

ShadowBound 100

Chapter 100: True Killing Intent

Liam had faced countless powerful foes during his time in the Dark Forest, creatures that exuded raw, unrelenting killing intent, and each time, survival had meant recognizing it and responding in kind.

Sheila's so-called killing intent? It was a pale imitation—a hollow act that barely scratched the surface of what true malice was.

Liam might not have taken the life of a human before, however, he'd taken countless lives things, not out of choice but out of necessity. Whether it was a demon, or beast, he understood one thing: survival demanded power and the unflinching will to kill. Hesitation was a luxury he could not afford.

"Hey, Princess," Liam said, his voice calm and measured as he straightened his posture. "Let me ask you something."

Sheila's eyebrow twitched, a flicker of annoyance crossing her face. "What could you possibly have to ask me?"

"Have you ever fought with nothing but survival on your mind?" Liam asked, his cold gaze locking onto hers. His voice was steady, devoid of emotion. "Have you ever taken a life that was fully intent on taking yours the moment you faltered?"

Sheila's posture shifted slightly, a trace of uncertainty in her stance as the unexpected question hung in the air. 'What kind of nonsense is this?' she thought, her irritation growing.

"What does that have to do with anything?" Sheila shot back, her tone laced with mockery. "It's pretty amusing, coming from someone who's about to die."

Liam's expression didn't change. "I see," he said, his tone flat. "That answer serves as a 'no.' That explains it."

Sheila's smirk faltered for a moment. "Explains what?" she asked, her voice tinged with irritation.

"The hesitation in your attack just now," Liam said, his voice cutting through the clearing like a blade.

Sheila's eyes widened slightly, caught off guard. "What are you—"

"If you truly intended to kill me," Liam interrupted, "you would've done it with that first strike. But that millisecond of hesitation? It's enough to cost you your life."

He took a step closer, his stoic expression never wavering. "So I'll tell you this for free—throw away that pathetic, fake killing intent. It's disgusting."

Sheila's surprise morphed into anger. "Pfft," she scoffed, her voice dripping with venom. "Are those supposed to be your last words? Because all I see is an abomination grasping at straws, begging for his life."

Her gaze hardened, fierce and unrelenting. "And don't talk to me about killing intent like you're some kind of expert. What do you know about it? Exactly—nothing. So do me a favor, stop talking, and come at me with everything you've got. Let me end this and make it look like an accident."

Liam stared at her, unblinking, for a moment. Then he let out a sigh, as though bored with the entire situation.

"Fine then, Princess," he said, his voice as calm as ever. "Let's see how much you can keep to your word."

Liam inhaled deeply, the air around him shimmering with heat as he exhaled. But what left his lips wasn't ordinary air—it was fire. A controlled stream of flames, faint but vivid, danced from his breath.

Sheila's eyes narrowed, her curiosity piqued. 'What kind of technique is this?' She wasn't a fire manipulator, but she knew enough about them to recognize the usual methods. This, however—this was something she had no idea about.

'What the hell is this supposed to be?' she wondered, watching Liam begin to walk toward her, his movements deliberate and steady. Her instincts flared. 'Here he com—'

Her thought was cut short as Liam vanished from her sight, leaving behind only fleeting trails of flame hanging in the air like ghostly embers.

Her eyes widened, her body stiffening as she darted her gaze around, searching for him. But before she could locate him, an icy chill surged down her spine, primal and immediate, forcing her to move before her mind could catch up. Sheila sidestepped, leaping to the side and landing a good distance away.

Her breath hitched as she passed her hand around the side of her neck before havinv a glance at her palm, where a thin line of blood was seen. 'What was that?' she thought, her heart racing. The cut was shallow, but it spoke volumes—it hadn't been there a second ago. Liam's speed wasn't just surprising; it was lethal.

She scanned her surroundings, but Liam remained out of sight. Her senses screamed at her again, another overwhelming chill that surged through her body like a predator's warning growl.

This time, Sheila reacted faster, her instincts sharpening. As she summoned a thick ice wall in front of her, she caught a glimpse of him—a fleeting shadow that was cover with flames, in the corner of her vision.

Then, in an instant, her ice wall shattered into a storm of glinting shards, Liam's dagger slicing through it with terrifying precision. The force of the impact rippled through the air, leaving Sheila stumbling backward as her mind reeled.

For a brief moment, as if time had slowed, Sheila met his gaze. What she saw in Liam's eyes wasn't anger or desperation—it was cold, unyielding resolve. His intent was clear, and for the first time, Sheila felt it.

True killing intent.

It wasn't merely a sensation; it was a primal force, raw and overwhelming. Killing intent wasn't something that could be faked or forced—it was the distilled manifestation of one's will to kill, rooted in

experience, emotion, and instinct. It radiated from Liam like a predator's glare, primal and suffocating. It was the kind of intent that froze the body, forcing every nerve to scream in protest, whispering that death was near.

In that fleeting moment, Sheila understood the difference between their resolve. Her earlier bravado, her so-called killing intent—it was a hollow imitation. This, on the other hand, was the real deal.

Liam's strike carried the weight of his will. The sheer force of his attack sent Sheila skidding across the forest floor, her boots digging into the dirt to slow her momentum. She came to a stop, breathing heavily as the sting of his earlier graze pulsed on her palm.

Her heart pounded in her chest, her mind racing. 'What is this? How does he carry so much force, so much intent, in just two attacks?' She clenched her fists, her earlier confidence shaken but not extinguished.

Still, in the back of her mind, one thought lingered, a shadow of doubt growing with each passing second: Am I truly ready to face this monster?

"So, Princess, do you get it now?" Liam's voice cut through the tension, calm but carrying an edge that made Sheila's chest tighten.

As she lifted her gaze, her eyes locked onto his figure standing just a few paces away, a dagger gleaming ominously in his left hand.

"Drop the pathetic act," he continued, his tone cold and unrelenting. "It's revolting." His expression remained stoic, but the air around him seemed to darken, exuding a menacing presence that sent a shiver down her spine.