

Living Shadow 183

Chapter 183 Out To Get Him

Damon had long since thought up every possible excuse for when someone asked about his changed eye color.

But at this moment, he was caught off guard by his sister's question.

His mind had been too preoccupied—still lingering in the aftermath of back-to-back deaths, and the sheer excitement of finally seeing Luna again.

He hadn't even considered the physical changes he had gone through.

So, for a brief second, he stared at her, slightly startled.

"Erm... I—I..." He fumbled, trying to form words. "My eyes? Oh... uh..."

Luna's worried gaze didn't waver.

"Don't lie to me, Damon."

Damon smirked, regaining his composure.

"I'm not lying."

"You are."

He shook his head, amused by her insistence.

"I'm not going to lie."

"Stop being stubborn, Damon."

He let out a sigh, feeling a tinge of guilt as he met her gray eyes.

For a brief moment, he thought of Sylvia.

There were times when he drew parallels between the two girls—their gentle yet unyielding spirits, their unyielding concern for him.

Finally, he relented.

"Fine, I'll tell you..."

His gaze shifted to the window, staring at the world beyond.

"I woke up one morning, and my eyes started hurting. Next thing I knew, my mana surged..." He shrugged slightly. "Apparently, it's a sign that I'm close to a first-class advancement."

Luna glanced at him, then sighed.

"That's a lie," she said quietly. "But it's fine if you don't want to tell me."

She paused for a moment before continuing.

"I can understand... There are some things you want to protect me from." Her voice grew softer. "But, Damon... don't you ever think that I want to protect you too?"

Damon's smile softened.

He leaned his head against hers.

"I know that."

Luna bit her lip, determination flashing in her eyes.

"I'm going to get better," she declared. "I'll get really strong—and I'll be the one protecting you."

Damon let out a small chuckle, amused but touched by her words.

"I'm looking forward to that."

She nodded, forcing a smile.

Then, as if trying to lighten the mood, she changed the subject.

"Enough of this serious talk," she huffed. "What's the academy like? I hope you aren't getting into fights with nobles..."

She gave him a knowing look.

"I know your anger issues would never let things slide. The only time you ever show patience is when you're plotting revenge."

Damon smiled wryly. His sister really knew him too well.

In the two months he had spent at the academy, he had put up with a lot—until he decided to deal with his oppressors in his own way.

"Actually, my dear sister, you're wrong about that. I actually made friends..."

Luna narrowed her eyes, scanning him up and down with blatant skepticism.

"You? Made friends?" She placed a hand on her forehead dramatically. "Did you hit your head? How does an edge lord like you make friends?"

Damon's eye twitched. His hands clenched into fists, his pride taking a direct hit.

"I am not an edge lord! If anything, I'm a contrarian."

Luna shook her head, chuckling. That was such a Damon thing to say.

His eyes may have changed, but deep down, he was still the same person she knew and loved. Despite his brooding and anti-social tendencies, she knew he had a softer side—if you could just get past his walls.

Damon crossed his arms, raising his chin slightly.

"And I do have friends! In fact, most of the students in my year want to be my friend."

Luna tilted her head, amusement twinkling in her eyes.

"Oh really? You're not exactly the most pleasant person to be around. How did they put up with you?"

Damon clutched his chest in mock pain.

"Ouch. Coming from my own sister... that hurts. And for the record, I am pleasant—" he paused before sighing, "okay, fine, I'm unpleasant. But I still made friends!"

He held up a finger as he began listing them off.

"There's this really nice beastkin girl—though at first, I suspected she had ulterior motives. Then there's an elf girl, Sylvia—she has the same hair and attribute as you, by the way. Oh, and there's Evangeline—she has a light attribute, and her hair sort of reminds me of the sun... Kind of like Mom's, but different."

His brows furrowed slightly, but he quickly shook it off and continued.

"And then there's this moron—who is obviously not better looking than me, not as strong, and definitely not as smart. His name is Xander. Oh, and just so you know, I beat him at everything."

Luna was initially skeptical, but seeing her brother rant about his so-called friends made her smile.

He seemed to genuinely like them.

Having friends must have been a novel feeling for him. Or rather... it probably brought back memories of when he used to be popular with the other kids back in the village—before everything changed.

She rested her chin on her palm, giving him a teasing look.

"You must really like this Xander."

Damon froze for a moment before scoffing.

"Pfft! Me? Like Xander? Please... I hate him."

Luna simply smiled. "He must be a nice person if he's willing to be your friend."

Damon clicked his tongue, looking offended.

"Whoa, whoa, let me stop you right there. He is not my friend. I live just to ruin him. He's my nemesis."

Luna clapped her hands together, eyes sparkling in excitement.

"That's amazing! The both of you have such a good rivalry! It's like you're brothers-in-arms, just like in those stories Mom used to tell us... Two knights, bound by steel and blood..."

She cleared her throat, then deepened her voice dramatically.

"The blood of our covenant is thicker than the water of the womb..."

Damon stared at her blankly, his face deadpan.

If she ever said something like that in front of Xander, his cool guy act would be over for good. That idiot would never let him live it down.

"Okay, that's enough, you brat. You're giving me secondhand embarrassment. And if anyone asks, I'm his greatest enemy. You better not forget that."

Luna grinned. "Mmhmm. Got it."

She adjusted her medical robe slightly, then added, "I'll be sure to invite him for tea."

Damon groaned, dragging a hand down his face.

"You really don't listen to me, do you?"

She giggled. "I do. You're just stubborn."

Then, her expression shifted, and she folded her hands neatly on her lap.

"Now then. To address the elephant in the room."

Damon blinked, glancing around.

"...I see no elephant here."

Luna closed her eyes, smiling.

"Oh, you'll see."

She leaned forward slightly.

"I can only imagine how hard it must have been for the girls who became friends with you."

Damon narrowed his eyes, already feeling the impending attack.

Luna continued, her tone laced with mock sympathy.

"Yes, I can see it... It must have gone something like this..."

She cleared her throat, then mimicked an innocent, friendly voice.

"Hello, can I sit here?"

Then, she deepened her voice, mimicking him.

"No. You may not."

She clapped her hands together dramatically.

"And then, of course, the poor girl would have insisted—"

For the next few minutes, Luna broke down exactly how his friends must have suffered through his lone wolf attitude and blunt personality.

To Damon's shock, she got most of it right.

Even down to the exact words he had said sometimes.

He squinted at her, lips curving into a thin smile.

"...Alright. You've addressed the elephant. Stop. I have suffered enough."

Luna scoffed playfully, shaking her head.

"Hehe. Wrong again, big brother."

She leaned in close, her grey eyes gleaming mischievously.

"That wasn't the elephant."

She lowered her voice.

"Tell me, Damon... which one of them is your girlfriend?"

Damon's brow twitched.

...Luna was truly out to get him.