

ShadowBound 214

Chapter 214: Don't Dictate My Life

"What an interesting one," Seraphina murmured to herself, her emerald eyes glinting as she watched Liam disappear from sight. "He reminds me so much of Percy... but his will, his sense of self—" She chuckled, tilting her head. "Greater than my dear Percy, without a doubt."

She tapped a finger against her lips, lost in thought. "Well, who cares? Cold-hearted sweeties like them... oh, they'd make such a deadly pair. But not yet. Not yet." A smirk spread across her lips, sharp as a dagger. "You sure are interesting, Liam. And I'd be damned to see that potential go to waste."

She ran a hand through her dark green hair, sighing in amusement. "Such a delicious meal you've found, Mystica."

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As Liam changed into his academy uniform and left the training hall, he realized something unsettling—all the attacks, all the pain he had felt inside Seraphina's domain had been nothing more than illusions. Not a single wound remained on his body.

Shaking off the lingering sensation, he made his way back to his dorm. However, as he approached his door, he immediately noticed something was off. The slightest shift in its position, the barely perceptible disturbance on the handle—it had been touched. Someone had broken in.

Yet, no presence could be felt from inside.

Despite this, Liam entered anyway, chalking up his unease to the residual paranoia from Seraphina's training. His gaze swept across the room, scanning every inch for movement, anything out of place. Satisfied that nothing seemed immediately threatening, he closed the door behind him, setting his sword on the rack before pulling off his shirt.

Just as he turned toward the bathroom, he abruptly stopped.

Something was wrong.

No sound.

His own footsteps had been completely silent, the air itself unnaturally still. It was exactly like what had happened just moments ago with Seraphina when she had cast her silence spell. No footfalls. No rustling of fabric. Nothing.

His instincts flared, warning him too late.

A crushing force wrapped around his throat and slammed him against the wall with terrifying strength. His feet left the ground as he was hoisted up, his back cracking against the unyielding surface. His windpipe compressed under the unseen grip, his breath cut off instantly.

A hand. A firm, heavy hand.

Even as he struggled, he recognized the cold, disdainful voice that followed.

"As a student of my class, you're already dead."

Liam's attacker began to materialize from thin air, the invisibility fading like mist.

Instructor Kaine.

The man's muscular arm was locked around Liam's throat, his grip unyielding, lethal.

"Pathetic," Kaine spat, eyes gleaming with contempt. "Even after a training session with Seraphina, this is all you amount to? Tch. A waste of her time." His grip tightened. "And honestly, I really don't get what she sees in a worthless shit like you."

Liam remained silent, struggling against the vice-like hold, his lungs burning.

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'What the hell is wrong with this man?'

Kaine leaned in slightly, his voice dropping to an icy whisper. "Listen closely, kid. I don't like you. Never did. So take my advice—drop the course by tomorrow." His fingers dug in harder, pressing Liam against the wall until the surface behind him cracked slightly. "If you don't, I promise you with very fiber of my being —every single day you remain in my class, you get close to her, I will make yourll life a living hell. And if you think that's bad?" His tone turned downright murderous. "I could kill you right here, and no one would ever find out."

Liam's vision blurred slightly from the lack of oxygen, but something far stronger was rising within him—rage.

'This bastard just classified himself under the fools who think they can dictate my life.'

A deep, simmering fury coiled in his gut, sharp and relentless.

"For... a teacher... you sure know... how to be... an asshole," Liam forced out, his voice breaking under the pressure.

Kaine's eyes narrowed, his fury evident, but his tone remained coldly calm. "You still have the nerve to speak? How idiotic. I suppose you've learned nothing from my lessons. Rule number one—never talk when I—"

Liam cut him off.

"Keep that... bullshit to yourself." His glowing red eyes locked onto Kaine's with burning defiance. "I don't care if you're my instructor... but breaking into my room for this nonsense... is next-level stupidity."

A sudden surge of heat flooded the room.

Liam's grip on Kaine's forearm tightened, and without warning, flames erupted from his hands—not wild, untamed fire, but controlled, focused heat.

Immediately, Kaine felt the scorching heat surge through his entire arm, but he refused to loosen his grip on Liam's throat.

"You think a little heat will make me let go?" he sneered. "Pathetic."

Liam smirked despite the chokehold. "Of course not. For a masochist like you, this is nothing."

Without warning, the flames intensified, bursting from his hands and feet in a controlled explosion. Using the force, Liam pushed off the wall, propelling himself forward with blistering speed. In a blur, his legs snapped into motion—a rapid three-strike kick combo that forced Kaine to shift defensively. But Liam wasn't done.

In the same breath, he twisted mid-air, coiling his body around Kaine's arm like a serpent. Before Kaine could react, Liam's heel struck the back of his neck, the blow searing with heat and precision. The impact staggered Kaine just enough for Liam to fully lock around him, using his body's momentum to drive him downward.

With a heavy 'silent' thud, Kaine crashed onto the floor, momentarily pinned.

Shock flickered in his eyes—not at the fact that Liam had landed clean hits or even that he was momentarily immobilized, but because of the way he moved.

'That technique...'

The fluid, serpentine motion was eerily familiar.

'Did this damn kid learn this just from experiencing it once? From her?'

Rage flared in Kaine's chest at the realization.

But before he could retaliate, a firm, bare foot pressed against his throat, forcing his head down. The heat radiating from Liam's sole wasn't just warmth—it was compressed, controlled, and dangerously lethal.

Liam stood over him, looking down with cold, detached eyes.

"Mr. Kaine," he said evenly, "I have no doubt you're more than capable of avoiding this situation entirely. But your refusal to acknowledge me—the simple fact that Lady Seraphina chose to teach me—clouded your judgment. That's why you're here."

Kaine's teeth clenched, his muscles tensing.

"But that doesn't matter now," Liam continued, his tone turning razor-sharp. "Just like you warned me—let me return the favor. Don't ever cross the line by invading my privacy again because of your man-child feelings for Lady Seraphina. The moment you think you can dictate my life, you've signed your own death contract."

The room grew heavy with a suffocating presence.

Liam leaned in slightly, eyes glowing ominously. "And just so you know, the kid you saw hesitating to strike a damn hologram? He's dead. The one standing over you now?" His voice dropped into something far more menacing. "He wouldn't hesitate for a second to rip your head off."

Kaine's entire body went rigid.

A chill—primal, ancient—slithered down his spine.

This wasn't just killing intent. This was something else.

Unknowingly, Liam was radiating Nyxie's aura, an oppressive energy that made even Kaine—who had seen death a hundred times over—feel a moment of instinctual dread.

Liam pressed down ever so slightly, his foot unmoving.

"So be careful how you move, Instructor." His voice was ice. "You might lose your head if you move the wrong way."