

## Living Shadow 164

### Chapter 164 The Way Of The Master

While Iris was taking off the bulky armor she had been using for training, Damon took the moment to distribute his attributepoints.

He had 105 in total.

This time, he didn't allocate any to mana. His focus was purely on physical strength.

After getting beaten up by Evangeline Brightwater earlier, he realized the gap in his physical power.

As for why she was so strong... he only figured it out after sensing Makia's first-class advancement aura.

Evangeline must have gotten stronger.

She was just a fine line away from her first-class advancement, which explained the sudden boost in her physical abilities.

In fact, she might have even received a general boost to her stats all around.

But so did he.

Damon distributed his points.

"The moment I return... I'll mess her up a bit..."

He held that thought, shaking his head. There was no need to provoke her when his shadow was full.

'Let's see her take me on when I'm hungry.'

His body heated up as power coursed through his veins. He felt his joints become nimbler, his muscles explode with strength.

His system panel displayed his updated stats:

[HP: 60/60]

[Mana: 1384/1384]

[Strength: 79] +50

[Agility: 27] +10

[Speed: 60] +25

[Endurance: 30] +20

[Class: —]

[Shadow: 400]

[Shadow Hunger Levels: 0%]

[Shadow Level: 4]

[Condition: Shadow is Full]

[Attributes: Umbra]

[Skills:]

[5x] [Remorseless] [Shadow Perception] [Water Celebration] [Sacrifice] [Shadow Control] [Parkour]

[Locked]

His shadow was full.

The sight almost brought a tear to his eye.

He had been living frugally all this time, but one night out with Lilith Astranova and he was completely satisfied.

As for his level-up requirements...

Level Up Requirements

Souls Consumed: [6/10]

Damon sighed.

He still needed to kill four more people to level up.

But on the bright side, his pool of shadow energy had grown, so he wasn't really complaining.

A dull clang echoed behind him.

He turned around to see Iris watching him, a small but menacing smile on her face. Her body was drenched in sweat, but her eyes were burning with determination.

Damon nodded.

"Fine. Five hares. I'll have them to you in two minutes tops."

Iris snickered in disdain.

"Looks like I'm getting a million zeni today."

Damon smirked and shrugged off his jacket.

Then, he began donning the armor.

It felt slightly heavy and cumbersome, but with his boosted stats, it was nothing to worry about.

His body was also bigger than Iris's, so the armor fit him better.

She obviously didn't take that into account when she agreed.

And, of course—Damon wasn't going to play fair.

He still had the [5x] skill, which could boost any stat of his choice.

Iris shot him a thin smile as she watched him adjust to the armor.

"Two minutes to catch them..." She turned to Lilith.

"Erm... Student Council President... can you act as the judge?"

Lilith nodded.

"You can call me Lilith."

Iris blinked, feeling slightly honored.

Being allowed to refer to Lady Lilith Astranova by name was no small thing.

After all, Lilith was the daughter of a Duke and the heiress of the famed Astranova house.

Damon might not have thought much of it, but to Iris—who was a former noble—it was significant.

Damon secured the helmet, its thin visor making it hard to see.

But that wasn't a problem.

Only plebeians relied on eyesight.

He had Shadow Perception.

He could see the hares without needing light or eyes. He could sense their small shadows moving about.

Taking advantage of all his passive skills, he charged forward toward the first hare.

Using the training dummies as stepping stones, he performed a flip with his Parkour skill.

Before he even touched the ground—he snatched the hare out of the air, landing with a thud.

"Hmmm... That was easy."

Damon activated his [5x] skill, boosting his speed.

He dashed toward the remaining four hares.

And, to no one's surprise—

He caught all of them easily.

It wasn't even a challenge.

Damon had spent a long time catching small animals for food in his village after his parents died.

He already knew how they would move.

Iris watched him with wide eyes.

"A-Ah... Huh...? What kind of movement was that?!"

Damon removed his helm, exhaling steadily as he peeled off the cumbersome armor piece by piece. The hares he had caught wasted no time, darting away into the training ground.

"You still have a lot to learn..." His voice was calm, but there was an edge to it.

Iris could tell immediately—this was Damon in teacher mode.

She bit her lip, already thinking ahead to his next words.

Her self-declared master had a habit of being strict with her training.

"Why do you think I made you wear this bulk armor?"

Iris took a breath.

"You wanted me to train my muscles and reflexes," she began, voice steady.

"To improve my coordination, build up stamina and endurance. You also wanted me to learn how to move quietly in metal gear."

She glanced at him, eyes sharp.

"Among other things..."

Damon nodded.

That was part of the reason.

She had been training hard, and her physical strength had improved significantly.

He had also taught her the basics of swordsmanship—not because he used it much himself, but because it was valuable to know.

Swordplay was something he had learned from his father.

Something he used more for stress relief than real combat.

Still, he had guided her through striking, parrying, and even helped refine her magic casting.

She had pushed through every challenge he threw at her.

Now, she was ready for the next step.

"You've done well," Damon admitted. "Your effort hasn't gone unnoticed."

Iris gave a firm nod.

Training was all she did.

Since Damon declared himself her master, she had stopped relying on the townsfolk entirely.

She lived off the allowance he gave her, dedicating herself fully to her training.

Damon crossed his arms.

"I'll teach you my self-created spell." His tone was matter-of-fact.

"It's dangerous, so learn it at your own risk."

Iris didn't flinch.

Her usual hot-headed resolve burned bright in her eyes.

Lilith, watching from the sidelines, raised an eyebrow.

She already knew what spell Damon was about to teach.

And yes—

It was dangerous.

But it was also powerful with lots of potential for growth.

Damon smirked.

"But first..."

He tilted his head slightly.

"You may call me Master."

Iris scoffed, crossing her arms.

"Sure. Whatever." She narrowed her eyes. "Let's see your spell first. If it's worth it, I'll consider it."

Damon chuckled at her defiance.

Then—

Without even looking at one of the hares, he raised his hand.

His fingers formed a gun gesture.

BANG!

A magic bullet shot from his fingertips, piercing the hare's skull.

The creature collapsed instantly, its blood soaking into the dirt.

Damon casually pulled his hand back—

And blew away the faint wisp of smoke from his fingertip.

Iris's eyes widened in shock.

"H-Huh?! What the hell kind of spell was that?! Damon—"

He cleared his throat.

"Ahem, ahem."

Her awe immediately turned into a scowl.

She gritted her teeth.

"...Master."

Damon grinned.

And with an exaggerated flourish, he soaked in the moment.