

Living Shadow 19

Chapter 19 Shadow VS The Strongest

Evangeline had missed her usual trip to the cafeteria. She had been summoned by Professor Kael Blackthorn and had just finished her errand, now walking briskly through the halls with a stack of papers in her hands. Her attention was focused on the documents, her sharp mind processing the professor's instructions.

As she turned a corner, she felt herself collide with someone. The impact caught her off guard, and before she could react, she was shoved forcefully into the wall.

"Ahh!" she gasped, the sting of the cold stone shooting up her back. The suddenness of it all left her shocked and furious.

No one had ever treated her with such blatant disrespect. She pushed herself off the wall, anger blazing in her emerald eyes, and turned to confront the offender.

When her gaze locked on his face, recognition flickered in her mind. She didn't know his name, but she remembered him—he was the boy who had effortlessly evaded stray shots during her battle with Sylvia Moonveil. There had been something strange about him then, something elusive.

But now, as she looked at him, she felt a chill crawl down her spine. His eyes were pitch black, his lips twisted into a snarl, and the way he stared at her was anything but human. His gaze was feral, cold, and unnervingly predatory.

Almost on instinct, she straightened, her voice laced with indignation.

"How dare you!"

Before her words had fully left her lips, he lunged forward. The movement was so sudden that Evangeline's mind blanked for a second. Her body tensed to defend itself, but just before he reached her, he stopped.

He froze in place, trembling violently, his hand clutching his head.

"Sorry,"

Damon whispered hoarsely, his voice a faint rasp. He didn't even look at her, his face contorted with pain and frustration.

Evangeline blinked in confusion, her anger momentarily replaced by unease. She studied him, noting the way his shadow seemed to writhe unnaturally beneath his feet, dark tendrils rising and sinking back into the ground as if alive.

To her shock, he began to back away, his movements rigid and strained. He was trying to leave.

Her anger flared once more. He shoved me and thinks he can just walk away without an explanation?

"Wait!"

she snapped, stepping forward and grabbing his shoulder to stop him.

That was the moment everything unraveled.

The instant her hand made contact, Damon stiffened. The sensation brought forth a flood of memories—times he'd been mocked, beaten, and humiliated by Marcus and his gang. A spark of rage ignited within him, consuming his fragile restraint like oil poured onto an open flame.

His body trembled violently, and his eyes darkened further as shadows began to rise around him, swirling chaotically.

Evangeline's hand slipped from his shoulder as Damon let out a low, guttural growl.

Before she could react, he turned on her, grabbing her arm with terrifying strength. Without hesitation, he pulled her into a throw.

Evangeline felt the air rush around her as her body was launched through the corridor. Reacting instinctively, she twisted midair and landed on her feet, her boots skidding slightly against the floor.

The papers she had been carrying scattered around her like fallen leaves, forgotten as her narrowed gaze locked onto Damon.

"What is wrong with you?" she demanded, her voice sharp but steady.

Damon didn't respond. His body trembled violently, his breaths ragged and shallow. The shadows around him grew thicker, coiling upwards like snakes, their tips almost brushing his feet.

Evangeline's eyes narrowed further as she assumed a defensive stance. Whatever was happening to him, it wasn't normal.

She clenched her fists, magic sparking faintly at her fingertips. If he attacked again, she would be ready.

Evangeline had already passed the point of patience. Any thought of a peaceful resolution vanished as her golden sun-marked eyes narrowed with cold determination.

She extended her hand forward, her voice steady yet filled with anger.

Beams of light erupted from her palm, shooting faster than a human could ever hope to react. The attack should have ended things immediately, but Damon's shadow-infused instincts granted him an unnatural edge. The dark tendrils entwining his feet reacted to the energy shift, enabling his body to move with almost inhuman precision.

Damon weaved through the beams effortlessly, his movements fluid and calculated.

Evangeline's eyes widened slightly, momentarily betraying her surprise.

'He dodged...' she thought, her mind racing.

Most opponents would have attempted to block the attack using their magical attributes, but Damon had evaded it—a feat that required extraordinary speed and reflexes, especially against light magic.

Her expression hardened, and she muttered under her breath, her voice steady but carrying an edge of disbelief.

"So, he's faster than I thought."

Small orbs of light began forming around her as she prepared her next move.

[Light Magic: Brilliant Sparks]

The orbs shot forward in rapid succession, a blinding barrage of light aimed directly at Damon. Each projectile streaked through the air like an artillery shell, their glow scorching the walls and floor upon impact.

Damon's feral snarl deepened. His shadow expanded, tendrils fusing into his body, granting him an animalistic grace.

He twisted his frame unnaturally, dodging the projectiles with a bone-chilling ease. His movements were fluid yet erratic, like a beast unbound by the limits of human anatomy.

He darted between the walls, ceiling, and floor, his agility surpassing anything Evangeline had seen.

Her gaze sharpened further as she adjusted her attacks mid-cast, altering the trajectories to box him in.

"Let's see how long you can keep this up," she muttered, her voice filled with cold determination.

'He's fast,' she thought, her frustration mounting.

'Not as fast as Leona Valefier, but his agility outclasses even her. This... isn't normal.'

Damon growled again, his eyes locked onto her. He moved seamlessly from two legs to four, his shadow morphing his body further. The floor beneath him cracked as he launched himself forward, dodging the relentless barrage and closing the gap between them.

Evangeline realized the distance was shrinking too quickly. Gritting her teeth, she molded her light magic into a glowing blade.

[Light Magic: Radiant Blade]

The blade shimmered with power as she swung it down in a wide arc, sending a streak of destruction across the ground. Damon, however, slipped past the strike with unnerving ease, his shadow-enhanced reflexes allowing him to evade even this close-range attack.

She swung again, but this time, he deflected her sword with a calculated strike of his hand, pushing the blade to the side.

Evangeline didn't hesitate, unleashing a concentrated beam of light magic directly at him. Damon ducked and then sprang forward, his foot slamming into her with a flying kick.

She crossed her arms in time to block the blow, though the impact sent her skidding back several feet. Her heart raced as she regained her footing, gripping her radiant blade tightly.

Damon showed no signs of stopping. He charged forward, his movements unpredictable. Evangeline swung her sword with practiced precision, but each strike was either dodged or countered.

'He's reading my moves... No, it's more than that. He's anticipating them,' she realized, frustration creeping into her thoughts.

Damon's attacks were wild yet strangely calculated, blending primal instincts with unnatural flexibility. His punches and kicks came from impossible angles, twisting his body as though he had no bones.

Evangeline feinted to the left, hoping to catch him off guard, but he saw through it. His foot connected with her temple in a precise kick, and before she could recover, his palm struck her diaphragm, forcing the air from her lungs.

She stumbled back, gasping for breath, her vision blurring for a split second.

The next thing she registered was Damon launching another flying kick. This time, it hit with full force, and darkness claimed her vision as her body crumpled to the ground.

Damon stood over her, his breathing heavy and erratic. Drool dripped from his mouth as his shadow writhed uncontrollably. His eyes were glazed, his consciousness buried beneath the primal hunger consuming him.

He moved closer, his hand reaching for her neck. The temptation to crush the light she radiated was overwhelming, almost instinctual.

But just as his fingers brushed her skin, his body jolted violently.

Damon gasped, clutching his head as clarity returned in a crashing wave. His knees buckled, and he stumbled back, trembling uncontrollably.

"No... no...," he muttered, his voice hoarse and filled with panic.

He turned abruptly and bolted down the corridor, his footsteps echoing as he fled. He stumbled several times but forced himself onward, fear overtaking his every thought.

He didn't stop running until he reached the busy plaza, his head low as he darted toward the forest.

Unbeknownst to Damon, a figure watched him from the windows of an adjacent building.

Lark Bonaire's lips curved into a sinister smile as his eyes followed Damon's retreating form.

"Found you, Grey..." he murmured, his voice dripping with malice.

With a casual flick of his wrist, he opened the window beside him and leapt out, using wind magic to steady his descent.

His movements were precise, calculated. He slipped between buildings and trees, evading the gaze of wandering students as he pursued Damon into the forest.