I'm paper thin (in love with you now)

by scalira

Summary

Jace never thought living with Meliorn would be a problem.

Notes

For some reason I still can't put links in notes, but I think we all know what inspired this fic. (Hint: it was that headline of the straight dude worrying he's being homophobic to roommate when he is in fact in love with him)

See the end of the work for more notes.

Jace never thought living with Meliorn would be a problem.

Sure, he had had his doubts about him when Magnus introduced them to each other. Jace was freshly out of college – or well, freshly dropped out of college – and he didn’t really have a lot of money at the time. He had barely started up Java Jace and was still in debt from his unfinished education, so he really couldn’t afford living on his own.

But staying with the Lightwoods hadn’t been an option either. It wasn’t like he didn’t love them – he quite literally owed them his life. But he could no longer stand being on the pedestal they placed him on, especially after he was the first (and only) of the Lightwood siblings to drop out of college. Izzy
was still going strong juggling a double major (forensics – fashion) and Alec was in his last year of Business when Jace decided college really wasn’t for him. His adoptive parents had been angry and disappointed and had told him that, as long as he lived under their roof, he would do what they wanted him to.

So he left.

His siblings were supportive of his decision and tried to lend him some money, but Jace had too much pride to take any from them. So Alec had told Magnus that he was looking for a roommate, and then Magnus had introduced him to Meliorn.

At first Jace had found Meliorn a bit weird. He seemed to be living in the clouds, always a calm smile on his face like he didn’t have a care in the world despite him being in his second year of college. He also had a bit of a hippie vibe to him, with floral pants and loose cotton shirts and shoulder-length hair.

But he was looking for a roommate and asked decent rent, so Jace really wasn’t in any position to turn him down.

And surely enough, living with Meliorn turned out to be kind of a dream scenario. They both had spacious bedrooms and a nice living room and small kitchen. Not even sharing a bathroom with the guy worried Jace. In fact, they quickly developed an unlikely friendship.

Jace never thought he could be friends with people like Meliorn. But, as proven multiple times in the past, Jace’ first impression about people tends to be quite off. Yeah, Meliorn was a bit of a dreamer and he got high every once in a while, but he wasn’t half as hippie-esque as Jace had accused him to be. He liked violent video games just as much as the next guy, often binged on junk food, stayed in bed till well past noon and didn’t do yoga once. No hippie there.

Jace guesses the only thing Meliorn has in common with hippies is sleeping around.

They’ve been living together for around six months when Meliorn’s guests start to annoy him. They never bothered him in the past, not even when he could hear their sex noises through the thin walls, but all of the sudden Jace can’t stand to be in the same room when Meliorn has someone over.

They made some kind of contract when they moved in together that stated neither of them would complain about the people they brought over, so Jace can’t even grumble in peace. So he tries his best to hide his sudden annoyance, but Meliorn is starting to notice.

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“You sure? You seem annoyed lately.”

“It’s nothing. Work, I guess.”

“Is it stress? Do you need a massage?” Meliorn flashes his teeth at him in a smug grin and Jace flips him off, causing Meliorn to burst out laughing.
“Or maybe you just need to get laid,” Meliorn shrugs. He’s walking around the living room now, trying to collect all his stuff before he has to leave for work. Honestly, that kid is a mess. He would lose his own head if he could.

“I would offer, but – you know.”

“Literally suck my dick, Meliorn.”

“Only if you ask nicely.”

Jace throws a pillow at him, which Meliorn easily dodges. He darts across the room to get his keys and then dashes out of the door, wishing Jace a very bad day as he goes.

Jace falls back into the cushions and starts biting his nails. There’s a thought forming in his head, and he’s not happy with where his mind is leading him.

Meliorn not being solely attracted to girls shouldn’t have come to a surprise to him, but Jace only found out he didn’t when he brought home a guy for the first time a couple of weeks ago. Meliorn had shrugged when he’d seen Jace’ shocked expression and had stated he loved regardless of gender, and that was that.

And, if Jace is being totally honest with himself, that’s when his general annoyance with Meliorn’s bedpartners started.

So now he’s sitting on their couch, thinking about all the non-straight people he knows, and wondering one thing:

Is Jace Wayland a homophobe?

* 

The question eats Jace up for the next few days. He even makes a list with all the reasons why he is and isn’t a homophobe. The isn’t part is longer, but the is part is heavier. Sure, Jace knows a lot of people that aren’t straight. Hell, literally his entire friend group is not straight. But that doesn’t mean anything if seeing two dudes getting it on together makes you uncomfortable. Jace isn’t one to hide behind the ‘but I have gay friends!’ approach to disguise his homophobia. He’s honest about his feelings.

So all of this adds up to one thing: Jace is in fact homophobic. Maybe not in the violent way or in the ‘Gay marriage got legalized what more do you gays want’ way, but homophobia exists in many shapes and sizes.

So he decides to go out and investigate. If he really is homophobic, surely he doesn’t just get uncomfortable around Meliorn, right? He must get uncomfortable around others too.

So he jumps in the shower, gets dressed and heads to Clary’s apartment.

* 

“Jace!” Clary exclaims surprised when she opens the door. She has to yell over the loud music booming through her apartment and pulls Jace inside before darting away to turn down the noise. She comes back with a rag to clean her hands, a fresh smear of paint on her cheek.

“What’s up?” She asks, softer now.
“Is Izzy here too?” Jace asks, mouth dry. He doesn’t know how he’s going to approach this exactly, but he’s hoping he’ll figure it out as he goes.

“Yeah. Want me to go get her?”

Jace nods, and Clary disappears again to go get Isabelle. They reappear seconds later, Izzy’s clothes and hair covered in flour.

“Hey, big bro!” She greets when she sees him. She pulls him into a short embrace before realizing she’s ruining his clothes with the flour and pulling back with an apologetic smile. “I was just trying out some recipes Magnus gave me. Wanna try some cookies?”

Clary fiercely shakes her head behind Isabelle’s back, making a gesture as if slashing her throat with her thumb and eyes huge with fear. Jace snickers and Isabelle turns around to her girlfriend, who pretends her throat is suddenly extremely itchy.

“No, thanks,” Jace says, “I just wanted to see you. Are you two doing anything special today?”

“No, not really,” Clary shrugs, “Izzy is trying to ‘bake’ –” she makes quotation marks in the air “– and I’m trying to finish a piece for my exhibition later this week. Wanna stay for dinner?”

“I’d love to,” Jace grins. He retreats back into the kitchen after a pleading look from Clary to see if he can salvage anything from the destruction, and Izzy hops on the counter as he pulls a tray of burned cookies out of the oven.

“So, what really brings you here?” She wonders, watching as he throws the cookies in the trash.

“Mhh?” Jace asks innocently. Izzy punches him on the shoulder and scowls at him.

“Don’t play dumb! I’m onto you, Jonathan. You normally never drop by out of the blue. What’s up? You can tell your sister.”

Jace sighs, leaning against the counter and staring at the ground. “It’s just – I don’t know. You know my roommate Meliorn, right?”

“I do.”

“Well, I recently found out that he likes boys. And it never bugged me before, obviously, since both you and Alec are gay, but somehow living with someone who’s not straight and not my sibling makes me uncomfortable?”

“Uncomfortable?”

“Yeah, like –” he makes a vague, frustrated gesture “– I don’t know. Whenever he has a boy over, I feel really weird. Like I said; uncomfortable. I get all irritated and I can’t stand seeing them together and whenever they kiss I feel like throwing up. That’s not normal, is it?”

Isabelle frowns. “No, it isn’t. And how do you think we could help you with that?”

Jace feels his cheeks burn up and avoids eye contact as he stutters out a reply. “It’s – it’s silly, but I thought, maybe, if I expose myself to gay couples, I can figure out if I really am homophobic. Surely all gay people should make me feel weird, right? Not just Meliorn and his boy toy of the week.”

Isabelle hums thoughtfully and hops off the counter. “Hey, babe?” She calls out, “can you come here for a sec?”
They can hear some stumbling and cursing, and then Clary comes skipping into the kitchen. Her hair is now twisted into a messy bun, a paint brush stabbed through it to hold it up.

“Yeah?” She asks. Izzy smiles lovingly at her and pulls her closer by the braces of her jeans. She places a soft kiss on her lips, and Clary’s eyes flutter shut as she kisses back.

“What was that for?” She asks breathlessly when Izzy pulls back. Instead of replying, Isabelle looks at Jace.

“Well?” She wonders. “Did that make you uncomfortable?”

“Uncomfortable?” Clary repeats the same time as Jace says: “No!”

“Why would that make Jace uncomfortable?” Clary asks confused.

“My big brother over here thinks he might be a homophobe,” Izzy explains with a shrug, “I just wanted to test it out.”

“Yeah, well,” Jace huffs, “you’re girls! Men are basically brainwashed into thinking lesbians are hot. That’s why lesbian porn exists.”

Clary slaps him on his arm. “Hey! Girls watch lesbian porn too. Besides, men fetishizing relationships between women is gross and misogynistic. We’re not for your consumption.”

Jace holds up his hands in surrender. “I know that! I’m just pointing out the fact that many homophobes don’t mind girl on girl action. This doesn’t prove anything.”

Clary narrows her eyes at him. “You’re being weird. Why do you suddenly think you’re homophobic?”

Jace explains again, more exasperated this time, and Clary gets a weird look on her face when he finishes.

“What?”

“Nothing!” She says quickly, voice too high. Jace doesn’t believe her, but he’s also learned not to bully Clary into speaking her mind if you don’t want a detailed description of where you can pour your coffee if you bother her one more time. He’s experienced it firsthand.

“Anyway,” Clary says when the silence stretches between them, “has anyone seen my paint brush?”

* *

Jace spends the rest of the day with his sister and Clary, switching from helping Clary with her piece (which mostly consists of moving it from room to room to get That Right Lighting™ and telling her it looks great) and making sure Isabelle doesn’t burn the house down with her cooking. He ends up having to put out a small fire with a wet towel and then declares Izzy in charge of helping Clary with her art piece while he tries to put something decent on the table.

He makes a basic spaghetti, but Clary moans as she stuffs way too much into her mouth at once and tells him this is the best thing she’s eaten since she moved in with Isabelle. Izzy tries to take offense to that, but she just shrugs and agrees.

By the end of the night, after watching a movie with them, Jace’ skin feels warm and buzzing. He doesn’t have a care in the world and has basically forgotten why he’d gone to his sister in the first
place, but then he walks into his apartment to find Meliorn straddling another man on their couch.

“Oh, come on!” Jace complains. Meliorn’s head jerks up at his voice and he at least has the decency to look ashamed of himself when he spots Jace.

“Oh, hey,” he says with a sheepish smile, “you’re home.”

“I am,” Jace grunts.

“Who’s this?” The boy underneath Meliorn questions. “Is he your boyfriend or something?”

Meliorn flickers his eyes over Jace’ body for a second. “No,” he eventually deadpans. He crawls off the boy’s lap and pulls him to his feet instead. “Come on, we’ll take this party to my room.”

He offers Jace an apologetic shrug in passing before ducking into his room, leaving Jace alone in the living room.

Jace thought that maybe this whole being homophobic thing was just a misunderstanding, but the nausea is back and stronger than ever at the thought of whatever Meliorn and that dude could be doing in there. He angrily kicks the coffee table, snatches his earphones off the couch where he left them and retreats into his room, blocking out all possible sex sounds with 21 Pilots screaming into his ears.

*  

Meliorn’s hook-up of the evening stumbles out of their apartment at 6 the next morning, slamming the door behind him too loudly for Jace to sleep through it. He groans and rolls onto his other side, but his earphones get tangled around his neck and make it impossible for him to stay comfortable. Jace groans again and rolls out of bed, dragging his feet outside of his room to get some coffee.

“You’d think you have someone in there too with all the groaning you’re doing,” Meliorn comments. Jace jumps and glares at him as he passes him to get to the coffee machine.

“Those aren’t my sex groans,” he grumbles as he makes himself some coffee.

“No? What do your sex groans sound like, then?” Meliorn asks over the edge of his cup of tea, trying to hide his amused smile.

“Wouldn’t you like to know,” Jace mutters.

Meliorn just hums and walks back to his room, his bare back all laid out for Jace to admire. Jace stares at the big tree tattoo spreading over his entire back as Meliorn walks away, some of its branches curling around his sides and ribs. Jace’ fingers are suddenly itching, though he doesn’t quite know why.

*  

Neither of them have to work today, so they spend the day hanging out together. Meliorn is fun to hang out with – always has funny stories to tell and weed to share and video games to play. It’s never boring with him. They don’t hang out a lot because Jace is really busy with Java Jace and Meliorn works in a flower shop part time, so it’s been a while since it’s been just the two of them. Though it’s nice to hang out together, Jace still feels kinda weird about it. He’s constantly on edge, shoulders tense, and whenever Meliorn accidentally touches him he feels his heart beating painfully in his chest. His palms get sweaty when Meliorn reaches over his lap to grab the bowl of chips Jace had claimed for himself earlier.
Jace mentally shakes himself and tells himself to man the fuck up. He’s disgusted with himself, if he’s being honest. He really liked Meliorn before he found out he also liked dudes, and now all of the sudden he feels sick whenever they’re together. As if this simple fact suddenly changed Meliorn’s entire personality. As if his sexuality is a huge obstacle Jace needs to tackle in order to be comfortable around him.

This is getting out of hand. At first Jace just didn’t like the boy candy Meliorn brought over, but now he’s even getting uncomfortable around Meliorn himself. He doesn’t even know why. Alec came out to him when they were thirteen, and Jace never made a problem out of it.

Wait.

Alec. Of course!

Jace jumps to his feet so fast Meliorn startles, glaring up at him as he chews on a chip.

“Where’s the fire?” He asks.

“Nowhere. I – uh, I just remembered I was supposed to meet up with Alec today. So I have… I have to go.”

“But we’re in the middle of a game! You didn’t even finish your beer yet.”

Jace shrugs. “He’s my brother, Mel. Blood is thicker than beer.”

“That’s not how that saying goes,” Meliorn mutters, sinking further into the couch. He seems annoyed, but Jace doesn’t have the time to stick around to find out why.

He quickly snatches his keys off the table, gets his jacket, throws a goodbye over his shoulder and heads out.

*

Jace shrieks when Alec opens the door, wearing excessive, bright make-up and blue lipstick.

“What happened to your face!” Jace exclaims, reaching out to cup his cheeks and turn his head sideways. Alec slaps his hands away.

“Nothing,” he says, “Magnus has a big runway project coming up and he’s testing his make-up on me. If you wanna come in, you must be willing to be experimented on.”

Jace groans but steps inside anyway, deciding a little bit of make-up never hurt anyone. Alec guides him to the bathroom, where Magnus is hovering his hands over his collection of make-up items.

“I brought another victim,” Alec declares. Magnus swirls around and grins at Jace.

“Jonathan! You and your beautiful eyes are exactly what I need right now! Sit down.”

“Hey, what about my beautiful eyes?” Alec complains. Magnus tuts at him.

“Oh, my dear Alexander. You have amazing eyes, but you don’t have Heterochromia.”

“You in fact have nothing hetero,” Jace chirps. Magnus laughs loudly at that and high-fives him before pushing him down onto the stool placed in the middle of the room.

“Did you just come here to team up against me with my boyfriend or is there another reason for your
sudden visit?” Alec wonders as he sinks down on the edge of the bathtub. Jace glances at him shortly, but then focuses back on Magnus and the weird pencil that’s nearing his eyes.

“No,” he says, jerking away from the torture device, “just here to make fun of you.”

Alec flicks him off and maybe laughs a bit louder than necessary when Jace jerks away again but gets the pencil right in his eye.

“Sit still!” Magnus demands. “I need to get this right before next week.”

“What happened to Raphael? Isn’t he your usual guinea pig for these kind of things?”

“He is, but he and Simon just moved in together and they’re still in their honeymoon phase, so I daren’t interrupt them.”

“How very considerate of you,” Jace mutters, eyes watering. Magnus swiftly wipes away his tears with a tissue before starting to apply foundation on Jace’ cheeks.

Magnus’ experienced fingers have a calming effect on Jace’ nervous state of mind, and he finds himself easily slipping into some mindless bickering with Alec while Magnus works his magic on him. He doesn’t even mind the taste of the dark lipstick he applies to his lips, or how he pokes his eye maybe a bit too roughly applying eyeshadow because Jace made a comment about him that made Alec snort laughing.

It’s easy to forget why exactly he’s here. The bickering between the three of them is just so familiar that it immediately chases away all the worries Jace might have, especially when Alec brings some beer and snacks to munch on while Magnus smears their faces with chemical products. Just guys being dudes, getting a make-over and drinking beer.

But nice songs don’t last forever, and Magnus has to ruin the nice atmosphere by bringing up Meliorn.

“Why didn’t you bring him too? I thought Sunday was your weekly Hang Day?” Magnus asks casually. Jace has been repositioned on the edge of the tub and Alec has taken his place on the stool again, enduring Magnus’ steady hands as he draws winged eyeliner.

“Yeah, uh… I don’t know. Sorry.”

“Mhh,” Magnus hums, taking a step backwards to admire his work, “that boy has amazing skin. He would’ve made the perfect guinea pig. Such a shame.”

“I’ll tell him you said that.”

“What’s up, dude?” Alec asks, frowning slightly despite Magnus’ protest as to not ruin his make-up.

“What? Nothing! Why would anything be up?”

Alec turns his head to look at him. Jace waits for Magnus to protest, but the other man is looking at him intently too now, arms crossed in front of his chest.

“Something wrong?” Magnus questions, sounding suspiciously worried. Which is weird, because he and Jace aren’t that kind of friends. They’re the kind of friends to sit together and drink alcohol and binge American’s Next Top Model. Magnus doesn’t usually worry about him.

Jace wants to deny, but Magnus’ eyes are piercing right through him. So he sighs and asks: “Do you
think I’m homophobic?”

dude on the subway again who tells everyone who doesn’t want to suck his dick that they’re
homophobic? Because he called me that and I’m literally gay.”

“No, it wasn’t him,” Jace assures him, “it’s just… something I’ve been thinking about lately.”

Magnus puts his make-up stuff away and leans against the sink. “Okay, explain,” he demands.

So Jace does. He tells them about Meliorn and his boy toys, about how they make him feel and how
ashamed of himself he is because he never thought of himself as homophobic, but of course no
homophobe ever openly admits that they’re homophobic.

By the end of his monologue, Magnus is shaking his head and Alec is frowning.

“Oh, you wanna hear something that’ll make you uncomfortable?” Magnus grins. “Last night, Alec –”

“Okay!” Alec interrupts, “thank you for your input! Anyway, Jace, if you really wanna see
how you’ll react to a gay couple that doesn’t include one of your siblings, maybe go visit Raphael
and Simon to find out? Make sure to bring a gift, though. Raphael gets cranky when you don’t bring
anything for their new apartment.”

“It’s basic human decency,” Magnus counters.

“I forgot, okay? It won’t happen again. He won’t let me live this down till we’re all old and grey.”

Magnus rolls his eyes at his boyfriend and focuses back on Jace. “Anyway, just take a bottle of wine
or something. And compliment the nice view they have; Raphael is really proud of it.”

“Got it,” Jace nods. “Now, wanna get drunk and watch weird cartoons?”
It’s way past midnight when Jace stumbles back into his apartment. A small, rational part of his brain curses him for getting drunk on a work night, but most of his brain and body is too intoxicated to care. He had a great time with Alec and Magnus, taking shots whenever Gumball said *What the what* in the Amazing World of Gumball and ordering pizza and not thinking about Meliorn at all, certainly not when they watched Foster’s Home for Imaginary Friends and Blue somehow reminded him of Meliorn’s blue tips.

Jace makes a stop in the kitchen to get some water and then blindly stumbles through the apartment to get to his room. He doesn’t bother turning on the lights and just feels himself to his bed, kicks off his shoes and crawls underneath the sheets.

Maybe his mind registers something is off about the situation. Maybe some part of him realizes he’s not alone in bed, and that this isn’t his bed at all, but he’s too drunk and tired to really care. So he just buries his face in the foreign but familiar smelling pillow and drifts to sleep.

*Jace realizes a few things at the same time when he wakes up the next morning. One: his head is killing him. Two: the sun is up, which means he’s already late for work, and three: there’s a warm body pressed to his chest.*

At first he doesn’t quite understand what’s happening. He doesn’t remember bringing someone home last night, and he’s also pretty sure nobody was waiting for him in his bed. But then he notices the interior of the room; the big windows without curtains because Meliorn likes getting woken up by sunlight, the cacti on the windows still, the simple clothing rack in the corner. This isn’t his room.

This is Meliorn’s.

Which means…

Jace looks down onto the person in his arms and immediately notices the dark hair with the blue tips. Meliorn’s back is pressed to his chest, which means they’re spooning, and Jace hopes to God that Meliorn was asleep when he crawled in last night and hasn’t woken up yet.

But then Meliorn reaches behind him, searches for Jace’ hand and brings it to his lips to kiss his knuckles.

Jace feels his stomach drop and jerks his hand away like he just got burned, jumping out of bed.

“Hey,” Meliorn croaks sleepily, turning around to look at him. There’s a smile on his face that makes Jace’ palms sweat. “What’s the rush? You overslept, why don’t you just stay in today?”

Jace’ mouth is dry when he replies. “N- no. I have… I really have to go. Uh – yeah. See you. Bye.”

He dashes out of the room so fast he forgets his shoes, and since that’s his only pair, he just pulls off his socks and wears his flip flops to Simon’s and Raphael’s apartment.

*He doesn’t actually dare to show up at their apartment before three pm, so he opens Java Jace for a few hours before going. He dives behind the counter when he sees Meliorn approaching and stays there until he’s gone, despite knowing full well that Meliorn must know he’s there. He feels like an ass, but he just can’t face him now. He’s embarrassed and confused and mostly, he really doesn’t want to hurt Meliorn’s feelings. He feels weird about all this. His stomach aches and his palms are sweaty and he feels sick whenever he thinks about how he just spent the night with Meliorn. Which*
are obvious signs of disgust, right? It must be. He doesn’t know what else it could be. He just doesn’t want Meliorn to see that disgust in his eyes when he looks at him.

Jace closes the coffee truck at 2:30 and makes a stop at a local store to buy a bottle of wine. Then he heads towards Simon’s and Raphael’s apartment.

Simon is the one to open the door. He grins widely when he sees Jace.

“Hey, bro! What are you doing here?”

Jace holds up the bottle of wine he just purchased. “Came to check out your new apartment and get drunk.”

“Ah, yes. A perfect combination on this Monday afternoon,” Simon grins. He steps aside to let Jace in and leads him to the living room, where Raphael is furiously typing away on his laptop.

“Look who’s here, babe,” Simon says cheerfully. Raphael doesn’t look up from his laptop when he hums absentmindedly.

“He’s working on his final essay,” Simon explains. “Been working since five am this morning. Watch this. Hey, Raphael, I decided to run away to Europe with Jace and start a llama farm.”

“That’s cool, baby,” Raphael mutters. Simon rolls his eyes at Jace and pulls him to the kitchen to put away the bottle of wine.

“Sometimes I worry about him, ya know. College is driving him insane.”

“He’s almost done, though. Right?”

“Yeah. Final year. Hey, Raph? Do you want a nice bowl of chicken guts?”

“Sounds great,” Raphael calls back. Simon laughs to himself and pours him a bowl of cereal. He also takes two beers out of the fridge for him and Jace.

“Not really a fan of wine,” he explains with a shrug. He offers Jace one, who gladly takes it.

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“‘Here you go, bud,’ Simon says, placing the bowl of cereal in front of Raphael’s face. Raphael hums a thank you and looks up from his screen long enough to give Simon a quick kiss, which makes Simon beam so widely it almost hurts to look at.

Simon gives Jace a quick tour through their apartment. Jace makes sure he compliments the view loud enough for Raphael to hear, who shouts an exasperated ‘Thank you!’ at him and continues to mutter something about Alec not appreciating anything. Simon looks amazed that Raphael was responsive to anything at all, but just shrugs it off.

“So, that’s our apartment. What do you think?” He asks once they’re back in the living room.

“It’s nice, dude. I’m happy for you. Didn’t think you’d ever settle down.”


“You know what I mean. You always seemed so scared to settle down.”

“Hey,” Simon points out, “I asked Izzy to move in with me.”

“Yeah, as friends. Because you needed a roommate.”
“Your lips are moving, but you’re not making any sense.”

Jace rolls his eyes and takes a swig of his beer. He watches Raphael furiously type away on his laptop and looks back to Simon, moving in closer as if to share he secret. “He makes you happy, right?”

Simon looks at Raphael too, eyes immediately softening when they land on him.

“He does,” he nods. “So much. He can be a grumpy asshole, but he’s my grumpy asshole, you know?”

“Disgusting,” Jace grumbles, but he’s smiling.

“Just because you don’t understand romance doesn’t mean I don’t,” Simon points out.

“I understand romance!” Jace counters.

“You do not. You haven’t had a girlfriend since middle school.”

Jace opens his mouth to deny that, but Simon actually has a valid point. He doesn’t understand romance or having feelings for someone. He wouldn’t recognize them if they punched him in the face.

“Fair point,” he shrugs eventually.

Simon winks at him and clinks his beer to Jace’s. They decide to set up the PlayStation and kill some zombies together, an easy conversation flowing between them as they do so. Raphael joins them somewhere in the middle of the game after making an off-hand comment on Jace’s flip flops, resting his head on Simon’s lap as they play. Simon occasionally runs his fingers through his hair when he doesn’t need two hands, and it looks so intimate and soft that Jace has to look away. It’s not out of disgust though, so at least that’s something.

“Am I homophobic?” He blurs suddenly. Simon looks up from the screen to raise an eyebrow at him.

“I’m sorry, what?”

Jace takes a deep breath. “Meliorn likes boys. I didn’t know at first, and now that he’s taking boys home it makes me feel really uncomfortable. I can’t be around him when he has someone over and I feel sick whenever I hear him with someone else. At first I just didn’t like the boys he brought over, but now I can’t even be alone with him without feeling weird. I constantly feel lightheaded around him and my stomach aches and my palms sweat. I feel so bad because I don’t mean to be homophobic, but I must be, right?”

Simon gapes at him for a heartbeat before shaking his head and pausing the game. Raphael sits up straight to look at him too.

“Jace, buddy, I don’t think you’re homophobic,” Simon says.

“You don’t?”

“No. I do think there’s something else going on, though.”

“Yeah? What?”

Simon and Raphael exchange a look, and then Simon says: “Bro, I think you might have feelings for
Meliorn.

“Wh – feelings? No, that can’t – I’m… I’m straight, dude.”

“I think you might be less straight than originally intended,” Raphael points out. “All those things you just described… the feeling sick, the sweaty palms when you’re with him, … those are all things that happen to you when you have feelings for someone. And I don’t think you don’t like him taking home boys because you’re homophobic, but because you’re jealous.”

“Jealous?”

“Yeah. Think about it. Maybe you don’t like the boys he brings home because you want Meliorn to be yours. Look, I get it, Jace. I’m on the aro spectrum, and I generally have a really hard time telling romantic and platonic feelings apart. That’s why it took me so long to realize that I was in love with Simon. Maybe that’s the same for you.” Raphael shrugs and gets off the couch after swiftly kissing Simon’s cheek.

“I’m gonna continue working on my essay.” He jabs his finger into Jace’ direction. “You should talk to Meliorn. Maybe that will clear things up.”

Jace nods and sighs. “I know. Thank you, Raphael.”

“Anytime,” Raphael smiles before sitting back down behind his laptop. He starts it up and starts typing.

“Aaaaand we lost him,” Simon says, looking at his boyfriend and then at Jace. “He’s right, though. Just talk to him.”

“Yeah. Yeah, I will. I better get going.”

Simon nods and leads Jace back to the front door. “Good luck, buddy. Let me know how it went. And thanks for the wine. I’ll make sure to get Raphael drunk and relaxed tonight.”

“Great plan, pal.” Jace gives Simon a fist bump and calls a goodbye to Raphael, who just hums vaguely.

Jace buys Chinese food on his way home as some kind of peace offering for ignoring Meliorn and hopes for the best.

* *

Meliorn doesn’t even look up from his phone when Jace enters their apartment. Jace is glad that there isn’t anyone else here, boy or girl, but he doesn’t like the way Meliorn is furiously typing on his phone or frowning at his screen.

“Hey,” he greets, holding up the bags of Chinese food, “I brought Chinese food.”


“But you love Chinese food.”

“Not tonight.”

“Hey, is everything okay?” Jace asks, sitting down next to him on the couch. Meliorn looks up from his phone to glare at him.
“Are you fucking kidding me right now? Look, Jonathan. We didn’t do anything last night, alright? In case you were too drunk to remember. You don’t have to be so weird about it.”

“Wh – no, I do remember. I know we didn’t do anything. I’m not being weird about that.”

“Then what the fuck is the matter with you? First you can’t get out of my room fast enough as if I’m some kind of freaking prostitute, then you literally duck behind your counter where I can still see you and wait for me to walk away and now you’re bringing Chinese food like some kind of peace offering? What’s up with that?”

Jace exhales deeply and drops the bags of food on the coffee table, dragging a hand over his face.

“Okay, Mel, look. Everything about this is really confusing, so please be patient with me, alright?”

Meliorn’s expression softens, even if it’s only a bit, and he nods.

Jace frantically searches for the right words, and when they don’t come he decides to just start from the beginning. “I didn’t know you also liked guys. And when you started bringing boys over, I started feeling weird. I thought that that made me homophobic for some reason, so I just spent the last couple of days going from gay couple to gay couple to see if they make me feel the same way you and your boyfriends do. But they don’t, so I figured I’m not homophobic after all. And I just had a really good conversation with Simon and Raphael, and they told me… that I might – like, have feelings for you? And the reason why I felt so weird about you having boys over was because I was jealous of those guys.”

It’s quiet for a heartbeat after Jace’ confession, and then Meliorn starts laughing. “You idiot!” He laughs, “the only reason why I took all those boys home was to try and make you jealous!”

Jace’ jaw drops. “Wait, really?”

“Yes! I’ve been into you for months!”

“But… I told you I was straight.”

Meliorn rolls his eyes at him. “Oh, please. No straight guy looks at me the way you do. I knew you weren’t straight the moment we moved in together.”

Jace’ opens and closes his mouth, not sure what to say. Meliorn is looking at him expectedly, probably waiting for him to continue the conversation, so Jace says: “So, what now?”

Meliorn shrugs. “I don’t know. We’re both into each other, so… do you want to give this a shot? Nothing has to change. We would still live together and be bros and hang out together, but there’d just be more kissing involved. If you want to, of course.”

“I, uh. I’ve never kissed a guy before.”

Meliorn smiles.

“Wanna change that?”

Jace darts his gaze from Meliorn’s eyes to his lips and back and feels himself nodding. Meliorn moves closer, slow enough to give Jace the chance to pull back, but Jace just closes his eyes and waits.

The kiss is short and sweet, just their lips touching softly, but Jace’ heart is racing and his palms are
sweaty again.

“How was that?” Meliorn asks when he pulls back, voice soft.

Jace chuckles. “I’m not used to the stubble,” he says.

Meliorn chuckles too and nudges his shoulder. “But was it any good? Was it something you’d like to do again?”

Jace bites his lip and nods. “Yeah, definitely,” he says, and then he moves to kiss Meliorn again.

* 

He snapchats a picture of him and Meliorn kissing to all of his friends the next day, with the caption ‘not so homophobic after all’. Clary messages back that she’d always known, Alec snapchats a picture of Magnus crying because now none of the adult Lightwood siblings are straight anymore and Simon sends him a picture of him kissing Raphael’s cheek, who just scowls at the camera.

In the end, living with Meliorn isn’t such a big problem after all.

End Notes

I did it! My very first Jeliorn fic is here!

Jace is a cute lil aro bean who doesn't know the difference between romantic and platonic love just like me so that's why it took him so long to understand the feelings he's having are because he likes Meliorn.

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