

- THE PORTION OF THEIR CUP

“Picture something calming. The beach in Los Angeles—white sand, crashing blue water, you’re strolling along the tide line . . .”

Jace cracked an eye open. “This sounds very romantic.”

The boy sitting across from him sighed and ran his hands through his shaggy dark hair. Though it was a cold December day, werewolves didn’t feel weather as acutely as humans, and Jordan had his jacket off and his shirtsleeves rolled up. They were seated opposite each other on a patch of browning grass in a clearing in Central Park, both cross-legged, their hands on their knees, palms up.

An outcropping of rock rose from the ground near them. It was broken up into larger and smaller boulders, and atop one of the larger boulders perched Alec and Isabelle Lightwood. As Jace looked up, Isabelle caught his eye and gave him an encouraging wave. Alec, noting her gesture, smacked her shoulder. Jace could see him lecturing Izzy, probably about not breaking Jace’s concentration. He smiled to himself—neither of them really had a reason to be here, but they had come anyway, “for moral support.” Though, Jace suspected it had more to do with the fact that Alec hated to be at loose ends these days, Isabelle hated for her brother to be on his own, and both of them were avoiding their parents and the Institute.

Jordan snapped his fingers under Jace’s nose. “Are you paying any attention?”

Jace frowned. “I was, until we wandered into the territory of bad personal ads.”

“Well, what kind of thing does make you feel calm and peaceful?”

Jace took his hands off his knees—the lotus position was giving him wrist cramps—and leaned back on his arms. Chilly wind rattled the few dead leaves that still clung to the branches of the trees. Against the pale winter sky the leaves had a spare elegance, like pen and ink sketches. “Killing demons,” he said. “A good clean kill is very relaxing. The messy ones are more annoying, because you have to clean up afterward—”

“No.” Jordan held his hands up. Below the sleeves of his shirt, the tattoos that wrapped his arms were visible. Shaantih, shaantih, shaantih. Jace knew it meant “the peace that passes understanding” and that you were supposed to say the word three times every time you uttered the mantra, to calm your mind. But nothing seemed to calm his, these days. The fire in his veins made his mind race too, thoughts coming too quickly, one after another, like exploding fireworks. Dreams as vivid and saturated with color as oil paintings. He’d tried training it out of himself, hours and hours spent in the practice room, blood and bruises and sweat and once, even, broken fingers. But he hadn’t managed to do much more than irritate Alec with requests for healing runes and, on one memorable occasion, accidentally set fire to one of the crossbeams.

It was Simon who had pointed out that his roommate meditated every day, and who’d said that learning the habit was what had calmed the uncontrollable fits of rage that were often part

of the transformation into a werewolf. From there it had been a short jump to Clary suggesting that Jace “might as well try it,” and here they were, at his second session. The first session had ended with Jace burning a mark into Simon and Jordan’s hardwood floor, so Jordan had suggested they take it outside for the second round to prevent further property damage.

“No killing,” Jordan said. “We’re trying to make you feel peaceful. Blood, killing, war, those are all non-peaceful things. Isn’t there anything else you like?”

“Weapons,” said Jace. “I like weapons.”

“I’m starting to think we have a problematic issue of personal philosophy here.”

Jace leaned forward, his palms flat on the grass. “I’m a warrior,” he said. “I was brought up as a warrior. I didn’t have toys, I had weapons. I slept with a wooden sword until I was five. My first books were medieval demonologies with illuminated pages. The first songs I learned were chants to banish demons. I know what brings me peace, and it isn’t sandy beaches or chirping birds in rain forests. I want a weapon in my hand and a strategy to win.”

Jordan looked at him levelly. “So you’re saying that what brings you peace is war.”

Jace threw his hands up and stood, brushing grass off his jeans. “Now you get it.” He heard the crackle of dry grass and turned, in time to see Clary duck through a gap between two trees and emerge into the clearing, Simon only a few steps behind her. Clary had her hands in her back pockets and she was laughing.

Jace watched them for a moment—there was something about looking at people who didn’t know they were being watched. He remembered the second time he had ever seen Clary, across the main room of Java Jones. She’d been laughing and talking with Simon the way she was doing now. He remembered the unfamiliar twist of jealousy in his chest, pressing out his breath, the feeling of satisfaction when she’d left Simon behind to come and talk to him.

Things did change. He’d gone from being eaten up with jealousy of Simon, to a grudging respect for his tenacity and courage, to actually considering him a friend, though he doubted he’d ever say so out loud. Jace watched as Clary looked over and blew him a kiss, her red hair bouncing in its ponytail. She was so small—delicate, doll-like, he had thought once, before he’d learned how strong she was.

She headed toward Jace and Jordan, leaving Simon to scamper up the rocky ground to where Alec and Isabelle were sitting; he collapsed beside Isabelle, who immediately leaned over to say something to him, her black curtain of hair hiding her face.

Clary stopped in front of Jace, rocking back on her heels with a smile. “How’s it coming along?”

“Jordan wants me to think about the beach,” Jace said gloomily.

“He’s stubborn,” Clary said to Jordan. “What he means is that he appreciates it.”

"I don't, really," said Jace.

Jordan snorted. "Without me you'd be bouncing down Madison Avenue, shooting sparks out of all your orifices." He rose to his feet, shrugging on his green jacket. "Your boyfriend's crazy," he said to Clary.

"Yeah, but he's hot," said Clary. "So there's that."

Jordan made a face, but it was good-natured. "I'm heading out," he said. "Got to meet Maia downtown." He gave a mock salute and was gone, slipping into the trees and vanishing with the silent tread of the wolf he was under the skin. Jace watched him go. Unlikely saviors, he thought. Six months ago he wouldn't have believed anyone who'd told him he was going to wind up taking behavioral lessons from a werewolf.

Jordan and Simon and Jace had struck up something of a friendship in the past months. Jace couldn't help using their apartment as a refuge, away from the daily pressures of the Institute, away from the reminders that the Clave was still unprepared for war with Sebastian.

Erchomai. The word brushed the back of Jace's mind like the touch of a feather, making him shiver. He saw an angel's wing, torn from its body, lying in a pool of golden blood.

I am coming.

"What's wrong?" Clary said; Jace suddenly looked a million miles away. Since the heavenly fire had entered his body, he'd tended to drift off more into his head. She had a feeling that it was a side effect of suppressing his emotions. She felt a little pang—Jace, when she had met him, had been so controlled, only a little of his real self leaking out through the cracks in his personal armor, like light through the chinks in a wall. It had taken a long time to break down those defenses. Now, though, the fire in his veins was forcing him to put them back up, to bite down on his emotions for safety's sake. But when the fire was gone, would he be able to dismantle them again?

He blinked, called back by her voice. The winter sun was high and cold; it sharpened the bones of his face and threw the shadows under his eyes into relief. He reached for her hand, taking a deep breath. "You're right," he said in the quiet, more serious voice he reserved only for her. "It is helping—the lessons with Jordan. It is helping, and I do appreciate it."

"I know." Clary curled her hand around his wrist. His skin felt warm under her touch; he seemed to run several degrees hotter than normal since his encounter with Glorious. His heart still pounded its familiar, steady rhythm, but the blood being pushed through his veins seemed to thrum under her touch with the kinetic energy of a fire just about to catch.

She went up on her toes to kiss his cheek, but he turned, and their lips brushed. They'd done nothing more than kiss since the fire had first started singing in his blood, and they'd done even that carefully. Jace was careful now, his mouth sliding softly against hers, his hand closing on her shoulder. For a moment they were body to body, and she felt the thrum and

pulse of his blood. He moved to pull her closer, and a sharp, dry spark passed between them, like the zing of static electricity.

Jace broke off the kiss and stepped back with an exhale; before Clary could say anything, a chorus of sarcastic applause broke out from the nearby hill. Simon, Isabelle, and Alec waved at them. Jace bowed while Clary stepped back slightly sheepishly, hooking her thumbs into the belt of her jeans.

Jace sighed. "Shall we join our annoying, voyeuristic friends?"

"Unfortunately, that's the only kind of friends we have." Clary bumped her shoulder against his arm, and they headed up toward the rocks. Simon and Isabelle were side by side, talking quietly. Alec was sitting a little apart, staring at the screen of his phone with an expression of intense concentration.

Jace threw himself down next to his parabatai. "I've heard that if you stare at those things enough, they'll ring."

"He's been texting Magnus," said Isabelle, glancing over with a disapproving look.

"I haven't," Alec said automatically.

"Yes, you have," said Jace, craning to look over Alec's shoulder. "And calling. I can see your outgoing calls."

"It's his birthday," Alec said, flipping the phone shut. He looked smaller these days, almost skinny in his worn blue pullover, holes at the elbows, his lips bitten and chapped. Clary's heart went out to him. He'd spent the first week after Magnus had broken up with him in a sort of daze of sadness and disbelief. None of them could really believe it. She'd always thought Magnus loved Alec, really loved him; clearly Alec had thought so too. "I didn't want him to think that I didn't—to think that I forgot."

"You're pining," said Jace.

Alec shrugged. "Look who's talking. 'Oh, I love her. Oh, she's my sister. Oh why, why, why—',"

Jace threw a handful of dead leaves at Alec, making him splutter.

Isabelle was laughing. "You know he's right, Jace."

"Give me your phone," Jace said, ignoring Isabelle. "Come on, Alexander."

"It's none of your business," Alec said, holding the phone away. "Just forget about it, okay?"

"You don't eat, you don't sleep, you stare at your phone, and I'm supposed to forget about it?" Jace said. There was a surprising amount of agitation in his voice; Clary knew how upset he'd been that Alec was unhappy, but she wasn't sure Alec knew it. Under normal circumstances

Jace would have killed, or at least threatened, anyone who hurt Alec; this was different. Jace liked to win, but you couldn't win out over a broken heart, even someone else's. Even someone you loved.

Jace leaned over and grabbed the phone out of his parabatai's hand. Alec protested and reached for it, but Jace held him off with one hand, expertly scrolling through the messages on the phone with the other. "Magnus, just call me back. I need to know if you're okay—" He shook his head. "Okay, no. Just no." With a decisive move he snapped the phone in half. The screen went blank as Jace dropped the pieces to the ground. "There."

Alec looked down at the shattered pieces in disbelief. "You BROKE my PHONE."

Jace shrugged. "Guys don't let other guys keep calling other guys. Okay, that came out wrong. Friends don't let friends keep calling their exes and hanging up. Seriously. You have to stop."

Alec looked furious. "So you broke my brand-new phone? Thanks a lot."

Jace smiled serenely and lay back on the rock. "You're welcome."

"Look on the bright side," Isabelle said. "You won't be able to get texts from Mom anymore. She's texted me six times today. I turned my phone off." She patted her pocket with a significant look.

"What does she want?" Simon asked.

"Constant meetings," Isabelle said. "Depositions. The Clave keeps wanting to hear what happened when we fought Sebastian at the Burren. We've all had to give accounts, like, fifty times. How Jace absorbed the heavenly fire from Glorious. Descriptions of the Dark Shadowhunters, the Infernal Cup, the weapons they used, the runes that were on them. What we were wearing, what Sebastian was wearing, what everyone was wearing . . . like phone sex but boring."

Simon made a choking noise.

"What we think Sebastian wants," Alec added. "When he'll come back. What he'll do when he does."

Clary leaned her elbows on her knees. "Always good to know the Clave has a well-thought-out and reliable plan."

"They don't want to believe it," said Jace, staring at the sky. "That's the problem. No matter how many times we tell them what we saw at the Burren. No matter how many times we tell them how dangerous the Endarkened are. They don't want to believe that Nephilim could really be corrupted. That Shadowhunters could kill Shadowhunters."

Clary had been there when Sebastian had created the first of the Endarkened. She had seen the blankness in their eyes, the fury with which they'd fought. They terrified her. "They're not Shadowhunters anymore," she added in a low voice. "They're not people."

"It's hard to believe that if you haven't seen it," Alec said. "And Sebastian has only so many of them. A small force, scattered—they don't want to believe he's really a threat. Or if he is a threat, they'd rather believe it was more a threat to us, to New York, than to Shadowhunters at large."

"They're not wrong that if Sebastian cares about anything, it's about Clary," Jace said, and Clary felt a cold shiver at her spine, a mixture of disgust and apprehension. "He doesn't really have emotions. Not like we do. But if he did, he'd have them about her. And he has them about Jocelyn. He hates her." He paused, thoughtful. "But I don't think he'd be likely to strike directly here. Too . . . obvious."

"I hope you told the Clave this," Simon said.

"About a thousand times," said Jace. "I don't think they hold my insights in particularly high regard."

Clary looked down at her hands. She had been deposed by the Clave, just like the rest of them; she'd given answers to all their questions. There were still things about Sebastian she hadn't told them, hadn't told anyone. The things he'd said he wanted from her.

She hadn't dreamed much since they'd come back from the Burren with Jace's veins full of fire, but when she did have nightmares, they were about her brother.

"It's like trying to fight a ghost," Jace said. "They can't track Sebastian, they can't find him, they can't find the Shadowhunters he's turned."

"They're doing what they can," Alec said. "They're shoring up the wards around Idris and Alicante. All the wards, in fact. They've sent dozens of experts to Wrangel Island."

Wrangel Island was the seat of all the world's wards, the spells that protected the globe, and Idris in particular, from demons and demon invasion. The network of wards wasn't perfect, and demons slipped through sometimes anyway, but Clary could only imagine how bad the situation would get if the wards didn't exist.

"I heard Mom say that the warlocks of the Spiral Labyrinth have been looking for a way to reverse the effects of the Infernal Cup," said Isabelle. "Of course it would be easier if they had bodies to study. . . ."

She trailed off; Clary knew why. The bodies of the Dark Shadowhunters killed at the Burren had been brought back to the Bone City for the Silent Brothers to examine. The Brothers had never gotten the chance. Overnight the bodies had rotted away to the equivalent of decade-old corpses. There had been nothing to do but burn the remains.

Isabelle found her voice again: "And the Iron Sisters are churning out weapons. We're getting thousands more seraph blades, swords, chakrams, everything . . . forged in heavenly fire." She looked at Jace. In the days immediately following the battle at the Burren, when the fire had raged through Jace's veins violently enough to make him scream sometimes with the pain, the Silent Brothers had examined him over and over, had tested him with ice and flame, with blessed metal and cold iron, trying to see if there was some way to draw the fire out of him, to contain it.

They hadn't found one. The fire of Glorious, having once been captured in a blade, seemed in no hurry to inhabit another, or indeed to leave Jace's body for any kind of vessel. Brother Zachariah had told Clary that in the earliest days of Shadowhunters, the Nephilim had sought to capture heavenly fire in a weapon, something that could be wielded against demons. They had never managed it, and eventually seraph blades had become their weapons of choice. In the end, again, the Silent Brothers had given up. Glorious's fire lay curled in Jace's veins like a serpent, and the best he could hope for was to control it so that it didn't destroy him.

The loud beep of a text message sounded; Isabelle had flicked on her phone again. "Mom says to get back to the Institute now," she said. "There's some meeting. We have to be at it." She stood up, brushing dirt from her dress. "I'd invite you back," she said to Simon, "but you know, banned for being undead and all."

"I did remember that," Simon said, getting to his feet. Clary scrambled up and reached a hand down to Jace. He took it and stood.

"Simon and I are going Christmas shopping," she said. "And none of you can come, because we have to get you presents."

Alec looked horrified. "Oh, God. Does that mean I have to get you guys presents?"

Clary shook her head. "Don't Shadowhunters do . . . you know, Christmas?" She thought back suddenly to the rather distressing Thanksgiving dinner at Luke's when Jace, on being asked to carve the turkey, had laid into the bird with a sword until there had been little left but turkey flakes. Maybe not?

"We exchange gifts, we honor the change of the seasons," said Isabelle. "There used to be a winter celebration of the Angel. It observed the day the Mortal Instruments were given to Jonathan Shadowhunter. I think Shadowhunters got annoyed with being left out of all the mundane celebrations, though, so a lot of Institutes have Christmas parties. The London one is famous." She shrugged. "I just don't think we're going to do it . . . this year."

"Oh." Clary felt awful. Of course they didn't want to celebrate Christmas after losing Max.

"Well, let us get you presents, at least. There doesn't have to be a party, or anything like that."

"Exactly." Simon threw his arms up. "I have to buy Hanukkah presents. It's mandated by Jewish law. The God of the Jews is an angry God. And very gift-oriented."

Clary smiled at him. He was finding it easier and easier to say the word "God" these days.

Jace sighed, and kissed Clary—a quick good-bye brush of lips against her temple, but it made her shiver. Not being able to touch Jace or kiss him properly was starting to make her jump out of her own skin. She'd promised him it would never matter, that she'd love him even if they could never touch again, but she hated it anyway, hated missing the reassurance of the way they had always fit together physically. "See you later," Jace said. "I'm going to head back with Alec and Izzy—"

"No, you're not," Isabelle said unexpectedly. "You broke Alec's phone. Granted, we've all been wanting to do that for weeks—"

"ISABELLE," Alec said.

"But the fact is, you're his parabatai, and you're the only one who hasn't been to see Magnus. Go talk to him."

"And tell him what?" Jace said. "You can't talk people into not breaking up with you. . . . Or maybe you can," he added hastily, at Alec's expression. "Who can say? I'll give it a try."

"Thanks." Alec clapped Jace on the shoulder. "I've heard you can be charming when you want to be."

"I've heard the same," Jace said, breaking into a backward jog. He was even graceful doing that, Clary thought gloomily. And sexy. Definitely sexy. She lifted her hand in a halfhearted wave.

"See you later," she called. If I'm not dead from frustration by then.

The Frays had never been a religiously observant family, but Clary loved Fifth Avenue at Christmastime. The air smelled like sweet roasted chestnuts, and the window displays sparkled with silver and blue, green and red. This year there were fat round crystal snowflakes attached to each lamppost, sending back the winter sunlight in shafts of gold. Not to mention the huge tree at Rockefeller Center. It threw its shadow across them when she and Simon draped themselves over the gate at the side of the skating rink, watching tourists fall down as they tried to navigate the ice.

Clary had a hot chocolate wrapped in her hands, the warmth spreading through her body. She felt almost normal—this, coming to Fifth to see the window displays and the tree, had been a winter tradition for her and Simon for as long as she could remember.

"Feels like old times, doesn't it?" he said, echoing her thoughts as he propped his chin on his folded arms.

She chanced a sideways look at him. He was wearing a black topcoat and scarf that emphasized the pallor of his skin. His eyes were shadowed, indicating that he hadn't fed on blood recently. He looked like what he was—a hungry, tired vampire.

Well, she thought. Almost like old times. “More people to buy presents for,” she said. “Plus, the always traumatic what-to-buy-someone-for-the-first-Christmas-after-you’ve-started-dating question.”

“What to get the Shadowhunter who has everything,” Simon said with a grin.

“Jace mostly likes weapons,” Clary said. “He likes books, but they have a huge library at the Institute. He likes classical music. . . .” She brightened. Simon was a musician; even though his band was terrible, and was always changing their name—currently they were Lethal Soufflé—he did have training. “What would you give someone who likes to play the piano?”

“A piano.”

“Simon.”

“A really huge metronome that could also double as a weapon?”

Clary sighed, exasperated.

“Sheet music. Rachmaninoff is tough stuff, but he likes a challenge.”

“Good idea. I’m going to see if there’s a music store around here.” Clary, done with her hot chocolate, tossed the cup into a nearby trash can and pulled her phone out. “What about you? What are you giving Isabelle?”

“I have absolutely no idea,” Simon said. They had started heading toward the avenue, where a steady stream of pedestrians gawking at the windows clogged the streets.

“Oh, come on. Isabelle’s easy.”

“That’s my girlfriend you’re talking about.” Simon’s brows drew together. “I think. I’m not sure. We haven’t discussed it. The relationship, I mean.”

“You really have to DTR, Simon.”

“What?”

“Define the relationship. What it is, where it’s going. Are you boyfriend and girlfriend, just having fun, ‘it’s complicated,’ or what? When’s she going to tell her parents? Are you allowed to see other people?”

Simon blanched. “What? Seriously?”

“Seriously. In the meantime—perfume!” Clary grabbed Simon by the back of his coat and hauled him into a cosmetics store. It was massive on the inside, with rows of gleaming bottles everywhere. “And something unusual,” she said, heading for the fragrance area. “Isabelle isn’t going to want to smell like everyone else. She’s going to want to smell like figs, or vetiver, or—”

"Figs? Figs have a smell?" Simon looked horrified; Clary was about to laugh at him when her phone buzzed. It was her mother.

WHERE ARE YOU?

Clary rolled her eyes and texted back. Jocelyn still got nervous when she thought Clary was out with Jace. Even though, as Clary had pointed out, Jace was probably the safest boyfriend in the world since he was pretty much banned from (1) getting angry, (2) making sexual advances, and (3) doing anything that would produce an adrenaline rush.

On the other hand, he had been possessed; she and her mother had both watched while he'd stood by and let Sebastian threaten Luke. Clary still hadn't talked about everything she'd seen in the apartment she'd shared with Jace and Sebastian for that brief time out of time, a mixture of dream and nightmare. She'd never told her mother that Jace had killed someone; there were things Jocelyn didn't need to know, things Clary didn't want to face herself.

"There is so much in this store I can picture Magnus wanting," Simon said, picking up a glass bottle of body glitter suspended in some kind of oil. "Is it against some kind of rule to buy presents for someone who broke up with your friend?"

"I guess it depends. Is Magnus your closer friend, or Alec?"

"Alec remembers my name," said Simon, and he set the bottle back down. "And I feel bad for him. I understand why Magnus did it, but Alec is so wrecked. I feel like if someone loves you, they should forgive you, if you're really sorry."

"I think it depends what you did," Clary said. "I don't mean Alec—I just mean in general. I'm sure Isabelle would forgive you for anything," she added hastily.

Simon looked dubious.

"Hold still," she announced, wielding a bottle near his head. "In three minutes I'm going to smell your neck."

"Well, I never," said Simon. "You've waited a long time to make your move, Fray, I'll say that for you."

Clary didn't bother with a smart retort; she was still thinking of what Simon had said about forgiveness, and remembering someone else, someone else's voice and face and eyes. Sebastian sitting across from her at a table in Paris. Do you think you can forgive me? I mean, do you think forgiveness is possible for someone like me?

"There are things you can never forgive," she said. "I can never forgive Sebastian."

"You don't love him."

"No, but he's my brother. If things were different—" But they're not different. Clary abandoned the thought, and leaned in to inhale instead. "You smell like figs and apricots."

"Do you really think Isabelle wants to smell like a dried fruit plate?"

"Maybe not." Clary picked up another bottle. "So, what are you going to do?"

"When?"

Clary looked up from pondering the question of how a tuberose was different from a regular rose, to see Simon looking at her with puzzlement in his brown eyes. She said, "Well, you can't live with Jordan forever, right? There's college . . ."

"You're not going to college," he said.

"No, but I'm a Shadowhunter. We keep studying after eighteen, we get posted to other Institutes—that's our college."

"I don't like the thought of you going away." He shoved his hands into the pockets of his coat. "I can't go to college," he said. "My mother's not exactly going to pay for it, and I can't take out student loans. I'm legally dead. And besides, how long would it take everyone at school to notice they were getting older but I wasn't? Sixteen-year-olds don't look like college seniors, I don't know if you've noticed."

Clary set the bottle down. "Simon . . ."

"Maybe I should get my mom something," he said bitterly. "What says 'Thanks for throwing me out of the house and pretending I died'?"

"Orchids?"

But Simon's joking mood had gone. "Maybe it's not like old times," he said. "I would have gotten you pencils usually, art supplies, but you don't draw anymore, do you, except with your stele? You don't draw, and I don't breathe. Not so much like last year."

"Maybe you should talk to Raphael," Clary said.

"Raphael?"

"He knows how vampires live," Clary said. "How they make lives for themselves, how they make money, how they get apartments—he does know those things. He could help."

"He could, but he wouldn't," said Simon with a frown. "I haven't heard anything from the Dumort bunch since Maureen took over from Camille. I know Raphael is her second in command. I'm pretty sure they still think I have the Mark of Cain; otherwise they would have sent someone after me by now. Matter of time."

"No. They know not to touch you. It would be war with the Clave. The Institute's been very clear," said Clary. "You're protected."

"Clary," Simon said. "None of us are protected."

Before Clary could answer, she heard someone call out her name; thoroughly puzzled, she looked over and saw her mother shoving her way through a crowd of shoppers. Through the window she could see Luke, waiting outside on the sidewalk. In his flannel shirt he looked out of place among the stylish New Yorkers.

Breaking free of the crowd, Jocelyn caught up to them and threw her arms around Clary. Clary looked over her mother's shoulder, baffled, at Simon. He shrugged. Finally Jocelyn released her and stepped back. "I was so worried something had happened to you—"

"In Sephora?" Clary said.

Jocelyn's brow furrowed. "You haven't heard? I would have thought Jace would have texted you by now."

Clary felt a sudden cold wash through her veins, as if she'd swallowed icy water. "No. I— What's going on?"

"I'm sorry, Simon," Jocelyn said. "But Clary and I have to get to the Institute right away."

Not much had changed at Magnus's since the first time Jace had been there. The same small entryway and single yellow bulb. Jace used an Open rune to get in through the front door, took the stairs two at a time, and buzzed Magnus's apartment bell. Safer than using another rune, he figured. After all, Magnus could be playing video games naked or, really, doing practically anything. Who knew what warlocks got up to in their spare time?

Jace buzzed again, this time leaning firmly on the doorbell. Two more long buzzes, and Magnus finally yanked the door open, looking furious. He was wearing a black silk dressing gown over a white dress shirt and tweed pants. His feet were bare. His dark hair was tangled, and there was the shadow of stubble on his jaw. "What are you doing here?" he demanded.

"My, my," said Jace. "So unwelcoming."

"That's because you're not welcome."

Jace raised an eyebrow. "I thought we were friends."

"No. You're Alec's friend. Alec was my boyfriend, so I had to put up with you. But now he's not my boyfriend, so I don't have to put up with you. Not that any of you seem to realize it. You must be the—what, fourth?—of you lot to bother me." Magnus counted off on his long fingers.

"Clary. Isabelle. Simon—"

"Simon came by?"

"You seem surprised."

"I didn't think he was that invested in your relationship with Alec."

"I don't have a relationship with Alec," said Magnus flatly, but Jace had already shouldered past him and was in his living room, looking around curiously.

One of the things Jace had always secretly liked about Magnus's apartment was that it rarely looked the same way twice. Sometimes it was a big modern loft. Sometimes it looked like a French bordello, or a Victorian opium den, or the inside of a spaceship. Right now, though, it was messy and dark. Stacks of old Chinese food cartons littered the coffee table. Chairman Meow lay on the rag rug, all four legs sticking straight out in front of him like a dead deer.

"It smells like heartbreak in here," said Jace.

"That's the Chinese food." Magnus threw himself onto the sofa and stretched out his long legs. "Go on, get it over with. Say whatever you came here to say."

"I think you should get back together with Alec," said Jace.

Magnus rolled his eyes up to the ceiling. "And why is that?"

"Because he's miserable," said Jace. "And he's sorry. He's sorry about what he did. He won't do it again."

"Oh, he won't sneak around behind my back with one of my exes planning to shorten my life again? Very noble of him."

"Magnus—"

"Besides, Camille's dead. He can't do it again."

"You know what I mean," said Jace. "He won't lie to you or mislead you or hide things from you or whatever it is you're actually upset about." He threw himself into a wingback leather chair and raised an eyebrow. "So?"

Magnus rolled onto his side. "What do you care if Alec's miserable?"

"What do I care?" Jace said, so loudly that Chairman Meow sat bolt upright as if he'd been shocked. "Of course I care about Alec; he's my best friend, my parabatai. And he's unhappy. And so are you, by the look of things. Take-out containers everywhere, you haven't done anything to fix up the place, your cat looks dead—"

"He's not dead."

"I care about Alec," Jace said, fixing Magnus with an unswerving gaze. "I care about him more than I care about myself."

"Don't you ever think," Magnus mused, pulling at a bit of peeling fingernail polish, "that the whole parabatai business is rather cruel? You can choose your parabatai, but then you can never un-choose them. Even if they turn on you. Look at Luke and Valentine. And though your parabatai is the closest person in the world to you in some ways, you can't fall in love with them. And if they die, some part of you dies too."

"How do you know so much about parabatai?"

"I know Shadowhunters," said Magnus, patting the sofa beside him so that the Chairman leaped up onto the cushions and nudged at Magnus with his head. The warlock's long fingers sank into the cat's fur. "I have for a long time. You are odd creatures. All fragile nobility and humanity on one side, and all the thoughtless fire of angels on the other." His eyes flicked toward Jace. "You especially, Herondale, for you have the fire of angels in your blood."

"You've been friends with Shadowhunters before?"

"Friends," said Magnus. "What does that mean, really?"

"You'd know," said Jace, "if you had any. Do you? Do you have friends? I mean, besides the people who come to your parties. Most people are afraid of you, or they seem to owe you something or you slept with them once, but friends—I don't see you having a lot of those."

"Well, this is novel," said Magnus. "None of the rest of your group has tried insulting me."

"Is it working?"

"If you mean do I suddenly feel compelled to get back together with Alec, no," said Magnus. "I have developed an odd craving for pizza, but that might be unrelated."

"Alec said you do that," said Jace. "Deflect questions about yourself with jokes."

Magnus narrowed his eyes. "And I'm the only one who does that?"

"Exactly," Jace said. "Take it from someone who knows. You hate talking about yourself, and you'd rather make people angry than be pitied. How old are you, Magnus? The real answer."

Magnus said nothing.

"What were your parents' names? Your father's name?"

Magnus glared at him out of gold-green eyes. "If I wanted to lie on a couch and complain to someone about my parents, I'd hire a psychiatrist."

"Ah," said Jace. "But my services are free."

"I heard that about you."

Jace grinned and slid down in his chair. There was a pillow with a pattern of the Union Jack on the ottoman. He grabbed it and put it behind his head. "I don't have anywhere to be. I can sit here all day."

"Great," Magnus said. "I'm going to take a nap." He reached out for a crumpled blanket lying on the floor, just as Jace's phone rang. Magnus watched, arrested midmotion, as Jace dug around in his pocket and flipped the phone open.

It was Isabelle. "Jace?"

"Yeah. I'm at Magnus's place. I think I might be making some headway. What's up?"

"Come back," Isabelle said, and Jace sat up straight, the pillow tumbling to the floor. Her voice was tightly strained. He could hear the sharpness in it, like the off notes of a badly tuned piano. "To the Institute. Right away, Jace."

"What is it?" he asked. "What's happened?" And he saw Magnus sit up too, the blanket dropping from his hand.

"Sebastian," Isabelle said.

Jace closed his eyes. He saw golden blood, and white feathers scattered across a marble floor. He remembered the apartment, a knife in his hands, the world at his feet, Sebastian's grip on his wrist, those fathomless black eyes looking at him with dark amusement. There was a buzzing in his ears.

"What is it?" Magnus's voice cut through Jace's thoughts. He realized he was already at the door, the phone back in his pocket. He turned. Magnus was behind him, his expression stark. "Is it Alec? Is he all right?"

"What do you care?" said Jace, and Magnus flinched. Jace didn't think he'd ever seen Magnus flinch before. It was the only thing that kept Jace from slamming the door on the way out.

There were dozens of unfamiliar coats and jackets hanging in the entryway of the Institute. Clary felt the tight buzzing of tension in her shoulders as she unzipped her own wool coat and hung it on one of the hooks that lined the walls.

"And Maryse didn't say what this was about?" Clary demanded. The edges of her voice had been rubbed thin by anxiety.

Jocelyn had unwound a long gray scarf from around her neck, and barely looked as Luke took it from her to drape it on a hook. Her green eyes were darting around the room, taking in the gate of the elevator, the arched ceiling overhead, the faded murals of men and angels.

Luke shook his head. "Just that there'd been an attack on the Clave, and we needed to get here as quickly as possible."

"It's the 'we' part that concerns me." Jocelyn wound her hair up into a knot at the back of her head, and secured it with her fingers. "I haven't been in an Institute in years. Why do they want me here?"

Luke squeezed her shoulder reassuringly. Clary knew what Jocelyn feared, what they all feared. The only reason the Clave would want Jocelyn here was if there was news of her son.

"Maryse said they'd be in the library," Jocelyn said. Clary led the way. She could hear Luke and her mother talking behind her, and the soft sound of their footsteps, Luke's slower than they had once been. He hadn't entirely recovered from the injury that had nearly killed him in November.

You know why you're here, don't you, breathed a soft voice in the back of her head. She knew it wasn't really there, but that didn't help. She hadn't seen her brother since the fight at the Burren, but she carried him in some small part of her mind, an intrusive, unwelcome ghost. Because of me. You always knew I hadn't gone away forever. I told you what would happen. I spelled it out for you.

Erchomai.

I am coming.

They had reached the library. The door was half-open, and a babble of voices spilled through. Jocelyn paused for a moment, her expression tight.

Clary put her hand on the doorknob. "Are you ready?" She hadn't noticed till then what her mother was wearing: black jeans, boots, and a black turtleneck. As if, without thinking of it, she had put on the closest thing she had to fighting gear.

Jocelyn nodded at her daughter.

Someone had pushed back all the furniture in the library, clearing a large space in the middle of the room, just atop the mosaic of the Angel. A massive table had been placed there, a huge slab of marble balanced on top of two kneeling stone angels. Around the table were seated the Conclave. Some members, like Kadir and Maryse, Clary knew by name. Others were just familiar faces. Maryse was standing, ticking off names on her fingers as she chanted aloud. "Berlin," she said. "No survivors. Bangkok. No survivors. Moscow. No survivors. Los Angeles—"

"Los Angeles?" said Jocelyn. "That was the Blackthorns. Are they—"

Maryse looked startled, as if she hadn't realized Jocelyn had come in. Her blue eyes swept over Luke and Clary. She looked drawn and exhausted, her hair scraped back severely, a stain—red wine or blood?—on the sleeve of her tailored jacket. "There were survivors," she said. "Children. They're in Idris now."

"Helen," said Alec, and Clary thought of the girl who had fought with them against Sebastian at the Burren. She remembered her in the nave of the Institute, a dark-haired boy clinging to her wrist. My brother, Julian.

"Aline's girlfriend," Clary blurted out, and saw the Conclave look at her with thinly veiled hostility. They always did, as if who she was and what she represented made them almost unable to see her. Valentine's daughter. Valentine's daughter. "Is she all right?"

"She was in Idris, with Aline," said Maryse. "Her younger brothers and sisters survived, although there seems to have been an issue with the eldest brother, Mark."

"An issue?" said Luke. "What's going on, exactly, Maryse?"

"I don't think we'll know the whole story until we get to Idris," said Maryse, smoothing back her already smooth hair. "But there have been attacks, several in the course of two nights, on six Institutes. We're not sure yet how the Institutes were breached, but we know—"

"Sebastian," said Clary's mother. She had her hands jammed into the pockets of her black trousers, but Clary suspected that if she hadn't, Clary would have been able to see that her mother's hands were tightened into fists. "Cut to the point, Maryse. My son. You wouldn't have called me here if he wasn't responsible. Would you?" Jocelyn's eyes met Maryse's, and Clary wondered if this was how it had been when they'd both been in the Circle, the sharp edges of their personalities rubbing up against each other, causing sparks.

Before Maryse could speak, the door opened and Jace came in. He was flushed with the cold, bareheaded, fair hair tousled by the wind. His hands were gloveless, red at the tips from the weather, scarred with Marks new and old. He saw Clary and gave her a quick smile before settling into a chair propped against the wall.

Luke, as usual, moved to make peace. "Maryse? Is Sebastian responsible?"

Maryse took a deep breath. "Yes, yes he was. And he had the Endarkened with him."

"Of course it's Sebastian," said Isabelle. She had been staring down at the table; now she raised her head. Her face was a mask of hatred and rage. "He said he was coming; well, now he's come."

Maryse sighed. "We assumed he'd attack Idris. That was what all the intelligence indicated. Not Institutes."

"So he did the thing you didn't expect," said Jace. "He always does the thing you don't expect. Maybe the Clave should plan for that." Jace's voice dropped. "I told you. I told you he'd want more soldiers."

"Jace," said Maryse. "You're not helping."

"I wasn't trying to."

"I would have thought he'd attack here first," said Alec. "Given what Jace was saying before, and it's true—everyone he loves or hates is here."

"He doesn't love anyone," Jocelyn snapped.

"Mom, stop," Clary said. Her heart was pounding, sick in her chest; yet at the same time there was a strange sense of relief. All this time waiting for Sebastian to come, and now he had. Now the waiting was over. Now the war would start. "So what are we supposed to do? Fortify the Institute? Hide?"

"Let me guess," said Jace, his voice dripping sarcasm. "The Clave's called for a Council. Another meeting."

"The Clave has called for immediate evacuation," said Maryse, and at that, everyone went silent, even Jace. "All Institutes are to empty out. All Conclaves must return to Alicante. The wards around Idris will be doubled after tomorrow. No one will be able to come in or get out."

Isabelle swallowed. "When do we leave New York?"

Maryse straightened up. Some of her usual imperious air was back, her mouth a thin line, her jaw set with determination. "Go and pack," she said. "We leave tonight."