

ShadowBound 140

Chapter 140: Exams Detail

Chris stood up, his pride bruised and his face contorted with frustration. His chest heaved as he clenched his fists, a deep frustration bubbling within him. The challenge had been humiliating, a blow to his ego he wasn't prepared for. Losing in front of the class, having his arrogance stripped away in a mere ten seconds—it was beyond infuriating. But worse than that, now he was expected to apologize. Apologize to Ariana, of all people.

His eyes flicked to her desk, and with a seething glare, he stalked toward her, his posture rigid, as if every step was a battle to maintain his dignity. His gaze never wavered from Ariana, and his lips curled into a thin, tight line. He was determined to make this moment as short as possible—because in his mind, this was a punishment far worse than any exam could ever be.

When he reached her desk, he stopped abruptly, towering over her. His muscles were tense, his jaw clenched so tightly it looked as though it might snap. He opened his mouth, ready to say something sharp, something cutting, to end this humiliating situation with as little effort as possible—

"A-Ah, Chris..." Ariana's voice, quiet but firm, cut through his thoughts. Her hand was raised, almost timidly, as if to stop him before he even began.

Chris froze, the words caught in his throat. His mind screamed at him, No. This can't be happening. I don't want to do this. Not like this. But he couldn't escape her gaze. Ariana's wide, gentle eyes met his, and for a split second, something flickered in his chest—something he hated. It made the anger boil hotter, and yet, his resolve wavered.

"I... I appreciate what Mystica did. But there's no need for you to apologize," Ariana said, her voice soft and slightly shaken. She smiled at him, but it wasn't the kind of smile that suggested forgiveness—it was faint, almost sad, and that made Chris's discomfort grow even more.

A beat of silence passed, thick and heavy. His pride screamed at him to ignore her, to brush her words aside and hold onto the bitterness of the situation. But despite the storm brewing inside him, he found his body moving before his mind could catch up.

Without another word, Chris spun on his heel, his gaze fixed straight ahead, not once glancing at the floor. His posture remained straight as an arrow, his ego still intact—if only just. The room watched in rapt silence, sensing that the moment of awkwardness wasn't yet over. But Chris was done. He was not about to let this show on his face.

Mystica watched the exchange, a faint glint of understanding in her eyes. She didn't push Chris to say anything more. Instead, she respected Ariana's decision, allowing the moment to pass. Her lips curved into a small, approving smile, though it quickly faded as she returned to her usual mischievous expression.

"Such drama for a simple apology, but I do respect your decision, Ariana." Mystica's voice was light, her tone playful but carrying a hint of approval. She then turned and gracefully strolled back to the front of the class, hopping onto the desk with ease and sitting cross-legged, her gaze sweeping over her students.

The room was silent for a few moments, the tension lingering in the air. But then, the usual murmurs began to rise again. Chris, though still scowling, wasn't as brash as before. Ariana, though visibly uncomfortable with the attention, managed to offer a soft smile to the class, trying to ease the moment.

Mystica sighed contentedly, resting her elbows on her knees, her eyes gleaming with a mix of mischief and satisfaction.

"Alright, darlings," she said, her voice once again light and teasing. "Lesson learned, I hope. Now, let's get back to more important matters, like me giving you some intel on how the exams will be like."

The class went still, the previous awkwardness evaporating as the reality of the upcoming exams settled back in. Mystica's gaze lingered on Chris for a moment before moving to the rest of the class.

"Alright, here's how the exams are going to work," Mystica announced, her voice steady and filled with an air of mystery. "The whole thing is divided into Theory and Practical sections. And yes, it spans across four days."

A murmur spread through the room, and Max, unable to contain his curiosity, leaned forward with wide eyes. "Wait—what? So, we write theory and do practicals—all in just four days? How does that even work?"

Mystica raised an eyebrow and flashed a sly grin. "Well, I'm not going to reveal everything just yet, darling. Let's keep it simple for now. Of those four days, only one full day will be dedicated to theory. The remaining three days? All practicals." She paused, letting the words sink in, then casually added, "As for what the practicals will involve... I have no idea."

Her smirk grew, and she shrugged nonchalantly, as if that was the most obvious thing in the world. The class stared at her, the uncertainty of it all hanging heavily in the air.

A soft voice broke the silence—Sheila, looking both concerned and intrigued. "Does this mean we should expect more intel as the exams get closer?"

"Exactly, Princess," Mystica replied, her tone light but laced with the unmistakable thrill of mischief. "All the additional intel will be delivered by none other than the Headmaster himself." She allowed a pause for effect, letting the words settle in. "And I believe none of you have had the pleasure of meeting the Headmaster, have you?"

"Anyway, that's all I can tell you for now," Mystica said with a soft chuckle as she gracefully stood up from the desk and began to make her way to the door. "So, have a great afternoon, my precious darlings."

The room remained still, the weight of the mystery hanging in the air. Just as she was about to leave, Mystica paused and glanced back at her students. "And..." She tilted her head, her gaze sweeping over the class with a slight smirk. "Don't worry about this too much. If you allow uneasiness and fear to consume you here, you've already failed the exams."

Her words hung in the air like a challenge, and before anyone could react, she swept out of the room with a fluid motion, the door closing softly behind her.

The class sat in silence for a few moments, processing what Mystica had just said. The tension that had built up over the past few minutes slowly began to dissipate, but the unease lingered. The exams, still shrouded in uncertainty, weighed heavily on everyone's mind.

Liam, who had been leaning back in his chair, sighed quietly to himself. 'Can't they just reveal everything now?' he thought, irritation flashing briefly in his eyes. 'This whole thing is just becoming a bigger hassle than it needs to be.'

"Tch... what a pain."