

MY LIVING SHADOW SYSTEM DEVOURS TO MAKE ME STRONGER

Chapter 4 The Living Shadow System

The morning sun pierced through Damon's barely open eyes, casting harsh rays that made him squint. For a moment, he lay there in a daze, touching his face in disbelief.

"I... I'm alive... I didn't die," he whispered, his voice thick with astonishment, his words almost breaking as if they would release the tears he held back.

He scanned the area. The strange, dark, viscous creature that had attacked him in the ditch the night before was nowhere to be seen. He could scarcely comprehend what had happened, but before he could gather his thoughts, something floated before him—a black panel with white text.

It read:

[System initialization complete]

[Do you wish to Proceed]

[Y/N]

Damon's brows knit together in confusion as he muttered, "Proceed...?"

As soon as he spoke, the words flickered, and a voice echoed in his mind.

[Welcome to the Living Shadow System, individual Damon Grey]

[Your shadow is alive.]

[Feed your shadow, devour souls, level up, gain skills, complete quests, and grow stronger.]

[Do you wish to view your current stats?]

[Y/N]

The voice rattled on as if it expected him to be familiar with these terms.
Hesitantly, Damon whispered,

"ermh... Yes..."

The screen shifted, revealing his stats in intricate detail.

[HP: 50/50]

[Mana: 30/30]

[Strength: 9]

[Agility: 12]

[Speed: 25]

[Endurance: 10]

[Class: —]

[Shadow: 100]

[Shadow Hunger Levels: 0%]

[Shadow Level: 1]

[Condition: Shadow Is Full]

[Attributes: Umbra]

[Skills]

----- No skills acquired-----

[Locked]

Damon stared at the screen, bewildered, his mind racing as he tried to make sense of it all. The voice had said his shadow was alive. Could that possibly be true? He quickly looked down, and there, cast upon the ground, was his shadow.

A sigh of relief escaped him.

"Phew... thank the goddess. I thought my shadow was stolen."

In this world, certain monsters had the power to rob people of their shadows or even kill by striking through them. He'd heard tales of such horrors lurking on the demon continent, Centros, though rare in Soltheon, where he lived.

But as he let his gaze linger, his shadow... moved.

Not him—just the shadow. Damon felt a jolt of terror as he stumbled backward. His shadow merely stayed in place, a slight shift in its posture as if it were rolling its eyes at him.

"W-what is happening... my... my shadow?" His mouth went dry as he whispered in shock.

He remained cautious, never taking his eyes off it, then, swallowing hard, he slowly approached. But the shadow, as if annoyed, rushed back and attached itself to him like any ordinary shadow.

Damon flinched, but his shadow acted normally, mirroring his every movement. Breathing hard, he forced himself to calm down. With a wary glance around, he picked up a stick, prodding at the shadow. It was nothing more than his own shape on the ground.

A sudden realization dawned. His shadow was gesturing, as if pointing to something. Damon looked in the direction it pointed and noticed the stats panel hovering before him.

"You... want me to look at this?" he murmured.

The shadow nodded in affirmation. Damon's nerves calmed, just slightly, but he kept his guard up. Glancing at the panel, his eyes locked on the [HP: 50/50] section. At his confusion, the panel expanded.

[HP: 50/50] – Health Points

Your total Health Points (HP) represent your physical vitality. When HP drops to zero, you will perish. Physical injuries, magical attacks, or overuse of certain shadow abilities and skills can deplete your HP. Use healing items or abilities to restore HP when it falls below safe levels.

Current Status: Your HP is at its maximum, indicating you are in good physical health.

The explanation jolted Damon, as he suddenly realized something obvious—something he should have noticed the moment he woke up.

"My injuries... th-they're gone..."

He patted himself down, shrugging off his academy jacket, his hands tracing over his body in search of any wounds.

He probed his mouth with his fingers, checking for the tooth he'd lost in the fight—it was there. In disbelief, he lifted his shirt, scanning his torso, but there wasn't a single scar, not even a mark from his past fights.

"I don't have a single injury..."

Damon lifted his white shirt again, glancing down and inspecting his body. Not a single scar remained from the past—a fact that unsettled him. His fingers trailed along his skin, feeling smoothness where there once were wounds and reminders of hardship.

Today felt strange, though he couldn't quite tell if it was for better or worse. Shaking his head, Damon tried to shrug off the thought. Focus. There were more important things to examine.

[Mana: 30/30] – Magical Energy

Mana is your energy pool, used to cast magical abilities, including those drawn from the system. Shadow-related abilities and some skills will deplete this pool. Keep a close eye on it during battle, as running out of mana may leave you vulnerable.

Current Status: Full mana allows for optimal casting of abilities. Spend wisely.

Note: You have an unusually low mana pool. Leveling up is highly recommended.

Damon felt a stab of bitterness. He'd always known his mana level was abysmal—the academy's tests had confirmed that. A pitiful 30, the lowest in the academy's history, which had made him an easy target for bullying. The next lowest mana pool was 656; between him and that student lay an insurmountable gap.

"But... the voice said I could level up. No, it called itself the system..." He paused, a hint of hope stirring.

"But how do I level up?"

The system didn't respond this time.

With a sigh, he moved to check his other stats.

Strength – Physical power. Predictably, his strength was rated low.

Agility – A mix of dexterity and reflexes. The system rated him as average here, though it didn't sound nearly as dismal as his mana.

Speed – His movement speed, slightly above average, but nothing remarkable.

Endurance – A measure of stamina and durability. Damon knew he could take a beating after everything he'd endured. Still, the system classified him as below average.

Finally, he reached the section on class.

[Class: —] – No Class Assigned

At present, you have no formal class assigned. Once you unlock a specialized combat or magic class, you will gain access to class-specific skills and perks. The system may allow for an unconventional class in the future.

Current Status: Undefined. As you explore the depths of your shadow abilities and level up, a class may be discovered or created.

Damon's breath hitched.

"I... I can gain a class?"

The words gave him a glimmer of hope. People in this world could awaken up to seven classes over their lifetime, but he'd never thought he'd awaken even one.

[Shadow: 100] – Shadow Energy

Shadow Energy is the primary resource for utilizing the abilities of the Living Shadow. It regenerates through certain actions such as consuming life force

and souls. Shadow energy is spent when manipulating shadows or using certain skills, and it's critical to maintain this resource, or risk weakening your shadow and death.

Current Status: Your shadow energy is full. This is ideal for activating and sustaining shadow abilities during combat or exploration.

Warning: Shadow Energy must be kept at a stable level.

Damon read over the description, not fully grasping it. Still, the idea of wielding shadow abilities intrigued him. He pushed on, reaching the next, most unsettling stat.

[Shadow Hunger Level: 0%] – Shadow's Appetite

The Hunger Level represents the shadow's need to consume flesh and souls. As you use your abilities, the shadow's hunger will increase, urging you to feed it. Neglecting this hunger can lead to dangerous consequences, such as losing control over your actions or the shadow taking over. Be mindful not to let the hunger grow too high.

[Note: When Shadow hunger reaches 100% HP will begin to decline until individual perishes.]

0%-20% Hunger: Safe range. The shadow is under control.

20%-50% Hunger: Increased temptation to feed. Minor stat boosts.

50%-80% Hunger: Loss of partial control. Significant power boosts.

90%-100% Hunger: Shadow becomes ravenous, fully takes control.
Immediate risk of losing your humanity.

Current Status: The shadow is currently sated, leaving you in full control.

Damon's face drained of color as he read the words.

"Feed my shadow... but with what... flesh? What type?"