Magnus listened for a while then said it was him not Alec, told the person to calm down and handed the phone back to Alec.

“It’s your sister,” Magnus said. “I have reminded her you speak human, not banshee. Here.” Alec took the phone

“Izzy?” Alec said. “Quiet voice please.”

“Simon proposed to me!” Izzy squealed and Alec almost removed the phone from his ear again. If he didn’t love his sister so much he would have.

“Congrats Iz,” Alec said though he wasn’t really surprised.

“Be more excited for me Alec!” Izzy said.
“I have two small children who don’t sleep,” Alec said. “This is as excited as I get.”

“Oh alright,” Izzy said. “I will go squeal at mom then. Bye Alec.” And she hung up.

“Izzy and Simon are getting married,” Alec said as he laid down on the sofa again.

“Awws Sizzy,” Magnus said.

“What did you just say?” Alec asked.

“If you merge Simon and Izzy’s names it says Sizzy,” Magnus said. “I don’t know. I thought it was cute.”

“I am too tired for this right now,” Alec said. “I am gonna take a nap.” And without even bothering to get off the sofa, Alec fell asleep.

__________

“The engagement party is in two days?” Alec asked as he read the text off his phone. “How are they planning that so fast?” Then he saw the date his sleep deprived mind hadn’t noticed before. “Oh. She wants to have it on Max’s birthday.”

“They didn’t ask me for help,” Magnus said. “I am shocked! I am an excellent party planner.”

“A sleep deprived party planner,” Alec corrected and Magnus couldn’t object as he chose that time to yawn hugely. “They were probably trying to be nice.”

“Well we shall arrive early and I can put up decorations or something,” Magnus said. “It will be Rafe’s first big outing. Robert might be able to met Rafe even. I know he hasn’t made it here since you talked to him.” Alec got out his phone and texted his mother to ask if Robert was coming. She replied that his father would be there and the Consel might be as well.

“Oh!” Alec said sitting bolt upright. “The Consel will be there!”

“And this is causing your face to do that because?” Magnus asked.

“Well we adopted a shadowhunter,” Alec said. “They are desperate for shadowhunters.”

“Ha!” Magnus said. “They can pry Rafe out of our cold dead hands.”

“The cold peace is making everyone jumpy!” Alec said. “What if--”

“Nothing,” Magnus said. “Rafe is ours. Don’t worry.”

“You know I suck at that right?” Alec said. “Not worrying I mean.”

“Yes,” Magnus said. “I have noticed that about you.” He smiled. “Why don’t you ask the ever wise Biscuit for advice?”

“When you use her nickname in that context it sounds weird,” Alec mumbled as exhaustion overtook
him again and he flopped back down on the couch.

Magnus sat in the corner of Izzy’s engagement party with his children on his lap and his Alec by his side. It would have been rather perfect if Alec didn’t look so worried.

The icicles he had conjured up glittered above their heads. He was glad he had at least contributed to the party in one respect.

“Alec,” Robert said as he approached. “So this must be Rafe.” He bent down to greet Rafe. “I’m your grandpa.”

“Hi,” Rafe said shyly while sinking deeper into Magnus’s lap.

“He is just shy,” Magnus said. “It’s okay Rafe. This is daddy’s dad. He’s nice.”

“Daddy has a daddy too?” Rafe asked turning to Magnus.

“Everyone does,” Magnus said. Rafe turned back to Robert and held out his hand. Robert took it, grinning.

“Nice to meet you,” Robert said.

“Grandpa,” Rafe said. “Grandma is over there.” He pointed to Maryse who stood at the other side of the room.

“Yes that’s right,” Robert said. “I bet you see her a lot.” Rafe nodded.

“She’s nice,” Rafe said.

“Yes she is,” Robert agreed. Magnus was watching Alec now that he was sure Rafe was comfortable with Robert. Alec was beaming at his father with nothing short of joy.

“Thanks dad,” Alec said.

“I shall have to come for a longer visit sometime,” Robert said. “I have to go now. But I shall see you later, Rafe.”

“Okay,” Rafe said and snuggled into Magnus’s arm. Robert left but Alec wasn’t totally relaxed, even after such a wonderful introduction.

“Go talk to Clary,” Magnus said. “Maybe she can strengthen out that silly head of yours.” Alec sighed, kissed Magnus lightly on the cheek and got up, presumably to talk to Clary.

Magnus didn’t need to bring toys to entertain his children like most parents. He tended to either summon toys from home when required then send them back when the kids tired of them or make his magic dance to entertain them.

“Shiny!” Max cried as he watched the flickering blue lights of Magnus’s magic dance around his and Rafe’s heads. Magnus chuckled. It was still sometimes a marvel to him how much joy a child could bring into your life.

Magnus saw Alec returned a while later and was pleased to see a less stressed look on his lover’s face.
“You look better,” Magnus said. “Did Clary sort you out?”

“She is a wise one,” Alec said, as he sat down with his family, the worry gone from his face.

“And what did she say?” Magnus asked.

“Oh let’s just say she knows we have people on our side,” Alec said. “And she saw through me instantly.” Magnus laughed.

“That sounds like her,” Magnus said.

“Alec!” It was Lily and she was cutting her way through the crowd with vampire reflexes, Maia trailing behind her.

“Alec I need your help,” Lily said.

“Not now Lily,” Alec said. “My kids are here. It’s my sister’s engagement party.”

“Oh those small creatures,” Lily said, then shook her head as if to clear it of irrelevant thoughts. “Come on Alec.”

Lily seemed to have a fickle attitude toward Magnus’s children. One day she thought they were adorable and the next she would have been happy to suck their blood to piss Alec off, or at least Rafe’s. Warlock blood wasn’t tasty.

“Go ask Clary,” Alec said. “I have recently been reminded that she is very wise.”

“Oh well fine then!” Lily said huffily and stalked off. Alec groaned.

“It probably would have been easier to help her,” Alec said.

“Don’t worry about that too!” Magnus said. “I just got the worry off your face and stress isn’t good for you. Besides Clary is wise, remember?” He chuckled.

Magnus, feeling suddenly in a party mood, magicked a dozen star shaped globes of light up into the air. They danced around in the room.

“Ah it is good to be a warlock sometimes,” Magnus said.

“Me next!” Max said and he lifted his hands in the air. A very small drop of light appeared in his hand, floating just an inch off his palm.

“Very good Max!” Magnus said, reaching over to where Max sat in Alec’s lap.

“Thanks papa,” Max said.

“It’s okay Rafe,” Alec said. “I am left out of the magic stuff too but we have faster reflexes.”

Magnus saw Lily approaching then with Maia pulling on her arm. This wasn’t slowing Lily down however.

“Alec!” Lily said. “I just came to tell you that you are useless.”

“Lily!” Maia said. “Let’s leave.” She tried again to drag Lily away.

“And the next time you don’t help!” Lily said. “I am gonna--” Maia gained some ground and
knocking Lily’s feet out from under her, dragged the grumpy vampire away.

Magnus suspected Maia had just stopped Lily from saying something that would make Alec very angry. Since it was probably the kids that had stopped Alec from assisting her Magnus could only imagine Lily was about to say something along the lines of biting the kids if Alec isn’t useful next time. Magnus made a mental note to send Maia a thank you. Maybe flowers or chocolates, with a note that read, ‘Thanks for not letting the vampire piss off my boyfriend. Cheers. Magnus.’

Izzy entered the party then and all eyes turned to her. Magnus thought she was glowing more than the orbs over his head. She blew a kiss at them as she passed.

“She sure is happy,” Alec said smiling. “I am glad.” The kids chose this moment to decide they were sitting in the wrong parent’s lap.

“Umph,” Alec said as Max stepped all over him to get to Magnus.

“You were settled so nicely!” Magnus complained. “Why do you want to move?”

“Papa,” Max said. “Sit on papa now!” Rafe moved happily enough and before Magnus or Alec could really figure out whose elbowing was in whose face the kids had switched places and were settling down again.

“You happy like that now?” Alec asked. “Because the slideshow is about to start.” As the lights dimmed the kids watched the screen. Magnus watched his family more than the screen. Pictures of Simon as a child didn’t really interest him as much, as he liked and owned the kid.

Once the slideshow ended Jace came running over to Alec with a funny look on his face, even for Jace.

“I’ve gonna ask her,” Jace whispered to Alec. “Wish me luck!”

“Good luck!” Alec whispered back putting a hand on Jace’s shoulder. “But you shouldn’t need it.” Jace quickly dashed away after Clary and Magnus saw them leave together. As Jace turned to look back Alec gave him a thumbs up.

“He really is worried isn’t he,” Magnus said.

“Yep,” Alec said. “He’s an idiot.”

“He is her idiot,” Magnus corrected. “And you are mine.” He put a hand on Alec’s face and stroke his cheek briefly before turning his attention to Max in his lap.

“Papa!” Max said. “Why daddy idiot?”

“I am teasing daddy,” Magnus explained. “Daddy is very smart.”

“That’s what I thought!” Max said, grinning.

It was no more than ten minutes later when Magnus noticed something was wrong. The map in his pocket lit up with magic. Magnus took it out and saw where the Necromantic magic was located, Los Angeles. Where Emma was.

“I have to go,” Magnus said to Alec. “Watch the kids.” And with that he got up and left.

Magnus quickly tried to reach Malcolm by magical means but no luck. He had to tell someone in case this was not a false alarm but he didn’t want to ruin Izzy’s party. Magnus saw Robert then and
made a snap decision.

“Robert!” Magnus whispered. “The alarm has gone off and we need to investigate.”

“Which alarm?” Robert asked.

“The Necromancy alarm,” Magnus whispered. “And this time there is also a convergence of Ley Lines.” Just the one sentence seemed to switch Robert from loving father and grandfather into clinical Inquisitor. Together they went after the Heads of the New York Institute.

Robert nodded once and assisted Magnus in searching for Clary and Jace. Magnus found them locked in a closet together, making out.

“I’ve walked in on your ancestors doing worse,” Magnus said as Jace objected to being interrupted. Magnus remembered walking in on, or more like portaling in on, Tessa and Will lying in bed together half naked all those years ago.

Magnus explained the situation to the love stuck… I guess he couldn’t call them teenagers anymore could he?

Once Magnus had been reminded by Clary he was the one who knew where they were going and was therefore supposed to make the portal, they left.

What Magnus learned in Los Angeles would not be pleasant. No one wants to learn that an old friend, even as heartbroken a friend as Malcom Fade, is capable of murder.

Magnus promised himself that if he ever lost everything he loved all at once like Malcolm had he wouldn’t let himself be devoured by grief and forget others feel pain as well.

——

See Lady Midnight page 610 for Magnus, Robert, Clary and Jace’s cameo in Los Angeles with Emma and Julian that takes place right after this.
Alec was standing in the middle of his living room, staring at the charred slip of paper in his hands. He had already read the fire message twice over but was still having trouble believing it.

“What’s that?” Magnus asked coming out of the kitchen where he had been making dinner.

“A request for my presence,” Alec said.

“Young presence improved most things” Magnus added as if it were common knowledge. “Who’s requesting it?”

“The clave.” Alec looked stunned. “Apparently there’s a big meeting with some of the downworlder representatives here in New York and high ranking shadowhunters from Alicante. The downworlder representatives only agreed to come if I was there.”

“That would be Lily and Maia yes,” Magnus said. Alec nodded.

“Do you want to go?” Magnus asked.

“I kinda have to,” Alec said. “I mean Lily and Maia should come. It sounds important.” Alec hadn’t taken his eyes off the piece of paper.

“Why do you look so surprised?” Magnus said. “The New York downworlders are the most organized and trouble free group I have ever met. And it’s mostly your fault. Someone was bound to notice.”

“All I do is help out Maia and Lily,” Alec said.

“You really don’t realize how rare you are,” Magnus said. “I keep telling you but there it is.”

“Daddy daddy!!” Max came running up to Alec with Rafe close behind him. Both boys each chose one of Alec’s legs and clung on like barnacles.

“Boys,” Magnus said. “Daddy needs to be able to walk.” Both boys shook their heads in unison. Alec seemed rather comfortable standing there despite the children attached to him though he hadn’t tried to walk yet.

“When is the meeting?” Magnus asked. Alec turned at the hip to look at Magnus, his legs immobilized.

“In a few days,” Alec said.
“I’ll miss you,” Magnus said.

“I doubt it will take more than a few hours,” Alec said.

“Nevertheless,” Magnus said. “I will miss you.”

“Me too Daddy!” Max said looking up at Alec from his place on his father’s right foot.

“Me too!” Rafe said, not wanting to be left out.

“How am I supposed to hug you if you are holding me hostage?” Alec asked his children.

“Daddy will figure it out,” Rafe said. “Daddy is magic.”

“Papa is magic,” Alec said. “Daddy isn’t”

“Papa disagrees with you on that one,” Magnus said.

“You can do actual magic Magnus,” Alec said turning as best he could to give Magnus an incredulous look. Magnus raised his hand as if to block Alec’s logic. Alec rolled his eyes at Magnus and turned back to the children.

“Could you please let daddy go boys?” Alec said looking down at his sons who both shook their heads. Alec sighed.

“Oh looks like daddy can’t go to any meetings now,” Magnus teased. “He will just have to stay right there. What do you think boys? Should we use him as a hat stand?”

“Daddy isn’t a hat stand?” Rafe said indignantly.

“Oh?” Magnus said with an air of false surprise. “If he can’t ever walk again what shall we use him for? A coat rack?” Rafe gave Alec’s leg one very tight squeeze before getting up and pulling his brother off Alec as well.

“Rafe!” Max complained as he was ragged away. Alec leaned down to his children’s height a huge smile on his face.

“Come here boys and give daddy a hug!” he said. Max’s sad look vanished instantly as he ran to Alec, his brother right behind him.

Alec held them both in his strong arms for a moment before releasing them and standing up. The boys whispered to each other then quickly ran down the hall.

“What are they up to?” Magnus said walking a few steps closer to wrap his arm around Alec.

“No idea,” Alec said, leaning into Magnus. “But it can’t be good.”

“You know you don’t have to go to the meeting?” Magnus said.

“You know me,” Alec said.

“Yes I do,” Magnus said. “You love it when people turn to you and you can help.”

When Alec arrived at the meeting a few days later he saw his father the inquisitor, Clary the head of
the New York Institute, Maia head of the New York wolf pack, Lily the head of the New York vampire clan and a few very important looking shadowhunters that had obviously come from Alicante for the meeting.

Why was he here? Alec, head of sticking his nose in where it doesn't belong. Trying not to show his thoughts on his face he sat down. The meeting began. Lily and Maia were the only ones calling on him to speak. Well I guess that wasn't totally true, Clary did address him once but he didn't count that. The shadowhunters from Alicante didn't even look at him.

They had all been sitting around talking for about an hour having really accomplished nothing when a portal opened up in the corner of the room. Max came running out of it, jumping into Alec lap.

"Daddy daddy!" Max cried "Look!" He held his hands cupped in front of him as blue sparks lite up the space above them.

Every single shadowhunter from Idris was on his or her feet starting at the child on Alec’s lap. Alec had an automatic reflex to put Max behind him and take protective posture in from of his son but he fought it. There were, after all, four people in his room who knew who Max was.

A portal still stood shimmering where it had opened and at that moment two more people came through it. Magnus appeared quickly followed by Rafe. Magnus was panting like he had been running. Max quickly got off Alec’s lap and went around his chair so he wasn’t in view of Magnus.

"Max!" he yelled. "This isn't funny." Max seemed to disagree with Magnus as Alec could hear him giggled behind him. Magnus took in his audience.

"Ah hi," Magnus said. "Have you seen a small blue boy around here?"

"With horns?" Rafe chimed in. Every pair of eyes in the room except for Alec’s were fixed on Max as if to answer Magnus’s question. Max shifted uncomfortably as if he knew he was in trouble. He came out from behind the chair and walked toward Magnus.

"Papa, I wanted to show Daddy," he explained. "Rafe told me I couldn’t portal to Daddy."

"Just because Rafe dares you to do something doesn’t mean you have to do it," Magnus said.

Max looked up then and noticed the whole room was looked very intently at him. "Why everyone so serious?"

“They are surprised you’re here,” Magnus said to Max. “You aren't supposed to be.”

“Sorry,” Max mumbled.

“Let’s go home,” Magnus said. He shot Alec an apologetic look. Then taking each of his children by the hand Magnus stepped back through the portal which closed behind him. Alec notice as his family left what Max had wanted to show him. There was a small white flower just visible in the young warlock's hand.

There was silence for a long moment. Then the people from Alicante sat back down very slowly like they had to make sure the chairs under them were really there before they could commit their weight. Lily was laughing.

“Your kids are awesome,” Lily said, looking down at her papers like nothing had happened. “This feels like our old meeting before Clary gave us space at the Institute.” She riffled through the papers in front of her. “Where were we cause I thought I was pretty clear about…” she looked up. Everyone
was staring at Alec except her. Maia and Clary were looking at him with concern but almost everyone else had identical looks of shock on their face.

“That was the strangest thing I have ever seen,” one of the younger Clave members said but Alec was relieved to hear only humor in his voice. He was starting to hope they would just get back to the meeting like nothing had happened when the women at the end of the table spoke.

“I don’t understand,” she said.

“Never mind then,” Alec said. “Let’s just get back to the meeting.”

“But that was Magnus Bane!” the older shadowhunter sitting next to the women said.

Alec ignored the man’s words and addressed Lily. He was feeling exposed and wanted to change the topic before he had to explain his family to strangers. “Lily, you were very clear but I don’t think it’s a good idea to simply--”

“It’s impossible,” the woman interrupted him. “A warlock is born from a human and a demon.” Alec suspected she was the highest ranking person in the room from where she was seated and from the way the others were addressing her. The women also had an air of authority about her.

“He’s adopted.” Alec said. There was no emotion in his voice. He so wanted to change the topic.

“How do you know Magnus Bane?” the older shadowhunter on her left asked with a funny look on his face. Alec guessed the man had actually met Magnus before today. Alec wasn’t really sure how to answer his question.

“The other child wasn’t a warlock,” another member of the Clave said. Alec was getting really frustrated now.

“Fine,” Alec said. “Mangus and I have adopted two children. I don’t see what all the fuss is about. Can we please get back to the topic at hand.”

“Why would you do that?”

“Do what?” Alec asked grinding his teeth.

“Adopt a warlock with a warlock,” the women sitting at the head of the table said. “You are a shadowhunter.”

“What does that have to do with it,” Alec growled. He was having a hard time containing his anger.

“The other boy,” the man sitting next to the leader said. “He is a shadowhunter isn’t he?”

“Yes,” Alec said through his teeth. Keeping his jaw clenched was all he could think of to keep his anger in check. Not that it was working.

“A shadowhunter being raised by Magnus Bane?” the older man said incredulously. The tone made it quite clear that leaving Magnus with a child in his mind was child abuse. Alec wasn’t going to put up with this. He got up out of his chair and started for the door, fuming.

“Alec don’t go.” Alec recognized his father voice and turned.

“Why not?” Alec said, facing the whole room. “I will not sit here and listen to this.”

“And you shouldn’t have to.” It was Clary this time. She had stood to stand by Robert. “Those
children call me auntie. Like I wouldn’t stand up for you Alec.” Clary smiled at him and some of Alec’s anger faded. Lily finally catching onto the situation stood as well.

“I never miss an opportunity to tell Nephilim they are being stupid,” Lily said. “Even if it wasn’t for you Alec.” She winked at him. Maia stood as Lily did, in silence support.

“We are here,” Robert said addressing the women at the head of the table, “to improve relations between downworlders and shadowhunters. Why then do you judge my son for simply doing a better job of that than you?” The women just stared; she had obviously not known Alec was the inquisitors son.

“Diplomatic relations,” the women said. “Not family relations! How is a shadowhunter supposed to know how to raise a warlock?”

“His name is Max Lightwood,” Robert said.

The women looked confused. “That's your son right?” She said sounding grave. “I heard.”


“You gave a shadowhunter name to a warlock?”

“Yes,” Alec said. He was standing tall now all anger having left him. He was so touched by the atmosphere in the room. His father, his friends defending his strange little family meant so much to him he wasn't even sure he could ever tell them how much.

“But a warlock raising a shadowhunter!” she continued. “That just isn’t done.” Alec could tell she was at least trying to be diplomatic but he could hear the disgusted in her voice.

“And why not?” Alec said.

“A nephilim needs to be trained from a young age,” the women said. “A warlock wouldn’t know--”

“Magnus Bane has been helping Nephilim for longer than anyone else in this room as been alive,” Alec said. “And Rafe has lots of shadowhunters in his family to help him.” Alec gave her a look as if to say what else you got.

“I--” the women said thrown by Alec's confidence. “Never before have I--” The women was looking at him differently. Like she was trying to understand even if she was failing.

“Can we get back to the matter at hand?” Alec asked her. “Or do you need me to leave because my family offends you?” The women just stared at him the word family in relation to what she had just witnessed seemed to take a long time to sink in.

“Oh and by the way,” Lily said, matter of factly. “If he leaves so am I.” Lily elbowed Maia in the ribs until she said she would leave too. Then the room was silent. A very pregnant silence.

“Oh and by the way,” Lily said, matter of factly. “If he leaves so am I.” Lily elbowed Maia in the ribs until she said she would leave too. Then the room was silent. A very pregnant silence.

“Oh and by the way,” Lily said, matter of factly. “If he leaves so am I.” Lily elbowed Maia in the ribs until she said she would leave too. Then the room was silent. A very pregnant silence.

“Oh and by the way,” Lily said, matter of factly. “If he leaves so am I.” Lily elbowed Maia in the ribs until she said she would leave too. Then the room was silent. A very pregnant silence.

“Okay but really why would Magnus Bane be--” the older Shadowhunter started by Alec silenced him with a look.

“How do you know Magnus Bane,” Alec asked the man coolly.

“In the 70s,” the man said stunned into answering by Alec’s tone. “He was involved with that New York Vampire clan when it go out of control.”

“So in summary,” Alec said. “You met him once four decades ago and think you know him.” The
man didn’t answer and Alec took that as a yes.

“Let’s get back to the reason we are here,” the leader said coming back out of her daze. “I won’t pretend to understand but we can all move forward.”

Everyone sat back down but the atmosphere wasn’t quite the same. The clave members instead of ignoring Alec kept looking over to him then turning away when they realised Alec had noticed them staring. Alec tried to ignore all the look but the hair on the back of his neck was standing up.

When Alec got home later that night he was tired. Alec opened the door to see his sister and Simon sitting on his living room floor playing with Max and Rafe.

“Hey Iz,” Alec greeted her.

“Clary texted me,” Izzy said.

“And what did Clary have to say?”

“Said you were bad ass at the meeting,” Izzy winked at him.

“More like incredibly awkward,” Alec said.

“Sorry daddy!” Max said getting up from the ground by his aunt and coming over to Alec.

“It’s not your fault blueberry,” Alec said picking up his son. “Well except for the making portals you aren’t supposed to that is.”

“He seemed to have mastered opening them,” Magnus said coming into the room. “But not closing them.”

“Daddy!” Max said demanding Alec’s attention. “Did you see the flower daddy?”

“Show it to me again,” Alec said knowing that would delight Max more than anything. Max held his hands together, secure in Alec’s arms, and a delicate blossom in his hand along with a shower of blue spark. “It’s beautiful Max.” Max beamed at him, waving the flower in the air.

“Sissy sissy!” Max called to Isabelle. Izzy was what he was trying to say but she didn’t seem to mind.

“Look!”

“Yes, Max,” Izzy said. “I can see. It’s a very pretty flower.” Max wiggled until Alec let him down then ran to his aunt.

“Its for you,” Max told her.

“Thanks Max,” Izzy said taking the blossom.

“What do you have for me buddy?” Simon said.

“What do you want?” Max asked.

“How about a blue flower” Simon suggested. “Like you.” Max loved the idea and promptly conjured a blue flower and gave it to Simon.
“Not fair!” Rafe said. “I can’t make flowers.”

“It’s okay Rafe,” Simon said. “Neither can I.”

“You can do all sorts of other things Max can’t, Rafe,” Izzy said to her nephew. “Don’t worry. You are special too. You are special like your daddy and Max is special like your papa.”

“I guess,” Rafe pouted. “But magic is cool.”

“It’s okay buddy,” Simon said, messing up Rafe’s hair. “I know how ya feel.”

“Really?”

“Oh yeah,” Simon said. “Once upon a time I was the normal kid with no supernatural powers hanging out with a bunch of magical-fighty people. But you are a shadowhunter Rafe. You have lots of magic Max doesn’t.”

Alec had walked over to Magnus as he listened to his son’s conversation. Magnus wrapped his arms around Alec’s waist from behind and they both watched their son’s.

“How did he learn to make a portal?” Alec asked Magnus leaning back into him.

“Watching me I suspect,” Magnus said. “He is a quick study. I don’t know of any warlocks making portals that young. But most warlocks don’t grow up with another magic user to learn from. When I met Catarina she only know healing magic. She couldn’t glamour herself or do anything that wasn’t instinctive to her. And she was a teenager.”

“I think it’s time for magic lessons,” Alec said. “If he is getting skills he should learn how and when to use them.”

“Rafe batted him,” Magnus explained.

“I don’t doubt it,” Alec said as Magnus’s arms tightened around him. Magnus’s chin resting on Alec’s shoulder.

“Alec,” Magnus whispered into Alec’s ear. “I think you need to start teaching Rafe as well. Maybe the bow and arrow. Show him your magic.”

“It isn’t magic,” Alec repeated.

“It felt like magic to me,” Magnus said. “On the many occasions when your bow has saved my life. And I think knowing something Max doesn’t will help Rafe.”

“You are right as usual,” Alec said. “I will start tomorrow.”

“And sorry,” Magnus said. “I shouldn’t have let Max get into your meeting. I know it must of been awkward. I just took my eye off them for a sec—”

“It’s alright,” Alec said. “It wasn’t so bad. Actually it was kinda amazing. Everyone stood up and defended our family. Clary, Maia, Lily even Dad. In front of the clave.”

“Alec darling,” Magnus said. “Don’t you think your parent thought of this when they chose to give Max the name Lightwood? Thought they would have to depend it one day. It was their idea was it not?”

“It just seemed right,” Alec said, shocked. “I never imagined.”
“It is right but it has also never been done before,” Magnus said. “You’re parents accept you Alec. Don’t ever forget that. It is quite a gift.” Alec turned around in Magnus’s arm’s recognizing the hurt in his voice. He raised his hand to the warlock’s face a sad expression suddenly taking hold there.

“You never had that,” he said. Magnus brought his hand up to rest it on Alec’s, turning into the contact.

“Oh Alec,” Magnus said. “It is so like you to be sad for me not being as lucky as you. But please don’t be. It was so very long ago.”

“Everyone’s beginning matters,” Alec said. “Even if that beginning was long ago.” Magnus turned to kiss Alec’s hand.

“You make everything better, my love,” Magnus said staring into the depths of Alec’s eyes. “Every past sorrow is nothing but a distant dream. You take up too much of my world.” Alec was looking back at him now with all the love Magnus knew to be on his face reflected back. Magnus couldn’t help it. He pulled Alec in close capturing his lips and pressing the shadowhunter against him. Alec kissed him back just as enthusiastically in the middle of their living room full of people.

“Ick!” Izzy said pretending to cover her eyes as she looked at her brother. “Get a room.”

“This is our apartment,” Magnus said, breaking the kiss with a huge grin on his face.

“And there are children here!” Izzy teased. Both the boys were too distracted at the moment to notice their parents make out. Max was moving his blocks without touching them while Rafe kept trying to knock the whole thing over.

“They are used to is,” Magnus said as he grabbed Alec by the shirt and pulled him in. Alec surrendered to the kiss for only a moment before being the responsible one.

“Do you guys some alone time?” Izzy said. “Cause you can go. We can watch the boys.”

“If it means you won’t keep doing that in front of me I am all for babysitting,” Simon agreed.

“What a wonderful idea,” Magnus said, beaming. “Thank you Isabelle. Simon.” And with that Magnus grabbed Alec by the shirt again and started pulling him out the front door.

“Magnus!” Alec protested. Izzy was trying not to laugh at the disgruntled look on her brother's face but she was failing.

“You guys have fun,” Izzy said sniggering. The door closed behind them.
“Grandpa grandpa!” Rafe cried as he ran into Robert Lightwoods arms, his brother right behind him.

“Hey dad,” Alex said. Robert was always great with his kids but didn’t get to see them often as he spend most of his time in Idris being the Inquisitor. Alec was feeling a renewed affection for his father’s acceptance of his children since the day Max portaled into an important meeting. Robert had stood up for his grandson when the Clave representatives had balked at the sight of his family.

It had been Robert’s idea to volunteer to babysit. He had come to New York for the meeting but decided to stay a few extra days to visit is grandchildren.

“Hi little man,” Robert said scooping Max into his arms. “You are getting so big! Soon grandpa won't be able to pick you up at all.”

“Me too!” Rafe said. “I am big too!”

“Indeed you are,” Robert said then Max pulled on his shirt and Robert switched his attention again.

“When I'm big and strong I will pick you up,” Max said. It seemed both brothers were competing for either grandfather’s attention. Robert had missed them quite a lot more than he realized.

“Now you have fun with grandpa,” Alec said to his boys. Alec went over to Max and hugged him without taking him out of Robert's arms. Then leaned down and hugged Rafe, kissing the top of his head.

“Thanks dad,” Alec said trying to convey more than thanks for babysitting in his tone. Robert seemed to understand. He smiled at Alec in a fatherly way that warmed Alec’s heart.

“Anytime,” Robert said. “Alexander after this could be spend some time together maybe. I will be in town for a few more days at least.”

“Of course,” he said. Robert looked relieved. He tickled Max who made a happy noise then taking Rafe hand in his the three of them left Alec’s apartment. Max waving goodbye over Robert’s shoulder with a grin on his face.

Magnus had been standing around the corner the whole time. Once Robert left he went over to Alec and wrapped his arms around him from behind. Alec leaned into him.

“I hope they are well behaviored for dad,” Alec said. “Or he won’t ever want to babysit again.”

“I don’t think hell or high water could stop Robert from spending time with his grandchildren,” Magnus said. “Family is a beautiful thing.”

“It is,” Alec said. “When did my life become better than my fantasies.”
“What fantasies are these?” Magnus teased.

“When we first entered Edom” Alec said. “I-- we all had fantasies of what this demon thought we really wanted. Mine was of my father announcing our engagement after I had won a great battle. Everyone was looking up at me like a hero.”

“How is real life better than that?”

Alec turned around in Magnus’s arms. “I never really wanted to be seen as a great hero. I am still shocked when people recognized me as the idiot who followed his ex-boyfriend into a hell dimension,” Alec laughed at his own phrasing. “And dad standing up for me in that meeting was better than his announcing our engagement. Not only because it was real but also it means more somehow.”

“Hmm,” Magnus said. “Why have I never heard this story before.” Alec shrugged.

“Maybe we should spend this time without the children talking about all the other things you didn’t bother to tell me,” Magnus teased. “Are there alot of them?”

“Oh yes,” Alec replied playing along. “Didn’t you know I have been secretly straight this whole time.”

“Well,” Magnus said. “I will just have to cure you of that, won’t I?”

“Oh and what did you have in mind?” Alec asked. Magnus grinned as he got his hands under Alec’s shirt and pulled it up over his head. “Oh I have a few things in mind,” he said. Alec laughed into the kiss Magnus planted on his mouth and he in turn started to remove Magnus’s clothes.

Magnus and Alec did manage to get a few hours sleep before Robert returned with two very tired children. Max was practically asleep in his grandfather’s arms when Robert appeared at their door.

“Were they alot of trouble,” Alec asked his father.

“Perfect angels,” Robert said.

“I seriously doubt that,” Alec said.

“But they were!”

“I believe you Robert,” Magnus said. “I am sure they were just happy to see you they were on their best behaviour.”

“I know I am not here often,” Robert said. “I am sorry about that.”

“It’s okay dad,” Alec said. “I know being the Inquisitor is time consuming.”

“I want to visit more,” Robert said.

“We would love that,” Alec said taking the semi-unconscious Max from his father’s arms. Magnus picked up Rafe where he stood swaying a little beside Robert, holding onto his grandfather’s leg for support.

“Will you meet me for coffee in the morning, Alexander,” Robert asked.
“Sure dad,” Alec said. “See you then. We have to put the boys to sleep.”

“They are already sleep Alec,” Magnus added.

“Sleeping standing up is not what I meant,” Alec said to Mangus then turned to his father. “Thanks again for babysitting.”

“Happy to,” Robert said stifling a huge yawn. “See you tomorrow Alec.” He left closing the door behind him.

Magnus and Alec each carrying a child walked down the hall and into each child’s bedroom. Tucking the boys in and backing out of the room quietly. They turned down and headed into their bedroom where they snuggling up on their bed and fell asleep.

_____

The next morning Alec kissed Magnus goodbye before heading out to meet up with his dad. They had texted that morning to confirm the details so Alec wasn’t surprised to see his father sitting waiting for him at the coffee shop around the corner.

“Hey dad,” Alec said sitting down in the seat opposite. His father smiled and nodded before pushing the second coffee he had ordered toward Alec. “The kids would say hi but they were still asleep when I left.”

“Magnus is with them?” his father asked.

“Course he is, dad,” Alec said.

“Right,” Robert said. Alec could tell there was something his father specifically wanted to say but was having problems getting there.

“How are you Alec?” Robert asked.

“I am really good dad,” Alec said.

“Your happy?”

“Yes,” Alec said. “Happier than I ever thought possible. How are you?”

“Oh I-- I mean don’t worry about me.”

“In my experience when people say that it means someone should be worrying about them.”

“That wasn’t why I wanted to talk to you though,” Robert said.

“Why did you want to talk to me then?”

“You know I have been sending a lot of time in Idris recently right?”

“Yeah.”

“Well I have been talking with Jia Penhallow quite a lot.”

“She’s the Consul,” Alec said. “You’re the Inquisitor. It makes sense.” He wasn’t sure why this was
something his father wanted to talk to him about. It sounded like work.

“True but that’s not what we have in common. We both have children in same sex relationships with downworlders.”

“Aline,” Alec said. “But that’s different Helen is nephilim.”

“She’s half faire.”

“But she can bare runes. She was able to get married.”

“Yes but she is looked down on by everyone and has been banished,” Robert said. “It has been really hard on Jia and one day we started talking and...”

“She thanked me once,” Alec said. “Aline I mean. For being her inspiration.”

“How do you mean?”

“For being openly gay and still being a shadowhunter,” Alec said. “She said it gave her the guts to accept Aline when they met and to come out to her parents.”

“I guess I never thought about it like that,” Robert said. “Never thought about how hard it was for you or Helen.”

“Have you thought about it now?”

“More than before,” Robert said pensively. “It never occurred to me you could inspire others. Is that why you did it?”

“No,” Alec said. “I just wanted to show Magnus that I wasn’t ashamed of him.”

“That was your motivation,” Robert almost laughed. It was so simple. He hadn’t even considered it. Well then he hadn’t considered Magnus at all.

“Yes,” Alec said and then in a sudden desire to really communicate with his father for a change he added. “Magnus had told me he loved me and I wanted to show him I did too.”

“I guess that makes sense,” Robert said softly. He was trying very hard to imagine that day he had first seen his son kiss a man from this new point of view.

“Dad,” Alex said. “We can talk about something else if you like?” Alec always tried to give those he loved a way out.

“I want to talk about whatever you want to talk about, son,” Robert said. “I owe you that much.”

“You don’t owe me anything, dad,” Alec said. “I forgave you a while ago.”

“You did?”

“Yeah,” Alec said. “It was Magnus’s idea actually. He said staying mad at you would only hurt me and if I could I should forgave you.”

“I guess I owe him one,” Robert said. “I was rather unkind to him... in the past.” He remembered a different past as well. One where Magnus had witnessed him kill a fellow shadowhunter when had been working with Valentine. Alec had been no one than one year old at the time. Maybe that was part of why Robert had never wanted to acknowledge Magnus’s relationship with Alec. He had been
scared to see someone with his secrets so close to his son. But Robert knew now Magus wasn’t telling Alec anything. Not only had he finally got up the nerve to ask Maryse about it but he had also never once seen the look on his son’s face. The look he knew would be there if Alec had been given all the details of his parents time in the circle.

“You stood up for me, Magnus, Max and Rafe in front of the Clave,” Alec said. “We will call it even.”

“Thank you.”

There was silence for a moment while they both drank their coffee and Robert finally seemed to digest something Alec had said earlier.

“That’s what you want isn’t it?” he said so quietly Alec couldn’t hear him.

“What?”

“Do you wanna marry Magnus?” Robert said louder this time and looking right at his son. Alec was stunned.

“Oh course,” Alec said numbly. “I asked him when we adopted Max.”

“And what did he say?”

“He said yes but he won’t have a ceremony that is looked down on. He wants to get married in gold. I told him changing the law would be hard. “

“That is true,” Robert said. “But if you like I could help you.”

“You would really do that for me!” Alec said excitement rising in his voice. Robert nodded. He was a man of few words.

“Why, dad?”


“I have made some careful observations since Max and then Rafe entered the family. There are what you would call real shadowhunter marriages that are less real than your relationship with that glittery man.” Robert made a face but Alec could tell it was only about the glitter. It felt normal. Teasing and familiar.

Robert meant this. He almost wanted to add that he felt his son was almost more married to Magnus than he had ever been to Maryse but decided Alec probably didn’t want to know that.

Alec didn’t know what to say. He was so touched his father could see the substance of his relationship. He was so relieved he could finally have this conversation with his dad. He wanted to say so many thank you’s. Some part of him wanted to cry for joy and hug his dad fiercely.

“How?” was all Alec said.

“We would have to start small. Find out how many people on the council are open to the idea enough to discuss it. Allowing downwards to marry shadowhunters in the shadow hunter way will be a bitter pill for some.”

“Shadowhunters have been marrying downworlder in mundane or downworlder weddings for hundreds of years. Why should this not be the next step,” Alec said, looking at his father with hope
in his eyes.

“Hundreds of years?” Robert looked a little shocked.

“Jace’s great great great grandmother is a warlock remember?”

“Oh right,” Robert said shaking his head. “Still can't wrap my brain around that one.”

“Yeah it’s kinda weird,” Alec agreed. “She looks younger than me and she really sucks at using her cell phone.”

“Do you know her?”

“Yeah. She is a old friend of Magnus’s,” Alec said. “And by old I mean Magnus met her like a hundred and thirty years ago. She comes over sometimes. She seems rather fond of Clary and has been trying to get to know Jace.”

“Alec,” Robert said getting back on topic. “If you want to try and change the law I will help you.”

Alec couldn't stop himself; he hugged his dad.

“I want to change the law dad,” Alex said in his dad’s ear. “And I want your help.” Robert smiled into Alec’s shoulder, wrapping his arms tightly around his oldest child. It was such a relief to have the tension in the air cleared. He realized now it had only been on his side for a while since his wonderful loving son had forgiven him long ago.
Alec was sitting in his chair by a sparking blue fire reading a book. His husband came over and sat beside him. Alec put the book down and leaned against Magnus.

“What are those things on your face?” Magnus asked.

“Reading glasses,” Alec said.

“Why do you need glasses to read?”

“Things up close are blurry without them,” Alec said shrugging. “Just part of getting old I guess.”

“You are not old,” Magnus said. Alec laughed.

“Only compared to you,” he said.

“Indeed,” Magnus said. “No matter how we look I am still the cradle robber.” Magnus didn’t speak for a moment but then he added, “What is it like?”

“What being old?” Magnus nodded. Alec thought for a moment before answering. He knew Magnus had been serious in his question. “Well it’s like everything doesn’t quite work as quickly as it used to. Your walking is slower and your mind is slower. I ache as well.”

“You’re hurt,” Magnus asked, worried. “Where?” The warlock’s hands seemed to hover over Alec as if trying to find an injury.

“Oh it’s nothing,” Alec said casually. “Just in general. My hands, my back.” He shrugged. “Joints don’t work like they used to is all.”

“Why didn’t you tell me darling,” Magnus said, understanding now what Alec meant. He moved his hands to gently touch Alec’s back and Alec felt the warmth of healing magic sooth his aching bones. Magnus moved on from Alec’s back to his hands. Repairing the joints causing his arthritis as he found them. Alec hadn’t realized Magnus could do this. Maybe if he had he would have swallowed his pride long ago and asked for help.

“You should have told me sooner, love,” Magnus said. “I hate to think of you in pain.”

“I didn’t know you could cure old age,” Alec said.

“I can’t,” Magnus said. “But I can soothe tired muscles and repair damage to worn out joints.” Magnus was smiling at him exactly the same way Alec remembered him smiling all those years ago when Alec’s skin had been smooth and his reflexes like a striking snake.

“I like your glasses,” Magnus said. “They make your blue eyes look bigger.”

“I can’t believe I once feared this,” Alec said conversationally.

“Feared what?” Magnus asked.

“Being an old man sitting next to you,” Alec said. “The Seelie Queen used it against me way back when. It really rattled me.”

“You never told me,” Magnus said. Alec shrugged.
“After everything we went through I realized it wouldn’t matter,” Alec said. “And I was right. The way you look at me…” Alec paused momentarily mesmerized by Magnus’s eyes.

“How do I look at you, my love?” Magnus said.

“Like I am still your beautiful blue eyed boy,” Alec said.

“That is because you are.” Magnus put both his hands on Alec’s face and pulled him in for a kiss. Magnus never saw Alec’s wrinkles or his grey hair. Magnus just saw his Alexander.
“My joints hurt,” Jace was complaining as they entered Alec’s place. “I am far too young for this to be a problem.”

“You are not as young as you think,” Alec said, looking intently at Jace’s head. “Ha!” He said as he pulled a grey hair out of his friend’s head.

“Ouch!”

“See,” Alec said. “Grey.”

“Still,” Jace said. “How come your joints don’t hurt?”

“It’s all about who you know,” Alec said grinning. They laid their weapons down on the table not really noticing the mess of demon blood they left there and went to put their feet up on the couch.

“Oh and who would that be?” Jace said sitting down next to Alec.

“I think you know him,” Alec teased. “You’re sitting on his couch.”

“Ah man!” Jace said. “Magnus. Are you saying if I had just married a warlock my hands wouldn’t hurt so much?” Alec nodded.

“Should I break the news to Clary?”

“What news?”

“That you are dumping her for Catarina?” Jace hit Alec fairly hard in the ribs.

“Blue isn’t my colour,” Jace teased. Alec in defence of his friend hit Jace across the back of the head.

“Ouch!” Jace said.

“You could do a lot worse than Catarina,” Alec said firmly.

“Alright!” Jace said arms up in surrender.

“Good,” Alec said. “Glad we straightened that out.” Then they were both laughing. Holding their stomach’s and sinking into the sofa laughing.

“And what I may ask is so funny?” They turned to see Magnus standing in the doorway.

“Jace dating Catarina,” Alec managed to say between breaths.

“Odd indeed,” Magnus said. “But I am not sure its quite that funny.”

“You had to be there,” Jace said still sniggering. Then he sobered and turned to Magnus. “Hey can you fix my joints too?”

“What?”
“Like you did for Alec,” Jace said.

“Getting old doesn’t seem to suit him it seems,” Alec teased his friend.

“You are older than me don’t forget!” Jace said.

“Oh please Jace,” Alec said. “At this point the few years makes no difference.”

“Still counts,” Jace said.

Magnus was staring at Alec, their conversation forgotten. All of a sudden noticing the lines on his husband’s face. The pepper in his hair. The excess skin on his hands. Alec was fifty-nine now Magnus knew but he hadn’t really noticed that Alec looked fifty-nine.

Alec was too busy wrestling with his parapati to notice Magnus quietly leave the room.

Magnus stood staring at the wall his mind somehow frozen and in a state of panic at the same time. He wasn’t sure how long he just stared at the wall. He noticed after a while that his hands were shaking.

“Magnus?” Alec said conversationally. “Jace went home. But I am betting the next time he comes over he is going to ask you to ‘fix’ his arthritis again.” Alec was laughing until he turned the corner and saw Magnus.

“What’s wrong!” Alec said anxiety in every aspect of his voice. He was shaking Magnus’s shoulders. Magnus seemed to snap into focus in an instant and suddenly Alec found himself encircled by Magnus’s arms being hugged so fiercely he wasn’t sure if he could still breath.

“Magnus say something,” Alec said breathlessly. “You are freaking me out!” Magnus didn’t speak but Alec felt the tears running down Magnus’s face against his skin.

“Magnus,” Alec said softly.

“I thought I was okay,” Magnus said. “I thought I could do this.”

“Do what?” Alec said. Magnus wouldn’t let Alec go but he did loosen his grip enough for Alec to breath. Magnus didn’t think he could look Alec in the eye. He just spoke next to his ear, his eyes closed.

“I have watched mortals grow old before,” Magnus said. “And it was sad but toward the end I am ashamed to admit I started to distance myself from them. Started to pull away and protect myself. Most of the time I left before…” he broke off. He was sobbing into Alec’s shoulder. “Or they left me before… before…”

Alec didn’t know what to do. He wanted more than anything to take the pain and fear out of Magnus’s voice but he had no idea how.

“Magnus it’s okay,” Alec said. “I understand if you need to do that. We have had a wonderful life together. Raised our sons together. I am happy. That was enough for me but you have more lives to life, I know that. Great adventures still to come for Magnus Bane.” He smiled into Magnus’s hair still being held too tight to pull back and see the warlock’s face. “Please don’t put yourself through any more pain for me. Do what you can to be okay. I won’t hold it against you. Promise.”

“Oh Alexander. You are too good to be.” Magnus pulled out of the hug now. He held Alec’s face in his hands and locked eyes with him.
“I can’t,” Magnus said with so much conviction Alec could do nothing but stare. “I can’t this time.” No one spoke for a long moment. Their eyes remained locked as they took in the others words.

“I am only fifty-nine,” Alec said. “I have many years yet. Please don’t be so sad. I can’t bear to see you so sad.”

Magnus ran his fingers over Alec neck, his face, his hands. Tracing every single line and wrinkle he found there. His hands of course looked the same as they always had. He stared down at his youthful hands next to Alec’s aged ones. It was true fifty-nine wasn’t that old but it was old enough now that the difference between them was very apparent. Magnus could feel Alec slipping away from him to a place he couldn’t follow: old age.

“I’m sorry,” Alec said. “I am sorry I wasn’t willing to becoming immortal for you. I’m sorry the only way wasn’t acceptable to me.” Magnus thought of seeing his Alec as a vampire and shook his head vigorously.

“You don’t have to apologize for that,” Magnus said. “This is my problem and I will deal with it.” After you’re gone he added to himself but didn’t say it out loud.

“Let’s go visit Rafe,” Alec suggested trying to bring a smile back to Magnus’s face. Magnus nodded his agreement. Rafe had married quite a few years ago now and he had children who loved it when their grandfather’s visited.

Alec and Magnus spent the whole rest of the day with their grandkids but the next day Alec sent a fire message to the one person in all the whole who would be able to help.

Max stepped out of the portal on the streets of New York. He knew this area well. His parents apartment was just around the corner. Max had a glamour on that disguised his blue skin and horns. He didn’t like using a glamour to hide his appearance but he knew it was necessary in the mundane world. Max never changed anything else about his appear. His friend Catarina liked to appear as a totally different person when she was disguised. Max always felt weird but this however. Maybe it was because he was still young for a warlock or maybe it was because of the huge loving accepting family that had raised him.

Speaking of which Max saw his father, or one of them, sitting at a outdoor cafe. Alec stood his arms out and Max accepted the hug.

“You look so weird glamoured,” Alec complained. “It takes so much work to see through it.”

“That is only because I am very good at them,” Max said, as they both sat down.

“Pap is an excellent teacher,” Alec said, smiling. “Thanks for coming, Max. Hope I didn’t interrupt anything important.”

“Nothing really,” Max said.

“How are you?” Alec asked conversationally. He was, of course, in frequent contact with his son. They had dinner around Magnus and Alec’s place a few times a month.

“I’m great but you knew that,” Max smiled. He knew his father had something he needed to say.

“Any annoying clients lately?” Alec said. “I know you papa used to complain a lot when he ended up working for…” Max interrupted his father with a look. “Alright that’s not why I wanted to talk to
“I know,” Max said. He knew this was about Magnus otherwise his other father would be here.

“I am worried about papa,” Alec said, finally giving up on small talk.

“I am too old to call him that,” Max said, with the air of recent adulthood. “I don’t call you daddy anymore either if you hadn’t noticed.”

“Okay fine,” Alec said. “Either way I am worried about him.”

“Is he okay?”

“He is now, yes,” Alec said. “This is kinda weird but I am worried about him after I die.” Max’s face fell.

“Having an mortal parent,” Alec said, knowing if he stopped now he wouldn’t be able to start again. “Is different than a mortal partner. I know you will be okay. It’s natural for children to outlive their parents. When my parents died I was devastated but they had lived a long life and a happy one. It wasn’t unnatural.” Alec paused taking a deep breath. “But with your papa he is going to be broken and I just can’t bear it.”

Max started at the look of pain on his dad’s face but didn’t speak. Once Max had grown up and seen more of the world he had realized how special his parent’s relationship was. Even compared to his aunts and uncles Max knew his parents were special. If Max ever found someone to love half as much as his parents loved each other he knew he would be a luck man.

“I need you to take care of him for me,” Alec said. “I know this isn’t the usual request old parents ask of their children but I am asking.” Alec pleaded with his son. “Please don’t let him petrify or stop trying new things or be alone or--” Alec’s voice broke and Max knew he couldn’t continue.

“Dad,” Max said softly.

“If I could stay with him forever I would,” Alec said. “If only to keep the pain from his eyes. But I can’t.” Alec’s hands were shaking but he placed his face in them as tears poured from his eyes. Max wrapped his hands around his fathers and lifted Alec’s face to look at him.

“Daddy,” Max said. “Of course I will be there for papa.” He smiled knowing Alec loved it when Max named them like it had when he was little. “I love you both and I owe you much.”

“You owe us nothing Max,” Alec said firmly. “Never think that. We wanted you. You are our treasure. Our blueberry. Don’t ever forget that. Even if you live for a thousand years. Remember that you were wanted. Loved.”

“Okay,” Max said. “But you listen to me. You didn’t need to ask me this, dad. I was going to do it anyway.”

Chapter End Notes

If you want to see Max and Magnus after Alec’s gone check out my story 'Memories of
Alec' to see Max keeping his promise to his dad. It was originally the last chapter of this story but I decided it was too bitter-sweet to really fit here so I cut it. But don't read it if you don't want to cry! People keeping telling me a made them cry! SO Sorry! You have been warned!

And the next chapter is an author's note. It explains what other chapters (besides the ones with the book title in the chapter name) have direct dialogue from other parts of the series. I talk about my motivation in writing this story and such. If you have any questions or just want to say hi leave a comment and I will answer.

Since you read all the way to the end I am going to guess you enjoyed this story. Therefore I thought I'd tell you I have a few more stories for the Mortal Instruments characters as well.

Mostly I want to tell you about my Malec AU story, I am currently writing. I finished writing this one then was so sad that my writers high was gone that I had to start another Malec story! ^_^ Yes I am a Malec addict. Anyway please go have a read and tell me what you think. I also have quite a few one-shots some of which used to be part of this story but eventually didn't fit. And one that is set in the tv show.
Author's Note

Malec's relationship didn't get enough page time in the books and we all know it! Cassandra Clare cut out much of their relationship, only hinting at it from a distance. I wanted to see all those missed Malec moments so I scoured fanfic for them. I found some but they were all scattered, choppy and they still didn't fill in all the gaps!

So I wrote them the way I wanted to read them, as one story! My hope was that this would act as one long story rather than a bunch of little filling in the gaps stories. I have heard from reviewer that haven't even read the books that they were able to follow and enjoy it so I like to think I have succeed here. Though non-book readers may not understand who some of the characters are (Like Maia and Kyle) they seem to be able to follow the Malec plot well enough. Honestly I was very surprised how many people enjoyed this story who hadn't read the books because this story is basically the books just from a different point of view.

Though she is going to write a series centered around Magnus and I am so excited! Even if this series will probably contradict all my writing I don't even care! The more Magnus the better!

To write the chapters with direct dialogue I cut and pasted the scenes that I wanted to switch the POV for into my google doc then wrote the new POV around the dialogue until there was as little of Cassandra Clare writing left as possible. I tried to fit my dialogue and writing into Cassandra Clare's as seamlessly as I could to make the story flow well. I also tried to cut as much of Cassandra's writing out as possible so you guys didn't get bored and annoyed wondering why I just copied her stuff.

My Strange Story Structure Explained:

All the chapters that have the book title in them eg. (CoB aka City of Bones) (CoA aka City of Ashes), (CoG aka City of Glass), (CoFA aka City of Fallen Angels), (CoLS aka City of Lost Souls), (CoHF aka City of Heavenly Fire) all take place during those books and have direct dialogue from the books mixed with dialogue I wrote. Many other chapters still have direct dialogue from the series just not the main books.

The chapter 'Healing Alec' is based off of what was said at the end of City of Bones and what Alec is thinking during the short scene published on Cassandra Clare's website where Alec asks Magnus out for the first time.

The chapter 'First Kiss' has dialogue from both the short scene published on Cassandra Clare's website and from the story 'The Course of First Dates and True Love' from the Magnus Bane Chronicles. It is just that scene from Cassandra Clare's website done in Magnus's POV instead of Alec's with the part at the end with Catarina taken from Magnus's POV of their date in the Magnus Bane Chronicles.

The chapter 'First Date' is basically just the story 'The Course of First Dates and True Love' from the Magnus Bane Chronicles but from Alec's point of view instead of Magnus's point of view. This chapter you can totally skipped if you have read the Magnus's Bane version.

The chapter 'Secretly Dating' is based off of a combination of hints in City of Ashes like how
Alec had Magnus's key and what Magnus is thinking in the story 'What to get the shadowhunter who has everything' in the Magnus Bane Chronicles. There is only a small amount of direct dialogue in his chapter. It is from 'What to get the shadowhunter who has everything' when they are at Taki's at the end of the chapter and Raphael walks in.

The chapter 'Birthday' is Alec and Izzy's point of view of the story 'What to get the shadowhunter who has everything' from the Magnus Bane Chronicles and had direct dialogue from that story. I researched what shadowhunters do for their birthday and found a Q&A with Cassandra Clare that said they only really care about their 18th and there is a rune ceremony were they also receive a stele of their own.

The Chapter 'Travelling' is based off of the end of City of Glass and all the hints in City of Fallen Angels about where they are on their vacation. It is also based off of all the noticeable changes in their relationship after they return from their vacation. I did found some post cards from Izzy to Alec during this trip about Izzy teasing him she is planning a Malec wedding. I didn't include them because I had already written it by the time I found them on the wikia page. I liked the chapter they way it was and thought added it would take away from it. Since it's a minor detail I decided I could leave it out. This is the only minor details I ever did that with in this story.

The chapter 'Sharing' is based off of the end of City of Heavenly Fire but has many references to Magnus's past that I found in the prequels (The Infernal Devices/Clockwork Series), the Magnus Bane Chronicles and the Shadowhunter wikia. It also makes reference to the small scene Cassandra Clare wrote in Magnus's point of view from after the party in City of Bones where he meets Alec. I found it on Magnus's wikia page and the scene is called "Magnus's Vow."

The chapter 'Impromtu Guests' is based on many references from The Infernal Devices as well as the fact that Jem wanted to talk to Magnus when he awoke in City of Heavenly Fire but Magnus was busy being kidnapped.

The chapter 'Typical Morning' is based off something Magnus says Alec told him in the epilogue of City of Heavenly Fire.

The chapter 'Epilogue' is basically just the epilogue of City of Heavenly Fire from Magnus's point of view only instead of a mix of many points of view like it is in the book.

The chapter 'Catarina' is based off of something said in 'What to get the Shadowhunter who has Everything,' the Epilogue of City of Heavenly Fire and the Shadowhunter Academy Series story 'Born to an Endless Night.'

The chapter 'Ideal Thoughts' takes place during the Shadowhunter Academy story 'Bitter Tongue' but is based off prompts from 'Born to an Endless Night.' It is mentioned at the end of 'Bitter Tongue' that Simon sees Alec sitting with Jace so I wrote Alec with Jace at the wedding.

The chapter 'Unexpected Friendship' has a little direct dialogue from the Shadowhunter Academy story 'Born to an Endless Night' mixed in with my dialogue and is based around the prompts from that story as well.
The chapter 'Blue Bundle of Joy' is Alec's point of view of the story 'Born to an Endless Night' from the Shadowhunter Academy Series.

The chapters 'A new kind of tired' and 'Mother in law' are based off of prompts from 'Born to and Endless Night' but have no direct dialogue. They reference some things from the Magnus Bane chronicles most of which happened in 'The Last Stand of the New York Institute' story. I said Magnus was born in 1604 here even though all the research I did didn't give an exact year. The wikia page said he was born in the early 1600 so I just picked a year. These were the first chapters I wrote.

The chapter 'Toys R Us' is based off a scene in the Shadowhunter Academy Series in which Simon and Izzy are at Magnus's and Alec's place and notice all the toys. It is also based off of how overwhelmed Magnus was by the Lightwood family invasion during the Shadowhunter Academy story 'Born to an Endless Night' along with the reference in another chapter of the Academy series in which Magnus and Alec are known to have taken their new son on a vacation to Bali.

The chapter 'First in Bali' is based off of the place where it was known Magnus and Alec went on vacation from the last chapter of the Shadowhunter Academy series 'Angels Twice Descending' and the fact that Magnus was born on an Indonesian Island. I couldn't find anything to contract that being the island he was born on so I decided it would be cute if Magnus was showing Alec more of his past.

The chapter 'Simon' is based off of what Simon was thinking during 'Born to an endless night.' Once he talked to Alec, Simon decided as Alec's new friend it was his job to show him Monty Python. (And yes I had to then go watch the Spanish Inquisition Monty Python skit to write this chapter.) In my story 'A new kind of tired' Simon takes it one step further and decides to show Alec Star Trek. This chapter also makes references to Simon's new job and graduation from the academy. His job is mentioned in the short story published in Lady Midnight called 'The Long Conversation' and his graduation is from the last story in the Academy series called 'Angels Twice Descending.'

The chapter 'Lullaby' is mostly just a cute scene I wrote but I did research ancient nursery rhymes to write it. I decided Magnus would be surprised he remembered the songs his mother used to sing to him since it is mentioned in 'The Infernal Devices' that he has forgotten what his mother looked like.

The chapter 'Lucky Warlock' is based off a scene that popped into my head in which Magnus jumps in front of Alec and gets hit. I matched it with the timeline in the short story 'The Long Conversation' from the first edition of the book Lady Midnight.

The Chapter 'Joyful Smile' has references to Magnus's first cameo in Lady Midnight but is otherwise based off hints in the Long Conversation when Clary is thinking about how Alec and Magnus adopted Rafe. I also looked up Rafael Santiago Lightwood-Bane's Wikia page for references. This is part 1/3 of my Rafe chapters.

The Chapter 'Home' is mostly just what I think would happen when Rafael is introduced to Max but it has references from Rafe's wikia page as well. This is part 2/3 of my Rafe chapters.

The Chapter 'Family' has references to Magnus's second cameo in Lady Midnight as well as
Malec's point of view of the Long Conversation. This is a very tying up loose ends chapter and was the last chapters I wrote. This is part 3/3 of my Rafe chapters.

The chapter 'Portals' and 'Grandpa' were among the first chapters I wrote. Portals was inspired by a tumblr post about Max portaling into Alec's lap during an important meeting and Grandpa is inspired by the Epilogue of City of Heavenly Fire.

The chapter 'Arthritis' was one of the first ones I wrote. It isn't based off anything in the books other than the fact that Magnus has said that the way her loves Alec is different and he won't love again after Alec.

I decided not to put the titles of the shorter stories in the titles of my chapters for the simple reason that they were too long to fit. So I have explained myself here.

And yes I know I did ALL the research but this isn't even the half of it because I did research for every tiny little thing in every chapter. If anyone finds anything in this story that contradicts the canon, I will be astonished! Seriously if you can find something that contradicts the canon tell me, cause I might mail you a cookie. ;)

I have had an absolutely marvellous time writing this story and I hope you had just as great a time reading it. Please check out my other Malec stories if you are sad this one ended. Cheers!

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