

ShadowBound 93

Chapter 93: Teach Me

"I want you to teach me the Sixth Myst Technique," Liam said, his tone calm and composed, as if he were merely stating a fact.

"H-huh?" Ariana blinked, completely caught off guard by his sudden request. "W-what could I possibly teach you?" she stammered, her voice tinged with disbelief.

"Well," Liam began, his tone unwavering and expression stoic as ever, "Mystica said you're just like her. More importantly, you understand the foundation of magic in ways I don't. So, apart from getting lessons from Mystica herself, you're the next best person I should turn to."

Ariana felt her cheeks heat up at his words, her heart racing. 'How can he say something like that and keep such a straight face? she thought, flustered.' "I-I guess you're right," she managed, her voice shaky as she tried to compose herself.

"But..." she hesitated, glancing down briefly before meeting his gaze again. "I can't promise to teach you well enough as Mysticab would."

"You don't need to worry about that, also you don't have to if you're tired," Liam replied, glancing up at the serene moon glowing in the midnight sky. "It's late, after all."

"Don't worry about it. I can teach you, I'll try my best." Ariana said quickly, determined to push aside her nervousness.

"Thank you," Liam said simply, his gratitude brief yet sincere.

"Um... can you come sit here?" Ariana gestured to the arena ground where she had just seated herself, kneeling gracefully.

Liam didn't respond with words, instead rising silently and walking over. He sat down across from her, legs crossed, his movements deliberate and calm.

For a moment, neither of them spoke, the silence between them broken only by the soft rustle of the wind. The moonlight bathed the arena, casting a soft glow on their faces. Ariana felt her heart flutter, struggling to focus as the proximity made her acutely aware of Liam's presence.

"So," she began, her voice steady despite the blush still warming her cheeks. "The Myst Techniques aren't really ranked in any strict order. Mystica just likes to organize them for easier understanding. So, the Sixth Myst Technique, as she calls it, is Myst Recovery."

"Myst Recovery." Liam repeated.

"Exactly," Ariana continued. "And lucky for us, you've already used a fair bit of Myst tonight. This is the perfect time to learn it."

She was right. Liam had expended Myst on his Myst Shielding earlier, a technique that created a protective barrier of energy. Summoning his dragon hadn't drained much Myst, but the flames it unleashed certainly had.

"This will help replenish your reserves and improve your control over Myst flow," Ariana said, her confidence growing as she focused on the lesson. "It's fundamental but incredibly important for anyone who wants to master advanced magic."

Liam gave a small nod. "Alright then, how do I start?"

"Close your eyes and try to absorb the Myst in the air around us," Ariana instructed, her tone calm but her heart racing.

Myst Recovery, as Ariana knew, was a combination of two foundational techniques: Myst Absorption and Myst Channeling. By absorbing the ambient Myst and channeling it to the core, one could replenish depleted reserves. It was simple in theory, yet it required focus and control, skills Liam had already demonstrated in abundance.

She watched as Liam closed his eyes, settling into a meditative posture. The arena wasn't ideal for Myst recovery—unlike the forests or Mystica's training grounds, the Myst here was sparse.

For most, this would pose a challenge. But Liam, with his mastery of Crimson Breathing, had an advantage. The technique allowed him to draw Myst more efficiently, even in less abundant environments.

Minutes passed, the air around them growing subtly heavier as Liam worked. Ariana could sense his progress, the faint ripple of Myst flowing toward him like a gentle tide.

Finally, Liam opened his eyes, his gaze meeting hers. "I think I've got the hang of it," he said calmly.

Ariana blinked in surprise. "Wow, that was quick! I expected you to struggle a bit, especially since the Myst here is pretty thin compared to other places." She paused, realizing how her words might sound. "Not that I thought you couldn't do it or anything!" she added hastily, her voice rising in pitch.

Liam stared at her, expressionless, unsure what to make of her flustered explanation.

"Anyway," Ariana continued, eager to move past her embarrassment, "since you've picked that up so fast, why don't we keep going? We might be able to cover the next techniques since you've already mastered Absorption and Channeling."

Liam raised an eyebrow, his surprise subtle but noticeable. "Won't that be too much for you? You look like you could use some rest." His tone was neutral, his expression unreadable.

"No, I'm fine!" Ariana said quickly, waving off his concern. "Besides... spending time with you is more fun than I expected," she muttered, her voice barely audible.

Liam, oblivious to her words, nodded. "If you say so."

"The next techniques are ones you're already familiar with—Myst Precision and Myst Infusion," Ariana explained.

Liam tilted his head slightly. "What are they?"

"Myst Precision is about focusing your Myst into a specific part of your body to prevent overuse. It's useful for conserving energy during prolonged battles. Myst Infusion, on the other hand, is channeling Myst into your weapon to enhance its power or effects," Ariana elaborated.

"Ah, I see," Liam said, raising a hand. A small flame flickered to life at the tip of his index finger. "So Myst Precision is something like this?"

"Exactly!" Ariana said, nodding. "And a perfect example of Myst Infusion would be when you use Inferno Edge."

"I get it now," Liam said, his stoic face softening ever so slightly, a faint hint of understanding in his eyes. For a moment, he almost looked... curious, like a child learning something new for the first time.

Ariana froze, her cheeks flushing red as she took in his expression. 'I never thought I'd see him look like that... and why does he seem even more handsome than usual?' she thought, her heart skipping a beat.

Clearing her throat, she forced herself to refocus. "Let's move on, shall we?" she said, her voice a little higher than normal.