

THE
SILVER
MASK

Also by

HOLLY BLACK *and*
CASSANDRA CLARE

THE IRON TRIAL

THE COPPER GAUNTLET

THE BRONZE KEY

MAGISTERIUM

BOOK FOUR

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SILVER
MASK

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
SCOTT FISCHER



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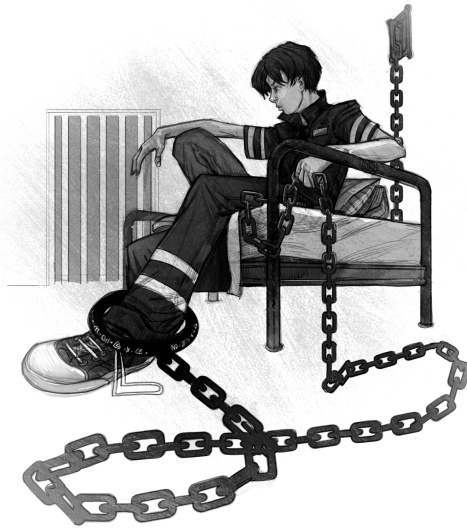
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FOR ELIAS DELOS CHURGHILL,
WHO MAY BE THE EVIL TWIN

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CHAPTER ONE

PRISON WAS NOT like Call expected it to be. He had grown up with the crime shows on television, so he thought he was supposed to have a gruff roommate to show him the ropes and how to get really buff from lifting weights. He was supposed to hate the food and not start anything with anybody, for fear of getting shanked with a cleverly sculpted toothbrush knife.

It turned out that the only thing being in magical prison had in common with television prison was that the main character was totally framed for a crime he hadn't committed.

In the mornings, he was awoken when lights all over the Panopticon went from dim to blindingly bright. Blinking and yawning, he watched the other prisoners (there seemed to be around fifty) as they were let out of their cells. They shuffled

off, probably to breakfast, but Call's tray was delivered right to his door by two guards, one of whom scowled. The other looked intimidated.

Call, who had grown bored over the last six months, made a face just to see the freaked-out guard get more freaked-out.

None of them saw him as a fifteen-year-old, as a kid. They all thought of him as the Enemy of Death.

In all the time he'd been here, not a single person had come to visit him. Not his father. Not his friends. Call tried to tell himself that they weren't allowed, but that wasn't comforting either; they were probably in a lot of trouble. They probably wished they'd never even heard of Callum Hunt.

He finished eating some of the slop on the tray and then brushed his teeth to get the taste out of his mouth. The guards returned — it was time for interrogation.

Every day, he was taken to a windowless, white-walled room where three Assembly members grilled him about his life. It was the only interruption in the monotony of his day.

What was your first memory?

When did you realize you were evil?

I know you say that you can't remember anything about being Constantine Madden, but what if you try harder?

How many times did you meet Master Joseph? What did he say to you? Where is his stronghold? What are his plans?

Whatever his answer, they would go over the minutia until Call himself got confused. They accused him of lying a lot.

Sometimes when he got tired and bored, he was tempted to lie because what they wanted to hear was so obvious and it seemed like it might be easier to tell them. But he didn't lie, because his Evil Overlord list was back in effect and he was assigning himself points for anything he did that seemed Evil Overlord-ish. Lying definitely counted.

It was easy to rack up Evil Overlord Points in prison.

His interrogators talked a lot about the devastating charm of the Enemy of Death and how Call shouldn't be allowed to talk to any of the other prisoners, for fear of seducing them over to his evil schemes.

Call might have found this flattering if it wasn't so clear that they thought he was deliberately hiding this aspect of his character from them. If Constantine Madden had possessed devastating charisma, they felt Call was showing the exact opposite. They didn't look forward to seeing him — and he didn't look forward to seeing them, either.

That day, though, Call was in for a surprise. When he walked in to be interrogated, it wasn't his usual interrogators sitting there. Instead, on the other side of the white desk, he found his former teacher, Master Rufus, dressed in black, his bald brown head shining under the too-bright lights.

Call hadn't seen anyone he knew in so long. He had an urge to leap across the table and hug Master Rufus, despite the fact that Master Rufus was glowering at him and wasn't a huge hugger in general.

Call sat down in the chair opposite his teacher. He couldn't even wave or offer to shake Master Rufus's hand, since his wrists were bound in front of him with a glowing chain of incredibly hard metal.

He cleared his throat. "How's Tamara?" he said. "Is she all right?"

Master Rufus looked at him for a long time. "I'm not sure I should tell you," he said finally. "I am not sure who you are, Call."

Call's chest hurt. "Tamara's my best friend. I want to know how she is. And Havoc. Even Jasper."

It felt strange not to mention Aaron, too. Despite knowing Aaron was dead, despite going over the circumstances of his death again and again — Call still missed him in a way that made him much more present than he was absent.

Master Rufus steepled his fingers under his chin. "I want to believe you," he said. "But you've lied to me for a long time."

"I didn't have a choice!" Call protested.

"You did. You could have told me at any time that Constantine Madden lived inside you. How long did you know? Did you trick me into choosing you as an apprentice?"

"At the Iron Trial?" Call couldn't believe it. "I didn't know anything back then! I tried to fail — I didn't even *want* to go to the Magisterium."

Master Rufus still looked skeptical. "It was the fact you tried to fail that caught my eye. Constantine would have known that. He would have known how to manipulate me."

“I’m not him,” said Call. “I might have his soul, but I’m not him.”

“Let us hope not, for your sake,” said Rufus.

Call felt bone-tired all of a sudden. “Why did you come?” he asked his teacher. “Because you hate me?”

This seemed to take Master Rufus aback for a moment. “I don’t hate you,” he said with more sadness than anger. “I came to like Callum Hunt — very much. But, once, I liked Constantine Madden . . . and he nearly destroyed us all. Perhaps that’s why I came: to see if I can trust myself as a judge of character . . . or if I’ve made the same mistake twice.”

He looked as tired as Call felt.

“They’re done interrogating you,” Rufus continued. “Now they have to decide what to do with you. I intended to speak at the hearing, to say what you just said — that you may have Constantine’s soul, but you are not Constantine. Still, I had to see it myself to believe it.”

“And?”

“He was much more charming than you.”

“So everyone says,” muttered Call.

Master Rufus hesitated. “Do you want to get out of prison?” he asked.

It was the first time anyone had asked Call that.

“I don’t know,” he said after some thought. “I — I let Aaron get killed. Maybe I deserve to be here. Maybe I should stay.”

After this admission, there was a long, long silence. Master Rufus rose to his feet. “Constantine loved his brother,” he said.

“But he would never have said he deserved to be punished for his brother’s death. It was always someone else’s fault.”

Call didn’t say anything.

“Secrets hurt the keeper more than you think. I always knew you had secrets, Callum, and I’d hoped you’d reveal them to me. If you had, maybe things would have gone differently.”

Call closed his eyes, afraid that Master Rufus was right. He’d kept his secrets and then he’d made Tamara and Aaron and Jasper keep them, too. If only he’d gone to Master Rufus. If only he’d gone to someone, maybe things would be different.

“I know you still have secrets,” Master Rufus went on, surprising Call into looking up.

“So you think I’m lying, too?” Call demanded.

“No,” Master Rufus said. “But this may be your last chance to unburden yourself. And it may be my last chance to be able to help you.”

Call thought of Anastasia Tarquin and how she’d revealed herself as Constantine’s mother. At the time, he hadn’t known what to think. He was reeling from Aaron’s death, reeling from feeling like everyone he’d believed in had betrayed him.

But what good was telling Master Rufus that? It wouldn’t help Call. It would only hurt someone else, someone who’d put her trust in him.

“I want to tell you a story,” Master Rufus said. “There was a mage, once, a man who very much liked teaching and sharing

his love of magic. He believed in his students and he believed in himself. When a great tragedy shook that belief, he realized he was lonely — that he had dedicated all his life to the Magisterium and that it was otherwise empty.”

Call blinked. He felt pretty sure this story was about Master Rufus himself, and he had to admit he’d never thought of Rufus as having a life outside the Magisterium. He’d never thought about Rufus having friends or a family or anyone to visit on holidays or make tornado phone calls to.

“You can just say this story is about you,” Call told his teacher. “It’ll still have emotional resonance.”

Master Rufus glared at him. “Fine,” he said. “It was after the Third Mage War that I faced the loneliness of the life I had chosen. And as fate would have it, I fell in love soon after — in a library, researching ancient documents.” He smiled a little. “But he wasn’t a mage. He knew nothing of the secret world of magic. And I couldn’t tell him. It would have broken all the rules if I’d told him how our world worked, and he would have thought I was insane. So I told him that I worked abroad and came home for holidays. We spoke often, but essentially, I was lying to him. I didn’t want to be, but I was.”

“Isn’t that a story about how it’s better to keep secrets?” Call asked.

Master Rufus’s eyebrows made another of their unlikely moves, lowering in a truly impressive glower. “It’s a story meant to show you that I understand about keeping secrets. I understand how they protect people and how they can hurt the

person keeping them. Call, if there's anything to tell, tell me, and I will do whatever I can to make sure it helps you."

"I don't have any secrets," Call said. "Not anymore."

Master Rufus nodded, then sighed.

"Tamara is fine," he told Call. "Lessons without you and Aaron are lonely, but she is coping. Havoc misses you, of course. As for Jasper, I could not guess. He has done some strange things with his hair lately, but that might have nothing to do with you."

"Okay," Call said, a little dazed. "Thanks."

"As for Aaron," said Master Rufus, "he was buried with all the splendor accorded a Makar. His funeral was attended by the entire Assembly and all of the Magisterium."

Call nodded and looked at the floor. *Aaron's funeral*. Hearing Master Rufus say those words — hearing the pain in his voice — made it feel more than real to Call. This would always be the central fact of his life: If it hadn't been for him, his best friend would still be alive.

Master Rufus headed for the door to let himself out, but he paused on the way, just a second, and rested his hand on Call's head. It made Call's throat tighten up in a way that surprised him.

When Call was escorted back to his cell, he had the next surprise of the day. His father, Alastair, was standing outside, waiting for him.

Alastair gave a little wave, and Call wiggled his cuffed

hands. He had to blink a lot or the devastatingly villainous charms of the Enemy of Death were going to dissolve into tears.

Call's guards brought him into his cell and uncuffed him. They were older mages, dressed in the dark brown uniform of the Panopticon. After undoing his hands, they fastened a metal cuff around his leg, one that connected to a hook in the wall. The chain was long enough to allow Call to wander around the cell, but not long enough for him to reach the bars or the door.

The guards left the cell, locked it, and retreated into the shadows. Call knew they were there, though. That was the point of the Panopticon: Someone was always watching you.

"You're all right?" said Alastair roughly, as soon as the guards were gone. "They haven't hurt you?"

He looked as if he wanted to grab Call up and run his hands over him for injuries, the way he used to when Call fell off a swing set or knocked into a tree on his skateboard.

Call shook his head. "They haven't tried to hurt me physically at all," he said.

Alastair nodded. His eyes looked pinched and tired behind his glasses. "I would have come sooner," he said, settling himself on the uncomfortable-looking metal chair the guards had placed on the other side of the bars, "but they weren't allowing you visitors."

The wash of relief Call felt was incredible. Somehow he had managed to convince himself that his father was happy

they'd locked him up. Or maybe not *happy* — but better off without him.

He was so glad that wasn't true.

"I tried everything," Alastair told his son.

Call didn't know how to respond. There was no way for him to say how sorry he was. He also didn't understand why all of a sudden he was allowed to have visitors . . . unless he'd outlived his usefulness to the Assembly.

Maybe these were the last visits he'd ever have.

"I saw Master Rufus today," he told his dad. "He said they were done interrogating me. Does that mean they're going to kill me?"

Alastair looked shocked. "Call, they can't do that. You haven't done anything wrong."

"They think I murdered Aaron!" Call said. "I'm in prison! Obviously, they think I did something wrong."

And I did do something wrong, he added in his head. Even if Alex Strike had been the one to actually kill Aaron, keeping Call's secret was the reason he was dead.

Alastair shook his head, dismissing Call's words. "They are afraid — afraid of Constantine, afraid of you — so they're looking for an excuse to keep you here. They don't really believe you were responsible for Aaron's death." Alastair sighed. "And if that doesn't comfort you, think of this — since they don't understand how Constantine transferred his soul to you, I am sure they don't want to risk you transferring your soul to someone else."

Call's dad hated the mage world and wasn't much of an optimist to begin with, but in this case, Alastair's grimness made Call feel better. He definitely had a point. It had never even occurred to Call that he could transfer his soul to someone else, or that the mages might be worried about it.

"So they're going to keep me here, locked up," Call said. "And then they're going to throw away the key and forget me."

Alastair was silent for a long moment after that, which was a lot less reassuring.

"When did you know?" Call blurted out, afraid the silence might drag on longer.

"Know what?" Alastair asked.

"That I wasn't your real son."

Alastair frowned. "You *are* my son, Callum."

"You know what I mean," Call said with a sigh . . . although he couldn't deny that it made him feel better that Alastair had corrected him. "When did you realize I had his soul?"

"Early," Alastair said, surprising Call a little. "I guessed. I knew what Constantine had been studying. It seemed possible he had succeeded in shifting his soul into your body."

Callum remembered the damning message his mother had left for Alastair, the one that Master Joseph, the Enemy of Death's instructor and most devoted minion, had shown him, but that his father had left out of his story:

KILL THE CHILD.

It still chilled him to think of his mother writing that with

her dying strength, of his father reading those words with a squalling baby — Call — in his arms.

Alastair could have just walked out of the cave if he guessed what it meant. The cold would have done the rest.

“Why did you do it? Why did you save me?” Callum demanded now. He hadn’t meant his words to sound so angry, but they did. He *felt* angry, even though he knew the alternative was his own death.

“You’re my son,” Alastair said again, helplessly. “Whatever else you are, you are always and also my child. Souls are malleable, Call. They’re not set in stone. I thought if I raised you correctly . . . if I gave you the right guidance . . . if I loved you enough, you would be all right.”

“Look how that turned out,” Call said.

Before his dad could answer, a guard reappeared in front of the cell to announce that visiting time was over.

Alastair stood up and then, in a low voice, spoke again. “I don’t know if I did any of the right things, Call. But for what it’s worth, I think you turned out fine.”

With that, he walked away, escorted by another guard.

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Call slept better that night than he had since his first night in the Panopticon. The bed was narrow and the mattress flat, and it was cold in the cell. At night, when he closed his eyes, he always had the same dream: the bolt of magic hitting Aaron.

Aaron's body sailing through the air before it hit the ground. Tamara crouched over Aaron, sobbing. And a voice saying, *It's your fault; it's your fault.*

That night, though, he didn't dream, and when he woke up, there was a guard outside his cell, holding his tray of breakfast. "You've got another visitor," the guard said, looking at Call sideways. He was pretty sure all the guards were still waiting for him to slay them with that charisma.

Call sat up. "Who is it?"

The guard shrugged. "Some student from your school."

Call's heart began to pound. It was Tamara. It had to be Tamara. Who else would visit him?

He barely noticed the guard sliding the breakfast tray through the narrow opening at the bottom of the door. He was too busy sitting up straight and running his fingers through his tangled hair, trying to calm it and figure out what to say to Tamara when she came in.

Hey, how are you doing, sorry I let our best friend get killed. . . .

The door opened and his visitor came through, walking between two guards. It was a Magisterium student — that was true.

But it wasn't Tamara.

"Jasper?" Call said in disbelief.

"I know." Jasper held up his hands as if to ward off gratitude. "Obviously you're overwhelmed by my kindness in coming here."

"Uh," Call said. Master Rufus had been right about

Jasper — his hair looked like he hadn't brushed it in years. It was sticking out all over. Call marveled at it. Had Jasper really worked to get it looking like that? On purpose? "I assume you came to tell me how much everyone at school hates me."

"They don't think of you all that much," Jasper said, obviously lying. "You just didn't make that big of an impression. Mostly, everyone's sad about Aaron. They thought of you as his sidekick, you know? Blending into the background."

They think of you as his murderer. That's what Jasper meant, even if he didn't say it.

After that, Call couldn't bring himself to ask about Tamara. "Did you get in a lot of trouble?" he asked instead. "I mean, because of me."

Jasper rubbed his hands against his designer jeans. "Mostly they wanted to know if you put spells on us to keep us in your dark thrall. I said you weren't a good enough mage to do anything like that."

"Thanks, Jasper," said Call, not sure if he meant it or not.

"So what's it like in the ole Panopticon?" Jasper asked, looking around. "It's very, uh, sterile-looking in here. Have you met any real criminals? Did you get a tattoo?"

"Seriously?" Call said. "You came to ask me if I got a tattoo?"

"No," said Jasper, abandoning all pretenses. "I actually came because — well — Celia broke up with me."

"What?" Call was incredulous. "I can't believe it."

“I know!” said Jasper. “I can’t believe it either!” He flopped down in the uncomfortable visitor chair. “We were perfect together!”

Call wished he could reach Jasper so he could strangle him. “No, I meant I can’t believe you went through six checkpoints and a potentially embarrassing full-body search just so you could come here and complain about your love life!”

“You’re the only one I can talk to, Call,” said Jasper.

“You mean because I’m chained to this floor and can’t get away?”

“Exactly.” Jasper seemed pleased. “Everyone else bolts when they see me. But they don’t understand. I have to get Celia back.”

“Jasper,” said Call. “Tell me something, and please answer honestly.”

Jasper nodded.

“Is this the Assembly’s new strategy for torturing me until I give them information?”

Just as he spoke, a thin tendril of smoke rose from the ground-floor level, followed by the flicker of flames. In the distance, an alarm started to sound.

The Panopticon was on fire.