

MY LIVING SHADOW SYSTEM DEVOURS TO MAKE ME STRONGER

Chapter 8 The Legend

Across the nine continents of Aetherus, from the central continent ruled by demons to the other eight governed by the goddess races, there was hardly a soul unfamiliar with the name Seras Blade. For demons, she was a feared adversary; for the goddess races, she was a revered hero.

Seras Blade was a prodigy from the war continent of Soltheon, born into a mid-level noble household. By age three, she could wield a sword; by age five, she had defeated someone who had awakened their first class. At six, she awakened her own class—a unique one not shared by the masses.

That was merely the beginning. By ten, she had reached her second class advancement. At eleven, she'd already slain numerous monsters and was hailed as a prodigy.

By fourteen, she entered the academy, quickly becoming its top student, her talent dazzling the entire world. She achieved her fourth class advancement at fifteen, and by graduation, she was stronger than most of the professors.

They said she was blessed by the Goddess of Doom, a warrior of unparalleled power.

But her legend didn't stop there. After her record-breaking graduation, she joined the war against the demon continent of Centros. At the time, the demons were steadily advancing in a war that had raged for centuries. The goddess races were losing ground—until Seras arrived. Her feats on the battlefield became legendary, and over the years, she reached the fifth class advancement. With her power, she was instrumental in forcing the demon continent into a truce.

Even Damon, who'd grown up far from glory, knew the name Seras Blade. She was a myth, a legend—and somehow, his golden ticket had come from her.

"My goddess... Seras Blade," Damon whispered, his frustration momentarily forgotten as he stared, wide-eyed.

Kael's expression barely softened.

"Correct. The Seras Blade was the original owner of your golden ticket. As for how it came to be in your hands... that's beyond me."

Kael sighed, glancing at Damon with barely contained disdain.

"It seems she gave it to a young couple named Grey."

He sneered.

"And somehow, that couple birthed a failure like you. It pains me to think that the eminent name of Seras Blade is associated with someone of your caliber. Your very existence tarnishes her legacy."

Damon lowered his head, his hands visibly trembling. He felt the weight of Kael's scorn pressing down on him, filling him with a suffocating shame.

Kael reached into his pocket, retrieving a brooch with the academy's crest. Made of silver, it bore a rune for "probation" inscribed in stark lettering. Kael pushed a sheet of paper toward Damon, his gaze laced with contempt.

"I'm giving you a chance," he said.

"Fill this out, and drop out of the academy voluntarily."

The paper slid toward Damon, and his heart sank, his face turning pale. He bit his lip until he tasted blood.

Kael watched him, unfazed by his distress.

"Sign it and leave on your own accord. That's better than being expelled and thrown out without any dignity. If you have even a scrap of respect for Seras Blade, you'll do this much for her legacy. Your failure reflects on her name as well."

Damon held the paper, fingers brushing against the pen on the table. But he hesitated, a memory flashing in his mind—his sister, Luna, her pale hair splayed around her as she lay in bed, struggling to live as pain wracked her body.

"Luna..." he whispered, his emotions swirling into a storm of rage and frustration.

How could he even consider giving up? He hadn't come to the academy for fame or honor. He was here to earn enough to save his sister.

If Kael Blackthorn wanted him gone, he'd comply—if Kael was willing to pay his sister's medical expenses in return. But since that wasn't happening, Damon owed him nothing.

'Seras Blade, huh?' he thought bitterly.

'Yeah, right... she can kiss my ass.'

Gripping the pen, he glared coldly at the paper, defiance burning in his gaze.

Kael's patience was growing thin.

"Well, get on with it. I don't have all day."

"No," Damon muttered, his tone cold and lifeless, a dead look in his eyes.

Kael's expression hardened.

"What did you just say?"

"I said no. I won't sign it."

Kael's eyes went icy.

"Do it. Now."

Damon didn't flinch.

"I said no."

Despite the tension knotting his stomach, he kept a calm facade, though anger simmered beneath his calm exterior.

Kael sighed, his patience finally snapping.

"Very well then."

He tossed the brooch in his hand toward Damon, who instinctively caught it. The silver brooch had the academy's crest with a rune for "probation" etched on it.

"Since you won't leave with dignity, the academy will force you out." Kael's voice held a cruel satisfaction.

"Congratulations, Damon Grey. You are now officially a probationary student. When you inevitably fail the mid-semester evaluation, I'll be here to personally kick you out."

Damon's hand shook, his fingers digging into the brooch as Kael continued.

"I've seen what you're worth—a failure and nothing more. You'll never amount to anything."

Damon's shadow flickered erratically as his rage swelled, his voice cold and cutting.

"Some educator you turned out to be, Professor."

Kael frowned, but Damon pressed on, his voice steady, fueled by a lifetime of frustration.

"You say I'm a failure. Yeah, you're right. I've failed countless times, and I've given up plenty, too. But I'm still here. Still standing. Call me a failure all you want, but saying I won't amount to anything? That's where you're wrong. You don't get to decide what I can or can't do." His eyes burned with defiance.

"You have no idea what I've been through just to make it this far. And if I go out, I'll go out kicking and screaming, knowing I gave it my all."

Damon's voice rose, his anger spilling over.

"Yes, I'm a failure, but failure is the crucible I've been forged in."

He stood, his glare locked onto Kael.

"I'm not getting expelled. I'll pass that mid-semester evaluation. And when I do, I'll look you dead in the eye and say—"

he leaned forward, his voice a low, fierce whisper, "Screw you."

Kael's gaze remained cold and unyielding.

"With your pathetic amount of credits, even passing won't be enough. You'll need to place in the top ten to stay, and we both know that isn't happening. Your words are nothing but a dog barking."

With a dismissive flick of his wrist, Kael tossed an envelope toward Damon.

"Now, get out of my office."

Damon caught the envelope, his dark eyes flashing with cold fury. He clenched the brooch in his hand and left without another word.