

Living Shadow 181

Chapter 181 New Requirements

A young man stood outside a massive shopping mall, his expression melancholic as he stared into the distance.

In front of him, a luxurious carriage gleamed under the afternoon sun, the craftsmanship impeccable.

He was alone.

The heat bore down on him, yet it wasn't the sun that made the air around him feel heavy. His mana pulsed, thick and overwhelming, as if his body struggled to contain it.

He had come here for something simple—a pager.

Instead, he got dragged into a clothing store by Lilith Astranova, who went on a spending spree on his behalf. She bought so many clothes that he doubted he'd ever find a reason to wear them all.

He still got what he came for, though—two pagers. One for Iris. The other for Luna.

By the time he made the purchase, he was so drained that he didn't even bother to haggle.

His fingers idly brushed the pendant in his pocket.

Killing Back to Back had changed him.

He felt it the moment he returned to his suite that night. His mana had shifted—something deep within him had. It wasn't just psychological. There was a distant ringing in his mind. A call.

The call of the First Class Advancement.

He had spent the entire night meditating, trying to control his mana, but he barely made progress. His body—or rather, his mana—had changed.

He was close now.

Before the year's end, he was certain he'd reach his First Class Advancement.

And not just him.

Evangeline and Xander were close. Leona showed no signs yet, but she was a battle away from the threshold.

Then there was Sylvia.

She should have been close too, assuming she ever got over him stabbing her... which she hadn't.

He sighed.

"I told Back to Back I made friends."

So, he had to make sure they were alright.

He shook his head, pushing the thoughts away.

Now that he was at the threshold of advancement, his power was undeniable. Stronger than his peers.

He wondered—what class would he awaken?

'I guess I'm no longer a fraud with a false reputation...'

He actually had power now.

But something about it unsettled him.

For the first time, his leveling requirements had changed.

It wasn't people's souls that were needed anymore.

It wasn't even a soul.....just a fragment of one.

Level-Up Requirement:

Dark Spirit Fragment consumed [0/1]

It was just as the system panel had shown him.

To level up, he didn't need an entire Dark Spirit—just a fragment of its soul.

'What the hell does the system want from me? Am I supposed to summon the spirit Rashi Ignath and then kill it...?'

That would be beyond suicidal.

Ignath was an incredibly powerful dark spirit. Even an incomplete summon of it had caused disasters.

'I knew it. The system didn't like how I relied on Lilith to go on a killing spree.'

With a sigh, he climbed into the carriage, leaning his head against the plush seats.

The door opened shortly after.

A young woman with fiery red hair, styled into a neat bun with delicate hairpins, stepped inside.

Lilith Astranova.

Her piercing gaze settled on him.

"What has you down? Are you still bothered about that elf friend of yours?"

He scoffed, feeling somewhat irritated by her words.

"He's not my friend... and I'm not."

She smirked.

"The two of you have a very toxic relationship." She studied him for a moment before adding, "But I see a parallel here."

Damon raised his head, narrowing his eyes.

"Huh? The hell are you on about?"

Lilith's smirk widened, as she connected several dots in her head.

"Back to Back raised you. He practically trained you into the person you are today."

Damon sneered. That was true. But it wasn't like he owed Back to Back anything.

"More like I trained myself. So what?"

She lifted her hand, palm open as if weighing something.

"The parallel here is with your relationship with Iris. You're training her, but one day, who's to say history won't repeat itself and she won't kill you?"

Damon sighed.

"Assuming she could."

Lilith scoffed.

"And I assume Back to Back thought you'd be a helpless child forever. That you'd never kill him. But didn't you leverage my power to make sure he died?"

His jaw tightened. She was right.

But so what?

"That's enough about that," Damon muttered. "My level-up requirements have changed."

He opened his system panel and revealed the new requirement to her.

Lilith's eyes scanned it.

"Hmmm... this is going to be troublesome."

Damon let out a dry chuckle.

"I guess I could always summon a Dark Spirit, endanger everyone, and hope I manage to rip off a fragment of its soul in the process."

Lilith raised an eyebrow.

"I wouldn't advise that. Unless, of course, you want to cause a crisis."

She leaned forward slightly.

"We're talking about an actual disaster here. Dark Spirits aren't just labeled that way for fun. These things might not be as strong as dragons, but they come damn close."

Damon nodded. He already knew as much.

Although dragons were far worse, Dark Spirits were still terrifying creatures that could destroy entire cities. There was a reason they were classified as disasters.

Lilith narrowed her eyes.

"Don't worry. We'll figure something out. Besides, this is still better than constantly killing humans. Now, all we need is fresh corpses for your shadows' hunger."

Damon winced.

"I'll pass on that," he muttered. "I think I can keep it on a diet of mana stones and use the Sacrifice Skill to convert that into shadow energy."

He would find a way to level up—one way or another.

But for now... he had something more important to do.

He was going to visit his sister.

A faint smile touched his lips at the thought.

Lilith caught the expression and narrowed her eyes slightly.

She certainly hoped he wasn't planning on finding a way to summon a Dark Spirit.

That would be a catastrophe.