

Living Shadow 53

Chapter 53 Intellectual

Two days had passed since Damon devoured the kind hunter, Carmen Vale. In that time, his Shadow Hunger had grown steadily. After his last experience, Damon had learned an important lesson.

If he allowed his shadow to travel too far from him—beyond one kilometer—it would begin to consume shadow energy at an alarming rate. He had tested this limit carefully and made note of it.

During these two days, Damon had attended only one class—Potion Brewing. When he entered the lecture hall, all eyes were on him, accompanied by hushed murmurs. The gossip had spread like wildfire.

The class doubted his strength, and not in a positive way. Apparently, Leona Valefier had shown up unannounced and beaten one of their classmates to a pulp for insulting Damon. Afterward, she declared loudly to the entire class that Damon was her "best friend."

Naturally, this sparked rumors. Many speculated that Leona had held back during her earlier fight with Damon to avoid humiliating him, which further fueled whispers about his supposed weakness.

Damon, of course, couldn't care less. The only reason he had bothered to attend the class was for knowledge on potion-making and to scope out his next target: Isaac Regardi. Isaac was a member of Marcus's group, one of the people who had abandoned Damon to die that fateful night—the night he gained the Living Shadow System.

Revenge was his purpose now, and he would hunt them down one by one.

Damon's stats had received a modest boost from his increased hunger, though not enough to affect his sanity. Yet, it was progress, and he would take every advantage he could.

At present, he was in the library, scouring shelves for a book that could help him refine his poisons.

These past two days had been hectic, filled with relentless training and experimentation. He had trained with the bow he'd acquired, tested his poisons and paralyzing agents on animals, and even suffered the consequences of his recklessness.

One mishap involved Damon accidentally inhaling fumes from a beaker, causing him to pass out for several hours. Fortunately, the poison wasn't potent enough to kill him.

'Imagine dying from my own poison,' he thought, shaking his head at the absurdity of it.

Among his test subjects were a group of ravens. One of them escaped, and before he knew it, Damon had become the sworn enemy of every raven in the area. They harassed him relentlessly, diving at him whenever he stepped outdoors.

Rather than let the situation frustrate him, Damon turned it into an opportunity. He used the ravens as target practice, sharpening his archery skills. Over time, his ability to pick up his bow, nock an arrow, and fire with precision improved significantly.

Now, all he needed was to perfect one final poison, and he would be ready. He had already gathered all the information he needed about Isaac Regardi.

'Tonight, he will die,' Damon thought grimly, his resolve unwavering.

There was a coldness in Damon's eyes as he opened the book and stepped aside to let someone pass. He felt a slight bump against his shoulder and heard the soft, apologetic voice of a female.

Damon raised his head from the book, irritation flickering briefly on his face before he quickly suppressed it. He knew it wasn't genuine anger but rather the aggressive effect of his Shadow Hunger. The sensation gnawed at him constantly, threatening to spill over into his interactions.

The person he had bumped into was a young girl he recognized—an elf with white hair and striking grey eyes. She was Sylvia Moonveil, the second-ranked student among the first years.

"My bad. didn't see you there," Damon said, his tone flat and perfunctory.

Sylvia tilted her head slightly, observing him.

"It's fine. I should have been paying more attention to where I was going."

Damon didn't bother with a more polite response, and while Sylvia noted his lack of courtesy, she chose not to comment.

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"Are you interested in medicine?" she asked after a brief pause, her voice calm but curious.

Damon blinked, confused by the sudden question. "No... why?"

Sylvia pointed to the book in his hand. "That's The Compendium of Cure-All Poisons and Medicines by the elf sage Madina. I assumed you had an interest in medicine, like me."

Damon glanced down at the book. He hadn't paid much attention to its title; his focus had been entirely on the sections about poison.

'Come to think of it, poison and medicine are two sides of the same coin,' he mused, his expression thoughtful.

His eyes flickered back to Sylvia, and an idea began to form in his mind. She was an elf scholar, reputedly knowledgeable about various topics. He had heard the whispers about Sylvia Moonveil and her intellect.

'Hmm... maybe I can use her talents here.'

"Yes, I am. Well, I dabble. Nothing too specialized," Damon said, his tone shifting slightly.

"Are you any good, or are you a novice like me?"

Sylvia seemed momentarily surprised by his sudden shift in demeanor, but she welcomed the friendliness.

"Well, I wouldn't say I dabble. I do know a thing or two."

Damon's eyes narrowed slightly, a faint smirk playing at the corner of his lips.

"Really now? Then you wouldn't happen to know why Slovak roots don't mix seamlessly with the sweat gland of an atone lizard?"

Sylvia brushed her hair aside, considering his question.

"That's easy. It's because the compounds in the root and the sweat glands dissolve each other. If you want them to work, you need a third compound to act as a binder."

Damon listened intently but frowned when she stopped short of revealing the binder.

"Like what?"

Sylvia tilted her head, as if the answer should have been obvious.

"Salt. It works perfectly as the binder. In fact, it's the best option."

"Salt... of course," Damon muttered, his eyes narrowing as he processed the information.

"Why didn't I think of that?"

Sylvia turned to leave, her curiosity about Damon seemingly satisfied.

"Well, goodbye," she said lightly.

Damon raised a hand quickly.

"Wait... how do I get rid of the smell if I'm using Bodak poison?"

She paused, glancing back. "You boil it."

"But if I boil it, won't it just evaporate into gas?"

She shook her head.

"That only happens if you boil it directly. Just add boiling water. The water will evaporate, but the heat will take care of the poison."

Damon nodded, mentally noting her advice. He spent the next few minutes asking her more questions, each answered with the same calm precision. Before long, their conversation veered into broader topics.

It became clear to Damon that Sylvia was an intellectual, much like himself. Unlike him, however, she came from wealth and had access to a vast collection of books growing up. He, on the other hand, had lacked such opportunities until arriving at the academy.

He didn't realize how much time had passed until he noticed the sun setting. Reluctantly, he bade Sylvia farewell and left the library.

'Tonight, I will strike,' Damon thought as he walked away, his resolve sharpened. But first, he needed to apply the knowledge he had just obtained from Sylvia.