

## Alchemy of Hearts chapter 4

Chapter 4: Eighteen years later

For 18 years, the Daimyos searched relentlessly for the Seer, while Daisuke protected her both in open and in secret. He was very intentional about keeping his master's bride safe.

Also in this period, he did everything he could to resurrect his master with the little alchemy knowledge he learned from him, but all were to no avail.

Finally, when he stumbled upon the knowledge of the side effects of some potions taking time to wear off, his heart gladdened a bit as there was still hope.

He also managed his Master's estate and other affairs, while looking forward to his awakening.

Although time seemed long, Daisuke's loyalty and devotion to Sato Naoki, remained unwavering. 1

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In a large underground training center, hundreds of men in kimonos were engaged in a duel swordfight with wooden swords in their hands.

Each time the fake swords clashed against each other, the swordfighters would take a step back and come around again, trying to strike their opponents.

In the midst of all this, Daisuke who looked more mature in the past 18 years, moved in their midst and shouted instructions to their hearing with a sheathed sword strapped steadfastly through the sash on his waist.

"You are fighting your opponents at the moment, not your brother! Do not go easy on him!" 1

There was no response from any of the men, but his instructions were well-taken note of as the clashes from the wooden swords became fiercer.

After what felt like a long time has passed, the men stopped training to take a break. There were smiles on their faces as they helped each other to settle down on the tatami floor.

Daisuke nodded satisfactorily as his gaze moved over them. He was happy they were able to maintain a positive spirit throughout the four hours of straight training without even a second break in-between.

“Your rest will be over once that incense stick burns out.” He said while pointing at the incense burner a man carried into the room and placed in front of them.

It would take about 20-30 minutes for the incense stick to completely burn out. This was enough time for them to rest, eat, and chat.

“Yes, Daisuke-sama!” The men roared in their high-spirited voices.

A tall man of Daisuke’s age, dressed like a samurai, appeared at the door in light steps. Because the distance between the door and the front of the room was short, he was able to see Daisuke with a causal glance.

Immediately, he took hurried steps forward as the men in the room resumed their chatting having recognized him to be Takashi, their manager, and leader of the group.

Daisuke’s gaze fell on the man till he came to his side and bowed to him in greeting, before leaning in to whisper worriedly.

“Daisuke-sama, the store manager would like to have a word with you. The medicine store is completely out of stock.”

There was no change in Daisuke’s facial expression after learning of the disturbing news. He only nodded and spoke a few words.

“I will meet with him. You stay and supervise the rest of their training for today.”

Turning to the men in the room, he addressed them briefly before hurrying away.

Earlier, his facial expression was so neutral as if he was not bothered by the news, but his hurried footsteps showed just how serious the matter was.

Takashi watched his back disappear from view and sighed inwardly with slightly furrowed brows. He was sad and worried at the same time.

‘Daisuke-sama has not smiled for the past 18 years.’

Since their Leader and Master slipped into the abyss of unconsciousness, Daisuke changed. His face hardly revealed any expression other than seriousness while instructing them.

Takashi kind of understood his inner burden. He had to shoulder all the responsibilities by himself and make important decisions on their Master’s behalf.

If care wasn’t taken, everything they had all worked hard for several years, would come crumbling, so they have to continue to maintain their high spirit even though it wasn’t easy.

Takashi hoped that this long period would pass soon...

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Outside the big wooden house which was tucked away in the corner of the street, Daisuke met with the medicine store manager.

There was no building in close proximity to it. And a little distance away from them was a restaurant with people trooping in and out of it.

Briefly glancing at the distance, Daisuke retracted his gaze when the man that requested an audience approached him.

The man was in his sixties and fully dressed in a dull brown worn-out kimono.

The number of grey strands in his hair was almost on par with the black ones. Wrinkles were visible on his aged face.

The man deeply bent his waist to greet Daisuke. "Daisuke-sama." The reedy roughness in his voice was clear as day, showing just how much he had aged.

Daisuke nodded in response. "I heard the store has completely run out of medicine," He said solemnly.

"Yes, Daisuke-sama," He confirmed in a grave tone.

His expression looked sad and regretful as he explained further. "After holding back for several weeks, I sold the last one yesterday. I thought to tell you in case there is something you can do."

Daisuke's brows knitted in a tight frown. His fingers clenched tightly by his side. His mood turned for the worse, and the medicine store manager felt it.

The atmosphere around them was somber and couldn't be imperceptible in the setting sun.

Now, Daisuke was starting to feel saddened by his Master's absence and he didn't know how much longer he could hold out.

Looking into the distance, his thoughts came alive in his head as he yearned for Sato Naoki's revival. 'Master, you have to come back soon. I don't know how long I can continue to do this.'

This sudden longing reminded him of the need to visit the castle. 'I will have to check on Master after visiting the medicine store.'

Recollecting his thoughts and concealing his emotions, he retracted his gaze. "I will come to the store with you to check things out for myself."

The store manager nodded in understanding.

Daisuke called for his horse. When it was brought to him, he pulled it by the reins to walk with the old man, leaving the building together on foot.

The medical store was one of the things Sato Naoki deemed important. It was one of the reasons he worked tirelessly in his Rabo.

Producing medicines that relieved and cured different ailments, was a part of his goal.

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## DICTIONARY

-Sama – A Japanese honorific used to show extreme respect