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THE INFERNAL DEVICES

• Book Two •

# Clockwork Prince

CASSANDRA CLARE

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*“To none. No, Miss Manette, to none. If you will hear me through a very little more, all you can ever do for me is done. I wish you to know that you have been the last dream of my soul. . . . Since I knew you, I have been troubled by a remorse that I thought would never reproach me again, and have heard whispers from old voices impelling me upward, that I thought were silent for ever. I have had unformed ideas of striving afresh, beginning anew, shaking off sloth and sensuality, and fighting out the abandoned fight. A dream, all a dream, that ends in nothing. . . .”*

—Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*

## PROLOGUE: The Outcast Dead

The fog was thick, muffling sound and sight; where it parted, Will Herondale could see the street rising ahead of him, slick and wet and black with rain, and hear the voices of the dead.

Not all Shadowhunters could hear ghosts, unless the ghosts chose to be heard, but Will was one of the few who could. As he approached the old cemetery, their voices rose in a ragged musical chorus: wails and pleading, cries and snarls. This was not a peaceful burial ground, but Will knew that; it was not his first visit to the Cross Bones Graveyard near London Bridge. He did his best to block out the noises, hunching his shoulders so that his collar covered his ears, his head down, a fine mist of rain dampening his black hair.

The entrance was halfway down the block: a pair of wrought iron gates set into a high stone wall. Any mundane passing by could see the thick chain that bound the gates shut, and the

sign declaring the premises closed—it had been fifteen years since a body was buried here. As Will neared the gates, something no mundane would have seen materialized out of the fog: a great bronze knocker in the shape of a hand, the fingers bony and skeletal. With a grimace, Will reached out one of his own gloved hands and lifted the knocker, letting it fall once, twice, three times, the hollow clank resounding through the night like the rattling chains of Marley’s ghost.

Beyond the gates, mist rose like steam from the ground, obscuring the grave markers and long, uneven plots of earth between them. Slowly the mist began to coalesce, taking on an eerie blue glow. Will put his hands to the bars of the gate; the cold of the metal seeped through his gloves, into his bones, and he shivered. It was a more than ordinary cold—when ghosts rose, they drew energy from their surroundings, depriving the air and space around them of heat. The hairs of the back of Will’s neck prickled and stood up as the blue mist formed slowly into the shape of an old woman in a ragged dress and white apron, her head bent.

“Hallo, Mol,” said Will. “You’re looking particularly fine this evening, if I do say so.”

The ghost raised her head. Old Molly was a strong spirit, one of the stronger Will had encountered. Even as moonlight speared through a gap in the clouds, she hardly looked transparent: her body was solid, her hair twisted in a thick yellow-gray coil over one shoulder, her rough, red hands braced on her hips. Only her eyes were hollow, twin blue flames flickering in their depths.

“William Herondale,” she said. “Back again so soon?”

She moved toward the gate with that gliding motion pecu-

liar to ghosts. Her feet were bare and filthy, despite the fact that they never touched the ground.

Will leaned against the gate. “You know I missed your pretty face.”

She grinned, her eyes flickering, and he caught a glimpse of the skull beneath the half-transparent skin. Overhead, the clouds had closed in on each other again, black and roiling, blocking out the moon. Idly, Will wondered what Old Molly had done to get herself buried here, far from consecrated ground. Most of the whispering voices of the dead belonged to prostitutes, suicides, and stillbirths—those outcast dead who could not be buried in a churchyard. Although Molly had managed to make the situation quite profitable for herself, so perhaps she didn’t mind.

She chortled. “What d’you want then, young Shadow-hunter? Malphas venom? I ’ave the talon of a Morax demon, polished very fine, the poison at the tip entirely invisible—”

“No,” Will said. “That’s not what I need. I need Foraii demon powders, ground fine.”

Molly turned her head to the side and spat a tendril of blue fire. “Now what’s a fine young man like you want with stuff like that?”

Will just sighed inwardly; Molly’s protests were part of the bargaining process. Magnus had already sent Will to Old Mol several times now, once for black stinking candles that stuck to his skin like tar, once for the bones of an unborn child, and once for a bag of faeries’ eyes which had dripped blood on his shirt. Foraii demon powder sounded pleasant by comparison.

“You think I’m a fool,” Molly went on. “This is a trap, innit?”

You Nephilim catch me selling that sort of stuff, an' it's the stick for Old Mol, it is."

"You're *already* dead." Will did his best not to sound irritable. "I don't know what you think the Clave could do to you now."

"Pah." Her hollow eyes flamed. "The prisons of the Silent Brothers, beneath the earth, can 'old either the living or the dead; you know that, Will Herondale."

Will held his hands up. "No tricks, old one. Surely you must have heard the rumors running about Downworld. The Clave has other things on its mind than tracking down ghosts who traffic in demon powders and faerie blood." He leaned forward. "I'll give you a good price." He drew a cambric bag from his pocket and dangled it in the air. It clinked like coins rattling together. "They all fit your description, Mol."

An eager look came over her dead face, and she solidified enough to take the bag from him. She plunged one hand into it and brought her palm out full of rings—gold wedding rings, each tied in a lover's knot at the top. Old Mol, like many ghosts, was always looking for that talisman, that lost piece of her past that would finally allow her to die, the anchor that kept her trapped in the world. In her case, it was her wedding ring. It was common belief, Magnus had told Will, that the ring was long gone, buried under the silty bed of the Thames, but in the meantime she'd take any bag of found rings on the hope one would turn out to be hers. So far it hadn't happened.

She dropped the rings back into the bag, which vanished somewhere on her undead person, and handed him a folded sachet of powder in return. He slipped it into his jacket pocket just as the ghost began to shimmer and fade. "Hold up, there, Mol. That isn't all I have come for, tonight."

The spirit flickered while greed warred with impatience and the effort of remaining visible. Finally, she grunted. “Very well. What else d’you want?”

Will hesitated. This was not something Magnus had sent him for; it was something he wanted to know for himself. “Love potions—”

Old Mol screeched with laughter. “*Love potions?* For Will Herondale? T’aint my way to turn down payment, but any man who looks like you has got no need of love potions, and that’s a fact.”

“No,” Will said, a little desperation in his voice, “I was looking for the opposite, really—something that might put an end to being in love.”

“An ’atred potion?” Mol still sounded amused.

“I was hoping for something more akin to indifference? Toleration . . . ?”

She made a snorting noise, astonishingly human for a ghost. “I ’ardly like to tell you this, Nephilim, but if you want a girl to ’ate you, there’s easy enough ways of making it ’appen. You don’t need *my* help with the poor thing.”

And with that, she vanished, spinning away into the mists among the graves. Will, looking after her, sighed. “Not for her,” he said, under his breath, though there was no one to hear him, “for *me* . . .” and he leaned his head against the cold iron gate.