

Collapse 841

Chapter 841 The Great Ballot Box Defense Operation

"Wait a minute, who is this 1118?" Teacher Slaughter looked at the big screen in front of him, deep confusion written all over his face.

Just as he expressed his doubt, 1118 gained over a hundred more votes, climbing a few more ranks.

Because the closer one gets to the top, the bigger the vote gap becomes, 1118 didn't jump as many ranks as before, but was steadily rising in small increments.

Then Teacher Slaughter noticed another mysterious person on the leaderboard, it was number 1117.

It repeated the scenario of 1118, with the number of votes increasing abnormally, though not as drastically as 1118, increasing by a few dozen votes each time, and not as frequently.

If he weren't the host, Teacher Slaughter would have suspected these two had received some kind of predetermined script.

Fortunately, 1117 and 1118 were contestants from Pleasure Heavenly City, and both had squeezed into the top fifty, which meant Teacher Slaughter's performance improved by two.

This was beneficial to him.

Although Teacher Slaughter had doubts in his heart, he didn't speak up to reveal this abnormal phenomenon.

But others were not blind; some audience members and contestants had already noticed the abnormal ranking of these two people.

"Why did 1118, and also 1117, suddenly gain so many votes and still charge upwards?"

"1118's vote count is too abnormal; it increases significantly each time. What's going on?"

The audience buzzed with discussion, starting to turn their heads to locate the voting boxes of 1118 and 1117.

The lower-class people were also closely monitoring the changes in vote count.

"No, no! How did my vote count suddenly drop so much? I was originally ranked in the thirties, but my votes dropped by more than two hundred, nearly falling out of the top fifty!"

"My votes have decreased too!"

"Stop fighting, all our votes have decreased!"

Very soon, everyone realized their vote count had decreased significantly.

And the ones with reduced votes were all contestants from Pleasure Heavenly City, while contestants from other areas showed normal increases on the leaderboard.

Naturally, everyone believed their vote decrease was related to the increase in votes for 1118 and 1117.

The lower-class people began searching throughout the square for these two people.

All voting boxes were arranged in numerical order around the square; following the numbers, they quickly found boxes 1117 and 1118.

But when everyone followed the numbers, they found these two voting boxes empty, not only without people but the boxes themselves had disappeared.

"They're over there!" A contestant at the back of the crowd spotted Gu Mian.

He pointed in a direction, and everyone followed his finger to look.

They saw a person in white clothes, with a long bag on his back, reaching into a voting box fishing something out. Quickly, he pulled out a stack of votes and turned to cast them into another voting box behind him, which was box 1118.

"He is number 1118! He pulled away his voting box and is stealing our votes to put into his own box!" another contestant realized.

They saw 1118 pull another stack of votes from a voting box, generously sharing half with the little green dwarf beside him—he was so short they wouldn't have noticed him standing there if 1118 hadn't handed him votes.

The little dwarf hastily stuffed the votes into the 1117 voting box behind him, which immediately emitted a string of "beep beep" sounds, "beeping" once for each vote, as if it had become stuttering due to the mass insertion.

"This thing is really smart, it can accurately count the votes even with so many thrown in at once. I must get one for my word-guessing instance one day." Mr. Green set his sights on the voting box, but for now, he could only fantasize about it, not knowing when or if he could ever return to his instance.

Thinking of this, Mr. Green hurriedly followed behind Gu Mian: "After saving Lu Yi, Gu Mian should send me to the NPC gathering area of this world, right? Once there, I might think of a way to return to my world; there are many NPCs in Crazy Game City, maybe they can help."

Excited by this thought, Mr. Green felt a surge of emotion, as he had wandered outside for so long and finally had a chance to return home.

In his excitement, he completely ignored the crowd of lower-class people angrily glaring at them from afar.

"They're in cahoots!" someone shouted angrily, "Stealing our votes together!"

"Get them! Take the votes back!"

"Beat them to death!"

Contestants who were fighting fiercely just a minute ago suddenly united, charging at their common enemies.

It could be said that Gu Mian and Mr. Green made great contributions to the peaceful development among the lower-class in the Human World.

At this moment, Mr. Green heard the angry roar from afar, turned to look, and saw a group of red-eyed people furiously charging toward them, scaring Mr. Green into trembling, his face turning as green as his clothes.

"They've found us! They've found us!" Mr. Green, with a green face, tugged at Gu Mian's clothes.

At this moment, Gu Mian was in front of box 1095, just pulling out a large stack of votes, numbering in the hundreds, causing 1095's rank to plummet from the first place to below the top fifty.

Gu Mian kindly returned a small portion, causing 1095 to come back into the top fifty, hovering around the twenties and thirties.

Then he threw the remaining large portion into his own box, causing his rank to jump significantly, directly becoming the new number one, far ahead.

"This should ensure a safe promotion." Gu Mian looked at his ranking on the big screen with satisfaction.

He heard the trembling voice of Mr. Green behind him.

Gu Mian looked up, seeing a group of lanky people with red eyes charging at them.

Their expressions were terrifying, as if they were about to swallow him whole.

At the same time, Teacher Slaughter was also charging at them.

His fury was evident, almost literarily burning with anger.

Of course, he wasn't kindly coming to uphold justice for the lower-class who lost votes; rather, Gu Mian and Mr. Green's actions caused the Pleasure Heavenly City contestants' rankings to drop drastically. If this continued, it would affect Teacher Slaughter's performance.

"Alright, seems we're not completely safe yet." Gu Mian grabbed the voting box that was still beeping, took hold of Mr. Green, and started running.

What followed was the "Voting Box Guard Battle."

"Stop!" Teacher Slaughter was even more furious than the contestants, his two legs bulling forward with determination, intent on capturing the two thieves, Gu Mian and Mr. Green.

At that moment, 007 and Chu Changge were not far away.

watched silently as Teacher Slaughter frantically tried to catch up with Gu Mian, finally unable to suppress a comment: "I knew something would happen."

Chapter 842 Gu Tixia Punches and Kills Guanxi

"No big deal." Chu Changge glanced around, seeing that all the contestants who could come down from the ladder had already descended, heading angrily toward Gu Mian and Mr. Green's direction.

Some of these people didn't even make it to the top one hundred and didn't know if their votes had been taken by Gu Mian.

They simply understood that they couldn't advance, harboring resentment in their hearts, and coincidentally, Gu Mian and Mr. Green were caught in the crossfire, allowing these people to vent their anger on them effortlessly.

A small group of clever individuals quickly adapted, imitating Gu Mian by secretly stealing votes from other voting boxes and putting them into their own.

Unlike Gu Mian, these people showed no restraint when taking votes. They wished to scour every vote from the box, leaving their fingernails to scrape lines across the bottom.

Seeing this, the contestants who were on the leaderboard hurriedly turned back to guard their own voting boxes.

was the first to return to his voting box.

Gu Mian had taken a small portion of his votes, but the remaining votes were enough to keep him ranked around thirtieth.

The pain in his waist made every step excruciating for him, and knowing he didn't have the strength to chase after Gu Mian, he immediately returned to his voting box to protect it.

Although some who chased after Gu Mian went back to guard their voting boxes, there were still quite a few people left.

Over there, Teacher Slaughter was also striding over aggressively.

"Now we can only try to buy Gu Mian some time." 007 glanced at the pocket watch hanging around his neck. It was now 11:25 AM, and all residential district programs would end promptly at noon, with the advancement rankings becoming final then.

The Upper Class People wouldn't care if Gu Mian's first-place win was obtained through cheating.

In fact, among the Upper Class People, only Teacher Slaughter was furious; the other spectators found it very entertaining, thinking Gu Mian's actions added a lot of fun to the show.

Some Upper Class People even chased after Gu Mian, wanting to vote for him.

"In any case, we can't let them catch up to Gu Mian," 007 sighed, pulling a pink Easter egg out of his pocket. "Fortunately, we still have a way to clean up after him."

[Princess Atmosphere Creation Egg]

[Introduction: Still lamenting that the scenery around you in selfies doesn't match your stunning beauty? Struggling to create a dreamy atmosphere? This egg will solve all your woes!]

[Function: Smash the egg, and within a 500-meter radius of the break point, a princess dreamy-style pink fog will form. Even if you're at a dump, you won't have to worry about the photo's background; the mist will completely cover everything.]

This was something they requested from the Crazy Tower Chief.

Before coming here, 007 and Chu Changge had anticipated the possibility of Gu Mian's identity being exposed, needing to cover his escape.

For this reason, they borrowed some special items from the Crazy Tower Chief to help conceal a person's form.

Though they said "borrow," the Crazy Tower Chief knew that once lent out, the items were gone for good, so he gave some relatively useless items.

This [Princess Atmosphere Creation Egg] was one of them.

It was meant for creating an atmospheric feel when taking photos; even if the mist could obscure things, it only worked on ordinary people's vision and was useless against ghosts, so it couldn't be used in the instance.

But it came in handy here.

007, seeing no one paying attention to him, discreetly smashed the egg on the ground.

The pink mist immediately surged out from the broken egg, enveloping this area in an instant.

Gu Mian and Mr. Green were instantly swept into the pink mist of a princess atmosphere.

Mr. Green's vision was completely obstructed by the pink fog. He coughed twice, horrified to find that he couldn't see anything but pink.

"Am I blind?" he instinctively stood still, puzzled as to why a blind person's vision would be pink.

As he stood there dazedly, a hand suddenly reached out from the pinkness, grabbing his collar.

He recognized it as Gu Mian's hand.

Then followed the arm, the shoulder, the face, until finally Gu Mian's entire figure emerged in front of Mr. Green, still holding a semi-visible voting box.

Only then did Mr. Green realize he wasn't blind; the pink was just mist, so thick that he could only see things that were very close.

Nervously, he grabbed Gu Mian's sleeve, looking around, "What's happening!"

"Chu Changge and 007 used special items to cover us," Gu Mian explained knowingly.

They had told him about coercing special items from the Crazy Tower Chief, and seeing the current situation, it was clear they had put these special items to use.

The contestants didn't know what this pink mist was and stood still in their places, bewildered, not sure what to do except stare at the fog.

The Upper Class People were also confused.

Someone in the audience suddenly stood up.

"What's going on? What's this pink stuff?"

"Can't see anything a bit further away. Is this part of the show?"

"Where's the host? Why isn't the host speaking?"

The host was now in Gu Mian's hands.

Before the pink mist appeared, Teacher Slaughter was the closest to Gu Mian.

After the pink mist appeared, he lost his sense of direction and stumbled, bumping into someone shortly after.

Before he could look up, he was punched on the forehead, causing stars to explode in his vision and making him sway.

It was only after Gu Mian punched Teacher Slaughter in the head that he remembered he was in disguise and didn't need to worry about being recognized.

Seeing Teacher Slaughter's familiar face just now, Gu Mian had reacted without thought, immediately going on the offensive.

Having already struck, he definitely couldn't let Teacher Slaughter see him now, as being accused of "harming an Upper Class Person" was no small matter, potentially affecting his participation in the next two phases of the variety show.

Before the other party could react, Gu Mian quickly pulled a Doggie Doll from the guitar bag and stuffed it in Teacher Slaughter's mouth to prevent him from speaking. Then, tearing off Mr. Green's coat, wrapped it completely over Teacher Slaughter's head, hoisting him up toward a less crowded area because he couldn't be seen holding a host captive.

Even though Teacher Slaughter's head was wrapped, his flamboyant pink shirt was still very conspicuous.

Gu Mian couldn't exactly take off his pink shirt too; carrying a person walking around without clothes would attract just as much attention.

Soon, Teacher Slaughter began to struggle in his hands.

"Let... me go..." With the Doggie Doll in his mouth, he could only make muffled sounds, mixed with a few profanities, "You... northerner lower-class... so daring..."

Although the Doggie Doll restrained Teacher Slaughter's speech, when he said "lower-class," those words came out very clearly.

When Teacher Slaughter bumped into Gu Mian, he saw the hand hanging by his side and recognized him as a lower-class by his skin color.

Just as he was about to express disdain, the lower-class was quicker on the draw, delivering a punch that left him dizzy.

Even now, Teacher Slaughter felt like he was dreaming.

I was hit by a lower-class person?

Chapter 843 Teacher Slaughter's Night of Beautiful Dreams

But this was far from over.

The lower-class people not only hit him but also reached out and groped around on his body.

"Upper Class People should all carry two tickets,"—Teacher Slaughter heard the lower-class person with particularly hard fists say.

Then he felt the other's hand rummaging through his pockets, and finally, he took away something.

Utter humiliation! Utter humiliation!

Teacher Slaughter flipped his eyes, nearly passing out from anger.

He struggled to make a sound, only to hear the person above say, "So noisy."

Then he felt another two heavy blows on his head.

Teacher Slaughter peacefully fell asleep.

But before he fell asleep, he suddenly felt that he seemed to have heard this person's voice somewhere before.

Unreasonably, he found this familiar voice terrifying.

Even while fainted, this terrifying voice continued to echo in his mind.

Teacher Slaughter had a nightmare, where he became the host of the second and third phases of the variety show as he wished, standing on the splendid stage, hosting the show with fiery passion.

Strangely, he realized that his microphone didn't produce any sound.

Confused, he looked at the microphone in his hand and witnessed a horrifying scene.

A mouth had somehow grown on the microphone, and it was opening and closing, saying something—

"So noisy" "So noisy"

Teacher Slaughter, terrified, flung the microphone, turning to see that the audience below the stage were staring straight at him, their mouths also opening and closing, making the same sound as the microphone.

"So noisy" "So noisy"

Teacher Slaughter was scared out of his wits, wanting to ask for help but not knowing who to ask.

What on earth was happening! He frantically wanted to ask what was happening, but opening his mouth, he realized he, too, was making the same sound as the microphone and the audience.

"So noisy!" "So noisy!" "So noisy!"

Teacher Slaughter woke up with a start.

His head ached unbearably.

But now he couldn't care less about his head, and the first thing he did upon opening his eyes was to try making a sound, hearing his own voice put him at ease.

Then he looked around and found himself in a single patient room in a hospital.

A television display was hanging directly opposite the bed, showing "Pleasure Heavenly City Variety Show Accident," accompanied by a video of a large pink mist.

That's right!

Teacher Slaughter finally remembered what he was doing before losing consciousness.

"I should be hosting the show in Pleasure Heavenly City!" He jumped up from the bed, and the bed creaked under his feet, as if protesting Teacher Slaughter's uncivilized behavior.

"I should be hosting the show in Pleasure Heavenly City. My performance was the best among all hosts before the accident occurred..."

At that thought, he jumped off the bed and ran towards the door of the hospital room.

"Were 1118 and 1117 caught? Did they return the tickets to the other contestants? Am I still in first place? Damn, what time is it now!"

"Four fifty-three in the afternoon, sir." A calm voice responded to his roar from beside him.

Teacher Slaughter turned to look, seeing a man in a suit sitting on a bench in the corridor, his collar adorned with a black bow tie with white polka dots, watching him.

Teacher Slaughter found the man somewhat familiar, recalling that he seemed to have seen him at the central square of Pleasure Heavenly City, he was an audience member.

"There was an accident in the show you were hosting, a pink mist came out of nowhere, blocking the audience's view, and the show in Pleasure Heavenly City had to be stopped early."

Teacher Slaughter held his breath: "What about the shows in the other residential areas? Were they stopped too?"

"Of course not, only the show you were hosting had an accident."

"This isn't fair!" Teacher Slaughter raised his voice, "Stopping my show early means my contestants have fewer opportunities to receive votes than those in other areas! The rankings must be out, how many do I have in the top fifty?"

The man with the black dotted bow tie didn't answer Teacher Slaughter's question but simply looked up in a certain direction.

Teacher Slaughter followed his gaze.

There was an open nurse station on each floor in the inpatient area, with a television screen hanging inside the nurse station, currently playing the emergency situation of Trial and Crown's first phase.

Teacher Slaughter quickly jogged to the nurse station, holding onto the counter and staring wide-eyed at the list, searching for those advancing from the 1000 to 1200 range.

"Number 1118 first place, 1166 fifteenth, 1161 nineteenth, 1095, 1003, 1080, 1117, 1124... eight people in the top fifty! Eight people from my area advanced!" Teacher Slaughter was giddy with excitement.

He went on to carefully study the range of the top fifty from other areas, realizing his performance was the best.

"Eight, eight advanced, I'm number one! Now I can host the variety show's second and third stages." Ever since the Forbidden Zone was destroyed by Gu Mian and the Slaughter Game went off air, Teacher Slaughter's career had plummeted. This time he wanted to seize the opportunity to reappear before the public.

"It's not certain yet." At this moment, the man with the black dotted bow tie suddenly spoke up.

Teacher Slaughter turned to look at him, only to see the man pointing to his forehead: "Your head was injured, after Pleasure Heavenly City's pink mist cleared away, I found you beside a streetlamp. You collided with the streetlamp and fainted, the wound hasn't completely healed yet, if your body can't withstand it, the variety show's hosts will assign someone else to take on this difficult task for you."

What?

Teacher Slaughter touched his forehead, feeling a layer of bandage, which he abruptly tore off: "I'm perfectly fine, no one should dare steal my position... no, I didn't collide with a streetlamp, a lower-class person held me hostage and knocked me out... I must report this to the hosts, and search for suspects among Pleasure Heavenly City's contestants one by one!"

Teacher Slaughter muttered to himself and sprinted towards the stairs.

Chu Changge watched his figure disappear completely before withdrawing his gaze.

"Did he see who the assailant was?" 007 walked out of an empty patient room, looking towards the direction where Teacher Slaughter disappeared.

After Gu Mian put Teacher Slaughter to sleep, she handed over the mess to the two of them to clean up.

The two then created the illusion of Teacher Slaughter colliding with the streetlamp and passing out, taking him to the hospital.

Chu Changge shook his head.

If Teacher Slaughter had discovered the assault at the scene, maybe they could have caught the assailant.

But because they interfered, the Upper Class People believed Teacher Slaughter collided with a streetlamp in panic, and now the contestants who didn't advance have already been sent back to the residential area, finding someone among them is like looking for a needle in a haystack.

The central square of Pleasure Heavenly City had also been cleared during the few hours Teacher Slaughter was unconscious, leaving no clues behind.

Teacher Slaughter could only suffer in silence, unable to voice his grievance.

Chapter 844 Mr. Green Outsmarts Gu Beng Beng

Chu Changge was right.

When Teacher Slaughter hurried back, the traces previously left in the central square had been completely cleaned up.

He complained to the staff still in the square about his ordeal, explaining how he was beaten and humiliatingly hooded.

But everyone just thought he had hit his head on the lamp post and lost his mind.

"I never imagined you would have this kind of dream, being held and knocked out by the lower-class, even if you gave them two hundred courage, they wouldn't dare to do that."

"There were quite a few people in the square at that time. If you shouted once, he would be discovered. I don't think any lower-class person has the guts to abduct you in broad daylight. Besides, what would the lower-class do by abducting you? Punching you twice wouldn't bring any benefits and might even bring life-threatening risks."

With this said, Teacher Slaughter hesitated.

Was I really abducted by the lower-class? Was it that the lamp post truly damaged my head?

He also felt that the lower-class didn't have the guts to abduct him in broad daylight.

His head still hurt; the more he thought, the more it hurt. Teacher Slaughter had to empty his mind and let it rest for a while.

"It seems your head is still not clear, which makes it impossible to work properly. You might as well take a break; the host ranked second is happy to take over your upcoming tasks."

"I'm fine!" Teacher Slaughter got anxious, glaring at the person in front of him, yet no longer speaking of being abducted.

"Where are the fifty lower-class people who advanced? I should be preparing to host the next two stages with them." He awkwardly changed the subject.

"They're on a cruise ship outside Carnival Wharf. They were chosen from two thousand people, and each has extremely high popularity. The cruise prepared a private room for each, with at least ten cameras in each room. Besides, each has a tracking camera behind them;

"The cruise will depart from the wharf tomorrow, going upstream along the river, until near the variety show venue. Originally, you should have been with them, but you were still lying in the hospital when they boarded;

"Oh, right, the situation on the cruise is broadcast live on TV. If you're interested, you can watch. The audience also set a new 'popularity ranking' for those fifty people. In your area, No. 1118 is leading in heat, currently the most popular contestant."

Speaking of No. 1118, Teacher Slaughter remembered how he dragged the voting box around to rob others.

Thinking of this made him grind his teeth in hatred, though luckily his performance didn't suffer and he was still ranked first.

At present, Gu Mian, whom Teacher Slaughter hated so much his teeth ached, was resting in a luxurious room. This room was two hundred square meters, with a large terrace outside from which one could see the shimmering water surface.

This was the largest and most luxurious room on the cruise.

After the first stage ended, the fifty who advanced were sent to this luxury cruise. In their free time, the Upper Class People held an online 'most popular vote,' and rooms were allocated according to the vote ranks.

It seemed Gu Mian's ridicule buff had worked, as the majority of votes circled around Gu Mian, thus he was allotted the best room.

The second place went to No. 1095, an old acquaintance, the first and only person to give a speech at Pleasure Heavenly City. He probably earned second place because of this.

Mr. Green ended up outside the top thirty, though there were no bad rooms on the cruise. Even the last place room wasn't small and had rich decorations within.

The sun slowly set on the horizon, the clock's hands were about to point to five o'clock.

By five-thirty everyone had to gather at the deck's open-air restaurant for dinner — this was a rule set by the Upper Class People.

Of course, there were no Upper Class People on the cruise; the lower-class concentration here was too high, they probably felt boarding the cruise would sully their status.

Two tracking cameras were continuously filming Gu Mian up and down, with one nearly sticking to his face. At this moment, a knock sounded at the door.

The three together turned to look at the door.

The room's door was quite lavish, made of two solid wood panels.

Opening it was a bit of a struggle.

Gu Mian grabbed the door handle, forcefully pulling the door open. The two tracking cameras beside bounced up and down by the door, seeming to exert themselves too.

After opening the door, Mr. Green's figure appeared in front.

He stood timidly outside, with two tracking cameras hovering overhead.

Mr. Green nervously walked in, intending to whisper something to Gu Mian, but the two tracking cameras clung overhead without leaving, buzzing around him.

He could only awkwardly call Gu Mian "No. 1118," and hinting that he might not advance to the third stage tomorrow.

Today's show made him have a deeper understanding of the Upper Class people's lunacy. In the first stage, he managed to sneak through with Gu Mian among the crowd, but the next stage had only fifty people, the third stage leaving only ten; he wouldn't be able to stand idly by and watch.

He wanted to find a chance to slip away, escaping to the NPC gathering area.

But now four tracking cameras guarded them, and there were countless cameras in the room, so Mr. Green couldn't blatantly discuss escaping, only subtly hinting, and sought help with his eyes.

But the other party clearly misunderstood his intention.

Gu Mian patted Mr. Green's shoulder, "Don't worry, I'll certainly do my best to help you advance."

After saying this he searched for the camera, displaying a helpful, enthusiastic perfect smile toward the tracking camera.

Mr. Green's eyebrow twitched twice, suppressing the urge to jump up and curse Gu Mian for not understanding human speech.

While he took deep breaths to control his emotions, a bell rang.

It was a reminder that dinner time was near.

This was their first meal today.

From morning until now, the contestants hadn't eaten a thing and had undergone intense physical activity, many feeling so hungry their stomachs touched their backs.

When the bell rang, contestants emerged from their rooms continuously, heading toward the deck.

Not everyone was in their rooms; most wandered curiously around the cruise, while those in rooms basically rested from injuries sustained in the first stage.

The event planned by Teacher Slaughter had the highest injury rate, with eight contestants advancing from Pleasure Heavenly City, besides Gu Mian and Mr. Green, everyone else had injuries ranging from minor to severe, though none life-threatening. No. 1166 had the worst injuries.

No. 1166 climbed onto the hot-air balloon, fortunately obtaining the pass.

But before the hot-air balloon had fully descended, a crowd awaited below to seize it, so No. 1166 jumped far outward when the balloon was three or four meters from the ground, trying to leap out of the encirclement.

However, it didn't work well; not only did he not jump very far, but he also broke a leg, and the pass in his hand was snatched away immediately by those who chased him.

Despite achieving a significant failure, his move was very entertaining, so he garnered quite a few votes.

Chapter 845 The Head of the Household, Gu Bengbeng

Gu Mian also took some tickets from ballot box 1166, but didn't go for "total annihilation."

The votes of those who could advance were desperately earned; Gu Mian only took part of the tickets, enabling those who could advance to still advance, but lowering their rank.

This was also the primary reason Teacher Slaughter's first place was unaffected.

Soon, Gu Mian led Mr. Green to the open-air restaurant on the deck.

An extraordinarily long table was placed at the center of the deck, long enough to seat fifty people on both sides for a meal.

The Upper Class People thoughtfully stuck numbers onto the chairs beside the long table to designate everyone's seat.

Gu Mian's seat was particularly prominent and special, situated at the short end facing the long table, akin to the head of the household's seat seen in television dramas.

On both sides of him were 1166 and 1095, Gu Mian knew the seating was arranged according to the audience popularity rankings.

and 1095 ranked second and third in popularity, respectively.

Seated according to rank, Gu Mian saw that Mr. Green, representing 1117, was separated from him by half the table's length.

A few scattered individuals had already taken their seats beside the long table's chairs, appearing as though they had been waiting there all along.

Everyone clearly recognized Gu Mian; upon seeing him approach, they all stood and greeted him with nods, as if he were a teacher attending class, while they were students eager to learn.

Mr. Green wore a ghostly expression; some among them had chased him and Gu Mian with red eyes in the morning, yet within half a day, they changed, appearing deferential to Gu Mian.

Naturally, their greetings were directed solely at Gu Mian; accompanying Gu Mian, Mr. Green was entirely ignored.

Mr. Green, shocked, felt deeply unequal.

"Lower-class people here are adept at looking at people's patterns when making decisions," Mr. Green whispered to Gu Mian, "They know you're the most favored by the Upper Class People, so they believe you're the highest-ranking here."

The tracking device wove through contestants, not missing a single expression on their faces.

Gu Mian and Mr. Green took their respective seats.

After a while, people arrived one after another, even the limping contestant 1166 came.

He hobbled on a crutch to the deck, nearly tipping over his chair upon sitting, saved from falling by a lower-ranked person who steadied him.

Some arrived late due to losing their way, repeatedly apologizing, first to those at the table, then to the camera and the tracking device.

Despite minor interruptions, thankfully everyone managed to eat in the end.

The dishes were served by robotic dogs, the Hei type.

The Upper Class People would surely not want to serve the lower-class; they used robotic dogs for this purpose.

Nobody knew exactly who invented these robotic dogs; capable of conducting street happiness surveys, sorting deliveries, and doing serving tasks.

The tables were significantly higher than the robotic dogs, preventing them from reaching the tabletop, but the dogs had their own intelligence.

A pair of robotic dogs stacked like acrobats, the dog below crouching, while the dog above carried a platter and stepped onto its back.

Once the dog holding the platter steadied itself, the dog below slowly stood up.

Thus, the dog above could extend its arms and deliver food onto the table.

One by one, the dogs efficiently delivered food onto the table, placing a corresponding dish in front of each person, each dish covered by a lid.

The lid on the plate in front of Gu Mian had the number 1118 written on it, and the others were similarly marked.

Though they gathered, they each ate their own meal.

Gu Mian noticed the platter before him was significantly larger compared to those on either side, causing the robot dog serving it to nearly lose its balance.

Nobody dared uncover their lid first; they all fixed their eyes on Gu Mian, as if waiting for him to uncover his before they dared to do so.

Lower-class people adapted well to circumstances, and evolved reasonable rules accordingly.

The Upper Class People divided contestant rooms and seating at the restaurant based on popularity rankings; contestants treated these rankings as decrees, imitating them, prioritizing the most popular.

To prevent everyone from starving, Gu Mian first lifted the lid of his giant plate.

The contents were indeed abundant.

There was half a honey-glazed lamb leg, a whole turkey, and vegetables, salad, and cream pudding.

Gu Mian initially thought the Upper Class People might play tricks with their food, serving something inedible or entirely unpalatable.

He even prepared himself to uncover a bomb inside—if that were true, the Upper Class People wouldn't have to anticipate tomorrow's show; one bomb could send all fifty contestants flying heavenward.

The audience was clearly very much looking forward to tomorrow's show, as evident in the splendid arrangement of food, perhaps encouraging them to recharge before delivering more acts tomorrow.

However, contestants' food wasn't entirely identical.

Food portions were allocated by popularity ranking; the higher the popularity, the more lavish the dinner.

Gu Mian saw that while 1166 and 1095's plates were also lavish, they paled beside his own.

When it came to Mr. Green, he was left with only half a turkey and a plate of leaves.

The plates at the far end of the table had a single chicken drumstick and several baked potatoes; even this was an unparalleled culinary delight for lower-class people.

Gu Mian speculated that the Upper Class People aimed to engender a sense of unfairness among contestants, allowing for a thrilling confrontation.

However, they clearly overlooked the servile nature of lower-class people, who contentedly followed the ranking-based food allocation and ate uncomplicatedly.

Sitting before the screen, the Upper Class People didn't see the unfolding they anticipated, declaring this phase the duller of the entire show.

At this moment, Chu Changge and 007 were also in front of a screen watching the yacht's live broadcast.

They had returned to Crazy Game City.

Though they had Upper Class identity cards, they weren't genuinely Upper Class; without residences, night's fall necessitated returning to Game City.

In Game City, they headed to the bookstore, observing the yacht broadcast via television.

The bookstore owner had grown oblivious to their presence; as they watched the broadcast, he mundanely wiped the counter with a cloth, awaiting their departure.

"Tomorrow, the second and third phases of the show proceed consecutively; if all goes well, we should leave here tomorrow," 007 commented, watching the screen.

Given the audience's strong preference for Gu Mian, his screen time was the most abundant.

The shopkeeper dared not watch the screen closely, fearing the image within might leap out and slap him twice.

Upon hearing 007's words, a glint appeared in his eyes; he discreetly listened attentively.

continued: "After leaving tomorrow, we likely won't return again; we must bring Mingliang to the show site."

"He seems to wish to stay," Chu Changge adjusted his glasses; to Chu, whether Mingliang stayed mattered little, not bringing him along meant escaping a burden.

acknowledged: "It's normal to desire remaining here; no danger, no need for instance runs, no worry of food supplies. Yet he fails to grasp that his current treatment is thanks to Gu Mian's presence; I wager if he stays, once Gu Mian departs, he'll immediately be cast out by Game City's denizens, becoming either a lower-class or starving by the roadside."

She paused before continuing: "Let him witness tomorrow's show; let him witness the plight of lower-class people, then see if he truly desires remaining here as one."

Even 007 couldn't gauge whether it was better to become a lower-class or remain in reality facing instances.

Everyone bears their own choice; should Mingliang witness tomorrow's show and opt against returning to reality, they wouldn't force him.

Meanwhile, on-screen contestants had consumed all their food.

Most licked their plates cleaner than their faces, tasting such delicacies for the first time; though filled to the brim, contestants forced one last morsel into their mouths, wearing satisfied smiles.

This self-abusive eating fashion pleased the audience; essentially, they yearned to see Gu Mian eating in such a style.

But Gu Mian hardly touched the food before him, greatly disappointing viewers; yet upon recalling the incoming show tomorrow, their anticipation renewed.

Unexpectedly, after the meal, the program launched a mysterious vote—allowing fifty contestants to anonymously determine the reverse order of tomorrow's show lineup; the more votes, the later the appearance.

The contestant with the most votes would be the very last to appear.

The earlier the appearance, the greater the advantage.

Naturally, the voting process was entirely handled by robotic dogs; upon voting, the program retained secrecy, delaying the reveal until tomorrow's stage.

Chapter 846 It's a Good Day!

When Teacher Slaughter rushed onto the cruise ship, it was already past midnight.

The cruise ship was quiet, with everyone having returned to their rooms to rest.

It was too late for Teacher Slaughter to stir up trouble even if he wanted to. He angrily went to his room at the bow of the ship, a room set up by the production team specifically for the hosts from the Upper Class People, far away from those lower-class people's rooms.

Not far from outside was the control room of the cruise ship, which, of course, was also unmanned. The ship is fully automated in navigation — the technology is still not quite mature, so while the Upper Class People board automated cruises, someone is still stationed in the control room to prevent accidents.

The value of lower-class people is much lower than that of the Upper Class People; they are not afraid of accidents, as it doesn't matter how many die.

However, the lower-class people on this ship are still of some value, and besides, there's an Upper Class People host on the ship.

So, the control room is equipped with a robot that can control the cruise. If the autopilot system fails, the robot will take over. It is worth mentioning that the manufacturing technology of this robot is also not fully mature.

The host's room has two levels, with an entire layer of screens on the second level, which functions as a surveillance room.

In the surveillance room, one can see the situation in each participant's room.

Teacher Slaughter focused his observation in the surveillance room on Room 1118. He initially wanted to give 1118 a hard time as soon as he arrived, but he came too late; by the time he got on the boat, everyone had returned to their rooms.

Room 1118, occupied by the most popular participant, is the largest room among the contestants. It is equipped with thirty to forty cameras.

At this moment, the lights were still on in 1118's room; he wasn't asleep yet. But whether by coincidence or not, 1118 always lingered in several surveillance blind spots, and the two follower cameras that accompanied him during the day had stopped working and were charging next to each other.

Teacher Slaughter eagerly searched for 1118 in the surveillance room for a long time but only caught glimpses of fleeting shadows.

Frustrated, he rolled his eyes a few times, deciding to step outside the room to get some fresh air.

Outside the room, there was the deck at the ship's bow, currently facing the direction of Carnival Wharf.

Standing at the bow, he looked in that direction and saw that the lights were still on in a white two-story building by the wharf. The wharf staff were working inside. The building was quite large, forming a square shape when viewed from above.

This was the first time Teacher Slaughter observed the building up close.

The higher-ups had classified Carnival Wharf as a Level 3 restricted area, similar to the Secret Forest in the prohibited area, not allowing casual entry.

Far from the wharf, there were restricted area signs, and people patrolled the perimeter. Anyone approaching would immediately be escorted back.

The wharf was mainly for transporting secret or urgently needed goods and wasn't frequently used.

The stage materials for the second and third phases once passed through Carnival Wharf.

Yet even during cargo transportation, the people inside were elusive. Teacher Slaughter had never seen the employees at the wharf nor knew anyone working there.

Curious, he peered at the building, trying to see more.

Perhaps the heavens heard his desire. Coincidentally, a window on the building's second floor suddenly opened, and a figure appeared at the window.

He wore a dark blue uniform, with two fingers of his right hand holding a cigarette, which he took a deep drag from.

The glow of the cigarette seemed like a branding iron, etched deep into the pitch-black curtain called the night.

Teacher Slaughter's entire attention was drawn to that point of fire.

He gaped, staring blankly at the person leisurely smoking at the window.

The person behind the window noticed him too, blew two smoke rings toward Teacher Slaughter's direction with a mischievous expression, then flicked the ash toward Teacher Slaughter and finally closed the window with a smile.

Of course, the lit cigarette butt didn't hit Teacher Slaughter; they were too far apart. It fell from the second floor, dropped to the ground, bounced a few times, and eventually, the wind rolled it off somewhere unknown.

The firelight vanished into the night, yet Teacher Slaughter still blankly stared at the window that had just opened.

He could hardly believe his eyes.

Until a night breeze blew by, its chill clearing his head a bit.

He finally came to his senses and muttered to himself, "A lower-class person? That was a lower-class person, right?"

He had just seen a lower-class person leisurely smoking in a building on Carnival Wharf's second floor, in a uniform!

Could lower-class people work at Carnival Wharf? And smoke leisurely at the window?

Impossible!

The only purpose of lower-class people was to entertain the noble Upper Class People. They couldn't get jobs, couldn't gain any status in a society ruled by the Upper Class People, and without special circumstances, they couldn't appear outside the lower-class residential areas.

Teacher Slaughter would rather believe he saw a ghost than believe what he just saw was real.

Another cold wind blew over, the wound on his forehead tingling slightly from the breeze.

Feeling the pain from his forehead, Teacher Slaughter suddenly realized.

It must be that his still-healing head wound caused him to see such an illusion. Teacher Slaughter thought so to himself, hesitatingly glancing again at the window that had opened before, but nothing moved there, seemingly no one would come to it again.

He held his head and returned to his room, thinking he should get some rest.

Too many illusions today; he needed a good rest to let his bruised head catch a breath; he didn't want to make a mistake in tomorrow's second and third phases.

The second and third phases would proceed continuously tomorrow, with the second phase eliminating forty people, leaving only ten to enter the third phase, where those ten contestants would then vie for the final championship.

Teacher Slaughter had already reviewed the program for the second and third phases. It was very exciting and sure to leave a lasting impression on the audience. As long as the program hosted successfully and gained fame, his career might return to its former glory.

Harboring hopes for the future, Teacher Slaughter fell into a deep sleep.

Some hold hope, while others despair.

At this time, Crazy Tower Chief was trapped in despair.

Gu Mian, that companion who loved to rob, came again to "offer up" to him.

He dared not voice anger, couldn't fight or scold, and had to peel a bit off his already weak household income to give that glasses guy.

If he could, Crazy Tower Chief would wish in front of Gu Mian that he never encounters Gu Mian or his gang of friends again.

Unfortunately, Gu Mian's wish mechanism only fulfilled his own wishes.

So Crazy Tower Chief could only hope that Gu Mian could successfully rescue the person he aimed to save this time, so as to escape from suffering soon.

Almost everyone awaited tomorrow.

And the "tomorrow" everyone awaited quickly arrived.

Chapter 847 Bung Bung's Family Reunion Memoir

By the time the cruise ship carrying Gu Mian and the others arrived at the variety show venue, the audience had already been waiting inside for a long while.

The unreliable automatic driving system really did malfunction, and even the backup robots meant for emergencies broke down as well.

The cruise ship had to stop halfway, and Teacher Slaughter hurriedly went to find an Upper Class Person who knew how to pilot the ship; after all this back and forth, they were delayed on the road for over half an hour.

When Gu Mian and the others finally approached their destination, the audience, who had arrived long ago, were already growing impatient from waiting.

As soon as the contestants got off the cruise ship, Teacher Slaughter rushed them toward the variety show venue in a fluster.

The docking place wasn't far from the variety show venue; a long red carpet linked the cruise ship exit to the entrance of the venue.

The variety show venue was a stadium that had been renovated. From the outside, it looked more or less like most stadiums on Earth—it was a gigantic ring, hollow in the middle.

From afar, Gu Mian could see something extending out of the hollow center of the stadium, pointing straight up at the sky.

But before he could take a closer look, Teacher Slaughter at his side urged them on anxiously, "Move it, move it, don't dawdle."

The contestants had no time to savor what it felt like to step on the red carpet, nor to appreciate the carefully arranged decorations on both sides; like ducks being driven onto a perch, they were stuffed all at once into that ring-shaped building.

After entering the building, there was still a long red carpet inside the doors, and around it were all sorts of baffling constructions.

Gu Mian looked at the Ferris wheel not far away and fell into thought.

Seeing that the contestants had finally arrived, the audience in the stands perked up and all turned toward the entrance.

They let out delighted shouts; some even leaned forward and whistled at Gu Mian.

Following the sound, Gu Mian looked over and saw the ring-shaped stands in the center of the venue.

He had already studied the topographical map of this place and knew it was originally a stadium. The original stands had been built around the perimeter, but after renovation, the Upper Class People had demolished those peripheral stands, built a stage in the very center, and then put up a small ring of seating around the stage.

Back when he first saw the architectural map, Gu Mian had felt something was off. The stadium was very large, yet the map showed that only the very center was being used, leaving a huge ring-shaped vacuum around it.

At the time, Gu Mian couldn't quite understand why the Upper Class People would leave such a giant empty space when building a variety show venue.

Now he knew—what should have been an empty ring of open ground was instead crammed full of entertainment facilities.

Well, they should probably count as entertainment facilities...

He saw a Ferris wheel built in the middle of a large artificial lake. Half of the Ferris wheel was submerged in the water, with only the upper half of the circle exposed above the surface, like a sun with its lower half sunk below the horizon.

Not far from the Ferris wheel was a merry-go-round playing cheerful music, except the floor beneath it was riddled with dark, gaping holes of all sizes, as if something might come crawling out of them at any moment.

Above their heads ran a long roller coaster track. Gu Mian saw that at regular intervals along the track, massive steel rings were welded on. They resembled tunnels on the track that the coaster had to pass through, and these "ring-tunnels" were bristling inside with sharp rebars of all lengths and sizes, all pointing along the direction of the track.

With so many attractions, it looked like the Upper Class People had built an amusement park here.

Just not any kind of proper Paradise. Gu Mian withdrew his gaze from those sharp rebars—none of these facilities seemed to have proper safety measures.

Just then, the loud shouts of the audience came from up ahead.

"Get on the stage! Get on the stage!"

They couldn't wait any longer.

Because of his popularity, Gu Mian had been deliberately arranged at the very front of the line.

He looked forward and saw that a passage had been left open in the ring-shaped stands for entry and exit. The red carpet under his feet passed through this passage and extended to the front of a stage about the size of a classroom, with a slightly peculiar shape.

Its steps rose level by level, each higher tier smaller than the one below; taken as a whole, it looked like a pyramid.

Teacher Slaughter led them forward excitedly and only stopped when they reached that "pyramid."

As soon as they arrived at the base of the pyramid, staff members immediately handed Teacher Slaughter a microphone, and two cameramen came up to start filming, capturing everyone in Gu Mian's group in the frame.

Only then did Gu Mian realize that the inner walls of the stadium had all been turned into a gigantic screen.

The ring-shaped screen wrapped around the entire variety show venue. On the enormous circular display, Gu Mian saw his own figure, as well as Chu Changge and 007.

The two of them were sitting in the very front row of the stands.

Gu Mian stopped looking at the big screen and shifted his gaze to the audience seating.

Chu Changge and 007 were looking at him too, but with so many people present, the three of them couldn't exactly acknowledge each other openly, nor could they reenact some TV drama scene and rush into a tearful embrace. All they could do was exchange a glance and silently look away.

By now, Teacher Slaughter had already launched into hosting with great enthusiasm.

"Thank you all for waiting—"

Perhaps because he was too excited, Teacher Slaughter's voice was a bit shrill. Listening to him talk felt like something sharp was scraping along your eardrums.

"Welcome to the second stage of Trial and Crown! Our second stage program is the Joyful Park Tour!

"I know you've all been waiting here for a long time, but I promise the upcoming program will definitely not disappoint you!"

Teacher Slaughter spoke with sonorous conviction, clearly very confident about what was to come.

But then he abruptly shifted the topic instead of immediately revealing the next segment, choosing to sell a bit of suspense first.

"I believe that viewers who watched last night's live broadcast already know that we held a mysterious vote among the contestants to determine today's order of appearance. In the upcoming program, the earlier you go on stage, the greater advantage you'll have. But our vote was reversed: the more votes you get, the later you appear. Hehe, now let's reveal the results of last night's vote."

Teacher Slaughter held a card in his hand and looked down at its contents with a squinting smile. "There's a certain contestant whose popularity is sky-high. His popularity ranks first not only among the audience, but even the other contestants have their eyes on him..."

This was practically calling out Gu Mian by name.

also picked up on who he was talking about. She glanced at Gu Mian standing at the base of the pyramid and quietly said to Chu Changge beside her, "Don't tell me the one with the highest vote count is Gu Mian."

Her guess was spot on.

The next second, Teacher Slaughter's voice boomed out from the speakers surrounding the stands: "Out of fifty contestants, thirty-two cast their votes for him. He is our No. 1118! He'll be the last to appear in the upcoming program."

Though last night everyone had put on a harmonious front and acted like they'd obey whichever popular contestant spoke, when it came time to trip someone up, they didn't hesitate in the slightest.

After speaking, Teacher Slaughter swept a malicious gaze over Gu Mian, wanting to see him looking worried and anxious.

The Upper Class People in the stands all turned to look at Gu Mian as well. Yesterday's number one had now become the last to go on; they too wanted to see what sort of wonderful expression would appear on his face.

But Gu Mian's reaction left the audience sorely disappointed. Not only did he not panic, he even looked quite proud, as if his face were saying, "I knew first place could only be me."

Teacher Slaughter's mouth twitched a few times; he felt that 1118's brain might not be screwed on quite right.

In reality, one of those thirty-two votes had been cast by Gu Mian himself. He had voted for himself, hoping to go on stage later.

The second and third stages of the variety show were being held back-to-back, and Lu Yi would make his appearance in the third stage. That meant Lu Yi would most likely be escorted to the venue in advance.

Gu Mian planned to find Lu Yi before he had to go on, then use the key to take Lu Yi and Chu Changge and the others and leave directly. So the later he appeared, the more time he would have.

However, at the moment, Gu Mian still hadn't managed to spot Lu Yi.

Chu Changge and 007 in the stands were secretly searching as well, but they didn't see Lu Yi either.

Either Lu Yi hadn't been brought here yet, or he'd been hidden somewhere and would only be revealed in the third stage.

Chapter 848 Chaotic Amusement Park Chronicles

Just as Gu Mian was searching everywhere for Lu Yi, Teacher Slaughter had already announced the ranking of the mysterious votes from last night.

It is worth mentioning that most of the fifty contestants voted for a few of the same people, so many in the back had zero votes.

Teacher Slaughter had no choice but to have those with the same number of votes draw lots to decide their order of appearance.

After finishing these trivial tasks, Teacher Slaughter finally breathed a sigh of relief and prepared to formally introduce the content of the second stage of the show.

He climbed up the Pyramid using both hands and feet.

Each step of the Pyramid was half a meter high, and since Teacher Slaughter was a bit short, his climbing looked somewhat comical.

Watching his back, a small burst of laughter erupted from the audience.

After a difficult climb, he finally reached the top of the Pyramid.

Standing on the high pinnacle, he spread his arms towards the audience below: "I announce, the second stage of our amusement park festival is now officially starting!"

Cannons fired alongside his voice around the stage, dozens of fireworks shot into the sky and exploded, but they were not very visible in the daytime. What stood out were the amusement rides that began to operate.

The Ferris wheel, half-submerged in the artificial lake, began to turn, with cabins emerging from the water one after another, filled with water, while new cabins sank into the water on the other side, releasing bubbles on the lake surface.

A roller coaster sped down from a high-altitude track, passing through steel-reinforced ring tunnels.

Not far from the stage, a drop tower was raised to the highest point, then started its free fall.

A colorful gridboard rose behind Teacher Slaughter at the top of the Pyramid.

Each square had a project written on it.

"Roller coaster, carousel, pirate ship..." 007 on the audience looked at the grid's content and said, "It seems this stage is for the contestants to experience those facilities in the venue."

But these facilities looked deadly, and 007 doubted how many of the fifty contestants would still be alive after experiencing them.

"The program has grouped the fifty contestants according to the voting ranking just now, two per group, making a total of twenty-five groups."

With that, he began announcing the group members; two people with adjacent appearance orders would form a group: the first and second up were a group, the third and fourth up were a group.

Gu Mian was crowned first in the "Who do you want last to perform" poll, so he should have been grouped with the second-to-last.

And the second-to-last was number 1095.

But when Teacher Slaughter grouped, he swapped 1095 with Mr. Green, putting 1095 in the front group, and Mr. Green was placed in the back to form the last group with Gu Mian.

After dividing the groups, Teacher Slaughter maliciously said to Mr. Green: "What a pity, 1117. Originally you should be performing earlier, but based on your previous performance, we found you seem to be good friends with 1118, so the organizers specially made an exception to let you and your good friend be in the same group; you get to perform last all thanks to your good friend here."

He moved 1117's performance order to the end, expecting 1117 to fume in silence or to hate 1118 directly.

Unexpectedly, the expected situation did not occur; instead, 1117 showed no complaint or anger, even looked at himself with gratitude, as if saying, "You are such a great person."

Teacher Slaughter looked at him like a ghost, feeling a bit gloomy, thinking that both 1117 and 1118 might not be right in the head.

He ignored these ominous two and turned to lead the different groups up the Pyramid according to their order; the earlier the group performed, the closer they were to the top.

The group closest to the pinnacle was the first to perform.

Beneath them was the second and third groups, this tier had two groups.

The lower the level, the more groups it contained, and Gu Mian and Mr. Green were at the bottom level, as expected.

"Among the two in each group, one will be the 'Judge,' and the other the 'Executor.' The Judge will select a project first, then the Executor will experience it..."

The contestants at the base of the Pyramid turned pale.

They had never been to an amusement park nor experienced its projects, but from the looks of it, none of these were right.

Take the Ferris wheel in the water, for instance. It turned slowly, estimated to take at least twenty minutes for a full revolution, but half of it was submerged in water! This meant being underwater for ten minutes in every full turn!

The person on the Ferris wheel would drown!

Drowning was considered a gentler way to die.

Not far from them was the bumper car area, but only the contestant-driven one was a normal bumper car. Others were a van, a dump truck, and even a road roller!

You can imagine the outcome of playing bumper cars with those things.

Teacher Slaughter at the top of the Pyramid continued to introduce the show's content: "If the Executor successfully completes the project chosen by the Judge, then they will advance directly."

No wonder Teacher Slaughter said having the advantage of earlier performance was significant; only ten players could advance in the second stage, and given this process, the ten advancing might already be decided before the ones at the back even participate in the show.

"If the Executor completes their project, the Judge will then choose a project for the Executor. If the Judge also completes the project, they will advance directly!"

Someone in the audience spoke up: "What if the Executor doesn't pass the project chosen by the Judge at the beginning? Who chooses the project for the group's Judge then?"

Hearing this, Teacher Slaughter's face showed a meaningful smile: "Then there's no need to choose any project; if the Executor fails the project chosen by the Judge, the Judge will advance directly into unforeseen circumstances!"

People in the audience whispered, discussing this rule.

"With this, the Judge has a massive advantage, not to mention it's a no-brainer. As long as the Judge picks a deadly project for the Executor, the Judge can advance..."

talked to Chu Changge while looking around at the amusement facilities.

The Judge didn't even need to be picky; each of these facilities looked deadly.

And by this process, at least one from each group could advance, making the top ten completely dominated by the first ten groups, with the last fifteen having no reason to exist.

Evidently, Teacher Slaughter also knew this; he raised a hand to signal everyone to quiet down.

"Of course, this would be unfair to the groups at the back; we can't let people come all this way without a chance to perform. The organizers, in their fairness and justice, have considered this, offering later groups a chance to perform too;

"As I mentioned before, if the Executor doesn't succeed in the project, the Judge will advance directly in unforeseen circumstances! Remember what I said: 'in unforeseen circumstances.'

Teacher Slaughter specifically emphasized the pronunciation of the words "unforeseen circumstances."

Unforeseen, meaning an unexpected occurrence.

Sure enough, he continued: "To give later groups a chance to perform, the organizers allow the existence of relay races;

"If the Executor doesn't succeed in the project, people from subsequent groups may choose to replace the failed one, becoming the new Executor within that group, but the new Executor must complete one more project; i.e., Judges can choose two projects for the new Executor;

"If the new Executor still fails the challenge, those from later groups may continue to choose to replace the failed one as the second new Executor, needing to add one more project to the failed one's count;

"If the new Executor succeeds, they will advance directly and select the same number of amusement projects for the Judge."

This long explanation confused the contestants, but they grasped some understanding.

"The later groups are not entirely without performance hopes; they can take over failed Executors' challenges, becoming early group members but with increased project challenges," 007 understood but thought this akin to rushing to death.

The lower-class people also understood this truth, but if the later groups did not rush forward, they would not have a chance to appear; all their previous efforts would be for naught.

At this moment, Teacher Slaughter suddenly changed the topic on stage, offering another solution: "Actually, there's a win-win solution, which is to give up. The Judge can waive their rights while choosing a project for the Executor, allowing the Executor to advance directly without participating in amusement projects."

This sparked numerous discussions among the contestants.

"Is there really such a good thing? The Judge can waive their rights, and the Executor will advance directly?"

"Will there be any punishment for the Judge after waiving their rights?"

A radiant smile spread across Teacher Slaughter's face: "No punishment awaits the Judge who waives their rights, and the process proceeds as usual. The advancing Executor will normally choose a project for the waiving Judge, who, upon project completion, will also advance normally."

He paused momentarily, exhibiting an enigmatic expression: "Of course, the Executor can also waive their rights when deciding on a project, allowing the Judge to advance directly; truly a friendly win-win conclusion."

Chapter 849 Wishing Everyone a Happy National Day!

If both parties forfeit, they can advance to the third stage together.

This is a benefit without any drawbacks, but it's only beneficial for those in the front groups; the contestants at the back can only watch as the ones ahead advance.

When the number of advancing contestants in the front reaches ten, those who haven't yet had their turn can pack up and leave.

Thinking of the contestants at the bottom of the pyramid all looking upward with hungry eyes, their expressions rife with jealousy or dissatisfaction.

and 1868, closest to the pinnacle of the pyramid, seem dazed, unable to believe such a good opportunity has fallen upon them; they're the frontmost group.

The rules announced by Teacher Slaughter prompted some dissatisfaction from the upper-class spectators, who hissed, not understanding why there would be a rule enabling the lower-class to advance so easily.

"What trick is the host up to?"

"If everyone in the first five groups chooses to forfeit, does the second stage end just like that?"

"Let's see if there are any other rules below; advancing just by forfeiting seems too easy."

To the audience's disappointment, Teacher Slaughter did not announce any new rules.

The content that was previously mentioned constitutes the entirety of the second stage.

In truth, Teacher Slaughter was also anxious inside; he didn't personally design the programs for the second and third stages—the organizers had arranged them long before, and he was merely the host.

It wasn't until last night that he became aware of today's program content.

Even upon seeing that forfeiting allows another person in the group to advance directly, he was baffled.

But having heard that this rule was designed by someone of high status in the program group, he believed there must be a rationale behind it.

Remembering this, Teacher Slaughter reinstated his signature smile, looking toward the spectators: "These are the rules; I presume everyone is already eager to watch the content ahead."

A wave of complaints surged from the audience seats, with Teacher Slaughter feigning deafness, swiftly shifting the topic to the two upcoming contestants.

"0175, 1868, your group is the first to take the stage according to the rankings." Teacher Slaughter stood at the pinnacle, looking down at the two lower-class individuals not far below.

The position of these two was closest to the pyramid's peak, allowing Teacher Slaughter to see them without straining: "Based on the sequence of previous voting and drawing, 0175 is first on stage, and 1868 is second, therefore 0175 is the Judge, and 1868 is the Executor."

Despite the continuous complaints from the audience seats, Teacher Slaughter sped up his speech, hoping to quickly move toward the project phase involving the two contestants, thus redirecting the audience's focus.

However, if these two both choose to forfeit, the audience's anger will surely escalate further.

And the likelihood of this happening is quite high.

Concerned about this possible future, Teacher Slaughter found himself sweating.

Yet, he withheld expressing his inner worries, instead cheerfully looking at the two contestants: "Now, you have two minutes to discuss and make a decision within two minutes, then ascend to the peak to decide your fates."

Teacher Slaughter pointed to the nine-grid standing behind him: "Choose the most joyous and exciting project for the other party and see who emerges as the winner in the end!"

He assumed an inscrutable and confident demeanor as much as possible, hoping his performance could initially stabilize the restless audience.

Some audience members indeed were deceived by his demeanor, believing the program had some hidden "big moves," thus patiently continuing to watch.

Meanwhile, 0175 and 1868 stood uneasily in place.

Several camera operators circled around them, filming from all angles, along with two upper-class photographers nearby aiming their cameras at them.

Every action and word of the two was projected onto that giant encircling screen, with everyone watching them.

Having never received such attention before, they momentarily dared not speak.

Teacher Slaughter watched the timer: "A minute and a half remaining, time to hurry."

His anxiety was no less than that of the two contestants; what if these two do indeed forfeit together to advance...no, not if—it's almost certain they will forfeit together.

Just like he said earlier, this is a benefit without any drawbacks; with such simple advancement conditions presented, any sensible person would choose this path, right?

Teacher Slaughter couldn't fathom how the scene would play out then—would it truly result in the first five groups advancing painlessly?

What was the purpose of designing this advancement rule?

While Teacher Slaughter was rapidly thinking, 0175 and 1868 on the lower level finally showed some activity.

It was 0175 who first broke the silence: "Let's forfeit; we can forfeit together. Once forfeited, we can advance together!"

Saying this, he nervously glanced at the amusement equipment encompassing the spectator seats, devices he didn't wish to experience.

Forfeiting would be advantageous for them both, so naturally 1868 was also willing.

Upon hearing 0175 was the Judge, 1868's heart sank. The Judge doesn't necessarily have to forfeit; if the Judge randomly chooses a project for him, he'd meet his end without burial, and the Judge would advance directly—none of these projects seemed survivable.

had just been contemplating how to propose a joint forfeiture, unexpectedly to have the Judge suggest it first.

He immediately agreed willingly: "Forfeit, let's both forfeit together, so neither of us has to participate in any projects."

However, he still worried about whether choosing to forfeit might be some sort of trap, as advancing through forfeiture seemed too easy.

Although he thought this, he didn't voice it out. He feared that expressing this concern might lead 0175 to hesitate, and should 0175 change his mind about forfeiting, he'd be forced to participate in those deadly projects.

If the Judge didn't forfeit, he surely would die; but forfeiting, even if a trap, wouldn't necessarily mean death, 1868 thought.

Their minds aligned, and within mere moments, they decided to forfeit together, hardly needing the two-minute discussion.

Teacher Slaughter's timer still had over a minute left, yet the two contestants had already made their decision, together looking up at Teacher Slaughter standing at the top: "We've decided to forfeit together."

Teacher Slaughter's face darkened slightly; he had been attentively observing them, listening to their conversation.

Upon hearing their unanimous forfeiture decision, Teacher Slaughter was once again perplexed by the person who designed this advancement rule.

He tried his best to control his expression: "Then please, both contestants come up to the top of the tower."

While speaking, Teacher Slaughter's tone was almost uncontrollable, the voice carrying a chill.

The audience below furrowed their brows as well.

"We've decided to forfeit together; we're not choosing." Perhaps overwhelmed by the joy of imminent advancement, 0175 failed to notice Teacher Slaughter's expression and tone, just standing in place waving repeatedly, assuming Teacher Slaughter didn't understand his choice.

Teacher Slaughter, reaching his limit, snapped: "Follow the procedure; you need to ascend to the top, stand on both sides, and then the Judge makes a choice first, followed by the other one. There's no such thing as making a choice together, is it difficult to understand?"

Seeing Teacher Slaughter's displeased expression, 1868 quickly urged 0175 upward, whispering: "You need to forfeit first, then I forfeit; we can't make the choice together."

also realized he had joyously drifted earlier; in his eagerness to forfeit and advance, he forgot the rules previously stated by the host.

He stole a glance at Teacher Slaughter, noticing the host's unpleasant expression, then bowed his head and hastily ascended to the top.

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and 1868 were just having a conversation, and Teacher Slaughter heard it all.

He knew the two had agreed that they would both forfeit, but he still held onto a sliver of hope.

"Forfeiting and advancing is just too easy, maybe it's a trap." His thoughts coincided with 1868.

At this moment, the two contestants had already arrived on the platform at the top of the tower, standing on either side of the grid.

The eyes of the spectators were fixed on the two of them, speculating on what would happen next.

knew he had angered Teacher Slaughter and dared not look up, waiting for Teacher Slaughter to arrange the next steps.

Teacher Slaughter had quite a temper; in previous shows, if any lower-class people annoyed him, he would definitely trip them up, for instance by having staff throw the person who annoyed him into the most dangerous area of the restricted zone.

But now the restricted zone had already collapsed, and his show was long gone.

Thinking of this, he couldn't help but recall the lower-class person who collapsed the restricted zone, gritting his teeth in anger.

noticed Teacher Slaughter's grim expression and fearfully lowered his head further.

"What's wrong with him?" 007, who had been watching the show, also noticed the change in Teacher Slaughter's expression and asked Chu Changge beside her in confusion.

Chu Changge reached out to adjust his glasses, but his hand found empty air instead—he had transformed into the appearance of an Upper Class Person, with no glasses perched on his face now: "Maybe he thought of something happy."

wasn't very interested in knowing what this "happy thing" was; she scanned the entire show venue again, searching for Lu Yi's figure, but found nothing.

"We're sitting at a rather high vantage point, able to see all the game equipment on the field... All those game devices are pretty much in plain view, the only possibility for hiding someone might be the Ferris wheel, but I've carefully observed that Ferris wheel, and checked each cabin thoroughly, there was no one inside." 007 watched the Ferris wheel, resembling a water wheel, not far from the entrance.

It began turning when Teacher Slaughter announced the start of the show, with one cabin after another scooping water from the artificial lake; one cabin exits the water on this side, while another enters the water on the other side. 007 watched from a distance for two rotations, but saw no clues.

No one should be hidden in those game devices.

"Either Lu Yi hasn't arrived yet, or..." 007 withdrew her gaze from the Ferris wheel and focused on the pyramid-shaped stage at the center, "he's inside there."

The colorful grid bearing the game projects emerged from the pyramid, and it seemed there was a considerable space inside, so it wasn't impossible for Lu Yi to be hidden in there.

It's just uncertain for now.

If it's confirmed that Lu Yi is inside the pyramid, Gu Mian could directly use a key up there to take them away.

"Probably have to wait until the third stage," 007 doubted whether Gu Mian could advance, "Gu Mian and Mr. Green are placed in the last group by the host, they might not even have their turn before the number of advancing contestants hits ten."

The spectator seats weren't crowded but rather spacious, with a certain distance between each seat. 007 was seated next to Chu Changge on her left and a male Upper Class Person wearing a white shirt on her right. This person was intently watching the people on stage and didn't care about the conversations around him; thus, when 007 and Chu Changge talked, they weren't afraid of being overheard by others.

"Not necessarily." Chu Changge was also looking at the very top of the pyramid.

By this time, Teacher Slaughter had resumed hosting according to procedure.

He expressionlessly looked toward 0175: "Judge, make your decision. Which project do you choose for the Executor?"

Only then did 0175 timidly raise his head, glanced at the grid full of game projects before him, then looked at Teacher Slaughter, before fearfully lowering his head and murmuring, "I forfeit..."

Things progressed smoothly, without any twists and turns.

After 0175 declared his forfeiture, the venue fell into silence; no one spoke for a moment.

The spectators remained silent, wanting to see what would happen next.

lifted his head, staring intently at the judge opposite him, eager to know if the forfeiture was a trap.

Teacher Slaughter also kept silent, seemingly awaiting a "twist" to appear.

That's how it goes in many literary works—when things go too smoothly, the most unexpected things occur.

But Teacher Slaughter's anticipation was in vain.

He waited a full thirty seconds, and no twists came, only the sound of amusement rides in operation resounding in the venue.

Not far away, a carousel was emitting a crisp melody, with a burst of joyous laughter in the middle of the tune. At this moment, the music was playing precisely at that laughter, seeming to mock Teacher Slaughter on stage.

The audience also expressed dissatisfaction.

"What are we waiting for?"

"Hurry up and announce the result."

"Really letting that one advance directly?"

This time it was Teacher Slaughter who dared not lift his head; having waited in vain for what he wanted to happen, he had no choice but to announce the result.

While announcing, he deliberately turned his head away, not daring to look at the complaining audience on stage: "Then, congratulations to 1868 for successfully advancing."

He spoke extremely fast and completed his sentence before the audience could respond.

"What?"

His pace was so swift, some audience members didn't even catch what he said.

Next, Teacher Slaughter tried to quickly continue the Q&A to swiftly conclude this process.

He didn't care about the audience's reaction, quickly looking to 1868 on the other side: "You've advanced, next it's your turn to..."

"Boom"

Before he could finish his sentence, an explosive sound suddenly erupted on stage.

Immediately, Teacher Slaughter thought of something bad and quickly turned towards the direction of the sound.

Fortunately, it wasn't an explosion; instead, it was the air pillar machines around the stage spraying decorative flames upward.

The pyramid stage was surrounded by seven air pillar machines; when the show reached an exciting stage, the seven air pillar machines would shoot flames upwards to enhance the mood.

Of course, Teacher Slaughter could control these devices.

But this time, the firing of the air pillar machines wasn't under his control.

He had originally planned to fire the air pillar machines when a contestant died during a project, and accompany it with a rousing host monologue for better show effect.

"What's going on?" Teacher Slaughter looked at the mysteriously activated air pillar machines and suspected the machines were malfunctioning.

Next, he saw a seat slowly rising at the back of the audience seats in front of him, with a large "1" printed on the seat's backrest.

This seat was constructed luxuriously with semi-transparent material, emitting unique colors under the light.

Teacher Slaughter stared at the "1" on the backrest and formed a guess.

Is this the exclusive seat for first place? But this segment wasn't in my hosting process! Teacher Slaughter roared in his heart, not knowing what the program team was doing.