

Living Shadow 186

Chapter 186 What Do You Want Good Sir...

Commoner... that was a term used to define anyone who did not have the privilege of being born into nobility. However, the term wasn't always present—it only came into use after the Peasant Revolution.

Once, anyone who wasn't a noble was classified as a peasant. Naturally, peasants were little more than slaves before the revolution. Peasants could not own land or any type of property. They themselves were the belongings of the lord of the land they were born in. They farmed the land, and the lords took everything, leaving them starving. Peasants were forbidden from learning magic, and they were not allowed to read or write without their lord's permission.

They were debased, violated by their lords. Some cruel lords hunted their peasants like one would hunt foxes for sport. Should one have the misfortune of serving a lascivious lord, he would demand to sample all the women under his reign. Some lords even imposed a tradition—when a couple got married, they had to send the newlywed bride to spend a night with the lord.

This was just one of the many injustices—one of too many to speak of. Even looking at a noble the wrong way could get an entire village destroyed, all kin executed. That was just the way the world worked, and for a time, the peasants accepted it.

Until an event known as the Peasant Revolution. One peasant standing up for themselves turned into two, then millions. It became a worldwide phenomenon. The nobles tried to suppress it in the only way they knew how—with violence.

However, that only made the situation worse. Many peasants died. Rivers of blood flowed, mountains of corpses cast long shadows over the land. Plagues spread. And naturally, the nobles weren't completely unscathed. Many nobles were killed by revolting peasants.

It was during this time they learned the power of the peasants. Among them, some showed outstanding talent and reached high-class advancements, adding their power to the conflict.

But that was only the beginning. Peasants were primarily farmers, and since they refused to farm... there was no food. They were laborers, and without them, society began to collapse. Too many lives had been lost. All around the world, millions had died.

It was during this time that the rulers of the era called a grand conference—the first world summit. And there, they made a decision. They announced the abolition of the peasant class and the creation of a new class—the commoner class.

Being a commoner was different from being a peasant. They could now learn to read and write. They could use magic freely. They had basic human rights. They could own property. And most importantly, they could now keep ten percent of their crop yield for themselves.

Of course, a taxation system was introduced, among other things. But without a doubt, the most appealing change was the ability to earn a noble title. The nobles had learned the power of talented commoners, and to avoid such dangers in the future, they opted to recruit them into their ranks—granting them noble titles.

Of course, Damon knew that didn't really change much. Nobles still did horrible things to those beneath them. Like these young men, beating up an old woman and her grandson. And seeing how the patrol and the crowd walking by did nothing, it was clear that this was commonplace.

From her ragged clothes to the dried bread on the ground, that old woman wasn't just a commoner. She had committed an even greater sin—she was poor. And an even greater sin than that—she was weak.

Damon walked towards them with a thin smile on his face.

"Hello, gentlemen... You guys seem to be having fun. Mind if I join in?"

One of the Imperial Academy students raised his head, scowling.

"Who the hell are you? Screw off—oh..."

He paused, eyes narrowing as he took in Damon's attire. Fine clothing. Not something a lowly commoner could afford. His tone shifted.

"What do you want, good sir?"

Damon smiled.

"Oh, a gentleman. I like that."

Reaching into his clothes, he pulled out a brooch—the insignia of the student council. He wanted these Imperial Academy students to know which academy he was affiliated with. That way, his status as a commoner wouldn't matter. They wouldn't see him as a lowborn but as a rival academy student.

"Hold on, let me pin my brooch..."

He fastened it to his chest, nodding in satisfaction.

"Ah, good. It's on... You see, I happen to be something of a disciplinarian where I come from, so I hope you don't mind if I beat you up a little. Thank you."

The boys froze, their eyes flickering with hesitation. The first one, a blonde, gasped.

"He's with Aether Academy—"

Before he could finish, Damon's fist crashed into his face, sending him flying backward.

Damon's dark eyes remained calm as the skill Remorseless activated. He turned his gaze toward the old woman and her battered grandson—a young man with black hair, his face swollen, one arm hanging limply, likely broken.

"Hold on a minute, Granny—"

"You bastard!"

The other students raised their hands, launching magic attacks at Damon. Fire and ice streaked through the air, but he twisted out of the way, flipping effortlessly as his Parkour skill kicked in.

"Wow, you guys are kind of weak. I see why you always lose to us in the war games. Pathetic."

He raised his hand, summoning a thin barrier of shadow magic just as another blast of fire and ice magic came his way. The attacks slammed into the barrier, cracks forming, but Damon remained unimpressed.

"That was a terrible combo attack. Don't they teach you anything at the Imperial Academy?"

His wrist flicked, and the omnidirectional gear shot out, latching onto a nearby surface and yanking him forward just as his barrier shattered. He propelled himself toward the fire mage, seizing him by the neck.

"Guess you're only good for picking on grannies."

He slammed the boy into the ground, dodging a wind blade from the remaining three.

Raising his hand, he formed his fingers into the shape of a gun.

"Magic Bullet."

