

Living Shadow 175

Chapter 175 Old Accounts

Back-to-Back held his bow steady, his expression eerily blank. The boy had changed. He could tell—no, he felt it.

Under the pale moonlight filtering through the shattered windows, the reflection in his eyes was unmistakable.

His once-icy blue eyes were gone.

In their place were pools of inky black, devoid of warmth, devoid of hesitation.

Back-to-Back clenched his jaw, suppressing the cold sweat trailing down his spine. The boy's clothes were no longer the ragged remnants of a street rat. He wore finely woven fabric, expensive and well-tailored, giving him the appearance of a noble. He had a slick, clean look—handsome even.

But none of that mattered.

What truly made Back-to-Back's stomach tighten was the restrained aura of the woman beside him.

She stood tall, long crimson hair cascading down her shoulders, her emerald eyes reflecting an almost casual disinterest. The jewelry adorning her clothing confirmed her status—a noble, without a doubt.

And worse, she was in the Third Class Advancement.

A death sentence.

Back-to-Back kept his focus on her. Fighting was pointless. If they fought, they would die.

He needed time. Time to think. Time to escape.

His gaze flickered toward the other men. They had already released their auras, readying themselves for battle. But it didn't matter. Even they could tell—tonight, they were going to die.

He forced a smile despite the sweat trickling down his back.

"A-Ah... runt, it's been too long..." His voice wavered slightly, but he quickly steadied it. "Did you miss me? I knew you weren't dead."

Damon's blackened eyes remained locked on him, unwavering.

The presence of five First-Class Advancement warriors exerted a certain level of pressure, but it was meaningless. Lilith's aura shielded him completely.

His skill, Remorseless, was already active, numbing him to unnecessary emotions.

Hatred? Bitterness? Regret? None of it mattered. The only thing that remained was purpose.

And his purpose was to kill Back-to-Back.

He scanned the grand hall, his gaze shifting over the stacks of wealth piled high. Crates of gold, magic crystals, rare gems—this mansion was filled with the fortune of a criminal empire.

His eyes lingered on the remaining men.

One was already dead.

The rest?

He would carve through them before he dealt with Back-to-Back.

He exhaled softly. Not yet.

There was something he wanted to show the elf. He needed him to see just how far he had come.

Damon turned to Lilith.

"Do you mind?"

She gave a small, amused nod.

"As you wish." Her lips curled into a smirk. "But you owe me a nice compliment for all this hard work..."

He sneered.

"You look lovely in that dress."

Lilith scoffed, rolling her eyes. "Liar."

She stepped forward, her emerald gaze sweeping over the five men, lingering on Back-to-Back and the bow he still held, drawn and ready to fire.

"The rest of you can die first." Her voice was calm, unhurried. "The one called Back-to-Back will go last."

The first man, a knight wielding a massive greatsword, narrowed his eyes.

"Do you have any idea who you're offending? The Charkata Family—"

Lilith cut him off with a bored sigh.

"I don't care." She tilted her head slightly. "Besides... they'll never know."

Back-to-Back fired.

But not at her.

His arrows shot toward the shattered windows.

The glass splintered further—but instead of breaking through, the shards rippled in the air, vanishing as if sinking into water.

Lilith's smile widened, a glimmer of disdain in her emerald eyes.

"I hate to disappoint..." She exhaled slowly. "But weak little tricks like that won't break my barrier."

Her gaze darkened.

"You're all trapped in here with me."

Damon merely stood still, waiting.

Lilith would handle them.

Then, when the time was right—he would end them.

Back-to-Back clenched his teeth. Death was here. He knew it.

But that didn't mean he was giving up.

"Battle formations!" His voice rang out sharply. "Tanks in front, mid—"

He never finished.

Lilith raised a single hand.

And in an instant, his body was launched backward.

He crashed against the wall, slamming into the barrier with a sickening crack.

His skin sizzled where it made contact, fresh blood splattering the ground beneath him.

He gasped, coughing up more blood.

"Stay down."

Damon barely spared him a glance.

His cold eyes focused on the four remaining warriors.

Then, he dashed forward—

Lilith sighed, lifting her hand.

The air ripped apart.

Blades of pure space erupted with a deafening shriek.

Limbs flew.

Blood splattered across the marble floor.

In an instant, the gap in power became painfully clear.

Lilith hadn't moved.

She had barely lifted a finger.

Damon reached the mutilated bodies. He swung his dagger, ending life after life, as the system echoed in his mind.

[You have slain Malos Army.]

[You have slain...]

[You have slain...]

[You have leveled up.]

[You have gained 40 attribute points.]

[You have awakened the skill: Shadow Armor.]

[You have slain...]

Screams filled the air—

"My legs—AAGHHH!"

"W-Wait! Don't kill me! I'm with the Charkata Fa—"

Their pleas fell on deaf ears.

Damon felt nothing.

No personal vendetta. No lingering grudges.

These men hadn't tortured him.

They hadn't stabbed him in the back again and again.

They hadn't cut off his fingers.

They were simply in the way.

Damon's hands and clothes were soaked in blood, the thick, metallic scent clinging to his skin. The stench of torn flesh and ruptured organs filled the air, a testament to the carnage he had wrought.

Back-to-Back watched in suppressed horror.

But this was only the beginning.

"Devour."

The boy's cold, emotionless voice echoed through the bloodstained hall.

To Back-to-Back's utter shock, the shadows beneath Damon twisted and surged like a living entity, slithering toward the corpses. The inky darkness enveloped the lifeless bodies, swallowing them whole.

It was not merely consuming them—it was absorbing them.

Damon remained still, watching with an impassive expression.

[Your shadow is full.]

[You have gained 15 attribute points.]

[You have gained 15 attribute points.]

[You have gained 15 attribute points.]

[You have acquired the skill: Beholder's Gaze.]

[You have gained 15 attribute points.]

Back-to-Back could barely breathe.

Even as he remained bound by the young woman's magic, unable to move, he couldn't tear his gaze away.

Dread clawed at his chest.

The boy he once knew was gone.

This was no longer some vengeful street rat seeking retribution.

This was a monster.

A cold-blooded killer.

And he was smiling.

'He came here to kill me.'

Damon turned to face him, his blackened eyes devoid of warmth.

"Now," his voice was low, almost casual. "It's finally your turn, Back-to-Back."

His fingers curled around the hilt of his blade.

"It's time to settle old accounts."