



**UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO RIO DE JANEIRO**  
**FACULDADE DE LETRAS**

**YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE: A CHARACTER STUDY OF  
ALEXANDER LIGHTWOOD**

Julia Carneiro Abrahão de Souza

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2024

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**Resumo:** Neste texto, falarei sobre Literatura Juvenil-Adulta (YAL), analisando um personagem de uma série memorável da YAL nos anos 2000 para entender como sua representação e personalidade se relacionam com o público-alvo. Temas como a definição da adolescência e a desrealização dos desafios da vida estarão presentes ao longo deste texto. “The Teenage Bill of Rights” de Elliot E. Cohen será usado como um guia para desconstruir o personagem selecionado, com o objetivo de destacar os aspectos relacionáveis do personagem e de sua vida que definem YAL, com foco no crescimento do personagem. Como exercício de escrita criativa, uma *fanfiction* de minha autoria também será utilizada como ferramenta para mostrar a relação entre personagem e leitor. A *fanfic* será uma *shortfic* da interação do personagem com meu eu mais jovem no momento em que li suas respectivas histórias, abordando as lições e sentimentos que YAL poderia me proporcionar e projetando uma compreensão do alcance que isso pode ter para jovens leitores em geral. O personagem escolhido é *Alexander Lightwood* de “Crônicas dos Caçadores de Sombras” de Cassandra Clare. Analisarei cada aspecto do arco de Alec para mostrar sua importância aos leitores jovens adultos.

**Palavras chave:** Literatura Jovem-Adulta; Adolescência; Caracterização de Personagem

**Abstract:** For this essay, I'll be talking about Young Adult Literature (YAL), analyzing a character from a memorable YAL series of the 2000s to understand how his portrayal and personality relates to the intended audience. Themes like the definition of teenhood and the derealization of life's challenges will be present throughout this text. Elliot E. Cohen's "The Teenage Bill of Rights" will be used as a guide to deconstructing the selected character, with the objective of highlighting the relatable aspects of the character and his life which define YAL, with a focus on character growth. As an exercise of creative writing, a fanfiction of my own authority will also be utilized as a tool to showcase the character and reader relationship. The fanfic will be shortfic of the characters' interaction with my younger self at the time I read his respective stories, touching on the lessons and feelings YAL could provide me, and hopefully projecting a grasp of the reach it may have for young readers at large. The chosen character is Alexander Lightwood from *The Shadowhunter Chronicles* by Cassandra Clare. I will analyze every aspect of Alec's arc to showcase his importance to young adult readers.

**Keyword:** Young Adult Literature; Teenager; Character Portrayal

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## Little Me

There once was a nine year old, a hastily wrapped gift in her hands. It was heavy, the weight straining her wrists. It was Christmas, and at Christmas, heavy presents were usually the best, she'd learned. However, the child fought to keep the pleasant smile on her face, be respectful and grateful, it was her dad's gift. She knew what it was, the shape and size being almost as obvious as the traffic lights drawing she had to color in for homework. Her dad gave the best and the worst gifts of all. So that Christmas, together with a hello kitty special edition Nokia cellphone, she received.. *by Gods not another book, hasn't he learned his lesson yet, and they say children are dumb*, she thought.

Every year, every Holliday, books. He always gave her books. Now, they were not all bad, the short ones with pictures and drawing were fun, but none kept her attention for long. Yet he kept trying, only to fail over and over again. *Reading is boring, movies are superior.*

She unwrapped the gift, threw the tissue paper aside and studied the block of papers in her hands, expectant eyes baring into her. Blue cover, nice smell and ugly font. *The Power of Six* by Pittacus Lore. It would be one more book collecting dust in her closet, if it wasn't for her father's clever strategy. "It's the sequence from that movie you love! The one we saw earlier this year, now you'll know what happens next" he said. Damn if that wasn't the smartest move he could make.

Familiar characters, interesting narrative and two hundred pages long, she finished the books in no more than two days. Reading wasn't just fun, she realized, it was magical. It was entertaining and intellectual, imaginative yet

realistic, provided rest from one's mind yet instigated reflection at the same time. *Magic, that's the right word for it, daddy!*

The purpose of the books were to familiarize her with reading in preparation for future academic study success. She was meant to grow slowly into academic and adult literature. That never happened. What she didn't know was YAL at the time, would become her sole academic object of study, and she now presents to you her graduation thesis.

I'm extremely grateful to my dado for never giving up on me, even though his goals didn't exactly come to fruition as he expected, it did define my more than just my professional interests but also my personality. My love for narratives defines my very being, three words are ingrained in my very soul: storytelling, creativity and imagination. Young Adult Literature is what made me want to enter Faculdade de Letras, and I've known it since I was a nine year old girl, surrounded by Christmas lights, summer at full stride and relatives I never don't even know the name asking how I've been, trying not to be disappointed at the gift weighing on my thin child's wrists.

# 1

## Brief History of the Genre: YAL & Fanfiction



(Image 1: Collection of YAL books taken from Pinterest.com)

Young Adult Literature (YAL) has been given many connotations throughout the years. While researching its history for this undergraduate thesis, I found that YAL's birth is often connected with the recognition of adolescence. Teenagers were not considered a stage of development; before the twentieth century, people were categorized as either children or adults, no in between. In the beginning of the 1900's, however, that redefinition started to appear. American Psychologist G. Stanley Hall first proposed the term "adolescence" as a category for those between 15 and 24 years of age in *Adolescence: Its Psychology And Its Relations To Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion And Education* (1904). After that, the term went through several redefinitions, but the job was done, there was now a stage of life that was the bridge between childhood and adulthood.

Michael Cart, YAL expert, former teacher of UCLA and recipient of many YALSA awards, makes a point in his book *Young Adult Literature: From Romance to Realism* (2010), to connect the creation of YA literature to a youth culture generated after the "invention" of the teenager. After realizing teenagers were a real group of people in society, it was only a

matter of time before industries started targeting their products towards them for profit. Cart says high school and middle school became spaces that gathered a group that previously didn't have a voice or did not fit anywhere, and through that process they developed or discovered their own culture, and felt the need to be represented.

Young Adult Literature started with a mixture of children's books and adult books until eventually and gradually literary communities started to understand what were the different aspects and characteristics of those two categories that attracted teenagers. In that way, during the first half of the twentieth century, YAL was shaped as a literature not as “complex” as adult literature, and not as “easy” as children’s literature. After World War II, the market grew exponentially, since teens no longer had to be bound by adult responsibilities, like surviving during the war. Today, the term Young Adult Literature is simply defined as literature that tells the story of those between 12 and 25 years of age.

Margaret Scorgin was an American librarian that made huge contributions to the expansion of Young Adult Literature. In the New York Public Library website, Ricci Yuhico, managing librarian, wrote a small article talking about Scorgin's legacy for their series “NYPL: Women Who Built NYPL”, a lot of her achievements can be found in that website. She was the first to implement the term “young adult” back in 1944, and proceeded to focus a huge part of her career into creating the space for young adults in the library and the community. Even before she used the term what many believed was the first young adult novel was published: back in 1942, *Seventeenth Summer* by Maureen Daly was published by Simon & Schuster and Dodd Mead, a story about a teenage girl called Angeline who falls in love with a boy just before she has to leave the state for College. The book has a really slow pace and a bittersweet ending as she refuses the boy’s marriage proposal and prioritizes her education. The book took a couple of years to be labeled Young Adult, only after realizing who was reading the book did the industry take notice of its potential genre. It’s possible to compare *Seventeenth Summer* to YAL today, the likes of John Green and Jenny Han come to mind as contemporary, coming of age writers. However, YAL is known today for its iconic fantasy and fiction book series that follow carefully crafted universes with supernatural or dystopian settings that are far from the realistic picture presented in *Seventeenth Summer*. Professor Virginia Schaefer Carrol reported in *Re-Reading the Romance of Seventeenth Summer* (1996), published in volume 21 of the *Children’s Literature Association Quarterly* (1996), page 12, that her students found the story boring since “nothing happens”, the pace was too slow. The criticism didn't end there, it included an apparent dislike for the main characters clearly expressed by the readers. Angeline was considered a naive and overly

passive character; also, the bittersweet ending didn't satisfy the students either, who, despite knowing it was not realistic, earned for a fairy tale ending in "they lived happily ever after". So the "first young adult novel" didn't appease the modern young adult. While the book told a story relatable to their experiences, it lacked the mental stimulation to keep young readers interested. In the 21st Century, the genre grew a lot due to the wave of television and movie adaptations, establishing its place in popular culture.

In theory, it's easy to define what YAL is. However, when trying to explain it more deeply, one quickly realizes that, despite having a clearly targeted niche in the industry, YAL shows no consensual or well defined characteristics beyond its definition. It's as broad in terms of genre as adult literature, and it can show the same simplicity that children's books contain. The complexity of YAL comes from the complexity of adolescence. Age targeted definitions, much like genres, are incapable of fully separating readers in strict lines, and when discussing the period of life with the biggest amount of change, limits become very unstable. Teenhood is the stage in life in which people start defining their personality, their morals and their place in the world. Big decisions are thrust upon the hands of these young people, much like Angeline. That process is very complex and very different from person to person: it can seem quick to some, and infinite to others, it can come back later in life or never at all. For example, in the twenty-first century, when teens are maturing more quickly due to the easy access to information provided by the internet, there is a case being made for the age limits of terms like adolescence. Teenagers may present the same amount of potential for emotional intelligence as adults while struggling to understand how to express it as children. That makes them the most complex of readers. Researchers like Maria Nikolajeva from Cambridge University, in her article *Memory of the Present: Empathy and Identity in Young Adult Literature* (2014), talks about how hard it is to portray or define the chaotic mind of the teenagers, highlighting the seeking of one's identity as one of the few denominators of YAL. Perhaps the definition of YAL comes from the acceptance of its own impossibility of definition, shown by the only real characteristic present across all genres within YAL: character growth. YAL represents its audience by telling stories of individuals who go through self identification journeys, either by their own psychological struggles or by experiencing external events.

I decided to use fanfiction to help me expose the different facets of a young adult character that speaks to its target audience. Fanfiction is, according to Fanlore<sup>1</sup>, a work of

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<sup>1</sup> A fandom "wikipedia" created by the Organization of Transformative Works devoted to preserving the history of fanworks.

fiction written by fans based on a source, transforming it in some way. Fanfiction allows readers to become writers, interacting directly with their favorite characters and stories, pushing them to express their creativity and, at times, explore their connection to their source material. Therefore, I decided to take a character from a young adult book series that made an impact on culture in the 21st century and write a short self insert<sup>2</sup> one shot<sup>3</sup>. In these texts, I'll be making the character interact with my younger self at the time I was reading the books for the first time. Between the fanfic and the texts based on my research, I'll hopefully be able to demonstrate how the relatability and growth of these characters makes them adequate content for young consumers.

Fanfiction has been around for about 100 years, back in the day, fanfiction came in a variety of formats such as fanzines and letters, usually traded between women in the 20th century.<sup>4</sup> Star Trek, for example, was one of the biggest propulsive forces of fan works. However, it was in the 90s, during the rapid evolution of electronics and the internet, that fanfiction grew into what we know today. From email listings to private servers, to blogs and pinboards, the fandom<sup>5</sup> had found a place to establish somewhat of a stable community.

As a kid, I went through a lot of fanfiction platforms, from the classic Fanfiction.net<sup>6</sup> to the horribly engineered Wattpad<sup>7</sup>, to our dearly beloved AO3<sup>8</sup>. Not only is AO3 a very well designed website with an incredibly efficient filtering system, it also holds a lot of cultural significance to the fandom. Since the very beginning, fanfiction has been about creative writing and peer interaction. It should be non profit, and widely available to all, in that sense I agree with the Organization of Transformative Works legal chair, Betsy Rosenblatt for the *Fansplaining: Buncha Lawyers interview*: "But there's a sort of personal autonomy element to fandom that I think is a really important thing to preserve." Fanfiction allows people to experiment in writing, actively interacting with the content they love while in a safe environment that allows discourse. Moonbeam Predilections,<sup>9</sup> a prominent figure in the

<sup>2</sup> A type of fanfiction in which the reader inserts themselves into the story of the fanfic.

<sup>3</sup> Synonym to "standalone" in the fandom culture, a "one shot" is a fanfiction written in a single chapter, meant to be read as a one off, independently of the word count.

<sup>4</sup> <https://fanlore.org/wiki/Zine>

<sup>5</sup> Fandom: community of fans according to <https://fanlore.org/wiki/Fandom>

<sup>6</sup> One of the world's biggest fanfiction archives, popular around the mid 2000s and early 2010s. <https://m.fanfiction.net/>

<sup>7</sup> Global app for writers and readers launched in 2006. <https://www.wattpad.com/>

<sup>8</sup> Stands for Archive of Our Own, a platform that offers a noncommercial and nonprofit central hosting place for fanworks. <https://archiveofourown.org/about>

<sup>9</sup> Moonbeams blog that details the different platforms she interacted with and all the work she did throughout the years, from fanfiction to the beloved Fanfiction Terminology: <https://www.angelfire.com/falcon/moonbeam/>

fandom since 1996, in an interview with my fanfic research group, NEPF (Núcleo de Estudos e Pesquisas em Fanfiction), said “An ordinary woman writing on her computer about her favorite characters for pleasure? God, don’t dare try to ask for money or you’ll be sued into bankruptcy. Even without actively seeking monetary gain, us normal folk always run the risk of getting on the bad side of some disgruntled creator or copyright holder. And most of us can’t afford the lawyers to defend ourselves. Declaring all fanworks as non-profit is often necessary just for the safety and survival of fandom as a whole.”

The organization of transformative works even has journal called *Transformative Works and Cultures*, created by Professors Kristina Busse<sup>10</sup> from the University of South Alabama, and Karen Hellekson<sup>11</sup> from the University of Kansas, to publish research created by the community.



(Image 2: collection of AO3 memes taken from Pinterest.com)

<sup>10</sup> <https://kristinabusse.com/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://karenhellekson.com/>





# 2

## **YAL, Fanfiction and Little Me**

As an undiagnosed autistic child, I had no idea how to act around other kids. I didn't understand them and they didn't understand me. Overall, I had a very lonely childhood, no one to talk to and I was limited by my crippling anxiety. So, like many others, I turned art into my loyal companion. My mind was always working, I barely slept and the things that entertained kids my age made me bored and frustrated. Nothing was interesting enough to me. When you're neurodivergent, you tend to be "stupid" at the stuff people find instinctive, that made me very confused. I couldn't go to a birthday party without at least a month of emotional preparation and usually wanted to leave before the first hour was up. I was below average in almost every subject in school despite sitting at the front and studying my ass off, and lord forbid someone threw me a ball because I assure you. I. Will. Not. Catch. It. Since I seemed to fail at absolutely everything society considered natural in human behavior, you would think it wouldn't take much to keep me distracted. Nope. I had so many thoughts all the time, how could I be so dumb if my brain worked so hard. Then I figured out that art was the only thing I cared about. Music, baking, decorating, fashion, drawing or whatever you can loosely define as a form of art was what I lived for. It was the only thing I understood. Art makes sense to me in a way everything else in a world made for neurotypicals doesn't. My connection to YAL is deeper than that, however. Like I said, there's so many types of art, but fanfiction and YAL reflected the inner workings of my mind so accurately it felt like being understood for the first time in my life. Basically, for anything in life I have scripts. My brain is a file room with this one overworked little guy that does his best to grab the right script at the right time. The less I understand something, the harder it is for the little guy to help me successfully navigate it. For example: Good Mornings. I understand people say it to be polite. I don't get why though. The concept of politeness in society is so weird to me, I can't phantom how saying good morning comes naturally to people. Everyday, the little guy holds

the script I see everybody use: enter the building, turn your head when you pass by the entrance and say Good Morning to the guard that stands by the front desk. Every single day I struggle with this, even if I have the script.

What is it that makes so much sense to me in YAL and fanfiction? Well, the reason the little guy uses scripts is because the absolute most effective way to explain something to me is through storytelling. Ever since I was a kid, my thoughts have always been an endless sequence of scenes, a movie. I can not think of anything without placing it in a context with a scenery and a story. I have so many ideas all the time, I control them by placing them in stories. I need characters and settings, otherwise those thoughts are just loose and I can't grasp them. Both Young Adult Literature and Fanfiction were the most accessible types of literature for me. Not just because they are newer types of texts that are very influential today, but because of the stories they told. YAL talked about youth and self discovery, the fantasy world it takes place in makes it stimulating, it creates layers for me to untangle and provides countless possibilities for a narrative. It was perfect. Then I encountered fanfiction, and it expanded my universe. Fanfiction is not constricted by the laws of published literature or traditional storytelling. Anyone can write it, it doesn't have to follow any type of structure, it has nothing to bind it anywhere. In fanfiction, a fan can take their favorite characters, extract them from their world, completely change their story and actively interact with them in whatever way they see fit. I can take a series with a white heterosexual cast and change it to portray underrepresented voices.

I think it's clear why somebody like me would gravitate towards a place like AO3. A lot of minorities use fanfiction to create the representation popular media refuses to deliver. So of course, teens, especially girls and women, whose voices were silenced for so long, would take the opportunity to fight back.

Basically, what I'm trying to say is that both YAL and Fanfiction brought not only a creative challenge for me, and a beyond entertaining story construction to analyze, it also provided me with a space where I felt seen, which for a neurodivergent asexual wasn't easy to find.

*Maybe it was obsession, but it was also happiness; an escape from the suckiness of everyday life. And when you find something that makes you happy and giddy and excited every day, us fangirls know a truth that everyone else seems to have forgotten: you hold on to that joy tenaciously, for as long as you can. (Moldavsky, Kill the Boy Band 2016)*



# 3

## Methodology

In practice, how I am utilizing fanfiction in my text is very interesting. Firstly, think about the most basic concept of metalinguistic language used to describe language (Coupland; Javorski 1998). In school, we learn that metalinguistic happens when a text talks about another text, and while that's a bit of a vague concept, I've always connected it to two concepts of fanfic: Self-Insert and Metafic. Keeping in mind both my experience in the fandom and the Fanlore definitions of the terms, let me try to explain the exact type of text I've written here.

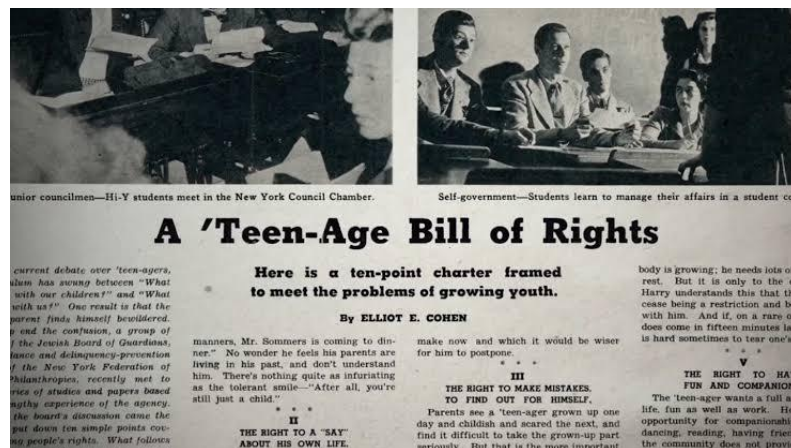
When talking about Metafic, the concept takes the self awareness approach, basically fanfics whose characters are aware of their fictionality and, a lot of times, interact humorously with the author. Self-Insertion in fanfiction is when the authors write themselves into the stories, either creating a character to represent them or just explicitly incorporating themselves into the canon source, interacting directly with the characters or universes they are writing about. Self-Insert is, theoretically, a type of Metafic. Another possible term is Authorfic, popularized by the fandoms of The X Files and Babylon 5, that refers to a fanfic where the author appears in the story and interacts with the characters. Self-Insert is the evolution of such term, the reason why I chose it.

Therefore, when I say I'm writing a short self insert one shot, I mean I am writing a fictional text about myself interacting with fictional characters that are fully aware of who I am and what they are, inside their own universe and storyline. I chose specific scenes from the stories I'm writing about that impacted me the first time I read it. My age also changes depending on the scene.

In summary, I made short stories where I inserted myself in a scene with the YA character I chose. I made myself the same age I was when I first read that character's story. I made the character aware of my presence, so I could interact directly with him. The idea is to emulate the interaction the reader has with a story, specially the process of self identification

present in YAL. Each character brings its own set of topics relevant to the young adult journey. Perhaps we can call this a type of comparative study, where I take the different points brought up by the Bill of Rights, and compare them to the stories this character follows, showcasing how these bills are practically applied in a young adult's life, in this case projected into a character from the literature they consume.

Something I've struggled with in university is all the limitations that come with writing a traditional type of text, from citations to references to what is considered valid information and what isn't. To me, it felt so frustrating that a tweet, a video essay on YouTube, an independent research weren't considered valid points of reference, and when I did finally find a "respectable academic reference" I had to go through all these hurdles to use it the "correct way". The thing is, new academic fields like Fanfiction and YAL, thrive in places like YouTube and Tumblr, the opinions and experiences of people with these areas are more easily accessible nowadays through these platforms, and much like the beliefs defended by the creators of AO3, the average person now has the power to research and share their knowledge. That's how I choose to interpret the concept of lived theory, you can't separate theory and experience from research. My experience during my time of interacting with such texts are inseparable from the theory I'm bringing to this work. Multimedia, multigenre texts are not the norm. And yet, here we are.



(Image 3: Photo from "A Teenage Bill of Rights" by Elliot E. Cohen taken from the New York Times)

*The joy you find as a teen, however frivolous and dumb, is pure and meaningful.*  
(Moldavsky, *Kill the Boy Band* 2016)

In 1945, the New York Times Magazine published Elliot E Cohen's "A Teenage Bill of Rights" with ten points on the struggles and needs of the growing youth. There are several

valid arguments validating young people's feelings and challenges. The arguments touch on the desire to leave childhood behind but still have adult guidance if one wishes for it, a fine line for adults to tread as a teenager refuses to be treated like a child yet lacks the full maturity to make decisions on their own. These conflicting matters made young folk hard to understand, something Cohen makes it look easy. The bills didn't seem to cause a big impact at the time they were released, at least from what I could find in my research. When looking for works that talked about the history of YAL and its trajectory, most texts mention the bills in passing, but don't go in depth or analyze the content in them. To me, the bills are an underrated piece of history, it's a great example of how, at the time, scholars were already trying to understand teenagers, to make sense of their feelings and experiences. What I particularly like about the bills is that they are very simple. Despite all the chaos and confusion surrounding the definitions of this particular age range, legally and biologically, Cohen was able to focus not on physical characteristics, but on emotional and social ones. The bills are compact, simple and effective. I'll tell you what it made me feel when I first encountered it a couple years ago as a young adult: it made me feel like I just spent an hour long session talking and talking and my psychologist summarized everything in the end with a couple sentences. It felt like being seen. Maybe an emotional motive quite like this is not enough to justify choosing the bills for this paper, maybe I can argue that the topic separation of the bills is a perfect way to separate my texts and character analysis in an organized fashion, maybe I can state the fact that through the bills we can see that teenagers and young adults are actually not that hard to crack, and there has been multiple scholars even back in the beginning that managed to listen to them. All of these are true, yes, but they don't negate the fact that I felt a genuine connection to Cohen's work and that's why I wanted to use it.

I'll be using Cohen's work in contrast with the character I chose from current YAL to, perhaps, give depth to the bills that *explain* the young adult experience, hopefully proving the incredible relatability that make YAL characters the center of the genre. The character will be assigned a couple of the bills, the ones I feel best represent their story. From that point forward, considering all the context and information I've previously provided, the character will go through a sort of character study, all the conflicts and aspects of this character that connect to the young adult experience will be brought to light and be connected to the arguments in the Bill of Rights, as well to their appeal to the audience.

The bills are as follow:

1. The right to let childhood be forgotten.

2. The right to have a say in their own life.
3. The right to make mistakes, to find out for one's self.
4. The right to have rules explained, not imposed.
5. The right to have fun and companions.
6. The right to question ideas.
7. The right to be at the romantic age.
8. The right to a fair chance at opportunity.
9. The right to professional help whenever necessary.
10. The right to struggle toward one's own philosophy of life.





# 4

## Alexander, the Great.



(Image 4: Collection of Illustrations from Cassandra Jean, official illustrator of The Shadowhunter Chronicles)

When looking for characters that represent the struggles and growths the youth goes through in their formative years, a couple of YAL icons immediately come to mind. Cassandra Clare published *The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones* in March of 2007 through Simon & Schuster, from that point forward, becoming one of the giants of YAL, a reference to fantasy literature and universe expansion. The true charm of Clare's work comes from beyond the stellar world building and fantastical scenery, instead taking root at the chess pieces that make the game worth playing: the characters. Clare spends a lot of time individualizing the characters, creating very specific personas for the readers to relate to. Her characters are realistic and human, a feeling created by the characters personalities and, above all, their relationships, both platonic and romantic. Clare shows us not only the good in her characters, but also the bad, not through sets of actions, but through emotional and logical perspectives. The main point to be taken from Clare's techniques in character construction is that when you give your characters realistic flaws with logical behavior, they will produce more relatable relationships and therefore, be more appealing to the readers. Clare's characters don't feel fake, they don't feel like made up people both in the sense of them being overly dramatized or underdeveloped, something usually tied with children's stories.

*Many predict that unrealistically high expectations will result in mental and physical health consequences, but the current evidence is divided. It seems there may be some mental health benefits to holding high achievement expectations despite low levels of academic performance. (Absurdly Ambitious? Teenagers' Expectations for the Future and the Realities of Social Structure; Chardie L. Baird, Stephanie W. Burge, and John R. Reynolds)*

### **The right to leave childhood behind / The right to have rules explained not imposed**

Alexander Lightwood is the eldest son of his family of shadowhunters. In Clare's books, the shadowhunters are a race of angelic soldiers that keep the human world safe from demons and, at times, downworlders (fairies, vampires, warlocks and werewolves). His family suffered several hits to their reputation in the past generations due to their involvement in previous civil wars. Alec has three siblings: Jace and Izzy, 16 years olds, only a year younger than Alec, and Max, 9 years old and the youngest of the four. Alec has several different layers of complexity that make him such a human character. His family and his devotion to it is one of the biggest reasons Alec acts the way he does.

The thing about Alec is that we truly see him grow up through the phases of teenhood. When Alec is first introduced, he is shown as somewhat of an antagonist to the main character, Clary. Clary is new, she just bulldozed into Alec's family's life and they have no idea who she really is or where she comes from. To be fair, neither does she. Several red flags seem to be waved at Alec from the very beginning of the book. Since we see things from Clary's perspective however, Alec is annoying, arrogant and calculating. He seems very petty, mad at the attention she's receiving from his siblings, he makes jealous comments and is mostly hostile to her presence. Clary isn't necessarily a ray of sunshine either, she doesn't recognize that she is showing up in their lives just as suddenly as she lost hers. To the reader, in the first and second books of the series, Alec is somewhat of a mean girl<sup>12</sup>, who despite being on the "good team", doesn't trust anyone and acts jealous when the main character gets all the attention. He has seemingly childish reasons for complex feelings. Alec's actions appear childish, a teenager being overly emotional, however he has many reasons to be hesitant in taking Clary in. Cassandra Clare answered a question in her tumblr about Alec's strength and said "Alec is constantly protective of the people he loves. ... The Nephilim (shadowhunters) need warriors who fight to live, not just warriors who fight to

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<sup>12</sup> "A girl who tries to elevate her social status through bullying and cliquy behavior." Link: [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/mean\\_girl#:~:text=mean%20girl%20](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/mean_girl#:~:text=mean%20girl%20)

die”. What she really highlights is that the shadowhunters are expected to sacrifice themselves for their cause, but that leads to a lot of them being reckless with their own well being. Alec is not like that, he’s devoted to the fight, yes, but he recognizes that one’s death is only a last resort. Both his teenage siblings are constantly putting themselves in danger, Alec considers his job, both as an older brother and a warrior, to protect them. He is protective because he has to be, and Clary appears bringing a lot of chaos and danger, even if not intentionally. She encourages the behavior in her, although understandable, desperate attempts to figure out what’s happening. That’s the real reason for her and Alec’s conflicts. Because we’re seeing it mostly from her perspective in the first two books, we understand her side the most, even if every once in a while we get glimpses of Alec’s reasoning:

*You don’t understand,” Alec said. “You don’t know him. I know him. He thinks he has to save the world; he’d be glad to kill himself trying. Sometimes I think he even wants to die, but that doesn’t mean you should encourage him to do it.”*

*“I don’t get it,” she said. “Jace is a Nephilim. This is what you do, you rescue people, you kill demons, you put yourselves in danger. How was last night any different?”*

*Alec’s control shattered. “Because he left me behind!” he shouted. “Normally I’d be with him, covering him, watching his back, keeping him safe.... (City of Bones; Cassandra Clare)*

Since very young, shadowhunters are trained and expected to fight as early as they are able bodied. Alec had to let go of many aspects of being a child in order to be a fighter, even more so with the weight of having to keep his siblings as safe as possible in midst of battles. It’s this revelation that makes readers forgive his behavior. He was never just a kid being jealous, though that’s part of it, yes, he was also an older brother with a lot of expectations.

Alec later turns eighteen during the series and, like every sibling loves to do, makes sure to shove it into his friends and siblings faces. This is wholesome and relatable but brings an interesting paradox in the sense that Alec is now technically an adult. With the shadowhunters on the brink of a war with potentially devastating consequences, Alec suddenly needs to attend councils, meetings and voting sessions. In a single day, Alec, who was just considered a child, is now expected to have an opinion on very adult topics. His voice that was previously drowned by adults with the pretense of age to disguise it, is now forced to be present, even if it won’t be taken seriously. There’s an imbalance in the way teens are treated, we claim they are not old enough for one thing, then demand they make life changing decisions with the maturity we ask for, but don’t teach. Shadowhunters asked him to

fight at age 14, yet he was still treated as a child. How confusing can that be? Teens and young adults are constantly thrown into paradoxes like this.

It's interesting how before he turned eighteen, he was the know-it-all, fun killer big brother that desperately tries to find reasons to follow the rules he doesn't believe in. He tries to trust the system, the council, the adults. Yet once he turns eighteen, he becomes a young adult. An adult, yes, but what does he really know? He has to take care of his younger siblings, uphold his family's reputation that just barely started recuperating from his parents' mistakes, and somehow still be a civilized member of society. Before, he was judged by peers for being too adult and trying to participate in events he wasn't welcomed yet, only to later be judged for being too childish. Teens can drive, but not drink. They are expected to make their own decisions, but are denied the right to consent. Alec needs to be responsible, but can't be included in "adult talk". He needs to be a warrior, but can't participate in strategy meetings.

Throughout the 20+ books in the Shadowhunter series, we see Alec slowly leave his childhood behind on his own terms. It's not possible to turn into something overnight, the process of becoming an adult is gradual and individual. The teen should have the right to determine which pace to take and how far to go. Alec was already trying to be as adult and responsible as possible, only later he realized he had the right to have fun and dictate how he wanted to grow up. Petty feelings like sibling jealousy are not wiped like his parents expected, but mellowed. He grows the capacity to better understand his feelings and evaluate his reasoning. However, his outcome is not the firm cold soldier one might have concluded from his actions in the first few books. While he doesn't hold onto his childhood rebellion for long like Izzy and Jace do, he shows us flashes of the child within. Moments of humor or levity bring snippets of his jovial sassiness. A perfect example is in the third book, when despite the precarious situation, his priorities are not quite what you would expect.

*"You never called me back;" he said. "I called you so many times and you never called me back."*

*Magnus looked at Alec as if he'd lost his mind. "Your city is under attack," he said. "The wards have been broken, and the streets are full of demons. And you want to know why I haven't called you?"*

*Alec sets his jaw in a stubborn line. "I want to know why you haven't called me **back**."*

*Magnus throws his hands up in the air in a gesture of utter exasperation. Alec noted with interest that when he did it, a few sparks escaped from his fingertips, like fireflies escaping a jar. "You're an idiot."*

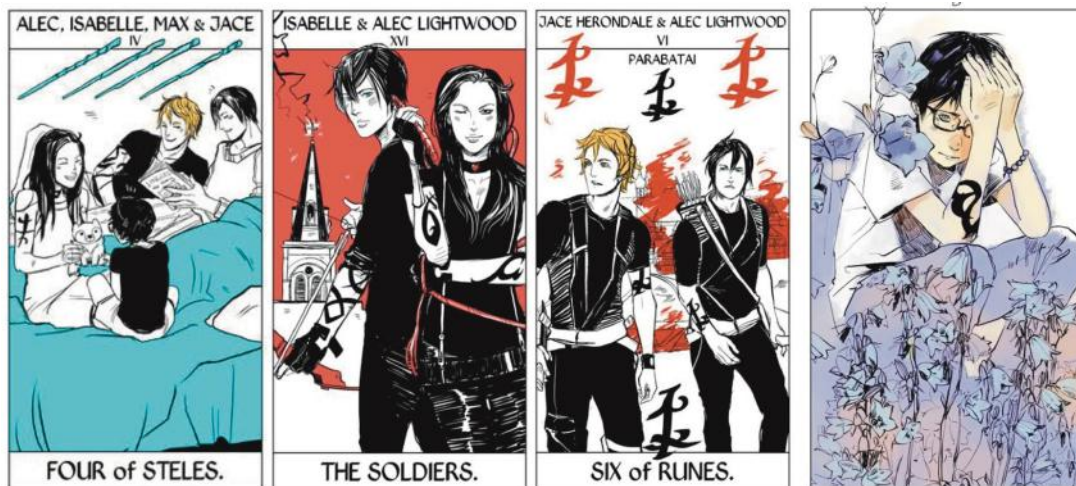
*"Is that why you haven't called me? Because I'm an idiot?"*

*(The Mortal Instruments City of Glass; Cassandra*

*Clare)*

**The right to a fair chance at opportunity / The right to have fun and companions + 03.**

**The right to make mistakes, to find out for one's self**



(Imagem 5: Collection of Illustrations from Cassandra Jean, official illustrator of The Shadowhunter Chronicles)

Talking about Alec is inevitably talking about Jace. Which is probably part of Alec's frustration. Jace Herondale is Alec's adopted brother, taken in by his family at age ten. Jace fits in with the Lightwood remarkably well, the siblings quickly invite him into the dynamic. Four children, Alec being the oldest and most responsible, Jace and Izzy being the middle children and most mischievous, and little Max, the youngest and most innocent, the only one of the four who's not a main character in the series. Clare always describes the Lightwoods as loud and proud, their entrance makes an impact in the room no matter where they go. An honorable Shadowhunter family that tends to have chaos following them around. Jace, while not biologically a Lightwood, very much has the profile of one.

*Every single one of the Lightwood family was there, each one causing enough noise for ten. Robert Lightwood was there, saying something in his booming voice. Maryse Lightwood was holding a bottle and appeared to be waving it around, giving a speech. Isabelle Lightwood was standing on top of a stool for no reason in the world Magnus could see. Jace Herondale was, even more mysteriously, lying flat out on the stone floor, and apparently he'd brought Clary, who looked at Magnus as if she were puzzled by her presence here as well. (Tales from the Shadowhunter Academy; Cassandra Clare)*

Alec is very protective of his siblings and tends to be the voice of reason in the group. With Jace, however, he has a special type of relationship. In the Shadowhunter world, there is

something called *parabatai*, a pair of warriors that swear their life to one another through a ritual that connects their souls. Parabatai are strictly platonic, meant to be two people who love each other so deeply and have a connection beyond that of the mind. They fight seamlessly together, swearing to have each other's back, in battle or otherwise. The ritual must be done until the warriors become eighteen years of age, and will last until after death. Just one more giant life altering decision for teenagers to do. Jace and Alec are *parabatai*. It's a quite odd pair, considering they are almost completely opposite in terms of not only personality, but also fighting style. Jace is intense and reckless, he fights with swords and daggers, close range weapons for hand to hand combat. Alec is calm and calculated, the bow and arrow is his weapon of choice, preferring to take higher ground and strategically corner his opponents. So really, it doesn't make sense at first how they ended up together. Alec, specifically, has a lot of conflicting feelings about Jace.

Jace is the perfect soldier, his skills on the battlefield are unparalleled, several times in the books he is said to be the best of his generation. He garners a lot of attention, as do the rest of the Lightwoods, except Alec. This is not to say that Alec doesn't have a strong personality, he does, it just seems to be overshadowed by Jace's larger than life attitude. We've established before that Alec has to be in constant guard to make sure Jace doesn't get hurt, even mentioning in the sixth book of the series that being his *parabatai* is a full time job since Jace could find himself in trouble by simply putting his pants on in the morning. During the first five books of the series, we are led to believe that Alec holds a grudge towards Jace, even if he doesn't admit it. I kept thinking that Alec couldn't help but be frustrated and jealous. Alec doesn't get his opportunity to shine like Jace does, either because he is occupied babysitting Jace, or because the adults around him have blatant favoritism to his *parabatai* for being a better warrior. Alec doesn't get to have as much fun and be a kid because he has to take the responsibility for his siblings and bear the family name as the oldest since Jace is adopted and can't technically represent the Lightwoods. Jace can make mistakes and experiment, if he fails, Alec is there to catch him. If Alec makes a mistake, it could cost Jace's life.

*Alec pulled his knees up to his chest and looked thoughtfully at Jace. "I know," he said. "I'm not jealous. I always knew, from the first, that everyone thought you were better than me. My dad thought it. The Clave thought it. Izzy and Max looked up to you as the great warrior they wanted to be like. But the day you asked me to be your parabatai, I knew you meant that you trusted me enough to ask me to help you. You were telling me that you weren't this lone and self-sufficient warrior able to do everything alone. You*

*needed me. So I realized that there was one person who didn't assume you were better than me. You." (City of Heavenly Fire; Cassandra Clare)*

This passage is one of the most important moments for Alec's character arc, it happens in the second half of the last book of the first Shadowhunters series. It's a very vulnerable moment for both characters. Jace and Alec are constantly reaffirming how they would do anything for each other throughout the storyline, but this is one of the only moments we get such a candid conversation between them. It tells us a lot about who Alec is. There's clearly some resentment involved, but it's not as Jace focused as I once thought in the sense that he doesn't resent Jace for being who he is, he resents himself for not living up to his *parabatai*. There is a sense of insecurity, a guilt for not being good enough. In spite of that, there is also pride. While everyone he loves looks up and praises his brother, Jace looks up to Alec. Jace sees in Alec someone he can be vulnerable with, someone that can do what he can't: keep his cool, be reliable and kind. Alec values Jace's trust more than anything, because he knows how hard it is to gain it. Jace, the mighty invincible warrior, was the one that asked Alec to be his partner. Alec likes taking care of people, that's something he figured out as the story went on, not because he had to or was forced to, it's just who he is. Alec learns to balance the responsibilities he chooses to take on with having an actual personal life.

*"It's me," he said, and cleared his throat. "I could understand if you didn't believe me, but I swear on the Angel, Iz, it's me." Alec said nothing, but his grip on Jace's hand tightened. "You don't need to swear," he said, and with his free hand touched the parabatai rune near his collarbone. "I know. I can feel it. I don't feel like I'm missing a part of me anymore."*

*"I felt it too." Jace took a ragged breath. "Something missing. I felt it, even with Sebastian, but I didn't know what it was I was missing. But it was you. My parabatai." (City of Lost Souls; Cassandra Clare)*

### **The right to be at a romantic age / The right to have a say in their own life**

*The right or wrong in the society is built by themselves and may be it influences by their religions and cultures....Generally, people shape the rules that have been around a long time. Social and Cultural norms can significantly influence both the expression of gender identity. (NINGRUM, 2015)*

Alec's journey in regards to his sexuality is a key factor for the character's storyline. As Amila Sholehati Ningrum said in the expert from her own character analysis of Alec



Lightwood, the social and cultural norms in the Shadowhunter world really impacted in the way he expresses himself. Alec is gay and the reader knows this since the very first book. So do most of the main characters. His sexuality is a known secret. An important fact about the Shadowhunter society is that it is considerably less progressed than the mundane world. The absolute ignorance when it comes to technology is a frequent source of comedic relief in the series. Unfortunately, that also applies to social norms. Homosexuality isn't even really acknowledged by the shadowhunters, and it is extremely frowned upon. That combined with the fact that Alec is trying to clear his family name, makes it hard for him to own up his identity. Alec spends the first two and a half books trying to hide his relationship with warlock Magnus Bane in fear of the backlash he would have from the community and his parents disappointment. The way Alec came out was very brave and very public, kissing the warlock in front of the whole Shadowhunter community and his parents. To see him finally break free from such shackles was emotional to me as a reader, even if we can see the consequences of such liberation in the following books.

*"Iz," Alec said tiredly. "It's not like it's one big bad thing. It's a lot of little invisible things. When Magnus and I were traveling, and I'd call from the road, Dad never asked how he was. When I get up to talk in Clave meetings, no one listens, and I don't know if that's because I'm young or if it's because of something else. I saw Mom talking to a friend about her grandchildren and the second I walked into the room they shut up. Irina Cartwright told me it was a pity no one would ever inherit my blue eyes now." He shrugged and looked toward Magnus, who took a hand off the wheel for a moment to place it on Alec's. "It's not like a stab wound you can protect me from. It's a million little paper cuts every day." (City of Lost Souls; Cassandra Clare)*

This quote from the fifth book of the series is one of the most memorable Alec scenes, it is also one of the most beloved. Alec is an outcast for most of his life, he's young, he's a Lightwood, he fights to live not to die, he's gay and dating a warlock. There's so many reasons to be hated, yet so little to be loved. There's an archetype already sorted for him to fit in since young, and he throws it all away to be what he wants to be. He was already being judged no matter what he did. That's how it feels to be young sometimes, like there's a magnifying glass in everything you do, adults trying to stir you in the direction they believe is best and betting on how you'll end up. Alec represents a lot to readers, as Alice D. Palmer talked about in her senior project for the State University of New York *The Political Battle Field in Cassandra Clare's Shadow World and YA*.

*Alec represents people who are different and "the other" in Clare's work. One of The Cohort members outright says, in regards to Alec, "he's a filthy pervert" (Clare 827). Clare says in an interview with the Independent, that she originally had a lot of pushback against the first book that Alec was included in. Publishers wanted him cut out. Barnes & Noble put a 'sexual content' warning on the book because of it. (PALMER, pg.8)*

As you can see, the push back wasn't just inside the story, Clare had to fight to keep Alec in the book and portrait him as she did, and it paid off remarkably well. The character was so beloved it gained its own series later on. Alec is a voice for a lot of queer kids that needed representation, not only that, but any young adult dealing with familial expectations and identity crisis could relate to him. A lot of that comes from Alec's aesthetic.

Alec does not fit the standard of the stereotypical homosexual character. The comparison I can make is with Alec's boyfriend Magnus. Magnus Bane is one of the most memorable characters of the Shadowhunter series, he's a very powerful warlock and has an interesting personality. Magnus is flamboyant, extravagant, eccentric and slightly effeminate. All adjectives often related to being a gay man. The contrast between him and Alec is quite glaring, but it was an important step for the LGBT+ community to have the stereotypes the media trapped them in placed in such a powerful main character like Magnus, only to then break them all in Alec. It shows there's no right or wrong way to be something, and that's why stereotypes can be harmful, they can make someone feel out of place in their own skin. Alec is not the traditional Shadowhunter, neither is he the traditional homosexual. Even when he develops a sense of style outside classic Shadowhunter black due to his relationship with Magnus, he still sticks to sweaters and jeans, simple and comfortable. He grows into himself without letting the peer pressure get to him. He dates who he wants, wears what he wants even with hurtful comments constantly being thrown his way.

Petra Krizkova in her text *LGBTQ+ Representation in Young Adult American Fiction* talks about this being one of the appeals of the character for the younger generation of queer folk:

*This also supports the reader's ability to relate to the characters, since many readers are likely to have rather conservative relatives of the older generation, who are no longer willing to learn other sentiments than those that they had internalized during their own up-bringing. (KRIZKOVA, 2022, p. 24)*

### **The right to struggle towards one's own philosophy of life / The right to question ideas**

The Shadowhunter politics is quite complex, there is a chain of command that goes from the Clave, a Congress of sorts, to the Inquisitor that works as a Secretary of State and an Ambassador, and finally the Consul, the one with the final say. All shadowhunters can come

to Clave meetings and have opinions, as well as vote for future leaders and members of the Clave. This chain is unfortunately littered with older generations of Shadowhunters that are still stuck in the old beliefs. Clare's world is an allegory to the real world in many ways, but this might be the most obvious. Racial discrimination is represented by the hostility between the Shadowhunters and the Downworlders. Since the warriors are a hybrid of human and angel, they believe they are superior to every other species, including humans and all types of downworlders. Fairies, Warlocks, Werewolves and Vampires suffer a lot of discrimination, they are constantly in surveillance of the shadowhunters, the laws prohibit them from taking part in discussions about the Shadow World. Shadowhunters can not marry Downworlders.

Overall, Alec grew up with hundreds of years of generational intolerance being shoved forward to him. In the beginning of the series, Alec makes intolerant comments every once in a while, though both to his siblings and the readers it is obvious those worlds have been repeated time and time again. Both Jace and Izzy call him out on the robotic way he says it, almost as if he's been programmed to do it. Alec is a great example of how to break free from harmful ideology, despite repeating the words said to him throughout his life, he makes friends with downworlders and protects them when called upon. He's not ashamed but he does fear the consequences of supporting the downworlders rights. It's after he kisses his warlock boyfriend in front of everyone that he starts advocating more enthusiastically.

Both Alec and Magnus become recurrent characters in the following series, coming back for cameos or to help the main characters of that story in both Shadowhunters and Downworlders affairs. The couple becomes a reference for any family with interracial relationships. It's in the end of *Queen of Air and Darkness*, the third book of the series following Alec's, taking place about 5 years from when Alec was a teenager, that we can see the difference Alec's determination makes. By choosing to go against the Clave but still remain a Shadowhunter and advocate in meetings, he carved himself a place in the big guys. When a civil war takes place in this book, the younger generations of shadowhunters that are now fighting for their ideology, vote to put Alec as the new Consul. The only person surprised by this decision is Alec himself. He doesn't take long to step into the role though, immediately taking decisions to help the younger shadowhunters, from pardoning the transgender Shadowhunter Diana for using human medical practices to transition and giving her the Head of the Los Angeles Shadowhunter Institute, to taking action in ending the Cold Peace that had been exiling anyone with fairie heritage. One of the first actions he takes however is in regards to himself, legalizing both gay and interracial marriage and immediately proposing to Magnus.

*“And when one day people look back on me and what my life meant, I don't want them to say, 'Alec Lightwood fought in the Dark War' or even 'Alec Lightwood was Consul once. I want them to think, 'Alec Lightwood loved one man so much he changed the world for him.'” (Queen of Air and Darkness; Cassandra Clare)*

## Fanfic: Alec Lightwood and Little Me

- What are we doing again? - the girl asked.

- Summoning an Angel. - Alec answered.

- Ah, yeah, makes sense.

Car rides are a universally relatable experience. Even in the Fairytales, it seemed. Stiff neck and a shitty TMJ inflammation made car rides very unpleasant, her moms deranged driving nauseating.

This car ride however, sitting between Simon and Izzy, Alec and Magnus in the front seats, this one she quite enjoyed.

- So his only powers are strength and healing? That's all he got from the radioactive spider? - Alec looked done with the conversation even though he was actively, and voluntarily, participating.

- And griping. - Isabelle added, cheekbones blushing under Simon's proudful gaze.

- He just seems like a very athletic guy to me... - Alec murmured.

The girl gasped with Simon, her nerdy ass appalled by the blasphemy of the statement.

- Alexander, I think you unsettled the geeks. - Oh Magnus, how she loved Magnus.

- Okay, think from the point of contextualization, in the mundane world, we die from colds okay, besides, there are several different modifications his body went through, his metabolism is faster than average, his cells are mutated..

- His senses are heightened! - the girl interrupted Simon.

- Hm. - Alec hummed - What makes him a spider tho?

The car sighed, Magnus laughing at the sheer capacity for annoyance his lover possessed.

- Not everything will be passed from the source to the subject. - even without looking, one could tell Simon was rolling his eyes.

- Well, that kills the gay spider theory. - Izzy commented.

The girl couldn't help but stop to consider the subject. Due to the nature of complete chaos her life has been, she was always too focused on surviving to consider understanding her own identity. It's easier to shove herself into whatever mold is more socially excepted: cis, straight and neurotypical.

- It's no use. - Alec was looking at her, his seatbelt straining as he leaned forward between the seats. - Going through life in an ill-fitted pair of jeans is uncomfortable, it leaves you red and chaffed, constantly waiting for the end of the day when you can get them off.

- Sometimes you don't even like jeans, you're just wearing them cuz everybody else is. - Magnus waved his hands as he talked, the array of rings and bracelets click-clacked, the glitter that followed the warlock around, scattering across the car's leather.

Her eyes shift from Magnus to Alec, kind blue eyes gently prompting her to reflect the message beneath them.

The couple was such a contrast. Magnus, she knew well, saw him everywhere, the stereotypical image of a gay man<sup>44</sup>. Androgynous, loud and extravagant. Entertaining. She loved him the second she met him.

Alec, however, was interesting. The girl absolutely hated him in the beginning. Such a boring know it all, it dampened Magnus' shine and creativity. With time, though, with every sentence of every page Alec became human in a way that made her question the limits of fiction. He had so many feelings, so relatable, so many conflicting ideas. Sassy yet serious, professional yet lenient, confident yet insecure. Gay, yet not Magnus. She never met someone quite like Alec before, and here, soothed by the smooth hum of an engine, squished between

Simon and Isabelle, locking eyes with Alec's endless blue while struggling to hold the weight of the first book she ever truly loved, she felt weirdly seen.

# 5

## Conclusion

Just like when I first created my research group, I was warned several times by fellow students and teachers that my writing wasn't the traditional type of text the university preferred. Just like every other time in my life, I chose to ignore those comments and stick to what I love to do. I think I managed to create something in between.

We started with *Little Me* because I wanted the first thing the reader felt to be the emotion and connection I, and so many others from my generation, have to these books. I created a small introduction to the history of Young Adult Literature and Fanfiction since it was brought to my attention that the academic field has yet to fully embrace them as viable research objects, so basic information about them has yet to be disseminated. I moved on to talk a bit about myself and my connections to this type of literature, highlighting the reasons I gravitated towards it since young.

It was in methodology that we truly got into the idea behind my final essay. Using Elliot E. Cohen's *The Teenage Bill of Rights* as a guide, I decided to list the different aspects of young adult characters that makes them so relatable to teenage readers, and how that set of characteristics is what differentiate the genre from its counterparts. The decision of the character came from my own personal experience with YAL as well as the popularity of Cassandra Clare's books. To further strengthen my point, on the Archive of Our Own, one of the biggest fanfiction platforms in the world, the Shadowhunters page shows how, even with 20+ books, one movie and one tv series, hundreds and hundreds of characters, Alec is still the most tagged character in over 43 thousand fanfiction written about the Shadow world. That means that he's in over 70% of FanFictions written about shadowhunters, whether as a side character or main character.

Finally, after analyzing every aspect I possibly could about Alexander Lightwood - his parental expectations, sibling rivalry, sexual identity, peer pressure and the challenges of growing up - I feel even closer to him than when I first read the books. Alec was the perfect



example of young adult representation in literacy, and I'll continue to look up to him as I work towards validating my field of research. Alec Lightwood and Little Me is a fanfic I wrote to insert creative writing, my true passion, into the text, hopefully giving a glimpse to how a young reader feels safe to interact with characters like Alec Lightwood.

You must have noticed I left one last bill to adressed.

### **The right to professional help whenever necessary.**

The reason I left it to the end is because I think it's the most important one, so I wanted it to be the last thing mentioned in this text. A lot of young people feel like they are not allowed to ask for help, that their feelings are childish and temporary. Remember, mental health is as much a priority as physical health, and age is NOT an excluding factor to who deserves to receive such care.

*"Sometimes the bravest thing you can do is admit your fears and ask for help." - Alexander Lightwood (City of Glass; Cassandra Clare)*



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