

Film Review: Nothing New in 'The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones'

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on August 21, 2013 - 2:53pm

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CHICAGO – The last time I checked, I am not a swoony teenage girl, looking to be romanced by a hunky-but-shadowy demon hunter. Thus the margin for enjoying "The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones" falls off like a leaf on an autumn tree. Even Kristen Stewart, I mean Lily Collins, can't save it.



Rating: **2.5/5.0**

Every hack writer east and west of the Mississippi must pine for that young adult fantasy franchise – ala J.K. and Harry Potter – to eventually buy them that McMansion in the Sky. And author Cassandra Clare struck the gold formula (five books in the series) with "The Mortal Instruments." Combining the moneymakers from Potter (human recruited as magic-maker) and "Twilight" (hunks as immortal man creatures), Clare's first book – "City of Bones" – has been adapted for the screen. And boy, did it have lots of explaining to do. The "origin" movies are filled with who-is-this-what-now and this-power-goes-where and this-humanoid-is-good-or-evil speeches that suck the blood from the story like the vampire coven in "City of Bones." Yep, there's vampires. The biggest sin of this film, however, is that it has no originality. None. It's merely a series of been-there-done-that, punctuated by the requisite hot gal and guy casting.

Clary (Lily Collins) is living large as a teenage dreamer in New York City. Her mother (Lena Headley) is a successful Brooklyn artist and widow dating Luke (Aidan Turner). Clary's best friend is Simon (Robert Sheehan), who may have a bigger crush on Clary than he lets on. Clary starts to have visions of strange symbols, and her entrance into a popular NYC nightclub is about to get her in hot water.

Clary is not exactly human, she comes from a line of Shadowhunters – which includes her mother – who are heroes, living on another plane of existence, hunting demons to protect the world. Her mother had a spell put on Clary to forget this, but it wears off in adolescence. In the nightclub, she begins to see other Shadowhunters, like Jace (Jamie Campbell Bower), who eventually takes her to the "Institute" where she will learn of her fate. After her mother is attacked because of her visions, she also must seek revenge.

'The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones' opens everywhere on August 21st. Featuring Lily Collins, Jamie Campbell Bower, Kevin Zegers, Jemina West, Robert Sheehan, CCH Pounder, Jared Harris and Jonathan Rhys Meyers. Screenplay Adapted by Jessica Postigo. Directed by Harald Zwart. Rated "PG-13"



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Jace (Jamie Campbell Bower) and (Clary) Lily Collins in 'The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones'

Photo credit: Sony Pictures Releasing

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