

# GOD'S IMITATOR

## Chapter 11: Psychological Manipulation

Cao Haichuan took out his cigarette box again, and once more realized he couldn't smoke.

He felt somewhat irritated and simply stood up, walking to the large screen. Pointing at the relevant information displayed on the screen, he continued his explanation.

"As we analyzed earlier, the iron block mechanism's initial state maintained a certain distance from his head.

"Wei Xinjian actually had a two-shot margin of error. Even if he chose to shoot the innocent person with these two shots, it wouldn't cause him any harm.

"In other words, this initial mechanism design created a false sense of security for him.

"Compared to the iron blocks that hadn't yet clamped down on his skull, the pistol with a 1/6 probability of fatal shooting was obviously more terrifying.

"This was the first shot, and he hadn't yet mentally prepared himself sufficiently for 'shooting himself.'

"What if the first shot is a real bullet? A 1/6 probability isn't low.' Driven by this kind of thinking, he would most likely choose to shoot the innocent person for the first shot.

"Conversely, if the iron blocks had been pressed tightly against his head from the beginning, then for this first shot, he might actually have made a more rational choice."

Everyone nodded in agreement. This detail was indeed something they hadn't considered before.

Jiang He asked with some curiosity, "What about the second and third shots?"

"He should have been mentally prepared to shoot himself by then, right?"

"Moreover, during the second shot, he showed obvious hesitation."

Programmer Cai Zhiyuan spoke up, "Officer Cao, I think I understand now. Let me explain this part.

"Actually, this is still a probability issue.

"Because the probability of hitting a bullet on the first shot is  $1/6$ , and the probability for the second shot is  $1/5$ , and so on.

"If the previous shot was a blank, then the probability of hitting a bullet with each subsequent shot is higher than the previous one.

"So, once he didn't choose to shoot himself with the first shot, he would fall into regret, like a sunk cost, which would further affect his judgment.

"It also made him more hesitant with each subsequent shot.

"When he aimed the second shot at himself, driven by the 'sunk cost,' he would have many other thoughts. For example, this shot has a higher

probability of hitting a bullet than the previous one. What if the game designer deliberately placed the bullet as the second one?

"From a rational standpoint, his concerns were unreasonable and wouldn't help him assess the situation at all.

"But in a life-or-death choice with a 5-minute countdown, people naturally find it difficult to remain rational, and these minor pieces of incorrect information can easily interfere with his thinking, making him develop a sense of false hope.

"Because shooting the innocent person with the next shot, even if it's a blank, still wouldn't harm him.

"The third shot follows the same logic. The sunk cost and probability changes would further influence his decision-making.

"By the time he had actually fired the first three shots, Wei Xinjian's head was clamped by the iron blocks, and he fell into enormous regret. But at that point, obviously everything was too late."

Cao Haichuan nodded approvingly, "Exactly, that's right.

"You explained the specific probabilities, making it clearer than my original thinking.

"But overall, our views are consistent."

However, immediately after, Cai Zhiyuan fell into confusion again.

"But, even without considering the first three shots, just considering the last three shots, as long as he knew the answer to the Monty Hall problem, he should have been able to survive.

"Shooting himself with the fourth and fifth shots, shooting the innocent person with the sixth shot, his head would be squeezed by the mechanism at most one more time, and he still wouldn't necessarily die."

Cao Haichuan shook his head slightly, "First, Wei Xinjian might not know the Monty Hall problem.

"He might not understand the probability changes at all, and might even think that both the fourth and sixth shots have a 1/2 probability of hitting a bullet.

"The increased probability of hitting a bullet with the fourth shot made him even more afraid to shoot himself.

"Secondly, the message that 'the fifth shot is a blank' wasn't some mercy from the designer, but rather a death warrant."

Cai Zhiyuan was even more confused, "How so?"

Cao Haichuan pointed to the information on the screen:

"Wei Xinjian hesitated during the fourth shot.

"Why would he hesitate at this moment? I believe this was completely different from the second shot situation.

"It wasn't a probability issue.

"Wei Xinjian had developed suicidal thoughts."

Everyone was somewhat surprised, "Suicidal?"

Cao Haichuan nodded, "That's right, because at this point, the iron block mechanism had already compressed inward once.

"With skull fractures and increased intracranial pressure, Wei Xinjian was actually in a state of extreme pain.

"The pain from the iron block compression exceeded the threat of a 1/3 bullet probability, and he might have developed death-seeking thoughts to quickly end this suffering.

"And the most interesting part is this:

"If he had actually done that, he wouldn't have died.

"But this obviously wasn't what the game's designer wanted to see."

Everyone couldn't help but suddenly understand.

Under that kind of severe pain, if Wei Xinjian had impulsively fired three consecutive shots at himself, wouldn't he have survived?

In that case, his survival wouldn't have been due to repentance or mercy, but because of the despair and irrationality of wanting to commit suicide.

This judgment would have lost its meaning.

Cao Haichuan paused briefly, then continued, "So, the game's designer deliberately inserted a hint here, reawakening his will to survive.

"This ensured the accuracy of this 'judgment.'

"Wei Xinjian originally needed to gamble on two bullets to know the location of the real bullet, but now he only needed to gamble on one. In other words, the iron blocks would move inward at most one more time.

"At this point, he actually had two choices:

"One was to shoot himself directly, with a  $\frac{1}{3}$  probability of death; the other was to shoot the innocent person, with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  probability that the iron blocks would move inward another 1.29cm.

"The 1.29cm compression would be very painful, but wouldn't cause immediate death.

"With the fifth and sixth bullets' positions confirmed, obviously the second choice had a higher survival rate."

Cai Zhiyuan now completely understood, and he added:

"If Wei Xinjian didn't understand probability, he might even think the fourth shot had a  $\frac{1}{2}$  probability of killing him.

"So after his will to survive was reawakened, he ultimately chose to shoot the innocent person.

"But the game's designer had set a trap here.

"There was no real bullet in the gun at all, which meant Wei Xinjian had completely misjudged the final shot: without a real bullet, the iron block mechanism would still continue to move.

"Wei Xinjian thought he could escape by killing the innocent person with the last shot, but actually sealed his own death."

Everyone present fell into silence. They needed time to digest this information.

Li Renshu felt a chill down her spine, "So, this game was actually intricately connected. From the moment Wei Xinjian decided to shoot the innocent person with the first shot, he had already completely embarked on a path of no return.

"And his final thought of choosing to kill the innocent person to save himself became his death sentence.

"This truly is a game where 'the selfish must die.'

"Rational people, selfless people, people with compassion, any of these types would actually have an extremely high survival rate.

"That's why it's called 'Redemption Roulette.'

"It appears to be roulette gambling based on luck, but actually, it's a test, an examination.

"If Wei Xinjian could have changed his perspective in this desperate situation and valued the innocent person's life, he could have obtained redemption.

"But unfortunately... he never repented until his death."

Everyone fell into prolonged silence again.

Obviously, after their brains' rapid processing, both physical and mental exhaustion began to emerge.

At the same time, the death in the game made them feel a severe lack of security.

The combination of these two factors made most people lose the desire to continue speaking.

Fu Chen keenly noticed this, "Let's call it a day then. I think everyone can go rest.

"Although I don't know what kind of place the 'New World' really is, I've always been adaptable to circumstances, and I hope everyone else is too.

"Regardless, we're in the same community, with different professions and identities. Our division of labor can complement each other, and no matter what problems we encounter, we can weather them together."

Everyone stood up and returned to their respective rooms.