

NOT FOR HUMANS

by Cassandra Clare and Holly Black

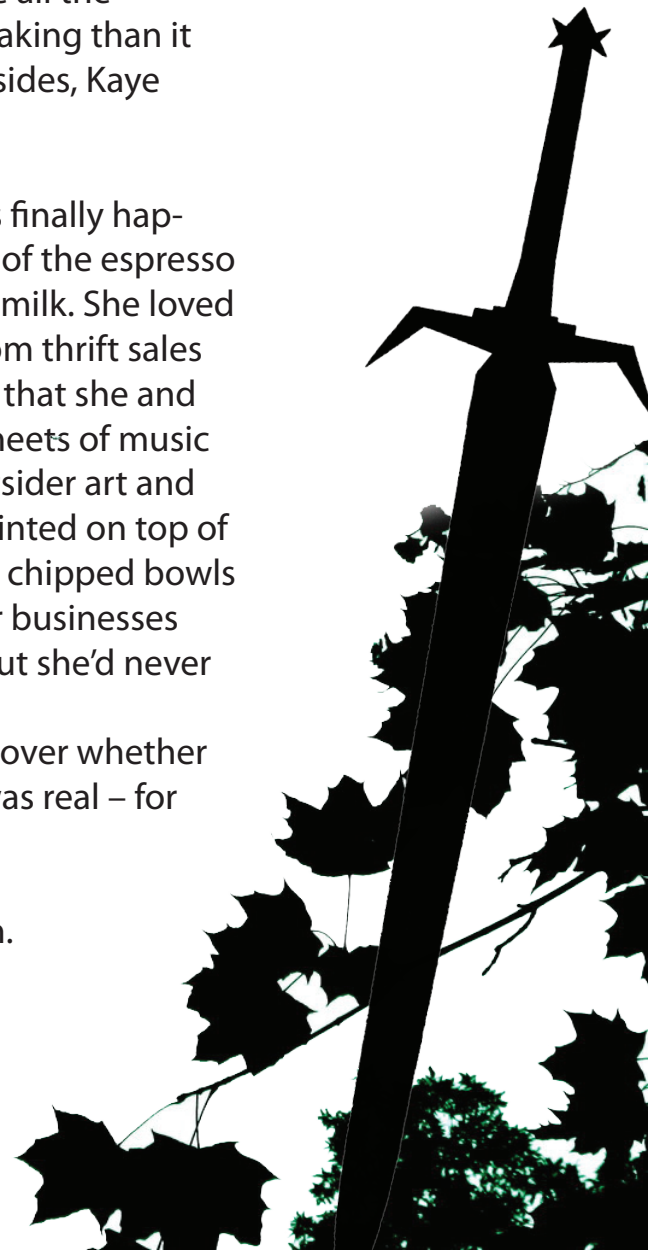
Kaye really wasn't expecting Shadowhunters to come to Moon in a Cup, especially on opening day. She wasn't even really sure what Shadowhunters did. They appeared to believe that the world was menaced by demons, wore a lot of weapons, tattooed one another, and didn't trust anyone who wasn't one of them. Kaye had once pointed out that she'd never seen a demon and, really, she'd seen plenty of odd things. The Shadowhunter she'd been talking with had claimed her not seeing any demons only proved that the Shadowhunters were doing their job. She'd stopped arguing after that.

You can't prove a negative, Corny had said. It annoyed her, though, because not only did they believe in demons, but they thought faeries like her were part demon too. That made all the weapon carrying and weirdness a little more nervous-making than it might have been otherwise. But Luis liked them and, besides, Kaye needed customers.

She just hoped they didn't eat the scones.

Moon in a Cup was her dream and now that it was finally happening, she was incredibly nervous. She loved the smell of the espresso in the air, the clouds of steam and the sound of frothing milk. She loved all the things that she and her friends had scavenged from thrift sales and from the side of the road. Ratty little wooden tables that she and Valerie and Ruth had decoupaged with postcards and sheets of music and pages from encyclopedias. Gold-painted chairs. Outsider art and weird antlers and a few landscapes with sea serpents painted on top of them. Mismatched cups that ranged from bone china to chipped bowls with pictures of ducks on them to mugs with slogans for businesses long closed. Every single one felt like a treasure to her, but she'd never owned anything before or been very responsible. She's worried over whether she could handle it – whether she'd even like it once it was real – for months.

And now, finally, finally, finally, the place was open.



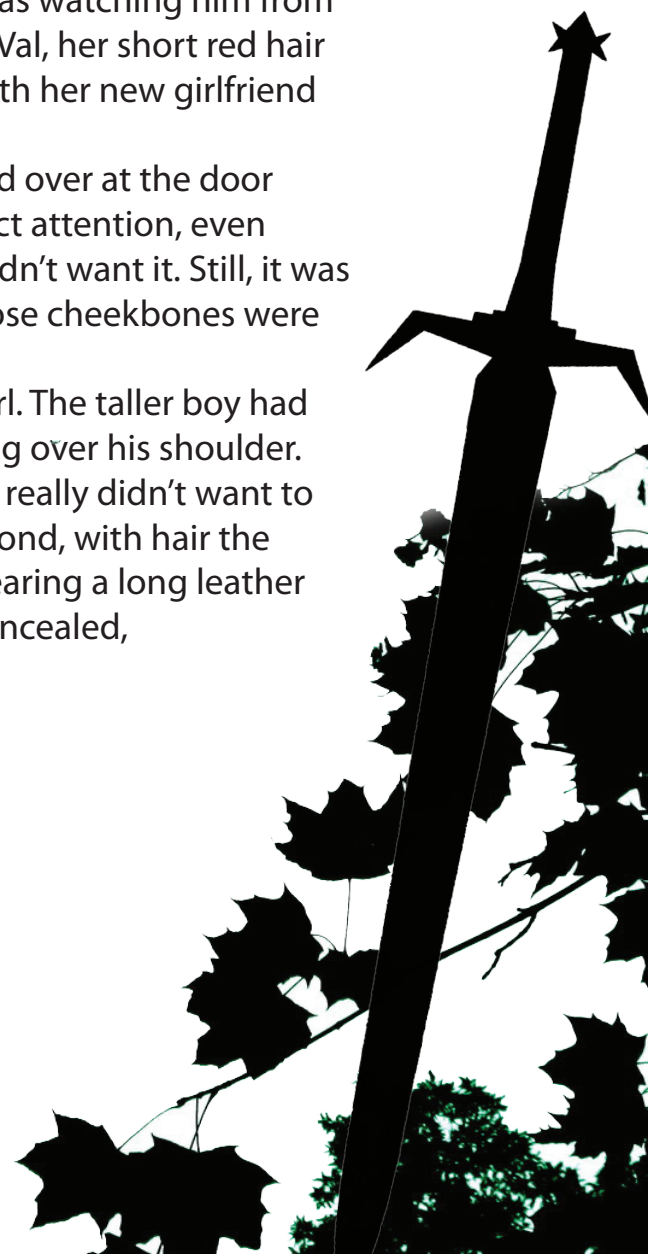
Ravus and Luis had painted a big sign announcing their GRAND OPENING, which hung above the register. There, in somewhat organized canisters, were the makings for many things, both mortal and less so. In addition to various coffee drinks, including the terrifying Red Eye, and the Dirty Chai, they were serving herbal teas made from nettle, milk thistle and dandelion, rosehip and sticklewort, bluecap and coltsfoot.

Then one of the Unseelie knights, Dulcamara, had sent Kaye a large basket of pastries – scones, muffins, all tarts – all baked with faerie fruit, none of which Kaye could picture the knight making herself. Corny had put them out, but marked them NOT FOR HUMANS, which Kaye worried might confuse people who came in off the street. Still, she'd been too busy to do more than promise herself that she was going to keep an eye on them.

The place was already half full by the time the Shadowhunters arrived. There were a ton of faerie folk that Kaye didn't know — denizens of Roiben's court, looking curiously around at the décor. Corny was helping Kaye behind the bar, mixing up a pot of seaweed tea for a sharp-dressed kelpie who winked at him. Corny didn't wink back, probably because Luis was watching him from across the room with an amused expression, flanked by Val, her short red hair growing out in curls, Ravus, and Val's best friend Ruth with her new girlfriend whose hair was dyed the color of a blueberry.

Luis stopped watching his boyfriend, though, and looked over at the door when the Shadowhunters came in. They tended to attract attention, even though they were often glamoured up like they really didn't want it. Still, it was hard to ignore a group of tall, heavily armed people whose cheekbones were as sharp as their weaponry.

It was a group of three of them: two boys and a girl. The taller boy had black hair and blue eyes, and wore a quiver of bows slung over his shoulder. His hands were in his pockets and he was glaring like he really didn't want to be there. The boy next to him was blond, really bright blond, with hair the same color that the gold chairs were painted. He was wearing a long leather jacket so any weapons he had on him were probably concealed, although Kaye was sure they were there. The girl had



the same long black hair as the tall boy — siblings, Kaye guessed — though her eyes were dark. She was wearing a flowing lacy top and a velvet skirt, and a very unusual sort of golden bangle that curled over and over up her arm.

“Meliorn!” the girl cried out upon entering, and dashed across the room to throw herself into the arms of a faerie knight in white armor. Kaye recognized him as one of the Seelie Court’s knights, kind of a silent, stuck-up type. He returned the Shadowhunter girl’s embrace.

“Isabelle,” he said. “You are as lovely as a willow tree.”

Kaye smirked to herself. Ah, faerie compliments. Some willow trees were lovely and some weren’t, so the compliment didn’t mean much. The Shadowhunter girl, Isabelle, seemed to purr under his words, though; grasping him by his slightly pointed ears, she kissed him firmly.

Well, that was new. Shadowhunters dating faeries?

The two boys came up to the bar, looking around like they were sure that anyone would be honored to serve them coffee. Kaye wasn’t so convinced.

“So what’s a red eye?” asked the blond one.

“It’s a shot of espresso in a cup of coffee,” Kaye explained. “Not for amateurs.”

The blond boy grinned. He had that kind of grin that really good-looking people who knew they were good-looking had. It was more than a little intimidating. “I think you’ll find I’m not an amateur at anything.”

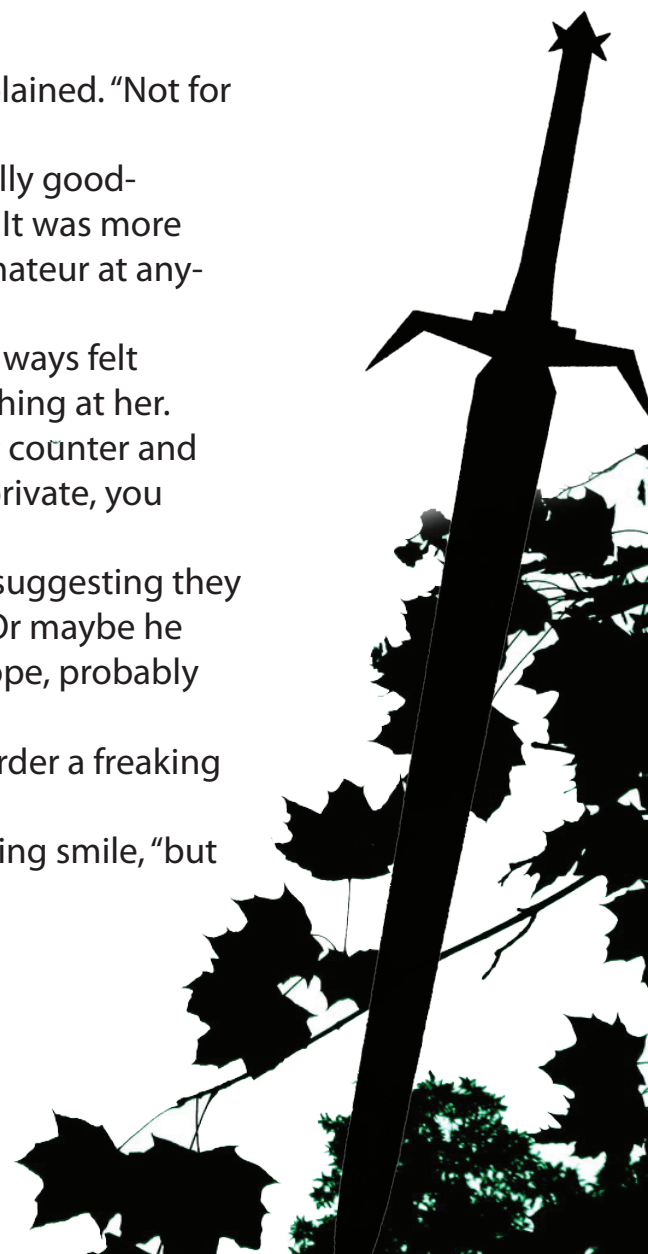
“So does that mean you want one, or not?” Kaye always felt awkward around boys like him, sure that they were laughing at her.

“I think it means if you come out from behind that counter and spend a few minutes with me somewhere a little more private, you won’t be disappointed.”

Kaye stared at him, open-mouthed. Was he really suggesting they go have sex? Like right then, in the middle of her shift? Or maybe he meant something else. She took another look at him. Nope, probably not.

“Jace,” hissed the boy standing next to him. “Just order a freaking cookie or something.”

“I like cookies,” said Jace, with a particularly charming smile, “but what I



really prefer is pretty ladies with green skin."

"Slow your roll, Captain Kirk," said Corny. "She has a boyfriend."

"A serious one?" Jace inquired — he was still smiling in that annoyingly charming way that made it hard to be irritated.

"He has a seriously big sword," Corny said. "And he'll be here any minute."

Jace's hand went to his waist. "Well, if it's seriously big swords we're discussing —"

The dark-haired boy thunked his head down on the countertop. "Stop this pointless flirting," he said. "Or I will bash my head through this pastry case."

"I wish you wouldn't," said Kaye. "We just had it installed."

"Calm down, Alec." Jace shrugged, in a no-harm-trying kind of way and flashed his grin at Corny. "In that case, I guess we'll have to make do with two Red Eyes and a scone."

"The scones aren't for humans," Kaye protested.

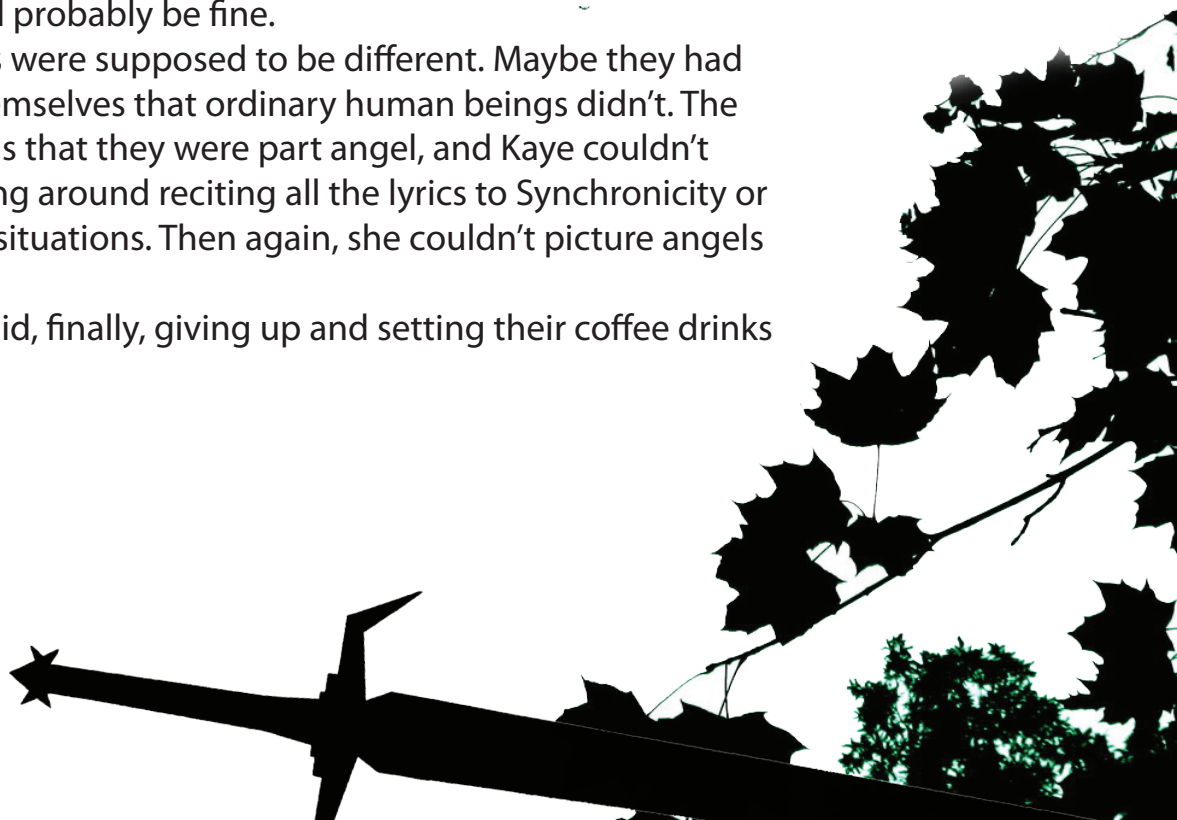
"We're not humans," said Jace.

Kaye was about to protest again, when Corny slid a plate with a scone on it onto the countertop with a flourish.

She wanted to snatch it back — faerie fruit wasn't wise for anyone — but it would be bad for business to be seen wrestling food away from customers, especially when they were currently in the process of paying for it. Besides, she thought, trying to convince herself, people liked faerie fruit. It made them a little crazy, sure, and there was that one time that Corny had recited all the lyrics to Synchronicity while eating them and that other time that he'd maybe been involved in an orgy, but on the whole, Jace would probably be fine.

Shadowhunters were supposed to be different. Maybe they had some control over themselves that ordinary human beings didn't. The rumor about them was that they were part angel, and Kaye couldn't imagine angels running around reciting all the lyrics to Synchronicity or getting into orgiastic situations. Then again, she couldn't picture angels hitting on her either.

"Enjoy it," she said, finally, giving up and setting their coffee drinks on the



counter. Alec took the change she handed out and dumped it in the tip jar. She felt bad for him. It was obvious he had a bit of a crush on Jace, and equally obvious that he was having a pretty bad day. She watched as they made their way across the shop and sank down on a couch across from Isabelle and Meliorn, who were busy rubbing noses and making cutesy faces at each other. Jace and Alec rolled their eyes.

Another boy came in, staggering a little. His black hair stuck straight up, thick with glitter, and he appeared to be very, very drunk. He had a stack of papers with him and was handing them out to the patrons. Every time someone took one, there was a little electric burst of glitter.

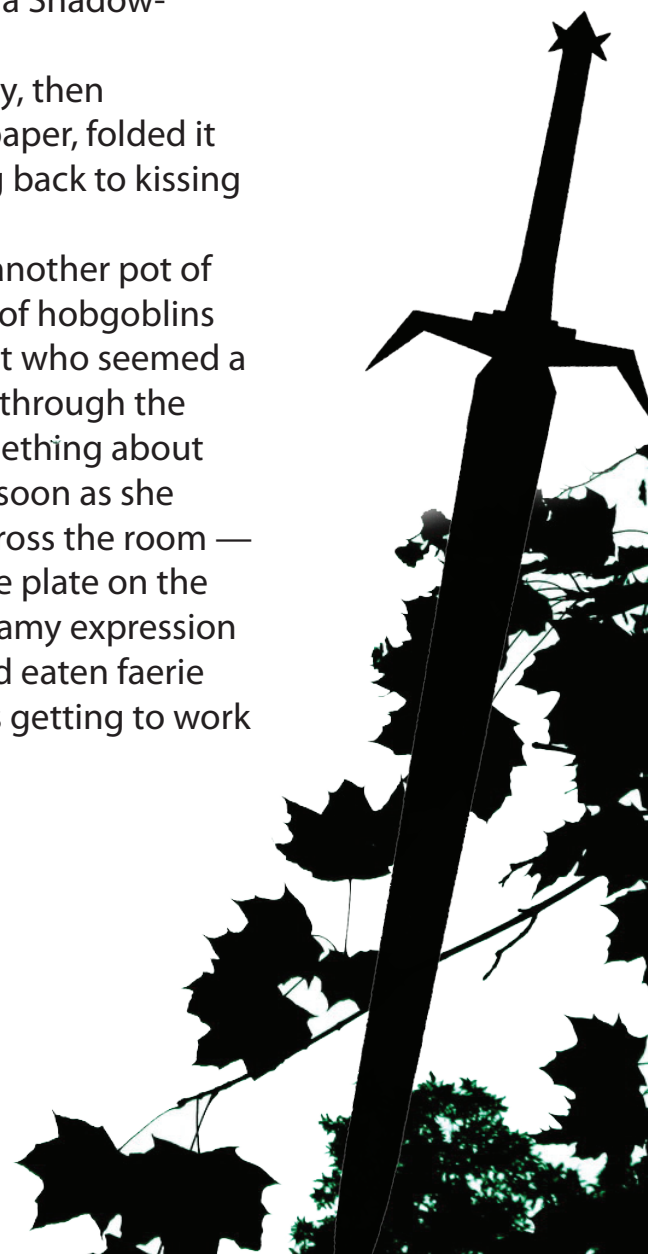
Finally he sprawled out in an armchair near Isabelle, and leaned over to her. She broke away from Meliorn, frowning at him — he seemed to be saying something about his cat's birthday as he waved another piece of paper at her. Or maybe he was talking about his own birthday, since his eyes looked very like the reflective, unblinking eyes of a cat. Kaye wondered what he was. Not a faerie, and not a Shadow-hunter either.

"The Magnificent Magnus?" Isabelle said, dubiously, then shrugged. "But, hey, thanks for the invite." She took the paper, folded it up, and thrust it down the front of her shirt before going back to kissing Meliorn.

For a few minutes, Kaye was absorbed in making another pot of seaweed tea, passing over three espresso shots to a trio of hobgoblins and making one Dirty Chai for a human in a business suit who seemed a little unnerved, as though despite not being able to see through the glamour all around him, he was able to discern that something about the other customers was a little off. He scuttled away as soon as she handed him her drink, clearing the way for her to see across the room —

To where Jace was taking off his clothes. The scone plate on the coffee table in front of him was empty, and he had a dreamy expression on his face — the dreamy expression of a human who had eaten faerie fruit. He had already shrugged off his long coat, and was getting to work on the buttons of his shirt.

"Jace," Alec hissed. "Jace, what are you doing?"



"It's warm in here," Jace said, in a slurred voice. Two knives hit the ground.

Across the room, several faeries began to giggle. Jace kicked off his boots and socks.

"Corny," Kaye said. "Do something. This is entirely your fault, you know. You gave him those scones."

Corny was watching Jace undressing with raised eyebrows and an appreciative expression on his face. "I think I might be some kind of genius. You couldn't pay me to stop this."

Jace had whipped his shirt off. Kaye squinted and had to admit Corny had a point. You rarely saw a body like that outside of magazine spreads. Some people had six-packs; Jace appeared to have a twelve-pack. It didn't look humanly possible. "Could be good for business," she mused and pulled herself an espresso shot. She thought she was going to need it.

"Maybe we could get him to do it every day?" Corny said, as Jace unbuttoned his jeans. Alec attempted to stop him, but Jace moved nimbly out of his way and kicked the jeans off with a flourish.

"Don't try to stop me, Alec," said Jace. "This body has to be free."

Isabelle looked up from kissing Meliorn and her eyes widened.

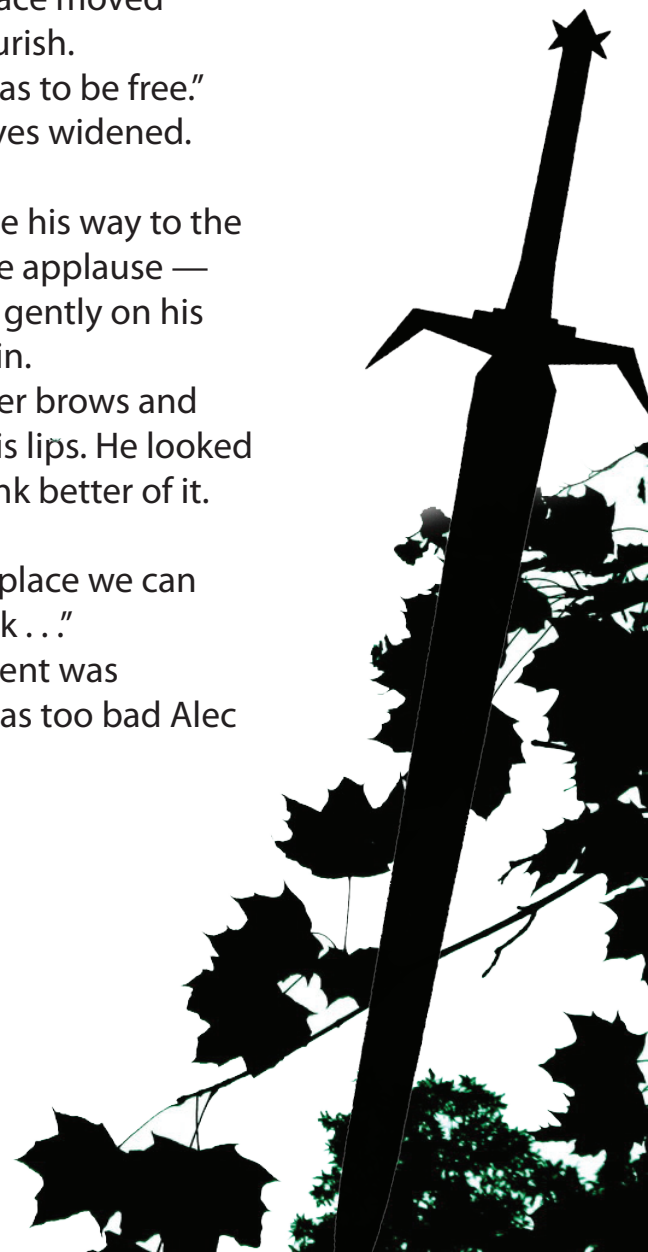
"Holy crap," she said. "Jace —"

She started to stand up, but Jace had already made his way to the door. He paused there and bowed — to not considerable applause — plucked the pair of antlers off the wall, and placed them gently on his head. Then he darted out the door, just as Roiben came in.

Roiben, in his long black cloak, raised both his silver brows and stared after Jace, a small smile playing at the corner of his lips. He looked about to ask Meliorn a question and then seemed to think better of it. Then, abruptly, he began to laugh.

"Oh, by the Angel," Alec said mournfully. "Another place we can never go to again. You'd think, in a city as big as New York . . ."

Kaye noticed that the boozy Magnus the Magnificent was watching Alec with a gleam in his catlike eyes. It really was too bad Alec seemed too sunk in gloom to



notice.

"We should have hung a sign on that guy," Corny said. "Imagine the advertising."

And right then, Kaye realized two things. One was that Shadowhunters might be good at killing things, but their dating lives were a mess. And the other was that she was going to love owning a coffee shop.

