

The Gate 1055

Chapter 1055: The Difficult Second Round

“That’s the Clear Wind Immortal Claw.” Lu Dongze gave a calm reply. He knew that Ning Cheng was spouting nonsense. In fact, everyone understood Ning Cheng was talking nonsense. But everyone also understood a crucial point. It was just a name. If you called it Zhang San, couldn’t others call it Zhang Zi? After all, it wasn’t like this was an enquiry into the medicinal properties and effects of the divine herb. If it were a test of medicinal properties and effects, then Ning Cheng’s trick wouldn’t work.

Lu Dongze no longer had an ounce of worry in him. He already knew the names of the five divine herbs; even if he didn’t know them, he could ‘name’ them as Ning Cheng did. This also meant that the first round was a definite tie. The second round was where the real test of skills would take place. If he guessed correctly, the second round should be a test of medicinal properties. Would Ning Cheng still be able to fake through it?

Not only did Lu Dongze understand this, but so did everyone else. They all laughed coldly after hearing Ning Cheng naming the divine herbs as if they were watching a clown perform. Ultimately, no matter how well you perform, you will be the same, a clown till the end.

Plus, if Kong Lianbo couldn’t expose Ning Cheng, he had no right to stand here amongst them and would be undeserving of his reputation. After all, those who treat others as fools are the real fools.

The final five divine herbs that Lu Dongze identified were the Twin-leaved Scales of the Celestial Fox, the Clear Wind Immortal Claw, the Silver Ring Fruit, the Sakyamuni Flower, and the Red Cloud Wings. On the other hand, Ning Cheng named them Dog’s Tail Flower, Chicken Claw Vine, Silver Arc Fruit, Two-coloured Flower, and the Remnant Sun Leaf.

None of the divine herbs recognised by the two men were the same. This made it clear to all that Ning Cheng didn’t know even one of the five divine herbs presented. Fortunately, the names given to the last three divine herbs by Ning Cheng were somewhat decent, not as shameless as the first two.

The purple-robed man understood that no one could determine the winner in the first round, especially after Ning Cheng used his rogue method. Therefore, after both submitted their responses, he spoke up dryly. “The first round is a tie between Union Master Li and Alchemist Ning. We’ll be heading to the second round.”

Ning Cheng breathed a slight sigh of relief. He already decided that if the second round involved refining a Dao Fusion Dao Pill, he would immediately admit defeat. However, Ning Cheng believed that since this purple-robed man presided over this competition, he would consider the difference between him and Lu Dongze’s Dao of Alchemy and cultivation. Therefore, even if the people here wanted him to lose, they would want him to lose willingly to make it seem fair to everyone.

“The second round of this competition will involve refining pills. I request Union Master Lu and Alchemist Ning to refine a pill. This pill will use these five divine herbs as its primary ingredient, and each can be supplemented with ten or fewer auxiliary divine herbs. What auxiliary divine herbs you use and how many are used depends on the individual’s preferences and willingness. If you encounter difficulties, you can choose not to use all the primary divine herbs.”

“The final evaluation criteria will be as follows: How many of the five divine herbs in front of you have you used? How many auxiliary divine herbs have you consumed? And finally, whoever refined the highest grade of pills. This round will last for six days and will begin now.”

As the purple-robed man’s words ended, the crowd in the hall couldn’t help but feel shocked. It wasn’t that the topic of this round was too easy, but rather it was too difficult, almost impossible even.

This was no longer refining pills but deducing a pill recipe. To deduce a pill recipe, an alchemist must be very clear about all the divine herbs’ efficacy, properties, and attributes. Not only that, but it also required a certain level of understanding of alchemy. No one could cheat in this kind of pill recipe deduction.

Those who liked to play smart like Ning Cheng did in the previous round would be dead in this round. Deducing a pill recipe required real skill; one couldn’t fake it.

With five primary divine herbs, according to the rules, they could use a maximum of fifty auxiliary divine herbs. In other words, a total of fifty-five ingredients to refine a pill. Thus, making a Dao Transformation Dao Pill was the best option. However, refining a Dao Transformation Dao Pill wasn’t the problem; the problem was that both had to derive a pill recipe and then refine it into a pill rather than using a ready-made pill recipe. Wanting to use fifty-five divine herbs to deduce a pill formula for a Dao Transformation Dao Pill within the time limit, it wasn’t just difficult; it was almost impossible.

What’s more, both only had one chance. Failure meant a complete loss.

Ning Cheng and Lu Dongze were both beyond the level of ordinary Dao Transformation Pill Sages. Therefore, the topic could be considered fair and equitable. Unfortunately, absolute fairness did not exist. Lu Dongze’s Dao of Alchemy was far stronger than Ning Cheng’s, meaning he would have an easier time deducing the pill recipe.

With the topic declaration, everyone understood that Lu Dongze had won. Even if Lu Dongze couldn’t deduce the pill recipe, with his understanding of the five divine herbs, if he used even one of them to produce a pill, he would still be farther ahead than Ning Cheng.

Lu Dongze no longer cared about Ning Cheng. After hearing the topic, he immediately took out a dark brown furnace and began concentrating on deducing the pill recipe.

Ning Cheng took a deep breath. Fortunately, the topic wasn’t far from what he had guessed. If he wanted to obtain the Herbs and Plants of the Universe, this was his only chance, using his Mysterious Yellow Formless.

With a lift of his hand, Ning Cheng also took out a pill furnace.

Those in the hall paying attention to Lu Dongze were a minority. Instead, more people focussed on Ning Cheng, wanting to know how Ning Cheng wanted to disgrace himself even further. But after seeing Ning Cheng take out a pill furnace, they couldn’t help but feel puzzled. Of course, no matter how puzzled they were, no one thought Ning Cheng knew anything about the five primary divine herbs, even if they had other names.

But when they saw the name on the pill furnace that Ning Cheng took out, some couldn’t help but laugh out loud.

‘First Furnace of Primal Chaos’, a furnace could also be named ‘First Furnace of Primal Chaos’? Among the various alchemists present here, far too many pill furnaces in their possession were better than what Ning Cheng brought out. If Ning Cheng called this one the First Furnace of Primal Chaos, wouldn’t theirs be called the First Furnace before Primal Chaos?

Ning Cheng activated the restriction without thought, blocking all the sounds around him. After all, this match was very important to him.

Losing face was a small matter. What mattered more was the Herbs and Plants of the Universe and helping patch Sichen Qiutian’s dao heart. If he failed, he was bound to be treated like a clown, but Sichen Qiutian would be labelled as someone who sought the dao with a clown. It would immediately cause his dao heart to crack even more.

Ning Cheng picked up the first divine herb, the Twin-leaved Scales of the Celestial Fox. He didn’t throw it into the pill furnace; instead, he held it in hand and let his spiritual consciousness probe it carefully.

A few moments later, Ning Cheng managed to scan through the entire divine herb, and an image of it appeared in Ning Cheng’s Sea of Consciousness as if stripped naked. It allowed Ning Cheng to catch and observe the worldly essence in it.

The Twin-leaved Scales of the Celestial Fox wasn’t a pure elemental-type divine herb, but it could be considered a wind-attributed divine herb as it contained traces of wind-attributed law aura. However, it was warm and yang in nature, making it difficult to integrate into pills without using all five elemental-attributed divine herbs.

After understanding this information, Ning Cheng couldn’t calm down. Generally, all divine herbs containing worldly laws were dao fruit-level ingredients. This Twin-leaved Scales of the Celestial Fox appeared to have no law aura on the surface, but it was unexpectedly a law-infused divine herb.

It looks like this topic has a huge trap. If one doesn’t mind the cost, refining a Dao Sculpting Dao Pill with fifty-five divine herbs should be possible with the ingredients.

However, the Clear Wind Immortal Claw wasn’t a pure elemental divine herb but a wind and yin-attributed ingredient opposite of the Twin-leaves Scales of the Celestial Fox. Another law-infused divine herb.

Interesting, since that old man Kang took out these two divine herbs, did that fellow know he would be bullshitting in the first round?

Silver Ring Fruit, a metal-attributed divine herb that contained no laws but carried a killing intent with a tearing effect.

The Sakyamuni Flower. Although an attributeless divine herb, it had a substantial amplification effect on the perception of laws. When Ning Cheng deduced the attributeless nature of the Sakyamuni Flower, he thought that he had deduced it wrong. As a Dao Essence Pill Sage, he had seen over a thousand divine herbs but had never seen an attributeless divine herb before. Although he knew attributeless herbs existed, this was his first time seeing one.

Holding the Sakyamuni Flower, Ning Cheng almost didn’t want to put it down. Without attributes, it was as if there were no laws. It also made him recall the Bestowing Lawless Fruit, a dao fruit that absorbed

the laws of heaven and earth but had no laws. Unfortunately, the Sakyamuni Flower didn't contain any laws, at least none he could sense; otherwise, its value would be at the top, maybe even beyond the Bestowing Lawless Fruit.

The Grand Change Realm was worthy of its name; Ning Cheng couldn't help but praise it from the bottom of his heart. Just a few divine herbs from this round had already shocked him this much.

The last divine herb, the Red Cloud Wings, a name that sounded wind-attributed but was a wood-attributed divine herb and a solid auxiliary divine herb at that.

By the time he finished deducing the effects of the five divine herbs, Ning Cheng had realised that three days had already passed. The purple-robed man had only set six days to refine the pills, and now he spent three days deducing the divine herbs' effects. In other words, he now only had three days to deduce the pill recipe and refine the pill using the deduced pill recipe.

Ning Cheng casually glanced around, and sure enough, apart from a few people, such as Sichen Qiutian, most were focused on Lu Dongze's actions. Heat constantly rolled off Lu Dongze's furnace; he had already started condensing the pill long ago. This kind of creation of a pill recipe differed from ordinary alchemy, and refining a divine herb using this method for several hours was relatively normal.

Ning Cheng secretly sighed; this was the difference. It wasn't that Lu Dongze had a deeper knowledge of the Dao of Alchemy compared to him, but rather due to Lu Dongze's possession of the Herbs and Plants of the Universe. Studying that book, Lu Dongze didn't need to deduce the effects of the divine herbs as he did.

However, Ning Cheng wasn't worried about losing. Since he deduced the properties and effects of the divine herbs, he had a much clearer understanding of what he could get from them instead of reading a book.

The Twin-leaved Scales of the Celestial Fox and the Clear Wind Immortal Claw were law-infused divine herbs. One of which was yang-oriented, and the other was yin-oriented. Therefore, Ning Cheng decided to refine a Dao Sculpting Dao Pill for sensing wind-attributed divine abilities. With the option of fifty-five kinds of divine herbs, it was obvious that he would only be using a few of the auxiliary neutralising divine herbs. However, Ning Cheng believed that he could refine the pill within the remaining three days with the help of the Mysterious Yellow Formless.

If it weren't for the Mysterious Yellow Formless, he wouldn't have dared to challenge Lu Dongze. After all, the Mysterious Yellow Formless allowed him to deduce far better than other cultivators, and because the Mysterious Yellow Bead now had the support of the various origins, he could easily grasp the origin-essences of the various divine herbs, which would drastically shorten his deduction time.

After all, one had to know that, on the surface, the Dao of Alchemy was the condensation of the essences of various origins of heaven and earth.

Moreover, on his way to the Five Grand Realms' Void Market, Ning Cheng repeatedly deduced various pill recipes. It was only because he didn't have enough dao fruits that he didn't refine them. But now, he was only refining a Dao Sculpting Dao Pill, something much simpler than a previously deduced Dao Essence Dao Pill.