

ShadowBound 87

Chapter 87: Successful First Day

To pursue magic and truly understand its depths, one must first master Myst, the primordial energy that gives birth to all magical and elemental abilities.

Myst is the foundation of magic—the wellspring from which all power flows. Without understanding Myst, the pursuit of magic remains incomplete.

There are ten essential Myst techniques that must be learned before one can fully grasp magic. Unbeknownst to him, Liam had already mastered the first three: Myst Detection, Channeling, and Resonance.

These techniques, which most novices struggle to learn, were things Liam had been unconsciously executing throughout his countless battles in the forest.

His sheer will to survive had forced him to adapt and refine these skills naturally, even without formal instruction. However, under Mystica's guidance, Liam was now learning to approach these abilities deliberately, unlocking their true potential.

By the end of his first training session with Mystica, Liam had advanced significantly, mastering two additional techniques: Myst Shielding and Myst Amplification, the fourth and fifth steps.

Myst Shielding is the formation of a protective barrier of Myst around one's body. This barrier can absorb or reduce the impact of physical and magical attacks. For Liam, it felt like cloaking himself in an invisible armor, providing a new level of defense he hadn't thought possible.

Meanwhile, Myst Amplification is the act of Temporarily boosting one's Myst to enhance physical power or magical potency. This ability acts as a surge of energy, like opening floodgates to release raw power in controlled bursts.

While Myst Amplification is generally a temporary boost, some individuals possess an innate talent for maintaining it indefinitely. These rare few lack the ability to wield elemental magic, but their Amplification becomes a specialized skill called Enhancement Magic.

Enhancement Magic improves the individual's physical prowess, such as strength, speed, and senses, to superhuman levels. Unlike elemental mages who manipulate fire, water, or air, those gifted in Enhancement Magic excel in direct combat, relying on their augmented bodies to dominate the battlefield.

With his extensive battle experience and natural adaptability, Liam found himself progressing faster than most. Mystica noted that his ability to absorb and execute these techniques was almost instinctive, as if he had been unknowingly preparing for this his entire life.

Though he had already conquered the first five techniques, five more lay ahead. But for Liam, these challenges were nothing but stepping stones to his success and he knew he had to get them done quickly.

"I think we'll end it here for today," Mystica said with a stretch, standing up from her perch.

Liam raised an eyebrow, his expression as unreadable as ever. "Why? You said there were ten techniques, and I've only learned five."

Mystica rolled her eyes dramatically, her voice taking on an exaggerated tone. "Hey, I've got things to do, you know? Besides, with your ridiculous rate of progress, I'm sure you'll be able to handle the rest tomorrow. Go get some rest—you're going to need it."

She muttered something under her breath that sounded like "Such a pain," though she didn't seem too bothered.

Liam didn't react, maintaining his usual cool demeanor.

Mystica gave a final glance to the fading sun, casting a long shadow across the forest. "Anyway, look at the time—sun's almost set. I've got a meeting to attend to, so I need to get going."

With a flick of her wrist, she began to dissolve into thin air, her form vanishing with a faint shimmer of magic.

"See you tomorrow, Liam," she called out playfully, her mischievous wink the last thing he saw before she completely disappeared.

Liam stood still for a moment, his gaze lingering where Mystica had been. "Looks like she can leave or appear without any flashy teleportation magic," he thought to himself, his tone flat, as though pondering a simple fact rather than a remarkable feat.

With a quiet sigh, he pushed himself up. "I'd better get going. Wonder if Dylan's still hanging around here..." Liam muttered, heading off toward the direction he remembered walking earlier.

Liam walked through the dense forest, the rustling of leaves and chirps of wildlife surrounding him as he made his way through the trees.

As he stepped over a thick root, a sudden rustling sound came from the bushes to his right. Without thinking, his hand shot to summon one of his daggers—but before he could draw it, a familiar voice rang out, loud and almost desperate.

"Liam! Over here!"

Liam froze, his hand still poised at his side. He turned to see Dylan, dangling upside down from a tree by one foot, his arms flailing around as he tried to untangle himself. The sight was both absurd and impressive in its own way.

"Dylan... are you stuck?" Liam asked, his voice deadpan.

"Stuck? Pfft, of course not! Just... uh... perfecting my... my swinging technique," Dylan said with a grin, although he was swaying dangerously.

He immediately smacked into a branch above him. "Y'know, training for advanced acrobatics... or whatever."

Liam couldn't help but raise an eyebrow. "Uh-huh. Sure, that's totally what it looks like."

"I'm telling you, Liam, I've got skills you wouldn't believe," Dylan insisted, finally managing to free himself and land with an exaggerated roll, only to stumble and almost faceplant into the dirt.

"I'm a master of... balance," he added, trying to play it cool as he wobbled dangerously before straightening up and bowing dramatically.

Ariana, sitting on a boulder a few feet away, rolled her eyes with a soft chuckle. "Balance? You're lucky you didn't fall face-first into the dirt."

Dylan grinned unbothered. "Nah, that's too predictable. What's more impressive is how I got stuck in the first place. No one can get themselves in that position unless they're a genius."

Ariana glanced at him with a mischievous smile. "You mean no one can get stuck like that unless they're you."

"Exactly!" Dylan pointed dramatically at her, clearly pleased with her understanding. "See? You get it!"

Liam stood there, his expression completely calm and unconcerned. "I beginning to get Asher's frustration."

Ariana shook her head, still giggling softly. "Anyway, Liam. How was your training with Mystica?" she asked, turning the conversation back to Liam.

Dylan immediately adopted a dramatic, exaggerated dark expression. "Yeah, Liam, don't tell me you cross the line with my queen, huh?" He leaned closer to Liam with an overly serious face, making the moment feel absurdly tense.

Liam, still unmoved, glanced at Dylan with his deadpan expression. "What? What are you talking about?"

Ariana couldn't hold in her laughter and let out a soft giggle at the sight of Liam's expression. "Don't mind him, Liam. Sheila told him Mystica wanted to personally teach you the basics, and he got pretty jealous, that's all." She said, giving Dylan a teasing look.

Dylan's face twisted into a comically exaggerated pout. "Jealous? Me? Nah, I'm just concerned," he said dramatically, clutching his chest as if struck by an arrow. "I need to make sure no one is stepping out of line with my queen... especially Mr. Stoic here."

Liam sighed, his expression as calm and unbothered as ever. "Since you two seem to have so much to talk about, I'll leave you to it."

Without waiting for a reply, he turned and started heading in the direction of the forest path where Dylan had originally led them.

"Hey, wait up! Do you even remember where we came from?" Dylan called out, scrambling after him, nearly tripping over a root in the process. [Read latest stories on empire](#)

"Yeah."

Dylan caught up to him, walking beside him with a doubtful expression. "You sure? Because last time you said you knew where you were going, we ended up at the upperclassmen section of the academy."

"That wasn't my fault," Liam replied flatly, not breaking his stride.

"And we had to take useless punishments!" Dylan shot back, throwing his hands in the air for emphasis.

Liam ignored him, continuing down the path with his usual composure.

Meanwhile, Ariana remained seated on the boulder, watching them disappear into the distance. She let out a long sigh, her cheeks still warm from the interaction. 'Wow, I thought my heart might actually stop just now.'

She glanced at Liam's retreating figure, his calm and confident stride only making her blush harder. 'I really need to keep myself in check... This is getting ridiculous. Why do I keep turning into a mess whenever he's around?'

With a soft groan, she buried her face in her hands, then peeked through her fingers to catch one last look at Liam before he vanished completely into the trees.