

## The Mans Decree Chapter 2826 -

As Kai listened to the rules, realization finally dawned on him regarding the reason behind the Alchemist Fair competition's stipulation for participants to be at least Third Level Top Tier alchemists.

With the tolling of a bell, nearly a hundred alchemists in the arena immediately began crafting pills. All the medicinal herbs and pill cauldrons provided were identical, which meant that everyone was on the same starting line.

The speed of pill crafting would now depend on their individual alchemical prowess. In no time, flames shot up, carrying with them the rich aroma of herbs, which then spread throughout the surroundings.

Roderick remained composed, keeping a watchful eye on Kai's every move. After all, making it into the top twenty was enough to secure advancement; grabbing the top spot wasn't an absolute necessity. Roderick observed Kai, curious to see if the poisoning had affected Kai's alchemical skills at all.

Kai, too, had noticed Roderick's sneaky but constant glances, so he calmly dropped the medicinal herbs into the pill cauldron and began his crafting.

As he worked, he made a show of struggling with things. Sweat began to form on his forehead. Roderick smirked at the sight as he knew his poison was taking effect.

With Kai's consciousness field compromised, even the task of crafting a Third Level Top Tier pill seemed laborious. Roderick was confident that the later stages of the assessment would surely eliminate him.

He thought with glee that Kai would probably be weeded out after this very first assessment round. More than twenty minutes later...

Boom! Following a muffled sound, the air was filled with the scent of medicine. Someone had already successfully crafted a pill!

Following that, more booming sounded as others completed their pills. Roderick no longer played coy; he hastened his alchemical process. Soon enough, he produced a Third Level Top Tier pill.

When he turned to Kai, he was delighted to find the latter still struggling. Excitement bubbled within him as he observed. Finally, there was a blast from Kai's pill cauldron too, and a Third Level Top Tier pill soared out from within.

Kai had secured his success as the twentieth contestant. Any later, and he would've been eliminated in the first round! After everyone completed their pills, the first twenty to finish presented their creations to the judges.

Although speed was a factor, quality remained a priority. If a pill that had been crafted was subpar, it would be discarded, and the alchemist's ranking would be adjusted accordingly.

However, the judges ruled that the first twenty pills were of acceptable quality. After all, crafting a Third Level Top Tier pill wasn't an insurmountable challenge for these alchemists. If they failed in the first stage of the competition, there would be no need to continue with the subsequent rounds.

"What's up with Kai today? He spent so much time on a Third Level Top Tier pill that he was almost eliminated," Viola wondered aloud. She had noticed how Kai was struggling just now.

"I'm with you. Something's off about Mr. Chance. Making a Third Level Top Tier pill shouldn't have taken him this long, right?" Ghaylen chimed in with a perplexed expression.

"Could it be that Mr. Chance is just too exhausted?" Yuven recalled Kai's strange look yesterday when they had just left Solaris Sect.

Upon hearing Yuven's words, Viola unexpectedly turned red. She thought Yuven's comment about Kai being tired was a reference to their intimate activities the night before!

Ghaylen looked at the blushing Viola and smiled, refraining from commenting. Yuven himself felt like he might have said something inappropriate and became slightly awkward.

"The top twenty alchemists have been decided. The rest can leave the arena..." The elderly judge stood up and announced loudly. Many wore expressions of disappointment as they left the crowded arena, leaving only twenty people.

“Now, for the second round of competition. This time, you will be crafting Fifth Level Top Tier pills. In the time it takes for the sand to run out in this hourglass, the closer your pill is crafted to perfection, the better your chances of success in this second round!”

The judge added, “For this round, we will retain the best five participants. You will be using the same pill cauldrons and medicinal herbs!”

Once the twenty alchemists had heard the rules, they began their competition once more.

## **The Mans Decree Chapter 2827 -**

The time it took for the sand in the hourglass to run out wasn't enough for these alchemists to create a perfect Fifth Level Top Tier pill. However, the closer they got to perfection, the greater their chances of victory.

Thus, these individuals labored with all their might to craft the pills. This time, Roderick didn't dare to slack off anymore. He concentrated intensely on his alchemy, though he did still occasionally sneak glances at Kai.

However, Kai paid no attention to Roderick. He was completely engrossed in his own crafting. A Fifth Level Top Tier pill wasn't something just any alchemist could craft, so the sounds of cauldrons failing and exploding intermittently filled the air.

Soon enough, the time was up, and everyone retrieved their crafted pills. As some had experienced cauldron explosions halfway through and failed the round, only ten Fifth Level Top Tier pills were brought to the judges.

However, they were all semi-finished products- not a single one was fully complete. Taking note of that, Roderick couldn't help but smile smugly.

During the assessment previously, Kai had managed to craft a perfect Fifth Level Top Tier pill within the same amount of time. Now, he was struggling, clearly affected by Roderick's poison.

When the ten Fifth Level Top Tier pills were presented to the judges, Gregory and the other judges picked up the pills, focusing intently as they probed each pill's condition.

However, just as Gregory focused his attention on the pill, he felt a momentary dizziness in his head and was unable to sense the aura within the pill. Consequently, he couldn't discern which pill was crafted more perfectly.

"Master, are you all right?" Pearl noticed and expressed concern for Gregory. "I'm fine, just a little lightheaded," Gregory responded, picking up a pill and resuming his meticulous examination.

This time, the judging process noticeably took longer, but fortunately, they managed to identify the pills that came closest to perfection."

Among those were Roderick's and Kai's pills. The elderly judge in the center seemed to notice the changes in Gregory and the others, so he asked, "Are you all feeling unwell? Should we pause the competition for a moment?"

"No need. We're already down to the final round. It's probably just a bit of fatigue. We're fine," Gregory quickly reassured the elderly judge.

"Very well then. Let's proceed with the next round of competition. However, this round is the ultimate test of mental energy. Rest while the competition is going on."

With that, the elderly judge announced the start of the third round of competition. In this third round, the five alchemists were to craft Focus Pills. Although it was just an ordinary Fifth Level pill, crafting one required extensive and focused mental energy. The stronger one's mental energy, the more perfect the resulting Focus Pill would be.

For Roderick to secure victory, it all depended on this final round. That was why he had drugged Kai, causing damage to the latter's consciousness field. I'm sure Kai won't even be able to craft a Focus Pill. Even if he managed to, with a compromised consciousness field, the resulting pill would undoubtedly be flawed.

The remaining five alchemists stood in a row, their pill cauldrons having been removed. Then, each of them unleashed their spiritual sense and began to condense it.

In mid-air, five Focus Pills appeared, radiating light as they did. The alchemists continually released their spiritual sense, enveloping the Focus Pills they were crafting, which relentlessly absorbed the spiritual sense.

Roderick was next to Kai. As Roderick confidently began crafting his Focus Pill, he suddenly noticed that Kai was emitting an astonishing surge of spiritual sense. The Focus Pill Kai was crafting started expanding and growing increasingly radiant.

“What...”

Roderick’s eyebrows furrowed when he saw that. He couldn’t comprehend how Kai, with his damaged consciousness field, could release such immense spiritual sense.

## **The Mans Decree Chapter 2828 -**

Roderick panicked when he saw Kai’s Focus Pill glow increasingly brighter. He mustered all of his strength and unleashed his spiritual sense to help his Focus Pill absorb it, but he was still unable to keep up with Kai’s speed.

Suddenly, the look in Roderick’s eyes grew intense as he subtly pinched his fingers and unleashed a faint aura into his surroundings.

As Kai was standing the closest to Roderick, he detected that aura immediately. There was a force within the aura that kept sucking away Kai’s spiritual sense.

Kai sneered as a ray of golden light flashed within his consciousness field. Like a rat that had seen a cat, Roderick’s aura disappeared almost instantly. Although Roderick’s trick wasn’t able to harm Kai, the same could not be said about the other alchemists.

They all began to panic as they realized their spiritual sense was draining rapidly, and there was nothing they could do to stop it from happening. After Roderick finished absorbing everyone else’s spiritual sense, his Focus Pill started shining brightly as well.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Suddenly, the Focus Pills of three out of the five alchemists exploded, and their spiritual sense dispersed instantly.

Only Kai’s and Roderick’s Focus Pills were still glowing brightly. As the time ran out, Kai and Roderick were holding their respective Focus Pills.

The appearance and texture of the Focus Pills looked fairly identical, so the only way to compare them was through the spiritual sense contained within said Focus Pills. "You can't win even if you use such dirty tricks!"

Kai said. "Is that so? We shall see..." Roderick replied with a cunning smile. Although he had no idea why Kai's spiritual sense was still so powerful even though his consciousness field was damaged, Roderick had a backup plan ready.

The elderly judges from Solaris Sect had all been poisoned as well, so they would soon not be able to think clearly. According to Roderick's plan, Pearl would then use her power to declare his Focus Pill the winner.

Both Focus Pills were presented to the judges, who began observing the quality of the pills. Staring at the two pills, Gregory enveloped them with his powerful mental energy. A few seconds later, however, Gregory's body swayed violently, and he became woozy all of a sudden.

Pearl quickly ran up to him and held him steady as she asked, "Master, which of these two Focus Pills is stronger?"

By then, Gregory was so out of it that he couldn't differentiate the strength of the Focus Pills. Even so, he slowly lifted his hand anyway. Seeing that, Pearl quickly held his hand and pointed his finger at Roderick's Focus Pill.

Once someone had recorded his decision, the Focus Pills were passed on to the remaining judges. Following that, Pearl would stand behind the judges who were examining the Focus Pills and guide them into choosing Roderick's. She even secretly winked at Roderick after she was done with her task.

Roderick flashed her a gleeful smile in response. Little did they know, Kai had noticed their interaction. He frowned slightly as he realized the two of them were definitely in cahoots with each other.

However, when it came to the final elderly judge, he froze after enveloping the Focus Pills with his mental energy. The vast spiritual sense within Kai's Focus Pill was something he had never experienced before.

Although Roderick's Focus Pill resembled that of Kai's in terms of its appearance, it was the spiritual sense inside the Focus Pill that would determine its quality.

When compared to Kai's Focus Pill, it wouldn't be an overstatement to say that Roderick's was utter garbage.

## **The Mans Decree Chapter 2829 -**

The elderly judge stared at Kai in shock while trying his best to suppress his excitement. It had been forever since he last saw someone this powerful.

"Let us announce our decisions, fellow elders," said the elderly judge toward the others. The rest of the judges nodded in agreement and announced their respective decisions.

Everyone, including the elderly judge, was shocked when the results came out. Apart from himself, who voted for Kai, all the other judges had voted for Roderick.

"What is the meaning of this, fellow elders?" he asked in displeasure with an icy-cold expression. He only became a judge to prevent people from cheating, and Kai's Focus Pill was clearly a hundred times stronger than that of Roderick's.

The fact that Gregory and the other judges still chose Roderick's Focus Pill was a clear sign that someone was cheating.

Noticing that Gregory and the other judges were growing increasingly dizzy and starting to lose consciousness, Pearl stepped forward and said, "My master and the other elders are feeling unwell. Now that the results are out, I'll bring them somewhere they can get some rest."

She needed to get Gregory and the others out of there before they fainted on the spot. The elderly judge's expression slid into a frown as he could clearly see that something was off about them.

Right when Pearl was about to bring them away, the elderly judge grabbed Gregory's pulse point and inserted a wave of spiritual energy into his body. "What are you doing?"

Pearl was about to stop the elderly judge but froze in her tracks when he shot her a fierce glare. Fearing that their secret would be exposed, Roderick protested loudly, "The results are out, and I have won the competition! Why aren't you declaring me the winner?"

He did that on purpose to stir up a huge commotion and stop the elderly judge from examining Gregory and the others.

The poison that Roderick had given Pearl would not kill them. All it did was disrupt their consciousness field. Due to the low dosage given, their consciousness field would slowly recover over time.

It was never Roderick's intention to kill Gregory and the other judges. All he wanted was to become the champion in the Alchemist Fair.

After examining Gregory and the others, the elderly judge found it odd that he couldn't find anything wrong with them.

Cheating incidents had never occurred whenever Gregory and the others from Solaris Sect acted as judges, so he couldn't understand why it would happen this time. Upon noticing the smug grin on Roderick's face, Kai realized something and jumped forward to land in front of Gregory.

"Mr. Stark!" he called out to Gregory, but Gregory was in such a dazed state that he couldn't even talk. Kai then quickly enveloped Gregory's body with his spiritual sense.

"What are you doing? Are you trying to kill Master?" Pearl screamed as she tried to stop Kai. She knew all too well what had happened to Gregory and the others. Kai ignored Pearl and unleashed a wave of aura, sending Pearl flying in an instant.

He then inserted his spiritual sense into Gregory's consciousness field. Upon seeing the thick, gray fog in Gregory's consciousness field, Kai immediately understood what was going on.

Gregory and the others were experiencing the same thing Kai did yesterday. However, Kai had a huge consciousness field and the protection of Golden Dragon's True Form, so his consciousness field was not damaged.

Kai shot Pearl an icy-cold gaze as he recalled how this only happened to them after they drank the coffee she made yesterday. Had Gregory and the others not ended up like this, Kai wouldn't have suspected Pearl of anything.

Because she had a guilty conscience, Pearl couldn't bring herself to look at Kai directly when she saw his icy-cold gaze.

## The Mans Decree Chapter 2830 -

Kai ignored Pearl. Instead, he began ridding the poison from Gregory and the elders with his immense spiritual sense. Not long after, Gregory and the others regained their clarity. However, they could not recall the verdict they had rendered.

The elderly judge filled Gregory and the others in, then produced the Focus Pills Kai and Roderick had synthesized and let them examine them again.

The group was stunned when they took a closer look. It was plain that Kai's Focus Pill was a hundred times better than Roderick's, but they did not know why they had chosen Roderick as the winner.

"How did this happen? I don't even remember what I did!" Gregory exclaimed, looking abashed. As a judge of the contest, it was humiliating for him to have made such an unsound decision.

The other elders of Solaris Sect were also flushed with embarrassment for having made a choice even a child would not have made. "Perhaps you should ask your disciple, Pearl, Mr. Stark. She knows what happened," Kai said to Gregory.

Gregory whipped around to regard Pearl. "Tell me, Pearl. What exactly is going on? I remember you standing behind us." "I don't know what happened, Master. You were the ones who decided on the verdict."

Pearl was still feigning ignorance. In response, Roderick exclaimed loudly, "I won first place. Why aren't you announcing it yet? Are you going to openly go back on your verdict?"

Roderick's shouting also stoked the displeasure of many present. It was plain that his Focus Pill was the better one. After all, aside from the elderly judge, everybody had chosen him. Such a stark difference in opinions like this renders any further discussion pointless. They should announce the results!

Gazing at Roderick, who was still shouting, and the restless crowd, the elderly judge yelled, "Remain calm, everyone! As the elders of Solaris Sect are suddenly feeling unwell, the results of this round of the competition may be annulled."

“Why? What does their well-being have to do with the results? I wasn’t the one who forced them to choose! I object to the annulment. You will declare me the winner. If you insist on annulling it, however, I would be forced to question the impartiality of Jipsdale!” Roderick hollered. Having the results become invalid was the last thing he wanted.

Suddenly, the situation was plunged into a stalemate. Though it was plain that Gregory and the others had been tricked into making the wrong decision, they found themselves in a dilemma at this point.

On the one hand, it would not be fair for Kai if they proclaimed Roderick the winner. On the other, it would be seen as a challenge to Jipsdale’s authority if they did not announce Roderick’s victory and for insisting on a rematch.

“How did we get set up?” Gregory could not figure it out. They had not left after entering the venue for the Alchemist Fair; it was for the sake of impartiality. Despite all their precautions, they had still been tricked. The ludicrous verdict was evidence of that.

“Try and recall, Mr. Stark. Perhaps there was something wrong with our coffee. I experienced symptoms like yours yesterday. It was only due to my powerful spiritual sense that I managed to neutralize the toxin, which is why I remain unharmed,” Kai told Gregory. Hearing those words, Gregory glared at Pearl.

“Did you put something in our coffee, Pearl?”

“What are you talking about, Master? I don’t understand!” Still feigning ignorance, Pearl shook her head. Kai gazed at Pearl, aware that she was incorrigible. She is still being stubborn.

“Forget the matter of the poisoning for now. How should we announce the results?” the elderly judge said with a frown. I don’t even know if I should announce the outcome right now!