

## The Gate 1052

### Chapter 1052: The Five Grand Realms' Void Market

Ever since Ning Cheng pointed out Dou Jiangshi's possession, Dou Jiangshi never approached him again. He didn't even come up to the deck. At the same time, that interaction also gave everyone the impression that Ning Cheng wasn't easy to get along with, so the rest of the group rarely looked to speak with Ning Cheng. As for Sichen Qiutian, who was leading the group, he never came out.

Ning Cheng didn't bother to look for Dou Jiangshi. After crafting the Void Cold Light Spear, he stayed in his cabin to further push his alchemy skills. As another six months passed, the ship finally stopped. Feeling the ship stop, Ning Cheng stopped practising alchemy and left his cabin.

Sichen Qiutian finally walked out and asked the group to leave the void ship before landing outside a huge stone platform suspended in the void.

"Is this the teleportation platform?" Yan Kuaifu asked in amazement as he looked at the huge stone platform suspended in the void before him.

Sichen Qiutian smiled faintly, "Don't underestimate this platform. It is not only a planar teleportation formation but is also protected by a top-notch grand formation."

Ning Cheng had long felt the protective formation outside this platform. Moreover, after experiencing the Secret City and Mysterious Ferry Ancient Clan's concealment formation, Ning Cheng knew that his minor accomplishment in the Dao of Formations was nothing compared to the vast universe. He couldn't even restore the teleportation formation at the bottom of the Grand Essence Sea, let alone set up a large formation like this.

Sichen Qiutian fumbled around a bit and eventually took out a formation flag, causing an entrance to materialise in front of the stone platform.

"Come on in. This formation can directly teleport you to the Five Grand Realms' Void Market." As he spoke, Sichen Qiutian was the first to enter the teleportation platform, followed by Protector Ju. Ning Cheng and the others naturally followed suit and got onto the teleportation platform.

After Sichen Qiutian waited for them to get onto the platform, he raised his hand and took out a large sum of spirit crystals. Nobody could tell how many spirit crystals Sichen Qiutian brought out and spread onto the edge of the stone platform.

Half an incense stick later, a burst of white light erupted around the stone platform, which directly tore open the void above it and swept away all eight from Ning Cheng's group.

Ning Cheng had taken quite a few teleportation formations by now, but this was the first time he felt unable to use his spiritual consciousness. Even his mind turned uncontrollably dizzy.

Not knowing for how long he stayed in the teleportation space, he found himself standing on an identical stone platform when he came to his senses. Looking around at the people still coming and going, Ning Cheng understood that he must have arrived at the Five Grand Realms' Void Market.

Seeing that Ning Cheng was the first of the six participating Pill Sages to come to his senses, Sichen Qiutian nodded in satisfaction. Ning Cheng didn't disappoint him; despite being a Dao Raising Holy Emperor, his dao rhythm was far stronger than the rest.

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"Are you here from the Grand Essence Realm to participate in the Five Grand Realms' Alchemy Competition?" Sichen Qiutian had just walked out of the teleportation formation with his group when a Dao Transformation-level Holy Emperor walked over and asked with cupped fists.

Sichen Qiutian nodded and said, "That's right, we have come precisely from the Grand Essence Realm."

"Then, please follow me," This Dao Transformation Holy Emperor made a guiding gesture and led Ning Cheng and others out of the teleportation tower.

Regarding the concentration of spirit energy, the Five Grand Realms' Void Market was still far inferior to a large sect like the 9-Revolutions Sacred Dao Pond or even the Heaven Essence Sacred City. However, Ning Cheng's casual glance showed him how many powerful experts roamed this place. Not only did he spot quite a few Dao Essence Holy Emperors, he even saw a few Dao Fusion Holy Emperors among them, going and coming through the various buildings.

Moreover, the formations and restrictions outside the merchant buildings were much more sophisticated than the headquarters of the various merchant houses in the Heaven Essence Sacred City.

The Dao Transformation Holy Emperor brought Ning Cheng and the others to an inn, which they understood to be the Grand Change Inn from the characters outside.

"You can rest here. Someone will come to inform you when it's time to head to the Grand Change Realm." This Dao Transformation Holy Emperor didn't even arrange a room for the crowd. Rather, he just brought Ning Cheng and the others here and left after a brief explanation.

Sichen Qiutian didn't seem to mind it and turned towards Ning Cheng and the others, "You guys should first set up your respective rooms here. I'm going out for some time. Once you're free, you can go around the Void Market. Just don't start a fight with anyone. I don't need to remind you all that there are quite a few strong people here, but more importantly, there are no simple people here."

In fact, there was no need for Sichen Qiutian to say anything. The crowd knew that there would be no simple people here. How could anyone who could come to the Five Grand Realms' Void Market be simple?

Ning Cheng vaguely guessed that Sichen Qiutian made that excuse to look for his connections to secure that extra spot for him.

The room prices at the Grand Change Inn were all the same, 10,000 spirit crystals a day, with no high or low-tier rooms. For a pill sage like Ning Cheng, even if it was 100,000 spirit crystals a night, he could still afford to stay here for a few months.

"Brother Ning, are you free to go around the Void Market?" Out of Ning Cheng's expectations, Le Xizhen, who had lost to him, took the initiative to invite him.

Ning Cheng politely declined, "I'm a little tired and need to rest. Brother Le can go on his own."

“Brother Le, I also want to see the Void Market. Why don’t we go together?” Seeing Ning Cheng’s refusal, Mei Xiuwan hurriedly took the initiative to speak.

Among the six, Le Xizhen’s alchemy skill was second only to Ning Cheng’s, and it wouldn’t be a surprise that he would eventually become a Dao Essence Pill Sage. Mei Xiuwan was only a Dao Raising Pill Sage, so she naturally wanted to make friends when she had the opportunity.

“Count me in as well.” Yan Kuaifu and Mei Xiuwan had already grown close to each other during the trip, plus he also wanted to visit the Five Grand Realms’ Void Market. Therefore, he didn’t hesitate to recommend himself.

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Ning Cheng didn’t want to be nosy. He had come to the Five Grand Realms’ Alchemy Competition for two reasons. Apart from wanting the Wood-attributed top-grade spirit vein, he wanted to see if Cang Wei and Pan Qian had also come to the Grand Change Realm.

Pan Qian was supposed to have come from the Grand Change Realm, and as for Cang Wei, according to his words, he had no choice but to go to the Grand Change Realm if he wanted to open the Gate of Good Fortune.

After returning to his room, Ning Cheng activated the room’s restrictions and continued to push his alchemy skills. Unfortunately, he lacked the materials for refining Dao Essence Dao Pills for practice, so he could only push his skills further through the Mysterious Yellow Formless Cultivation Method.

It’s just that although his Dao of Alchemy had risen to a higher level after half a year of study, he lacked the dao fruits needed to polish and refine it further.

Just when he started thinking about this situation, someone triggered the restriction. Ning Cheng opened the restriction and suspiciously looked at Protector Ju standing at the door, “Senior Ju, are you looking for me for something?”

“It’s not that I’m looking for you for something, but the Union Master is looking for you, so hurry up and come with me.” Protector Ju eagerly gestured to Ning Cheng, showing that Ning Cheng should hurry up and follow him.

Ning Cheng had a bad feeling in his heart. Protector Ju always had a composed look, strong in cultivation, and was never impatient. But now, Ning Cheng could see the hurry and worry. Did something happen?

“Senior Ju, has something happened?” Not far away, Jing Han and Dou Jiangshi also left their rooms.

Protector Ju said to them, “Nothing major. You should stay here and rest. I will take Ning Cheng out for a while and will be back soon.”

Dou Jiangshi’s eyes flickered, “Senior Ju, why don’t we all go together. The more people with us, the more we can take care of each other.”

Ning Cheng sneered internally. Just by being a Dao Transformation Holy Emperor who took over someone else’s body, you dare speak of taking care of each other. Sure, a Dao Transformation Holy

Emperor could be considered a powerhouse in the Grand Essence Realm, but here, they were equivalent to ants.

Protector Ju obviously didn't think much of it and casually replied, "Alright, let's all go together."

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Standing in front of the Grand Change Pill Union's doorway, Ning Cheng realised where Protector Ju had brought him to.

Entering the Pill Union, the four of them quickly arrived at the entrance of a hall, and upon entering the hall, Ning Cheng realised that there were at least forty to fifty people inside.

Sichen Qiutian's face looked slightly pale as he sat at the side of the hall; even his aura felt slightly chaotic.

Ning Cheng was a Dao Essence Pill Sage, and his skill with Alchemy could also be considered better than ordinary Pill Sages in the same category. He had also integrated his Dao of Alchemy into his Returning-to-one Grand Dao. Therefore, seeing Sichen Qiutian in such a situation, he knew instantly that Sichen Qiutian had suffered another injury to his dao heart. After all, that slightly chaotic aura around him held the distinct aura of his grand dao and the dao rhythm aura of his Dao of Alchemy.

However, the many powerful people in the hall didn't care about Sichen Qiutian's messy aura. Nor did any of them step in to help, as everyone continued with their respective talks and jokes.

"Union Master, I have brought Ning Cheng." Protector Ju walked up to Sichen Qiutian and whispered.

Sichen Qiutian seemed to have just returned to his senses, and seeing the three people behind Protector Ju, he sighed. "Since you're here, sit down and take in everything. Try not to speak."

The others in the hall didn't feel anything strange with the arrival of Ning Cheng's group of four, and no one came forward to speak with them either.

Ning Cheng didn't know what had happened before their arrival, but when he was in the Heaven Essence Sacred City, Ning Cheng had already noticed the crack in Sichen Qiutian's Dao of Alchemy and dao heart. And now, not only did the crack in Sichen Qiutian's Dao of Alchemy not show any sign of healing, but it seemed to be growing bigger and worse.

Sichen Qiutian wasn't the same as him, who cultivated the Returning-to-one Grand Dao. Moreover, he had integrated his Dao of Alchemy into the Returning-to-one Grand Dao, which made it a part of it. Sichen Qiutian, on the other hand, had done the opposite, integrating his grand dao with his Dao of Alchemy. It meant that Sichen Qiutian could only progress as much as his Dao of Alchemy progressed.

Now that visible cracks appeared in Sichen Qiutian's Dao of Alchemy, it would be strange if his dao could progress further.

Sitting at the head seat was a man dressed in purple pill robes. Like the others, this man didn't care about Ning Cheng's group but looked at Sichen Qiutian and said calmly. "The first round of the Alchemy Debate is over, and it looks like the Grand Essence Realm's Pill Union Master Sichen Qiutian has fallen to the bottom, with only twelve of the twenty materials named. Master Sichen, do you still wish to continue to compete for a spot in the competition?"

Sichen Qiutian's hand trembled slightly. Based on the rules, 'extra' participating spots would come up every time the Five Grand Realms' Alchemy Competition happened. As a Union Master and familiar with the earlier Five Grand Realms Alchemy Competitions' organisers, he didn't think asking for a spot for Ning Cheng to participate in the Alchemy Competition would be a problem.

However, he never expected the Five Grand Realms' Alchemy Competition organisers to change this time. Moreover, he wasn't the only one to come here seeking the extra places. So, they had to undergo an informal alchemy debate between each participating force to decide who would get the extra spots. The first round of the debate was to name twenty kinds of divine grasses. Unfortunately, he, as the Union Master standing for one of the grand realms, could only recognise twelve of them, while the remaining Union masters from the remaining grand realms recognised at least seventeen, which not only dealt a blow to his confidence, but it also resulted in widening the crack in his dao heart.

Ning Cheng didn't ask Sichen Qiutian about what had happened. After hearing the words of that purple-robed man, he vaguely understood something about the situation. Without waiting for Sichen Qiutian to answer, Ning Cheng transmitted his voice to Sichen Qiutian and said, "Union Master, more people might help people recognise more. Here, there is only one Union Master, while everywhere else, at least five to six people surround them."

Sichen Qiutian understood Ning Cheng's meaning. He also knew that Ning Cheng wanted to comfort him. However, he could only sigh. But before he could say anything, the purple-robed man asked again, "Does Union Master Sichen want to continue the debate?"

"Naturally, I will participate on his behalf." Because Sichen Qiutian still did not speak, Ning Cheng decided to speak up.