

Jem slumped to his knees, his whole body buzzing softly, like a limb that had fallen asleep. His eyes drifted downwards, struggling to focus on the small knife that stuck out of his chest, the only visible part being the polished wooden hilt engraved with flowers. Odd. He couldn't feel the pain he knew should've been there. All he felt was a detached regret. Regret that he would never again tell Tessa he loved her. Regret that he was leaving her alone once again, although this time he doubted he would be coming back. The owner of the knife lay dead a few feet away on the bloodsoaked gravel, hands wrapped around his throat in a final, futile attempt to keep the blood from pouring out onto the ground, creating rivers of red in the dust. He felt a small, sad smile tug on his lips as his eyes slid closed one final time. While some deaths are loud and angry, rattling the world on its axis as if to say 'I'm gone! I'm never coming back! Don't forget me!', others are soft and peaceful; a flower shedding petals under fierce summer rain, a lonesome violin left to collect dust with no one to play it. No planets shook as the life finally drained from his body, brown eyes closed so that if you ignored the knife, you could almost pretend he was sleeping.

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A thick fog surrounded him, but it was neither cold nor warm, and left behind no dampness on the sleeve of his jacket. One glance at his chest, devoid of the knife and blood, was enough to confirm his suspicions. So this is what death looked like. A huff of laughter escaped from between his lips. Everyone, mundanes and Shadowhunters alike, always portrayed the afterlife as some fiery hellscape, filled with the tormented souls of the damned. They were all so afraid; if this was death, then it wasn't so bad. As his eyes began to adjust to the strange, ethereal light, he saw a figure standing in front of a river, which was too wide to see the opposite bank, throwing small stones into it that did little to disrupt the stillness of the glassy surface. The figure paused, as if sensing Jem's eyes on their back. They turned around slowly, letting the light shine on painfully familiar dark blue eyes and raven black hair. "Will?" Jem asked softly, scared that any loud noise would cause the man before him to disappear like smoke on the wind. A broad smile appeared on Will's face; he'd not seen it in more than a century, but it was still as well known to him as his own name. Jem darted forward, wrapping him in a tight hug, which Will returned just as fiercely. "You sure made me wait a long time." Will drawled sarcastically. Jem felt a smile tug at his lips, widening to match Will's. "I'm surprised you waited at all. I guess you matured in your old age." He teased, and although Will looked no different to him then when they'd seen each other last, his eyes carried the weight of his years. A look of mock outrage crossed his face, making his blue eyes light up. "I thought you promised me we'd go together." Jem's expression softened, his lighthearted grin morphing into something quieter, the look of someone who had lived his life, and was content, as he reached for Will's hand. "Yeah," he said softly, "I did." Will returned his quiet smile, and together, they walked into the fog and towards whatever lay waiting for them in that place after death.