

MY LIVING SHADOW SYSTEM DEVOURS TO MAKE ME STRONGER

Chapter 13 A Hungry Man Is A Hangry Man

The class finally came to an end, and Damon bolted from his seat as if sitting on pins and needles. Without so much as a backward glance, he rushed out of the room, making a beeline for the cafeteria. Hunger clawed at his insides, and he felt as though he could eat an entire feast.

The cafeteria was sparsely populated when he arrived, allowing him to grab a seat in a corner without much trouble.

Wasting no time, he piled his tray high with twice the amount of food he usually consumed and ate with uncharacteristic gusto. The first spread disappeared quickly, but even as he swallowed the last bite, his stomach growled in protest.

Frustrated, he returned for more servings—several more, in fact—until the sheer volume of his consumption began to draw stares.

By now, the cafeteria had filled with students, and Damon's voracious appetite became the subject of murmured conversations. Even the beastkin, known for their ferocious hunger, watched him in disbelief. A human eating this much? It seemed impossible.

Damon continued until his stomach felt bloated, almost painfully so, yet the gnawing hunger refused to subside. He took another bite, feeling like he might throw up from how full he was, but his stomach growled again, sending a wave of frustration through him.

His head felt light, his vision blurred for a moment, shifting into black and white before snapping back to normal. The sensation left him unsettled, his mounting irritation bubbling just beneath the surface.

He stood for what felt like the eighth time to clear his table and head back for more. Each serving grew larger than the last, but it didn't matter. The hunger remained.

When he reached the counter, he grabbed a new tray, ignoring the maids who offered to serve him—he preferred to do it himself. As he moved, distracted by his hunger, he bumped into someone.

"Sorry,"

Damon muttered gloomily without looking up, but his apology barely left his lips before the other person's voice rang out, sharp and angry.

The tone alone made Damon's blood boil.

In a blur of rage, he raised the tray and smashed it into the face of the person he had bumped into—Lark Bonaire.

Damon's heart surged with sudden, uncontrollable anger, and before he could think, he followed up with a powerful kick that sent Lark flying into a service trolley. The maid pushing the trolley let out a startled yelp as Lark collided with it, spilling food everywhere.

Damon moved as if to strike again, but the commotion had drawn too much attention, and he hesitated. He blinked, shocked by the sheer force behind his actions. His strength had caught him off guard. Glancing down, he saw his shadow behaving normally, yet something about it made his tired eyes narrow in suspicion.

Lark, covered in food and seething, scrambled to his feet, ready to retaliate.

"I'll kill you for this, Grey!"

he spat, his voice dripping with venom.

Before Lark could charge, someone stepped in, grabbing his arm and holding him back. Damon glanced up to see Marcus Fayjoy, who wore a strained expression as he tried to calm his friend.

"Let it go, Lark," Marcus urged. "Not here."

"Let me go!"

Lark shouted, his voice echoing through the now-silent cafeteria.

"I'll kill this bastard today!"

Damon's dark eyes grew colder at the threat, and his lips parted, ready to retort, but another voice cut through the tension like a blade.

"That's enough."

The cold, aloof tone belonged to none other than Xander Ravenscroft. His mere presence silenced the room, and his piercing gaze made Lark stiffen.

"You're causing a scene. This behavior is unbecoming of a noble."

Lark froze, his fury doused by Xander's disapproving glare. Muttering under his breath, he shot Damon one last, icy glare before stepping back.

Damon glanced at Xander briefly, then turned away, his voice low as he muttered,

"Not if I kill you first."

Leaving the cafeteria, Damon's stomach still churned with hunger despite the absurd amount of food he had consumed. The gnawing sensation persisted, an unrelenting ache that followed him as he exited the academy's main building. He cast a weary glance at his shadow, his frustration spilling over.

"Why? Why am I still so hungry?" he demanded.

The shadow stirred, shrugging its shoulders in response. Then, with a pointed gesture, it tapped its nonexistent stomach as if to say, You're not the only one.

Damon held his temple, his exhaustion mounting as he tried to soothe the persistent ache of hunger.

"Right, sorry. I'll find you something to eat later—just hold on a little longer."

His voice carried a weary edge, but he felt a flicker of determination to keep his strange companion satisfied.

Afterward, he headed to the library, spending some time poring over books to familiarize himself with the concepts his classmates already seemed to know by heart.

He flipped through pages on dangerous herbs and wild flora, hoping the knowledge might one day be useful. The gnawing hunger, however, was a

constant distraction. His stomach growled incessantly, forcing him to miss a few classes as he finally gave up and retreated to his dormitory with a small stack of books in hand.

The dormitory hallways were deserted, most students still attending their lessons. Damon moved quickly and quietly, wary of the head maid catching him.

He could already hear her sharp tone reprimanding him for skipping class, and he wasn't in the mood for a lecture. He ascended to the higher floors where his room was, unlocking the door with his pager before slipping inside.

He collapsed onto the bed, drained. His stomach felt full to the point of discomfort, yet the hunger hadn't waned. It gnawed at him like an unrelenting beast.

As his eyes fluttered shut, he caught a glimpse of his shadow moving freely about the room. He clutched his stomach, muttered something incoherent, and finally fell asleep.

When he opened his eyes again, the room was cloaked in darkness. Damon groaned and fumbled for his pager, its faint glow illuminating the screen. Midnight. He'd been asleep for hours.

The darkness didn't bother him—oddly enough, it felt soothing, almost like a second skin. Still, out of habit, he tapped the light switch on the wall. The sudden brightness stung his eyes, but his attention was quickly drawn to the far corner of the room.

His shadow stood there, arms crossed, radiating displeasure. Its stance was practically screaming annoyance.

Damon scratched the back of his head sheepishly.

"Heh... sorry. I overslept—I didn't mean to. And shouldn't you have woken me up?"

The shadow's form tensed, its fists balling up as it began a dramatic display of complaints. It gestured wildly, stomping its foot and pacing along the walls and ceiling, as if trying to express just how frustrating its day had been.

Damon sighed, already feeling a strange sense of familiarity with the peculiar entity.

"Yeah, yeah, I get it," he muttered, holding his head as the lightheadedness from his hunger returned.

Despite everything, he cracked a small smile.

"I was feeling hungry myself. And hey, it's late enough now that the head maid is probably asleep. Let's head to the dorm kitchen. There's a pantry and a cold room—you can have your pick of the meat."

The shadow paused its rant, its arms relaxing as it stroked its chin thoughtfully. After a moment of deliberation, it gave a slow, reluctant nod. Damon chuckled softly, shaking his head.

"Alright then, but we have to be discreet. Can't let anyone catch us."

Quietly, Damon opened the door to his dorm room. His shadow slipped seamlessly back into its usual place, clinging to him as if it had always belonged there.

Together, they stepped into the dimly lit halls.