

Imitator 57

Chapter 57: The Gallery's Preferences

Lin Sizhi paused slightly and continued explaining, "For example, Cell 1, with the theme of being worked like cattle. Cai Zhiyuan could enter, Uncle Ding could enter, even Zhang Peng or Wang Yongxin could enter.

"No matter who enters, a corresponding explanation can be found.

"If Zhang Peng enters, it's making the idle person start working. If Wang Yongxin enters, it's making the big boss who earns money lying down experience the hardships of being worked like cattle.

"Similarly, Cell 2's hanging from streetlights could hang Wang Yongxin or Gao Zhankui. Capitalists can be hung from streetlights, so why can't the capitalist's accomplices be hung too?

"Cell 3, anyone entering makes sense.

"Cell 4's 'Silence is Golden' could also have Zhang Peng enter, because Zhang Peng had been constantly instigating Uncle Ding before. Him going to Cell 4 would equally fit the 'Silence is Golden' theme.

"Cell 5's 'Undeserved Disaster' and Cell 6's 'Heaven's Will' are like Cell 3, anyone entering could have a reasonable explanation found.

"The King could make relatively free arrangements. As long as while making arrangements, he loudly declares the reasonableness of doing so, there would always be some audience members who agree, and the justice score wouldn't drop too much.

"Of course, the prerequisite is that the King has some eloquence.

"Moreover, even if the mechanism for judging the King is triggered early, it's not a big problem. Suppose Wang Yongxin is King. Even if he obviously favors Uncle Ding and Cai Zhiyuan, as long as these two don't vote for execution, he's safe."

Fu Chen fell into thought, "Hmm... seems right too."

Lin Sizhi continued, "Back to the previous topic. If Wang Yongxin were King, he might also enter a cell himself. Of course, this possibility is low, and he would only enter Cell 3.

"The King would earn a lot of visa time in this game, and Wang Yongxin himself has plenty of visa time. If it's just entering Cell 3 to deduct a little, he wouldn't mind too much.

"As for Zhang Peng and Gao Zhankui, I don't know much about these two, so it's hard to make specific guesses.

"But from the game mechanism perspective, pure villains in this game wouldn't necessarily die.

"Suppose the King immediately only throws two prisoners into cells, then tortures one of them to death for audience tips. The justice score would definitely quickly reach zero, triggering judgment.

"But as long as the prisoner favored by the King doesn't vote for execution, the King is safe.

"And there's only one vote to judge the King. Once this vote passes, the King can do whatever he wants.

"Of course, the actual situation is much more complex than this. I'm just making a hypothesis within the game mechanism."

Cao Haichuan nodded, "Yes, so compared to these four people, what is Uncle Ding's biggest disadvantage in this game?"

"I think it's two words: conflicted.

"Uncle Ding is the most conflicted person among these five.

"So at different periods in this game, he adopted many different standards.

"This led to him neither getting the highest justice score nor being hated by all the prisoners."

Cao Haichuan exhaled a puff of smoke and continued:

"Of course, if Uncle Ding could have known about the justice voting, everything might have been different. But unfortunately, the game mechanism's limitations meant he had no chance to know."

Fu Chen frowned, "I wanted to say before, deliberately concealing the justice voting from the King is indeed somewhat unfair."

Lin Sizhi shook his head, "I actually think this mechanism is very reasonable.

"Because the King is inherently the stronger party, almost holding absolute initiative on the field. If he knew the justice voting existed, he could unhesitatingly correct his behavior and remain invincible.

"The Gallery and God's Imitators wouldn't allow this situation to occur.

"Moreover, the justice voting mechanism, like 'Farmer's Walk,' has specific implications.

"In reality, every subject of the King also conducts justice voting for the King in their hearts, and the King never knows exactly how many points he has left.

"Just like that poem says: The water that capsizes boats is the people's tears, but the ruler doesn't know until the flood comes.

"The King never knows when judgment will descend upon him, or even whether such judgment is actually in progress. By the time he sees the judgment, everything is already too late.

"Moreover, what really determines the King's life or death isn't the audience, but the prisoners.

"Just like in reality, after subjects lose trust in the King, what ultimately decides whether the King will be pushed to the guillotine is often not the subjects, but the prisoners and slaves who have been persecuted most by the King.

"In short, precisely because this series of game mechanisms is very realistic and clever, it intensified Uncle Ding's characteristics.

"The reason Uncle Ding was somewhat conflicted is because he had been holding back anger. He always felt this world was unfair and hated this unfairness.

"This itself isn't problematic, but when he became a beneficiary of this unfairness, he was more likely to make some extreme decisions.

"Because he would think that using unfairness to repay unfairness is true fairness.

"Just like he questioned in the game, 'Why should I?'

"Even with 18,000 minutes of visa time, he refused to pay.

"This wasn't entirely due to stinginess, but also his obsession with fairness driving him to make such irrational behavior."

Fu Chen looked thoughtful, "So the more someone cares about fairness, the more likely they are to fall into Cell 3's trap..."

"Then, did this game's designer guess Uncle Ding's personality based on his occupation and profile, or... had he seen or known Uncle Ding before?"

"What was his purpose in scheming to kill Uncle Ding?"

"Personal vendetta? Or visa time?"

Lin Sizhi thought for a moment, "If it's harvesting visa time, that makes complete sense too."

"Because this game has an extreme possibility: Uncle Ding kills all four prisoners, and at this point the justice score reaches zero, triggering the mechanism for judging the King, defaulting to four execution votes."

"In that case, it would achieve a total annihilation ending. Whether it's the visa time the audience tipped Uncle Ding, or the remaining visa time of Uncle Ding and the four prisoners, it would all be harvested."

"That would be a very staggering number."

Fu Chen was silent for a moment, then asked, "By the way, which community did Uncle Ding play 'Blood Poker' with before? I remember it was Community 1?"

Lin Sizhi said nothing more, and all three fell silent.

Cao Haichuan extinguished his cigarette butt, "The reasoning has gone far enough. Without finding more evidence, continuing to think deeper might be counterproductive.

"Besides, these are all pure speculation. We might just be fighting with thin air.

"What if this designer really didn't think so much? What if these really are all coincidences? That possibility isn't impossible either.

"Just consider what I said nonsense.

"It's getting late, let's go back and rest."

...

Lin Sizhi returned to his room, washed up, and opened his computer.

No new messages.

This meant that at least within the next three days, the Gallery shouldn't open again.

He opened the 'King's Judgment' game rules again to review.

This was the second S-rated game to appear in the Gallery, while previously even 'Blood Poker,' which was the only one selected among all God's Imitator proposals, was only A-rated.

Originally Lin Sizhi speculated that perhaps the Gallery gave each God's Imitator different profiles. Without knowing Zhang Peng and Gao Zhankui's crimes, he hadn't designed the most fitting game.

While the God's Imitator who designed 'King's Judgment' had Zhang Peng and Gao Zhankui in the three revealed profiles, so designed a more harsh game.

But judging from the 'King's Judgment' situation, this God's Imitator also didn't seem particularly certain about what Zhang Peng and Gao Zhankui's crimes actually were.

'Silence is Golden' seemed to be guessed from Gao Zhankui's station manager identity, since this position would find it hard not to instigate delivery workers. 'Undeserved Disaster' was more like a catch-all, any mistake could fit in.

Zhang Peng and Gao Zhankui's crimes weren't particularly serious. Even knowing them in advance and improving his design, Lin Sizhi might not have been selected.

So Lin Sizhi ultimately still needed to figure out this key question: why did the Gallery finally choose 'King's Judgment' instead of the game he designed?

From the game content perspective, Lin Sizhi's designed game 'Life and Death Straight Line' also considered themes like algorithmic exploitation and also guessed that these five people were very likely involved in the same case.

So the core difference shouldn't be here.

Lin Sizhi thought of two possibilities.

The first possibility was that his designed game wasn't dangerous enough. Although called 'Life and Death Straight Line,' this game actually had a very low death probability.

This was because Lin Sizhi sincerely believed that Ding Wenqiang, Cai Zhiyuan, and Wang Yongxin's crimes didn't warrant death and shouldn't face judgment games with such high death probability.

The forcibly designed game only barely matched their crimes, so naturally could only be a low death rate game.

The 'King's Judgment' designer's biggest advantage over Lin Sizhi was that he wasn't constrained by these five players' specific crimes and didn't care at all whether this game would result in very tragic casualties.

According to 'King's Judgment' rules, situations like "all five annihilated" or "only one person surviving" were possible.

The second possibility was that his designed game lacked sufficient targeting.

Because it was a multiplayer game, Lin Sizhi didn't target any specific player in the game mechanism like he had previously targeted Wei Xinjian.

Looking at 'King's Judgment' in contrast, besides having extremely strong targeting of Ding Wenqiang, the design of several cells was also very clever in catering to the Gallery:

At first glance they perfectly matched everyone's crimes, but careful consideration revealed there was actually great ambiguous space, not an absolute one-to-one correspondence.

This could also be seen as some kind of better "test-taking technique."

Lin Sizhi wasn't quite sure which specific reason it was. Of course, it might be both.

He looked at the King's Judgment related rules, falling into contemplation.

"Perhaps for the Gallery, from the beginning it didn't care whether the game's punishment severity strictly matched the criminals' crimes.

"Ding Wenqiang had already received appropriate punishment from the law, and Cai Zhiyuan had no legal errors whatsoever.

"But the Gallery still pulled them into cruel judgment games.

"According to the rules' description, the Gallery's significance is 'purging and judgment,' that is, purging waste and judging sinners.

"The Gallery's so-called sinners don't simply refer to legal criminals, but are closer to the concept of 'original sin,' related to human nature's weaknesses.

"Judgment games can not only judge players' existing crimes but can also use entrapment to trigger players' original sins in human nature and impose tragic punishments.

"Under these circumstances, the Gallery would still give high evaluations.

"In games, those who can't see through game rules, have original sins triggered, can't break through human nature's weaknesses, would all be considered by the Gallery as unworthy of surviving in the New World.

"For players, they must achieve any one of these three points to possibly survive judgment games.

"For the Gallery, as long as God's Imitators' submitted games satisfy any one of these three conditions, they might pass review. Satisfying all three might earn an S rating.

"As for whether players die or not, whether it's unjust or not, whether it's fair or not, whether the designer has selfish motives... none of these are within the Gallery's consideration."