

Imitator 172

Chapter 172: "Coward's Judgment"

"Beep—"

A sharp buzzing sound rang out, and He Xiaojun suddenly awoke.

He felt his heart pounding rapidly, and his breathing was somewhat labored.

"So this is a judgment game..."

After entering the New World, He Xiaojun had spent most of his time in Community 14 as a marginal figure. Up to now, he had only participated in two distribution-type games and one screening-type game.

Apart from facing some death risks in the screening-type game, he had passed through smoothly so far but the three other players from his community didn't have such good luck. They had died in two different judgment games.

Judgment games were games that made all players in the New World turn pale at the mention.

When designing judgment games, God's Imitators seemed to gain greater killing authority. Not only that, judgment-type games would also design targeted traps based on each sinner's original sin.

Under the dual pressure of life-and-death stress and human instinct, sinners would often seemingly voluntarily, yet actually having no other choice, walk toward their doom.

He Xiaojun had originally thought he wouldn't be selected by a judgment game because he believed he had never committed any mistakes, whether legal or moral.

So when the judgment game invitation appeared, he instantly panicked. During the five minutes, his heartbeat soared, his breathing became rapid, and his mind went blank.

What was worse was that in this judgment game, he was the only one from all of Community 14 forced to participate.

The others had no qualification to voluntarily sign up.

This meant that in this game, he would be in a completely helpless and isolated state, without even a single community companion who could help him.

This made He Xiaojun feel even more desperate.

In this oppressive atmosphere, he gasped deeply, breathing in the musty air that permeated the space, while looking around at his surroundings.

This was what appeared to be a cramped and narrow basement. Apart from some dirty debris piled in the corners, there was nothing else, only an old cathode-ray tube television.

Suddenly, the game introduction screen appeared on the television that had been full of static, and an emotionless voice came from the inferior speaker.

[Hello, He Xiaojun.]

[You will now face judgment and participate in a game called 'Coward's Judgment.']

[Since childhood, you have been disciplined by family and society, adhering to the life creed of 'better to avoid trouble than invite it' and 'a moment of patience brings vast calm seas and skies.']

[Toward all conflicts and confrontations, you have always endured again and again, yielded again and again.]

[But many times, patience and yielding do not bring peace, but rather plunge you into a greater vortex. Taking a step back won't bring vast seas and skies, only eternal damnation.]

[Because of a female colleague's false accusation, you kept yielding, ultimately losing your job, suffering cyberbullying, losing your mental stability, and nearly losing everything.]

[Your current predicament is exactly like the moment you were first falsely accused:]

[You will be injected with a slow-acting poison and will die from the poison in 30 minutes. While you feel little abnormality, the life-and-death crisis has quietly approached.]

[Continue forward, and you will arrive at four different judgment venues to participate in four different judgments. They are all people who once caused you to fall into eternal damnation.]

[In each judgment, you must choose from two different punishment options the 'more appropriate' judgment for the person being judged.]

[If you choose correctly, you will obtain an antidote;]

[If you choose incorrectly, the antidote will be destroyed.]

[Passing through the iron door and leaving the initial venue means you officially begin this judgment.]

At the same time, the iron door that had been tightly shut opened with a "bang" but the rule introduction on the television continued.

[Of course, since this game is called 'Coward's Judgment,' you will also receive a 'coward's option': you can choose to escape, do nothing, and wait here for the game to end.]

[After 10 minutes, if you haven't left this initial venue, the iron door will close again.]

[The sinners who should have been judged by you will spontaneously complete their judgments. They can choose a punishment themselves to judge themselves.]

[After the judgment is complete, the sinners will regain their freedom. They likewise have the possibility of obtaining the antidote and delivering it to you.]

[Will you die from cowardice, or bravely rush out of the vortex? Now, please make your choice.]

The image on the television disappeared, leaving only static snow.

He Xiaojun's brain was in chaos, but at this moment, a sharp pain from his wrist made him instantly sober.

He hurriedly looked at his wrist and saw that the inside of the visa bracelet seemed to have extended a needle that quickly injected some kind of toxin into his body.

A tingling, numb sensation spread from his wrist.

Although his body was temporarily fine, just as the game rules stated, the slow-acting poison had spread throughout his body. Without an antidote, he would certainly die within 30 minutes.

Shock, fear, madness...

Many different emotions instantly invaded He Xiaojun's brain, making him want to scream or cry loudly, but in the end, they were all firmly suppressed by the suddenly emerging will to survive, allowing him to temporarily regain his rationality.

"Calm down, I must stay calm..."

"According to what the game rules said, there will be four judgments ahead.

"Each judgment is a choice between two options.

"As long as I make the correct choice once, I can get the antidote.

"This judgment game isn't difficult. Even with completely random choices, there's only a one-in-sixteen chance of dying. As long as I choose correctly once, I can survive..."

"Yes, that's right, I need to pull myself together..."

He Xiaojun harshly slapped himself twice. The surge of adrenaline made him muster up courage again but as he prepared to step through the iron door that had just opened, He Xiaojun fell into hesitation again.

He stepped back.

"The game rules mentioned a 'coward's option.' If I stay here, after 10 minutes, the sinners can judge themselves, and they might likewise obtain the antidote and come to save me...

"Since the game rules already stated it, then I can confirm this is a mechanism that definitely exists. It's just that 'possibly obtain the antidote' and 'possibly deliver it to me,' these two conditions, I don't know what the specific probability is...

"The God's Imitator who designed this game probably also can't predict all players' actions.

"As long as one person among these four judgments obtains the antidote and is willing to bring it to me, I can be saved, right?

"Conversely, if I rashly judge others myself, no matter which choice I make, I'll make an enemy of the person being judged.

"If I make consecutive wrong decisions, I might completely bury my own hope of survival..."

He Xiaojun fell into hesitation, because once he left this initial venue, the 'coward's option' would automatically become invalid. He could only choose between the two.

The habitual way of thinking formed over many years made He Xiaojun subconsciously want to escape.

In that previous screening-type game, he had similarly encountered death risks, but he did nothing and ultimately survived luckily to the end.

Instead, those players who lost their rationality due to death risks and acted blindly, quite a few died from their own stupidity.

"But will I have that kind of good luck this time?"

"The judgment theme is my cowardice. I must remember this point..."

After hesitating for several minutes, He Xiaojun finally made up his mind to walk out the iron door.

"No, I can't place my hopes on others anymore. My own fate must be held in my own hands..."