

The Herb King

The Herb King #Chapter 61 – 70

Read The Herb King Chapter 61

61 The Second Prince's Epiphany

On the balcony of a mansion, Emperor Ragnar was looking at the night sky with an unreadable expression.

“Dimitri, what do you think of that guy, Aethelwolf?” He muttered under his breath.

Swoosh!

A shadow suddenly emerged behind him.

“I wasn't able to detect his strength. He is a mysterious person and his strength shouldn't be shallow. Is it really fine for Your Majesty to give him the headmaster position of the academy?” Dimitri stared at the emperor's figure, still confused as to why he had given an important position to someone that he had just met.

Emperor Ragnar chuckled as he continued staring at the sky. “Care for some wine?” He muttered as he rubbed the space ring in his thumb.

A space ring was valuable in their world and one could only be made with the combined effort of a Blacksmith and an Engraver.

An Engraver is someone who has a high natural ability in controlling world essence. They could create runes and turn them into powerful barriers, runes that could summon the power of thunder, and many others.

The number of Engravers was even a lot less than the Blacksmiths and Alchemists. That's why Engravers are respected no matter where they go and their status was exalted! However, not everyone can become an Engravers.

.....

The space ring in the emperor's hand glowed as he took a bottle of wine and two wine glasses. He gave one glass to Dimitri before pouring wine into their glasses.

“Didn't you hear what I said in the Reynolds' mansion? Instincts... My instincts told me to give him the position...” Emperor Ragnar said as he swirled his wine.

Dimitri shrugged upon hearing his response. He then grabbed his wine glass and gulped down the contents in an uncultured manner.

Seeing this, Emperor Ragnar laughed and looked at Dimitri in amusement. "Dimitri, it seems like you've forgotten what I taught you. Swirling your wine isn't a matter of style. Do you know why the wise people do it?"

Dimitri shook his head. He was a fighter and he has no time to learn about etiquette.

Emperor Ragnar poured more wine into Dimitri's glass and said. "According to my father, the late emperor, swirling your wine can improve its taste. He said that you can remove the residual putrid smell of the wine if you swirl it. Well, it's not that I'm doing it for that reason. To tell you the truth, I only followed my old man's instruction since it looks cool and elegant to swirl my wine before drinking it."

Hearing this, Dimitri smiled and shook his head. It looks like the emperor was in a good mood since he has the time to joke with him.

Knock! Knock! Knock!

"It must be His Highness, Prince Calvin." Dimitri mumbled when he heard the knocking on the door.

"Go and bring him here." Emperor Ragnar said.

Dimitri walked towards the door and opened it.

Prince Calvin was surprised when he saw that it was Dimitri. It was only today that he finally knew the identity of this man. This guy was actually the strongest subordinate of his father!

Prince Calvin didn't dare meet his gaze as he said. "I've something to tell His Majesty."

"He is on the balcony. Follow me." Dimitri brought the second prince to the balcony.

"Come. Drink with me." Emperor Ragnar said as he handed a glass filled with wine to Prince Calvin.

"It's my pleasure, Your Majesty." Prince Calvin answered as he took the glass from his father's hand.

"There's no need for formalities. There's no outsider here. Have you delivered the contract?" Emperor Ragnar asked before lightly sipping on his wine.

Prince Calvin nodded his head. He was also happy that his father was finally acknowledging him. This was the first time his father had invited him to drink wine.

“Yes, father.” The word ‘father’ was quite difficult to say because it has been a long time since he last called him that way.

Emperor Ragnar recalled the memories of when his sons were still young. They used to call him father, but now that they had grown up, it was customary for them to call him ‘His Majesty’.

“You should stop thinking about the throne, my son. I don’t want there to be any disputes between you brothers. It would be nice if you can assist your younger brother and help him oversee the empire when he inherits the throne. You are excellent in all aspects. The only issue is the excessive greed in your heart. You must not let it control you, son. Believe me, when you overcome your greed, you will feel refreshed and your speed of breakthrough will increase.” Emperor Ragnar said while looking at his son.

Prince Calvin lowered his head. It appears that his father has seen through him. He also felt that his father’s words might be true. Could it be that he had almost allowed his greed to control him?

Prince Calvin felt a wave of terror as he thought about what he did all these years. He had been secretly plotting on how to reclaim the position as the crown prince. If he continued down this path, he might even do extreme things that could lead to a major fight between him and his younger brother.

As he thought about this, he felt a wave of shame enveloping his entire being. “Father, please punish me for my foolishness!” He shouted in remorse.

Emperor Ragnar smiled as he patted his son’s shoulder. “There is no need for that. As long as you’ve realized your mistake, everything is good. If you really feel guilty about it, just support your younger brother with all your heart.”

Prince Calvin raised his head and looked at his father, feeling warm in his heart. He then nodded his head and muttered with a resolute look. “From now on, I will support Christopher!”

Emperor Ragnar grinned when he saw his son’s change. A knot was also untied in his heart after that conversation.

The father and son continued drinking all night...

62 Leric’s Crazy Idea

The next day, it was the official start of the battle event. The arena that was specifically built for the competition was already packed with people and everyone was excited to witness the epic battles of the young talents of the empire.

There were even some people who placed large bets on their favorite participants, hoping that they could earn a large sum of money. This betting pool was set up by the Merchant Association and the Imperial Family.

Looking at the amounts of bets placed by the observers, Alec Ward has the most bets on him. With his sudden rise in the recent years, the young lord of the Ward Household was indeed one of the strongest participants.

“Does anyone of you know what the first part of the event is going to be?”

“I have no idea. The organizers didn’t mention anything. Let’s just wait and see.”

Meanwhile, the more than one thousand participants have already surrounded the battle arena. It was a huge platform and was definitely enough for the young Espers to show off their abilities.

“His Majesty has arrived.” Someone suddenly announced in a loud voice.

Everyone craned their necks and stared at the special section made for the Imperial Family.

Emperor Ragnar walked towards his seat with a calm look on his face. His overflowing charisma made the spectators look at him with deep veneration.

.....

Following behind the emperor was the second prince, Prince Calvin, and Dimitri who was still acting as an assistant.

The commoners kneeled respectfully at the emperor as they greeted him. “Greetings, Your Majesty!”

Emperor Ragnar gestured for everyone to stand up. He then smiled as he said. “We all came here for the battle event so I will not waste too much time on some stupid speech. I now announce the commencement of the competition!” He then flicked his sleeves and sat down on his seat.

Everyone clapped and cheered, excited for the battles that would come.

Prince Calvin nodded his head at the emperor. He was the main organizer of the event so it was best for him to tell everyone the rules of the first part of the competition.

Prince Calvin walked towards the center of the huge platform. Everyone followed him with their gazes and they immediately shut their mouth.

With all eyes gathered on him, Prince Calvin wasn't nervous. He smiled as he said. "The first part of the event is an elimination round. All participants must step inside the bronze tiles around the battle arena. Each tile is inscribed with a gravity rune. The strength of gravity would increase as time passes by and only the remaining two hundred fifty participants will have the chance to showcase their prowess. This event will eliminate those with weaker willpower and perseverance." He then turned his gaze to the participants and told them. "Participants, please step into the bronze squares."

All the participants heeded him and step into the bronze squares. They felt a bit nervous and some even summoned their world essence in preparation for the unknown.

Looking at their faces, Prince Calvin smiled as he gave a signal.

The bronze squares immediately lit up and the participants could already feel the sharp increase in gravity. They felt as if a heavy boulder was pressing down on them.

There were huge screens prepared all over the stadium for the spectators. Everyone could see the struggling faces of the participants through the screen.

The people who had placed large bets nervously stared at the participants they'd chosen.

Meanwhile, in the VIP section, Leric was looking at the screens with an uncaring look on his face. Sitting on either side of him were Anna and Samira who were looking at the participants with extreme attention.

Lord Julius and the others were also talking about their perspective on the participants' strengths based on what they know.

'What a boring event. Why are they even excited about this? It's more fun to watch horse racing than this lousy gravity dog crap...' Leric muttered disdainfully in his heart.

Suddenly, Leric's eyes narrowed as he inspected the runes on the bronze squares. He could tell that the runes were not ordinary. The strokes were forceful but were still refined. It was definitely the work of a top Engraver! His disdainful eyes were replaced with a solemn pondering look. He never thought that Engravers could actually bring out such power and that those gravity runes were merely for the sake of the competition. What if those runes were used in war?

"Sir Aethelwolf, what do you think about the participants?" Lord Harold suddenly asked him when he saw Leric staring at the screen with unblinking eyes.

Leric turned his head at him and responded thoughtlessly. "They're so-so...aya! I mean, they are good prospects and I can see that some of them would be great warriors in the future."

Lord Harold chuckled when he heard him. He definitely said that the young talents were so-so, but he didn't expose him.

"Sir Harold, you see those runes? What do you think will happen if we place them in the key areas of the empire?" Leric changed the topic and pointed at the runes.

Lord Harold was dumbfounded when he heard his question. The others also perked up their ears and listened to their conversation.

Place gravity runes in the key areas of the empire? It was a great idea, but the number of runes needed would be a lot and the materials they would have to gather for them were astronomical. Other than that, there weren't a lot of Engravers in the empire and even if all Engravers in the empire worked together, it would still take them years to accomplish what Leric had just said.

"I know that it would take a very long time to do it. I believe it would take around five years or more to finish the entire plan and the number of resources needed would be tremendous. However..." Leric's eyes suddenly narrowed into slits as he continued.

"If by chance the empire was able to accomplish this idea, we would be prepared for any war that would come. Be it against a neighboring empire or even the combined might of two empires, they would have a hard time fighting against our soldiers. Man, Engravers are so damn scary..."

Leric's words stunned them into silence. Sir Aethelwolf, the scary ones aren't the Engravers, but you and your crazy ideas!

Although Leric's idea was bordering the line of impossibility, it was still worthy of consideration.

When Leric noticed that they had gone silent, he gave them a confused look. "What happened to you guys?"

63 A Terrifying Genius!

Leric ignored them and continued studying the runes.

You have acquired the talent [Engraver]

[Engraver] Level 1

– You can now create the most basic runes.

Leric smiled when he saw the changes in his Status Screen.

Although he had no plans to become an Engraver, it might come in handy in the future. He then started planning on putting up some defensive runes around his clinic after it was completed.

‘How many runes should I make? Probably a hundred? Hehe. It’s not bad to be cautious, right?’ He muttered in his heart. Luckily, no one knew his thoughts or they would have coughed up blood. Even the richest nobles only put up about a dozen defensive runes in their mansions, but Leric was planning to make ten times more than that!

While Leric was absorbed in his thoughts, the struggles of the participants became more apparent as the gravity they felt intensified. Some of them could no longer bear the pressure and fell to the ground, eliminating them from the contest.

Looking at the eliminated participants, the experts who were watching the scene shook their heads as they muttered in their hearts. ‘Their willpower is not strong enough.’

.....

As time passed by, the gravity became more and more unbearable and the participants fell one by one.

From more than one thousand participants, there were about four hundred who remained stubbornly standing.

Looking at their struggling faces, everyone cheered for them silently in their hearts. These young people were the future experts of their empire!

Soon, only two hundred and fifty participants remained standing. Most of them were covered in sweat and only a few of them remained completely composed.

“The eliminated participants may leave the arena. Don’t be disheartened. All of you are elites of the younger generation. You can still sign up for the army and fight your way to the top!” Prince Calvin’s words ignited their hearts. They vowed to train more and contribute to the empire.

Prince Calvin then turned his gaze to the remaining participants and smiled at them. “You guys can have an hour of rest before we begin the next stage of the event.”

The first part of the battle event came to an end.

After the announcement, Leric stood up from his seat and turned his gaze toward everyone. “I have something to do, everyone. I’ll be back soon.”

“Sure, Sir Aethelwolf!”

Leric left the VIP section and went to where the Imperial Family was seated. He was prepared to give the signed contract to the second prince. The stack of documents in his storage space took up most of his time last night and he only had a few hours of rest.

As Leric was walking to the Imperial Family's spot, Emperor Ragnar saw him.

"He must be on his way to give us the signed contract." He muttered as he looked away.

Soon, Leric arrived at their spot.

"Greetings, Your Majesty and Your Highness." Leric greeted the emperor and the second prince.

The emperor smiled at him, while the second prince also greeted him. "Hello, Sir Aethelwolf."

"Come. You may sit with us." Prince Calvin smiled as he offered a seat to him. After his heart-to-heart talk with his father last night, Calvin had become more mature in his actions.

"Thanks." Leric said as he sat down with a calm expression. He then took out a bunch of documents from his storage space and handed them to the second prince. "I've already signed the contract. I just hope that everything written in them will be followed." He mumbled in a serious voice. He read everything in the documents twice to make sure that the Imperial Family didn't leave any loopholes for him.

The second prince chuckled as he took the signed contract from him. "You can rest assured, Sir Aethelwolf. We will do what is stated in the contract, but we also hope that you can do your part."

Leric nodded his head. At least they were sincere about this entire matter. "Of course! Oh, by the way, my clinic's construction will be completed tomorrow. I hope that you can grace my lousy clinic with your presence, Your Highness. I promise that you won't be disappointed if you go there tomorrow. You might even find something to your liking." Leric's face changed into that of an old fox.

Prince Calvin revealed a look of curiosity upon hearing this. He knew about the matter of Leric's clinic, but he had no idea what he has to offer other than curing diseases. "Oh? Can Sir Aethelwolf tell me about some inside information?"

Leric grinned when he saw that the second prince was interested. The fish had taken his bait. "Of course! Since I consider Your Highness as a friend of mine, I'll tell you more about what you can expect to see on the opening day of my clinic. The clinic will display various rare pills and medicines. Other than that, there will also be a special item that

would be on display...” Leric promoted his merchandise, looking like a professional salesperson.

Emperor Ragnar who was merely listening on the sidelines became intrigued when Leric mentioned about soaps. It was an item that he has never heard of, but from how he described them, it has a similar effect to beauty pills. The only shocking thing was that this guy was selling them cheaply and in large quantities at that! His product would surely take the empire by storm!

Meanwhile, Prince Calvin was already looking at Leric with admiration and surprise. This man who was about the same age as him was actually able to come up with such a unique product! He knew that once the noble ladies of the empire heard about his soaps, they would certainly visit his clinic every single day!

Other than being an Alchemist and having deep knowledge in politics and schemes, Aethelwolf was also a shrewd businessman! Inviting him to the opening day of his clinic would make the nobles and merchants more curious about what he has to offer. And when those prey would take his bait, they would become his source of income!

Just the thought of it made Prince Calvin look at Leric with horror. ‘What a terrifying genius!’

64 Subtle Changes

This was merely his speculation, but if this was indeed within Leric’s grasp, the guy’s shrewdness wouldn’t pale in comparison to the old patriarchs of the Noble Faction.

“Sir Aethelwolf, it seems like you’ve really prepared well for the opening day of your clinic.” Prince Calvin stared at Leric with a smile.

Leric nodded his head and smiled wryly as he recalled the sleepless nights of the past few days. He has been refining pills and making soaps all day and night and he only takes a few short breaks. If not for his improved physical constitution as an Esper, he would have become sick.

The two continued chatting and they ended their conversation when the second part of the battle event was about to start.

“I’ll take my leave now, Your Highness.” He then turned his gaze to the emperor who had remained silent the whole time. “Your Majesty, I’ll take my leave.”

Emperor Ragnar waved his hand without looking at him.

Seeing this, Leric laughed in his heart. ‘Continue your act. I know you are also interested in my soaps. Did you really think that I wouldn’t notice your subtle expressions?’

The real reason that Leric invited the second prince to come to the opening day of his clinic was not just to bait the prince, but also to tempt the emperor. The value of his soaps would soar as time passes by and Leric was certain that the emperor would soon visit him to talk about business.

Leric went back to the VIP section, but he didn't stay for long. He still had to prepare for the opening of his clinic.

.....

"Why did you guys leave as well? I thought that you are interested in watching those kids fight." Leric looked at Samira and her two maids. The three of them were now following him with cunning smiles on their faces. In truth, Anna also wanted to leave with them, but his grandfather didn't allow her.

"The first day of the battle event is boring. It will only be exciting if the final sixteen will fight amongst themselves. It's more fun to go with Sir Aethelwolf and observe how you make pills and soaps. Besides, didn't we decide that we will be working for you?" Samira looked at him, her eyes flashed with a mischievous glint. After staying with Leric for many days, they had already grown closer.

Skylar nodded her head as she nodded. "That's right! We are already working for Sir Aethelwolf!"

Kathlyn also nodded her head while looking at Leric silently.

Leric was speechless when he heard their words. He gave them an exasperated look as he mumbled. "We didn't decide it. You guys did. I haven't even given you three my approval yet."

"Come on, Sir Aethelwolf! We can help you look after the clinic. We can also greet your customers for you." Samira stared at him with big puppy eyes.

Leric's eyes twitched, but he couldn't bring himself to reject them when he saw their cute pleading faces. Besides, it would also be good for his clinic if he has three pretty ladies working for him. They would attract more customers for him with just their beauty alone. Thinking about this, Leric sighed in resignation. "Fine, but you guys must not disturb me while I'm making pills, okay?"

"Of course!" The three ladies replied in unison. Their eyes lit up with excitement after getting his approval.

Leric now treated them as his friends and he also noticed that the way he was interacting with them had changed. He was no longer polite with them and sometimes, he even tells them double-meaning jokes. Of course, he still didn't dare to go over the

line with his jokes. These ladies might be meek right now, but they could become fierce tigresses any time they would be provoked.

Inside the carriage, Leric suddenly noticed a red dot in his [Virtual Map]. The size of the red dot was also big, a sign that the enemy has the strength of a Level 3 Esper. 'There is only one guy. He must be the leader of those scouting parties sent by the Northern Viper Group. They've been loitering outside the mansion of the Reynolds Family.' Leric sneered when he noticed the red dot. He has been keeping tabs on the [Virtual Map] and he had long since discovered the scouts sent by the Northern Viper Group. He was also sure that they were the same people who were following them in Vale City.

Leric didn't do anything. There was only one person and he didn't seem to have a plan to attack them. It was unnecessary and might only complicate things if the enemies are alerted.

"Is there anything wrong, Sir Aethelwolf?" Samira asked when she noticed that he had gone silent.

"Nothing. Why are you still calling me 'Sir Aethelwolf'? Didn't I tell you guys to just call me by my name?" Leric smiled while looking at Samira's beautiful face.

Samira blushed under his direct gaze and she could not help but look away from him. "I'm still not used to it..."

"I consider you three as my closest friends so drop the honorifics with me." Leric smiled at them. He then leaned and closed his eyes to take a short nap. He was truly tired this time. "Wake me up once we arrive in the mansion."

"Alright."

Meanwhile, Serge was staring at their carriage with a solemn look on his face. He was now dressed like a traveler. He stealthily followed them while bypassing the crowd of people. No one noticed him at all and everyone only thought that a fierce wind has blown past them.

He has been monitoring the carriage of the Reynolds Household's young miss for the past few days. He also kept tabs on Lord Julius and Lord Harold, but he didn't dare to move closer to them for fear of being discovered. Those two were Level 4 Espers and there is a high chance of him being noticed if he unscrupulously monitors them so he decided to play it safe and just observe Samira.

What he didn't know was that he was already discovered by Leric!

65 Essence Gathering Pellet and Awakening Pellet

Samira stared at Leric who had apparently fallen asleep. She knew that he was very tired after a few sleepless nights. He had worked very hard for the opening day of his clinic.

While he was resting, Samira and the two maids stared at his face unblinkingly. It was rare to have this kind of opportunity so they cherished it.

Soon, they arrived at the mansion.

“Si- Aethelwolf, we have arrived.” Samira tapped his shoulder as she whispered in a gentle voice.

Leric’s eyes fluttered and he immediately sat up straight. He had actually fallen asleep! It was quite dangerous since there was a group of bandits monitoring their movements. Luckily, none of them took action. However, when he used his skill [Virtual Map], he noticed that the bandit he saw outside the battle arena was closely following behind them. It appears that the person was keen on observing their every action.

The group alighted from the carriage and entered the mansion.

Leric went to his room and the three ladies followed him. He didn’t have to worry about their safety since there were a lot of elite guards all over the mansion.

Leric didn’t say anything when he saw Samira and the other two entering his room. He’ll just treat them as spectators who wanted to observe his pill-refining.

He then retracted his gaze from them and took out a bunch of herbs and the Refined rank cauldron he got from Prince Calvin. It was a cauldron that surpassed the piece of junk that he took from his mom’s clinic.

.....

He is planning to display four types of pills for tomorrow’s opening day. The first two were the Recovery Pellet and the Vigor Pellet. Both pills were improved versions of the ones sold in the market and Leric was planning to sell them at a price that was only slightly higher than those pills!

Other than the two pills, the third pill is something that could speed up the process of gathering world essence. Upon consumption, one’s speed in refining world essence would increase by threefold! There was also a pill with similar effects in the market, but it could only increase the gathering of world essence by fifty percent. Whereas the one that Leric came up with could increase the process by three hundred percent! There was no point to compare the two pills at all since the difference in their efficiency was significant! Once this pill enters the market, everyone would surely do anything to get their hands on it! Leric named this pill, Essence Gathering Pellet.

Lastly, the final type of pill that he would display tomorrow is the most valuable among his creations. It is something that could help people awaken as Espers! Even the most ordinary person would become an Esper after consuming his pill!

It must be noted that not everyone was born with an active Hegel, the organ responsible for storing and gathering world essence, but Leric's pill could stimulate an inactive Hegel! The only problem was that even after awakening as an Esper, their level wouldn't increase without the help of resources. That means, they would still be held back by their inferior talent. Even so, this pill was still incredibly precious because it was something that didn't exist in the market!

This time, Leric was planning to refine the fourth pill which he named 'Awakening Pellet'. Among his creations, this was the most difficult to make and the ingredients were also a lot more expensive. Luckily, he still has the gold card he got from Samira. He was also able to get a discount when he bought the herbs because of his friendship with the Reynolds Household.

Leric's expression suddenly became serious when he began sorting the herbs. These herbs are the ingredients needed to refine the Awakening Pellet. Each of them is sold in the market at a price that only rich people can afford.

The three ladies stood silently behind him. They stared at his actions with great attention, eager to learn more about Alchemy.

The three of them were not Alchemists, but Leric noticed that they could be trained to become one. If they constantly watch him refine pills, they might be able to successfully summon their Pill Fires! However, everything still has to depend on their abilities.

Meanwhile, Leric already started extracting the medicinal properties of the herbs. His face was extremely focused while doing this. His hands moved in a skilled manner, making the three ladies stare at him in admiration.

They couldn't believe that even the process of refining pills could look so elegant and beautiful!

Time passed, and after about thirty minutes, the first batch of Awakening Pellets was finally born.

When Leric opened the cauldron, there are three pills sitting inside. In most cases, he would be able to refine three pills in one refining session, but the Awakening Pellet requires more energy so he was only able to form three pills.

Looking at the cyan pills, the three ladies could already tell that it was extremely valuable just based on the energy contained in them.

"A-Aethelwolf, what kind of pills are those?" Samira asked him curiously.

“Leric wiped off the sweat on his forehead before turning his head at her. He then replied with a mysterious smile on his face. “Have you guys heard of a pill that can turn an ordinary person into an Esper?”

Hearing his words, Samira and the two maids were dumbstruck. Could it be...

Looking at their stunned faces, Leric laughed in amusement. “One Awakening Pellet can turn a person into an Esper regardless of age or talent. What do you guys think about this pill?”

“This...” The ladies were at loss for words. It was a type of pill that could turn an ordinary person into an expert! If this pill was mass-produced, it was possible to create an army of Espers! However, when they recalled the herbs he used earlier, they could not help but feel that it was a pity. Those herbs were very expensive in the market and only a few of them are available every time.

“Among the four kinds of pills that my clinic will display tomorrow. The Awakening Pellet is the most valuable!” Leric muttered as he kept the three pills inside his storage space. With the ingredients he has, he could make about thirty pills! That was equivalent to the birth of thirty Level 1 Espers! However, Leric only planned to display ten Awakening Pellets for tomorrow’s opening day. He would sell them sparingly to make them more valuable and more expensive. He wasn’t afraid that someone would copy his pills since the techniques he used when refining them were something he learned with the help of the Status Screen. Perhaps they would be able to make a counterfeit product, but their efficiency would never be able to reach the standards of his pills!

66 Cigar

Samira’s eyes shone as she suddenly thought about something. Leric’s Awakening Pellets could change the power structure of the world! It was already common knowledge that it is possible for ordinary people with inactive Hegels to become Espers, but if they consume Leric’s pill, they could break upon their mediocre shells to become experts! Although becoming a Level 1 Esper was merely the first step, it was a level that only a few people could achieve.

“Aethelwolf, can I buy a few Awakening Pellets from you? Well, it’s not appropriate, just forget about it.” Samira didn’t want to miss this opportunity. If she manages to get her hands on a few pills, their Reynolds Household would welcome more experts in their fold!

Leric grinned as he moved his gaze to her. How could he not know what she was thinking? Not to mention her, anyone else would feel tempted once they would hear about the effects of consuming an Awakening Pellet.

“Since you are my friend, I can sell these three pills to you.” Leric took out the three Awakening Pellets and handed them to Samira who had a look of disbelief as she took the pills from his hands.

“You’re selling them to me?” Samira asked while feeling shocked in her heart. She knew the value of these pills and Leric could sell them at an astronomical price.

“Why not? I know how to refine them. As long as I have enough ingredients, I can even make an endless supply of them, but just to let you know, I won’t be giving you any discounts.” Leric chuckled while looking at her. It’s not that he was being a miser, he was truly lacking in money at this moment. He needed to get more money to obtain more herbs and items that he would need for the daily operations of his clinic. He also has to look for Alchemists who would be willing to work for him.

Samira shook her head and smiled. “There is no need for a discount. Our Reynolds Household doesn’t lack money. Come on. Tell me. How much for the three pills?”

“Awakening Pellets are 3rd Grade Pills that don’t exist in the market. I’m planning to sell that at a price of 100,000 gold coins!” The base price for 3rd Grade Pills hovers between 20,000 gold coins to 50,000 gold coins. However, some rare ones could go for 70,000 gold coins depending on their efficiency and rarity. Leric’s Awakening Pellet was indeed worthy of the price of 100,000 gold coins!

Samira was already expecting it to be expensive, but she still sucked in a mouthful of cold air when she heard the price. Skylar and Kathlyn also had their mouths agape when they heard the price.

.....

Samira took out a pouch from her storage ring. She then opened the pouch, revealing dozens of golden cards.

Leric was speechless when he saw this. Just how much money does this young miss have? She was actually so rich!

Each golden card was worth ten thousand gold coins so she only need to give thirty golden cards to pay for the three Awakening Pellets. After counting thirty golden cards, she handed them to Leric and grinned. “Here’s my payment. If you have more Awakening Pellets, please inform me. Hehe.”

Leric kept her payment inside his storage space. “Sure.” He replied in a calm voice, but he was very happy in his heart. He now has 300,000 gold coins! This kind of wealth was already enough for a commoner family to last a lifetime!

“By the way, Miss Samira, are there any companies here that offer courier services?” He plans to give some of this wealth to his parents. Although his father was now a Level

3 Esper and would be promoted at any time, his position was still unstable. His mother's clinic also needs some improvement and Leric was more than willing to support them.

Samira pondered for a moment before she replied. "There is one courier company in our empire and it is under Sir Henry's name. If you want their services, you can ask Sir Henry about it."

"I see. In that case, after I refine more Awakening Pellets, I will visit Sir Henry's office." Leric mumbled as he thought about Henry. He thought that the guy was merely someone who owned a construction firm. It looks like he underestimated Henry. The man was indeed a capable merchant.

"We will go with you." Samira hurriedly said.

Leric was in a good mood so he replied right away. "You can do anything you want."

After a moment, Leric resumed refining more pills. It took him several hours to completely refine thirty Awakening Pellets. His arms are sore and even his head was aching. "I'll rest for a while and then I'll go and visit Henry." He muttered as he stretched his muscles.

When he turned his head around, he noticed that Samira and the other two had already fallen asleep. They must have been bored after watching him refine pills for more than a few hours.

"I'll wait for them to wake up and then we'll leave." He muttered as he looked at their resting faces.

The ladies had fallen asleep on a sofa. He didn't wake them up and just went out of the mansion to get some fresh air. It was already in the middle of the afternoon and the sun was about to set.

"The first day of the battle should be ending soon..." Leric muttered as he took out a cigar from his storage space. Cigarettes don't exist in Regalis Continent. This was something he created on his own and he only has a few of dozens of them in his possession.

In his past life, he also used to smoke cigarettes during his free time. It was a means to relieve his stress as a doctor and herbalist.

The cigar in his hand was a unique creation since it didn't have the usual smell of nicotine. He used a different kind of herb but with similar effects to nicotine. It can also stimulate the blood and the brain and was even more effective. The herb he used has a natural fragrance similar to mints. One puff can make one's lungs clear from any obstructions.

While puffing rings of smoke, Leric stared at the sky while reminiscing about his boring past life.

67 Complete Construction of the Clinic

As he was occupied with the thoughts of his past life, Leric didn't notice that the ladies have arrived and they were now looking at him. They didn't know why, but his silhouette seemed to be covered in a lonely aura as if he had experienced many vicissitudes in life.

"Aethelwolf..." Samira summoned her courage as she called out to him in a worried voice. She wondered what the man was thinking for him to show that kind of expression.

Leric blew one last puff of smoke before burning the cigarette butt with golden flames. He then turned his head to the three ladies and smiled at them. "It's good that you guys are awake. Let's depart now while the sun is still up. The road will be dangerous if it gets darker."

In truth, Leric wasn't worried that someone would attack them. He has the [Virtual Map] skill and he would immediately notice any signs of danger. Besides, their coachman was a strong Level 3 Esper!

Samira glanced at his smile. She knew that he was hiding many secrets, but since he didn't want to tell them, she didn't force them out of him. It would only lead to a fracture in their friendship if she does that.

"Alright. I think the construction of your clinic should be done by now..." Samira muttered as she gave a signal to Reed. She then entered the carriage, followed by her maids, and then Leric came last.

In the coachman's seat, Reed asked in a low voice. "Where are we heading to, Miss Samira?"

"To Aethelwolf's clinic." Samira replied right away.

"Alright. Please sit tight." Reed said as he gave a signal to the Equuses. The beasts neighed as they pulled the carriage out of the mansion's vicinity.

.....

Along the journey, the group was strangely silent so Leric decided to take another short nap. The ladies didn't dare disturb him and they just quietly whispered among themselves when they were chatting.

Soon, Leric felt that the carriage has stopped moving. He slowly opened his eyes and heard Samira's gentle voice. "We're here, Aethelwolf."

Leric nodded his head as he stepped out of the carriage. He also helped the ladies out one by one. After they all alighted, the group of four started walking to the clinic. There was a large group of people outside the clinic. They are wearing working clothes and all of them are holding construction equipment in their hands.

Leric spotted Henry among the group of workers. He was chatting with them in a friendly manner unlike the usual types of bosses in big companies.

Henry and the workers had already noticed them.

“Greetings, Sir Aethelwolf, Miss Samira, and to the two Misses.” Henry greeted them with a wide smile on his face. He then stared at his subordinates and scolded them. “Hey, you fools! This is Miss Samira and her two maids, and this man right here is the owner of the clinic.”

The workers immediately greeted them when they heard their boss’ words. These young people were big shots!

Leric smiled at Henry while shaking hands with the man. “It appears that you’ve already completed the construction.”

Henry chuckled as he looked at the beautiful and classy clinic behind them. It was an absolute masterpiece and was one of the best creations their company has made. “We also did a final cleanup in the interior of the clinic. You can now put your products in the display cases. I’ll let my men help you out free of charge.”

“That would be great. Give me a quick tour inside while we’re at it.” Leric said as he stared at the clinic with an eager look. It was much better than he had expected. He had to give props to Henry and his workers for a job well done.

“Of course! Come! Follow me.” Henry led the group to the clinic while calling a few workers to go with them.

“The clinic has three floors and there are eight patient rooms and two emergency rooms on the third floor. You can display your products on the first floor and the second floor...” Henry informed Leric about the design of the clinic and toured him around.

After the quick tour, Leric took out the pills and soaps that he had made during the last few days. The pills were placed in small glass containers while the soaps were placed inside jade boxes.

“Where do you want us to put these items, Sir Aethelwolf?” A worker asked carefully while looking at Leric.

“The ones in jade boxes should be on the second floor and the pills on the first floor.” Leric answered after a moment of thought. His main product was still his pills since this

was a clinic. Once he earns more money, he would build another shop with the sole purpose of selling more of his soaps.

The workers carefully placed the items on the display cases. They did their job as carefully as possible. The items in their hands looked extremely valuable and they were afraid that they might break them.

“Sir Aethelwolf, can you tell me what’s inside those jade boxes?” Henry curiously stared at the jade boxes.

Leric smiled at him as he answered. “Inside those jade boxes are items that I call soap. Their effect is similar to the beauty pills sold in the market!”

Hearing this, Henry’s eyes jumped up in shock. “Similar effects to beauty pills? There’s actually such a thing?! Ehem! Sir Aethelwolf, how much are you selling them for?”

Leric grabbed three jade boxes. “Each jade box has a different color corresponding to its value. The green jade box contains the lowest-grade soap which is priced at ten silver coins. This blue jade box contains a mid-grade soap which is priced at ten gold coins. As for the purple jade box, it contains the highest-grade soap that has a price of five thousand gold coins.” He then handed the three jade boxes to Henry as he grinned. “Take this as my gift to you, Henry. I hope that there will be more business opportunities between us in the future.”

Henry took the jade boxes carefully. Although the other two were relatively cheap, the third jade box contains an item that was worth five thousand gold coins! He wouldn’t decline these gifts since he also wanted to give them to his wife. “Thank you so much, Sir Aethelwolf! I also hope that we can do more business in the future!”

Leric shook hands with him. “I’m looking forward to that. By the way, you can tell your men that they can take one blue jade box each.” There were only a little more than a dozen workers and it wouldn’t hurt him to give those guys one mid-grade soap each.

Hearing this, Henry nodded his head as he thought. ‘What a generous man!’

68 Preparation for the Opening Day of the Clinic

“By the way, I also came here for another matter. Let’s sit down first so that we can talk about it.” Leric walked towards a nearby seat and sat down with Henry opposite him.

Henry stared at Leric with a smile as he waited for him to speak.

“It’s actually not a big matter. I heard from Samira that you also have a courier company under your name. I want to send something to Barden City. Can your company do it?” Leric looked at him with a calm gaze. He was planning to send a huge amount of money to his parents.

Looking at his serious expression, Henry patted his chest confidently. "Of course! Our courier company even has the ability to send items outside of the Leone Empire. Sending something to Barden City is just a piece of cake to us."

Leric nodded his head as he took out a big box that he had prepared beforehand. Inside the box was a pouch with ten gold cards that were worth a hundred thousand gold coins! This sum of money was enough to upgrade his mom's clinic and also to help his parents buy more resources. There were also ten purple jade boxes inside the box which contains one high-grade soap each! Other than that, there was also a letter that he had written to his parents. "This box contains many valuable things so I hope that you'll take this matter seriously, Henry. I want this to be sent to Barden City's Lassiter Household." Leric muttered in a solemn tone.

Henry narrowed his eyes upon hearing this and he immediately nodded his head. "Don't worry, Sir Aethelwolf. I will send a group of skilled couriers to deliver this box to the recipient."

"Thanks and how much should I pay you for the courier service?" Leric flashed him a smile.

Henry chuckled and shook his head right away. "There's no need for payment, Sir Aethelwolf. Since I've received your gift, let me return the gesture."

Hearing this, Leric grinned. He took out something from his storage space and handed it to Henry as he said. "It's a pleasure working with you, Henry."

.....

"Likewise." Henry laughed while keeping the small glass container that Leric has given him. He didn't know what kind of pill that was, but since it comes from a Level 4 Alchemist, how could it be ordinary?

"I suggest you drink that pill once you go home, Henry. I'm sure you'll be surprised." Leric gave him a mysterious smile. What he gave him was one Awakening Pellet!

Henry might be a skilled merchant and a shrewd person, but he was only an ordinary man with no talent whatsoever in fighting.

"I'll make sure to keep your words in mind, Sir Aethelwolf." Not knowing what the pill was, Henry merely smiled at him. He then stood up and kept the big box inside his storage ring. "I shall take my leave now, Sir Aethelwolf. I still have to summon our best carriers to deliver your item."

"Alright. Take care, Henry." Leric smiled as he nodded his head.

Henry left the clinic with his subordinates soon afterward.

Leric went to where Samira, Skylar, and Kathlyn were chatting and handed a couple of price tags to them. He then told them where to put the price tags specifically. "This one is for the green jade boxes, and this one is..."

Samira and the other two happily complied with him, their eyes twinkling with unspeakable light.

Seeing them working so diligently, Leric knew what the girls wanted. They had seen Henry and his workers taking out the blue jade boxes from the display cases. The three of them knew that those boxes contained the items that Leric called 'soap'. An item with similar effects to beauty pills!

"It looks like I don't even need to pay them their wages anymore. Just one box of soap might be enough to pay them to work for me." Leric mumbled to himself in amusement.

After putting everything in place, the three ladies walked together in front of Leric with shining gazes. They didn't say anything and just silently looked at him with their big puppy eyes.

Seeing this, Leric shook his head with a wry smile. "There's no need to give me this kind of look. I've already prepared my gifts for you guys. Each of you will get one box of each kind. Here, take them." Leric handed them their soaps.

The ladies got three soaps each, one for every kind.

"Also, these are for Madam Antonette, Lord Harold, and Lord Julius." Leric handed more soaps to Samira.

After getting their soaps, the three ladies smiled from ear to ear. They couldn't wait to use the soaps for themselves and try out its efficiency. Their eyes were already gleaming with excitement.

"You can try using those soaps later. For now, you guys should familiarize yourselves with the products first. Since you want to work for me, you have to first learn what kind of items our clinic is selling." Leric began telling them about the products and their uses. He also told them about the benefits of using the products.

The three ladies listened with great attention. They don't want to miss any details since they were serious about working under Leric. The man was gallant and he wasn't stingy. They would also have more opportunities to get more soaps from him...

If Leric knew what they were thinking, he would surely laugh in amusement.

After telling the ladies about the specifics of their products, they sat down to take a rest.

“The first day of the battle event should be done by now. I think that only a hundred participants are left to fight for the championship.” Samira said as she leaned on her chair. Her back felt a bit stiff after all the work that they did. She wasn’t used to these kinds of chores so her body was already complaining.

Leric nodded his head with a disinterested look on his face.

69 Our Workers Must be Single Ladies Between the Ages of 18-25 He couldn’t care less about who will get the championship in the battle event. He was more worried about the opening day of his clinic. Would they be able to handle so many people at once?

Leric was confident about his products and services. The more people knew about them, the more patrons they would have. Just that, Leric has a severe lack of workers and he only has Samira and the other two under him.

While thinking about this problem, his eyes suddenly brightened as he thought of a solution. “Samira, I think it would be difficult for the four of us to handle all our customers tomorrow. How about asking Lord Harold if he can lend us some skilled workers to work here temporarily? Do you think it’s possible?” The Reynolds Household has a lot of skilled subordinates under their command. They were his only option now since he was pressed for time.

As to why he was in a hurry to open his clinic, it was because he would like to go back to his parents as soon as possible. It’s been about a month since he left his home and he missed his parents. It has been a long time since he last tasted his mother’s cooking. He also wanted to see his father’s progress after becoming a Level 3 Esper.

Samira didn’t even bother to think and just nodded her head right away. “Of course! Even without my father’s approval, I have the authority to help you regarding this matter. Just tell me what kind of workers are you looking for?”

Leric thought for a moment before answering. “Since we are showcasing a beauty product, our workers must be single ladies who are between the ages of 18-25. They must be beautiful and has the perfect proportions.”

Samira nodded her head as she looked at Leric’s calm expression. “Alright.” She then turned her head to her two maids and said. “Skylar and Kathlyn, please go back to the mansion and gather about a dozen workers according to the standards set by Aethelwolf. Make sure that they will come here before midnight. We still have to brief them on what to do for tomorrow’s opening day.”

Skylar and Kathlyn nodded their heads. “Yes, Miss Samira!” They answered in unison.

“Take this token with you guys and show it to them if they ask for proof.” Samira took out a token that has the crest of the Reynolds Household. Samira’s name was also engraved on the token in golden strokes.

.....

Skylar received the token and left the clinic with Kathlyn.

Only Leric and Samira stayed behind in the clinic.

The two began planning what they would do tomorrow.

Meanwhile, in the battle arena, the final one hundred participants have already been announced. All of them were the most talented young warriors of the empire!

“I didn’t know that the Urgel Household is actually hiding such a genius! Mid Level 1 Esper at the age of twelve? Amazing!” Anna exclaimed as she looked at the tiny silhouette among the remaining one hundred participants.

She was now looking at Grace Urgel. A hidden talent who hails from the most secretive noble family, the Urgel Household.

Grace Urgel showed off her amazing talent. Among the remaining participants, she was considered as one who would most likely reach the top ten!

It must be noted that she was also the youngest participant in the battle event!

The first day of the competition came to an end and the organizers announced the continuation to be held the day after tomorrow. They have decided to give the remaining participants an ample amount of time to rest.

“Let’s go back to the mansion. Everyone, we will take our leave first.” Lord Julius smiled as he bid farewell to their friends. He then went to the Imperial Family’s spot together with Lord Harold and Madam Antonette.

“Greetings, Your Majesty and Your Highness!” They greeted as soon as they saw Prince Calvin and Emperor Ragnar.

“It’s good to see you back in full health, Sir Julius.” Emperor Ragnar smiled as he warmly looked at them.

“I feel blessed that I had finally recovered. It’s thanks to Sir Aethelwolf for giving me this chance.” The old man said with a joyful smile.

“By the way, where are Aethelwolf and your granddaughter, Samira?” Emperor Ragnar looked at the old man.

Lord Julius smiled at him and replied. "Sir Aethelwolf is on his way to check his clinic. According to our contract with Henry's company, the construction should be done by now. Sir Aethelwolf should be preparing for the opening day of his clinic. As for Samira, she went together with him..."

"I see." Emperor Ragnar recalled the conversation between his son and Aethelwolf earlier. The guy was planning to sell some unique products and he wanted to see them. However, as the emperor of the empire, it would be troublesome if he showed up there with all the other people. His presence would only deter the crowd and he might even cause the opening of Aethelwolf's clinic to fail.

"Your Majesty, it's getting late so we'll take our leave first." Lord Julius said after seeing that the emperor has no interest in continuing their conversation.

Emperor Ragnar nodded his head. "Alright. You guys may leave."

Lord Julius bowed at him and left together with Lord Harold and Madam Antonette. "Farewell, Your Majesty."

After they left, Emperor Ragnar turned his head to Prince Calvin and asked. "Aethelwolf invited you to go tomorrow, right?"

Prince Calvin nodded his head. "That's right. Why are you asking me this, father?"

The emperor chuckled as he answered. "That guy's products are unique. Make sure that you can bring a few of them. Here's a bit of cash. Use them to buy me one of each item that he will be selling." He handed a small bag to the second prince that contained twenty golden cards.

"Alright, father. Leave it to me." The second prince patted his chest confidently.

70 Twelve Chosen

Skylar and Kathlyn arrived at the mansion. They didn't know that they were being followed by a group of scouts led by Serge. It was a good thing that the bandits has no plans to attack or it would have been dangerous for them. Even if Reed was with them, he might not be able to protect the two if the bandits attack at the same time.

The two immediately summoned the butler and the head maid of the mansion. These two figures were also elites of the Reynolds Household and their authority was only beneath that of Reed.

"We came back under the orders of Miss Samira. We need a dozen single women between the ages of 18-25. Their services will be needed for Ae- Sir Aethelwolf's clinic." Skylar said as he looked at the butler and the head maid.

The butler and the head maid both knew who Aethelwolf was. He was a Level 4 Alchemist that managed to cure their Lord, Julius! After hearing that he needs workers, the two immediately called their subordinates and let Skylar and Kathlyn choose among them.

There were about thirty women standing in front of Skylar and Kathlyn. They nervously stared at the two not knowing what was going on. They received the call from the head maid and the butler, but they had no idea why they were suddenly summoned.

“Relax. The reason why we called you guys is for an important matter. Sir Aethelwolf’s clinic has already been completed and he will be opening it tomorrow. He needs twelve people to help him manage the clinic and we will choose among you guys.” Skylar’s words made the eyes of the ladies light up with excitement.

Aethelwolf was an honored guest of the mansion. He was a successful man with great power and abilities. Working for him would certainly bring them a lot of benefits.

After almost an hour of time, Skylar and Kathlyn finally decided on the twelve ladies that they would bring.

“For the chosen twelve, pack your things. We will go to the clinic right away.” Skylar said as she looked at the skies. It was almost midnight, but they should be able to go back to the clinic on time.

.....

“Yes, Miss Skylar!” The twelve chosen ladies were excited at the thought of working for Aethelwolf. They then went back to their rooms to pack some clothes.

After less than thirty minutes, the twelve ladies came back. Skylar and Kathlyn then used another carriage to fit all of them.

Serge suddenly frowned when he noticed that an additional carriage was following Samira’s carriage. He wondered who are inside and what are they up to.

“I want five of you to come with me. The others stay here to observe the mansion.” Serge led five subordinates to tail the two carriages.

It was the middle of the night so they weren’t afraid that they would be discovered.

“Boss Serge, how about we take action now?” One bandit suggested with a malicious look.

Serge shook his head and rejected the suggestion right away. "We can't. Samira isn't inside the carriages and Boss Gustavo didn't tell us to do anything drastic. Our only mission is to monitor their movements."

"Isn't our main goal to capture that girl Samira? If we manage to get our hands on her two maids, we would have the chance to make an exchange with her. When that time comes, we will strike immediately." The bandit viciously said.

Serge furrowed his eyebrows while looking at the bandit. "Are you an idiot?! If we do what you said, the Reynolds Household would definitely be alerted. They would send more elites to protect Samira and it would become harder for us. Not to mention that the security here in Dominion District has become tighter because of the battle event. Can you just shut up and do what you're told to do?!"

The bandit awkwardly chuckled upon hearing his leader's words.

Serge was also unsure about the thoughts of Boss Gustavo. He only followed the missions given to him.

Suddenly, the ring on his middle finger lit up. This ring is a communication device that they use and all his subordinates have one with them. It was an item that came from the higher-ups of the Ford Empire. There was nothing similar that exists in the market and only the elites of the Ford Empire has possession of them. Since they were on a special mission, Boss Gustavo handed one to him and his subordinates.

"Who is this?" Serge asked in a low voice.

"Boss, I'm here to report about the battle event."

"Oh? Tell me the details." Serge's eyes shone with expectations. Their bandit group sent their most reliable young talents to join the event and Boss Gustavo even had high hopes for them.

"There are only a hundred participants left and the four people we sent are among them. The continuation of the event will be held the day after tomorrow. One more thing... We are now following the carriage of Julius, but we don't dare to go closer to them. They would be back in the mansion in less than an hour."

Serge smiled widely when he heard the report. The four young warriors didn't disappoint him. Once they become part of the top fifty, half of their mission would be completed.

"Alright. Good job. Stop following Julius for now. The old man had already recovered and you guys might be in danger if he discovers you. Retreat first."

"Yes, boss!"

Serge disconnected the call. He then chuckled as he stared at the two carriages ahead of them. "Once the battle event is over, we can finally go back to the base..." He muttered.

His subordinates were thrilled upon hearing his words. They have been out for many days and the constant monitoring and observations they did in the last few days were already making them sick. The thought of finally having to rest made these men feel elated.