

Living Shadow 59

Chapter 59 Malicious Remarks

Damon's eyes, hidden beneath his blindfold, would have burned with anger, resentment, and every negative feeling he could muster towards Xander Ravenscroft. But as they were shut and obscured, he could only rely on his [Shadow Perception] to sense the world around him.

His mood darkened further when Xander chose to sit at the table.

In Damon's monochrome world of shadows, Xander's high and mighty aura stood out like a polished blade. Xander radiated a commanding presence, the kind that seemed to demand respect by mere existence. It was as though he lived by an unshakable set of principles, carrying himself with a dignity Damon found both enviable and detestable.

And that was precisely why Damon hated him.

To Damon, survival was paramount, and he wouldn't hesitate to sacrifice principles, pride, or anything else necessary to keep breathing. That was the stark difference between the noble Xander Ravenscroft, born into privilege and strength, and Damon Grey, a commoner who had scraped and clawed his way through life.

The feeling was mutual. Xander didn't seem to harbor any affection for Damon either.

Enjoy exclusive adventures from empire

Xander inclined his head in a polite gesture, addressing the girls at the table.

"Lady Moonveil," he greeted smoothly, his tone regal.

He turned to Leona. "Good morning to you, Lady Valefier."

Finally, his gaze fell on Evangeline.

"Apologies for the intrusion, Lady Brightwater. A good morning to you as well."

But when his eyes settled on Damon, his expression hardened, and his tone grew sharp.

"Commoner."

Damon didn't miss a beat, sneering back with equal venom.

"Noble."

The air between them thickened with tension, palpable to anyone paying attention.

This was a rare occurrence—Xander rarely acknowledged Damon's existence. Most of the time, he would refer to Damon as "insect" in passing, even if Damon was standing right in front of him. Yet now, he had looked directly at him, his disdain visible.

Damon raised a teacup to his lips as a maid delivered Xander's breakfast to the table. His discomfort grew with every second. Here he was, the so-called weakest student in the academy, seated among four of the strongest.

'This is going to be a long day,' Damon thought bitterly, setting his cup down.

He could feel Xander's disapproving gaze on him, likely judging his surprisingly refined manner of holding the teacup. But Damon didn't care. He wasn't here to impress anyone. He was here for one reason only: Leona Valefier had paid him to have breakfast with her.

'The things I do for money,' he thought with a grimace.

Sylvia and Evangeline both noticed the tension brewing between Damon and Xander. However, the beastkin Leona remained blissfully oblivious, far too engrossed in her own thoughts.

With a bright smile, she returned to her earlier question, ignoring Xander's interruption.

"Tell us."

Damon tilted his head slightly.

"Tell you what?"

Leona grinned mischievously, leaning forward.

"You agreed to be nice, remember? You were going to tell us about your blindfold."

Damon sighed, his reluctance evident.

"Fine," he muttered.

Evangeline and Sylvia had been curious about Damon's blindfold as well. Xander, noticing their interest, raised an eyebrow and leaned forward slightly.

Damon finally broke the silence.

"Like I said before, this blindfold is for my training. It's to sharpen my senses."

Xander scoffed, his voice dripping with disdain.

"What rubbish. You expect us to believe that nonsense?"

Damon didn't spare him a glance, deciding that ignoring Xander would be far more insulting than responding.

Xander's scowl deepened, his frustration palpable.

Sylvia, however, was genuinely intrigued. To her, Damon was shrouded in mystery, and she couldn't help but want to uncover more about him.

"But you can see, can't you?" she asked curiously.

Damon shook his head, his voice calm and measured.

"No. I can't. At least, not with my eyes."

Sylvia's interest was piqued even further. As an intellectual, the idea fascinated her. She leaned in slightly, her tone inquisitive.

"How so? What do you use, then?"

Damon didn't want to reveal his [Shadow Perception], so he decided to keep his explanation vague.

"The eyes aren't the only way we perceive the world. We rely on them too much, but they can deceive us. By closing my eyes, I've trained myself to sense the world differently. It wasn't easy to adapt, but now, I think I can see more clearly—truths that my eyes would never show me."

Sylvia and Evangeline exchanged impressed glances, clearly taken by his explanation.

Xander, on the other hand, let out a derisive scoff.

"Preposterous."

Damon still didn't look at him, dismissing the comment entirely.

Leona's golden eyes sparkled with mischief as she raised her hand and grinned.

"How many fingers am I holding up now?"

Xander smirked, confident that Damon was about to embarrass himself.

Without even turning his head, Damon replied.

"Four fingers."

Leona's grin widened as she changed the number.

"Two."

"Five."

"You've balled your hand into a fist."

"You're holding a fork."

Leona ran through several gestures, testing Damon's abilities. Each time, he answered correctly without hesitation or movement.

Evangeline clapped her hands together, her admiration evident.

"That's incredible! To think you could train your senses like that."

Xander's smirk vanished, replaced with a scowl.

"It has to be a spell. There's no way he can see without his eyes."

Sylvia shook her head, her expression thoughtful.

"No, I didn't sense any magic. He hasn't even moved his mana."

Evangeline's amazement only grew, and she turned to Damon with a warm smile.

"You really are something. As expected from the one who defeated me."

Xander froze, his eyes widening as he processed her words. He looked between Evangeline and Damon, his gaze narrowing with disbelief.

"That's ridiculous. I find it hard to believe that this commoner, with such a pitiful amount of mana, could defeat anyone, let alone you."

Evangeline frowned, her irritation building, but before she could respond, Damon finally turned his head toward Xander.

"Is 'preposterous' the only word you know?" Damon sneered.

"You show up here uninvited, act like a lovesick fool, and expect people to take you seriously? I'm not sure where you're from, lover boy, but that's not how you win a lady's heart."

Xander's usually composed demeanor cracked, and his jaw tightened in visible frustration.

Leona, sensing drama, leaned forward eagerly.

"Lovesick? What does he mean, Damon?"

Damon suppressed a cruel smirk, relishing the opportunity.

'Right on time,' he thought.

"The fool has a crush, obviously," Damon said, his voice casual but biting.

He paused deliberately, waiting for Leona's curiosity to peak.

Leona's eyes lit up with intrigue.

"On who? Tell me, tell me! And it better not be me—he's definitely not my type."

Damon's smile turned wicked as he prepared to deliver the killing blow.

"It's that obvious, isn't it? Xander has a crush on—"

Xander slammed his hands against the table, standing abruptly.

"How dare you, commoner! I challenge you to a duel!"

Damon leaned back in his chair, unimpressed.

"Huh? Screw off. Why would I fight you, you retard?"