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The Bane Chronicles

Written by

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Published by

Walker Books Ltd

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THE BANE CHRONICLES

Vampires, Scones, and Edmund Herondale

CASSANDRA CLARE

SARAH REES BRENNAN

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LONDON, 1857

Ever since the unfortunate events of the French Revolution, Magnus had nursed a slight prejudice against vampires. The undead were always killing one's servants and endangering one's pet monkey. The vampire clan in Paris was still sending Magnus rude messages about their small misunderstanding. Vampires bore a grudge longer than any technically living creatures, and whenever they were in a bad temper, they expressed themselves through murder. Magnus generally wished his companions to be somewhat less—no pun intended—bloodthirsty.

There was also the fact that sometimes vampires committed crimes worse than murder. They committed crimes against fashion. When one was immortal, one tended to forget the passing of time. Still, that was no excuse for wearing a bonnet last fashionable in the era of Napoléon I.

Magnus was beginning, however, to feel as if he might have been a trifle hasty in dismissing *all* vampires.

Lady Camille Belcourt was a terribly charming woman. She was also attired in the absolute height of fashion. Her dress had a darling hoop skirt, and the fall of blue taffeta in seven narrow flounces about her chair made it appear as if she were rising from a cascade of gleaming blue water. There was not very much material at all around her bosom, which was as pale and curved as a pearl. All that broke the perfect pallor of the curve of bosom and the column of neck was a black velvet ribbon and the thick shining ringlets clustered about her face. One gold ringlet was long enough so that it rested in the delicate curve of her collarbone, which led Magnus's eyes back once again to—

Really, all roads led back to Lady Camille's bosom.

It was a wonderfully designed dress. It was also a wonderfully designed bosom.

Lady Camille, as observant as she was beautiful, noticed Magnus noticing, and smiled.

"The marvelous thing about being a creature of the night," she confided in a low voice, "is that one need never wear anything but evening clothes."

"I had never considered that point before," said Magnus, much struck.

"Of course I adore variety, so I do seize any opportunity to change costumes. I find there are many occasions during an adventurous night for a lady to divest herself of her garments." She leaned forward, one pale, smooth elbow resting against the Shadowhunters' mahogany table. "Something tells me that you are a man who knows something about adventurous nights."

"My lady, with me, every night is an adventure. Pray

continue your discourse on fashion," Magnus urged her. "It is one of my favorite subjects."

Lady Camille smiled.

Magnus lowered his voice discreetly. "Or if you choose, pray continue your discourse on disrobing. I believe that is my most favorite subject of all."

They sat side by side at a long table in the Shadowhunters' London Institute. The Consul, a dreary Nephilim heading up the proceedings, was droning on about all the spells they wished warlocks to make available to them at cut-rate prices, and about their notions of proper behavior for vampires and werewolves. Magnus had not heard a single way in which these "Accords" could conceivably benefit Downworlders, but he could certainly see why the Shadowhunters had developed a passionate desire to ratify them.

He began regretting his agreement to make the voyage to London and its Institute so that the Shadowhunters could waste his valuable time. The Consul, who Magnus believed was called Morgwhatsit, seemed passionately in love with his own voice.

Though, actually he had stopped talking.

Magnus glanced away from Camille to find the far less pleasant sight of the Consul—his disapproval writ across his face, as stark as the runes on his skin—staring at him. "If you and the—the vampire woman could cease your flirtation for a moment," he said in acid tones.

"Flirting? We were merely indulging in a little risqué conversation," Magnus said, offended. "When I begin to flirt, I assure you the entire room will know. My flirtations cause sensations."

Camille laughed. "What a clever rhyme."

Magnus's joke seemed to liberate the restless discontent of all Downworlders at the table.

"What else are we to do but talk amongst ourselves?" asked a werewolf stripling, still young but with the intense green eyes of a fanatic and the thin determined face of a fanatic who was actually competent. His name was Ralf Scott. "We have been here for three hours and have not been given the chance to speak at all. You Nephilim have done all the talking."

"I cannot believe," put in Arabella, a charming mermaid with charmingly placed seashells, "that I swam up the Thames, and consented to be hauled out by pulleys and put in a large glass aquarium, for *this*."

She spoke quite loudly.

Even Morgwhatsit looked taken aback. *Why*, Magnus wanted to know, were Shadowhunter names so long, when warlocks gave themselves elegant family names of one syllable? The long names were sheer self-importance.

"You wretches should be honored to be in the London Institute," snarled a silver-haired Shadowhunter by the name of Starkweather. "I wouldn't allow any of you in my Institute, unless I was carrying one of your filthy heads on a pike. Silence, and let your betters speak for you."

An extremely awkward pause ensued. Starkweather glared around, and his eyes dwelled on Camille, not as if she were a beautiful woman but as if she might be a fine trophy for his wall. Camille's eyes went to her leader and friend, the pale-haired vampire Alexei de Quincey, but he did not respond to her mute appeal. Magnus put out his hand and took hers.

Her skin was cool, but her fingers fit his very neatly. He saw Ralf Scott glance over at them and blanch. He was even younger than Magnus had thought. His eyes were huge and glass green, transparent enough for all his emotions to shine through, in his thin face. They were fixed on Camille.

Interesting, Magnus thought, and filed the observation away.

"These are meant to be peace accords," Scott said, deliberately slowly. "Which means we are all meant to have a chance to have our voices heard. I have heard how peace will benefit Shadowhunters. I wish now to discuss how it will benefit Downworlders. Will we be given seats on the Council?"

Starkweather began to choke. One of the Shadowhunter women stood up hastily. "Gracious, I think my husband was so excited by the chance to deliver a speech that he did not offer refreshments," she said loudly. "I am Amalia Morgenstern." *Oh, that's it*, Magnus thought. *Morgenstern. Awful name*. "And is there anything I can offer you?" the woman continued. "I will ring for the maid in a trice."

"No raw meat for the dog, mind," Starkweather said, and sniggered. Magnus saw another Shadowhunter woman titter silently behind her hand. Ralf Scott sat, pale and still. He had been the moving force behind assembling Downworlders here today, and had been the only werewolf willing to come. Even his own young brother, Woolsey, had stayed away, parting from Ralf on the front steps of the Institute with an insouciant toss of his blond head and a wink at Magnus. (Magnus had thought, *Interesting*, about that, too.)

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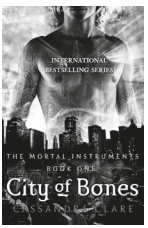
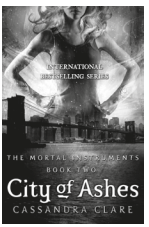
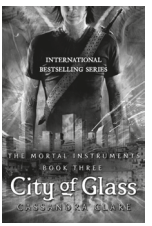
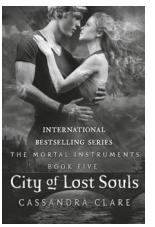
THE MORTAL INSTRUMENTS









Clary Fray just wishes her life would go back to normal. But what's normal when you're a demon-slaying Shadowhunter, your mother is in a magically induced coma and you can suddenly see Downworlders like werewolves, vampires and fairies? As Clary searches for a way to help her mother, she is forced to confront her past and her feelings for a boy who can never be hers...

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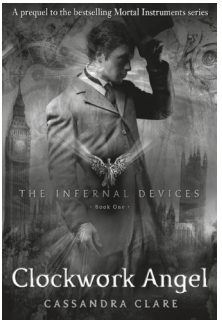

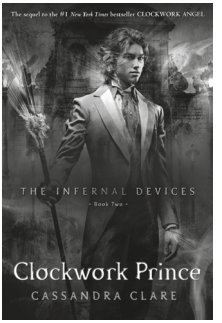

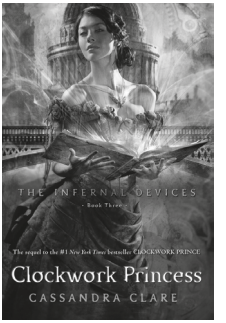

When sixteen-year-old Tessa Gray arrives in England during the reign of Queen Victoria, something terrifying is waiting for her in London's Downworld, where vampires, warlocks and other supernatural folk stalk the gaslit streets. Friendless and hunted, Tessa seeks refuge with the Shadowhunters and finds herself fascinated by – and torn between – two best friends and quickly realizes that love may be the most dangerous magic of all...

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