

When 'God' Decides To Start Over #Chapter 21: Butterfly Ball - Read When 'God' Decides To Start Over Chapter 21: Butterfly Ball

Chapter 21: Chapter 21: Butterfly Ball

By the third round, only Jin Zhenhuan and a few administrators remained, everyone else had already quit the trial, even Afei had left.

As an ordinary Trial Taker, the only one who hadn't left was Rod.

With Jin Zhenhuan and those administrators, there was an even number, so they could pair up, leaving Li Xiu and Rod as the last pair.

Li Xiu had two draws already, if he ended up with another draw against Rod, the next trial would be a mandatory life-and-death showdown.

You only get one chance, being a pitcher is fine, but being a batter greatly increases the chance Li Xiu might die.

Moreover, Li Xiu's opponent in the next match is likely Jin Zhenhuan, and being the batter it's almost a sure loss.

So no matter how you look at it, Li Xiu can only win this trial; losing or even drawing is not an option.

"Hey buddy, you're good; were you a professional before?" Rod began chatting with Li Xiu, acting chummy.

"No," Li Xiu closed his eyes to rest, waiting for his trial to begin.

"Not a professional pitcher, it's rare to see someone control the ball so well. The Finger Fork Ball isn't difficult, most people can throw a similar Finger Fork Ball with practice. But that kind of Finger Fork Ball is useless. The speed of the Finger Fork Ball is inherently slower than regular pitches; increasing its speed and precise control is the key. Like that guy who threw the Finger Fork Ball earlier, he nearly missed the strike zone; that kind of control doesn't deserve to be called a Finger Fork Ball..." Rod continued speaking to himself.

"What exactly are you trying to say?" Li Xiu interrupted Rod.

"I'm saying we're both technical players, no need for mutual destruction; if we truly compete to win, it could lead to mutual ruin, neither of us surviving," Rod said.

"Do you think I can trust you?" Li Xiu looked at Rod and asked.

"Of course you can, you don't have a choice but to trust me," Rod replied.

"Why?" Li Xiu looked at Rod with interest, wanting to know what gave Rod his confidence.

"Besides the Finger Fork Ball, I'm also good with the Finger Ball," Rod said softly to Li Xiu.

He thought Li Xiu understood what a Finger Ball meant, but Li Xiu was clueless, so he just looked at Rod without saying anything.

Seeing Li Xiu say nothing, Rod assumed Li Xiu was weighing the pros and cons, so he continued, "You should know very well, even pitchers themselves don't know where the Finger Ball will go; it moves erratically left, right, up, and down. Though it has a fancy name 'Butterfly Ball,' for professional players, it's a nightmare. Batters can only guess blindly, and catchers have to rely on luck to catch it. If you insist on having a decisive match with me, I'll throw the Butterfly Ball, let fate decide."

"Sounds like fun, I'm quite eager to see that Butterfly Ball you mentioned," Li Xiu responded to Rod.

Rod was a bit stunned; he thought someone like Li Xiu, also a professional-level baseball player, would understand his point; he didn't expect Li Xiu to say such a thing.

"You think I don't dare? Apart from being a professional player, I'm also a gambler; I love betting," Rod's eyes turned sharp.

"That's the best, I'm looking forward to you throwing the Butterfly Ball," Li Xiu said sincerely; he was indeed curious to see exactly what the Butterfly Ball was like.

"Alright then, let's see," no need for further conversation, Rod turned and walked away, sat down on the other end of the bleachers.

Soon, the third round of trials began; there weren't many groups left. They all mutually pitched to each other for points; quickly, it was Li Xiu and Rod's turn.

This time, Li Xiu was first at the pitcher's mound. From the batter's position, Rod shouted at Li Xiu, "Think it over, I can let you off one pitch."

"Don't need to think about it, let's rely on skill," Li Xiu moved his joints, preparing to pitch.

"What kind of pitch will he throw? Finger Fork Ball? Curveball? Or fastball?" Rod stared at Li Xiu, who was in a pitching stance, making judgments in his mind.

Though he claimed he had eagle eyes, possessing dynamic vision that was hard for ordinary people to match, seeing was one thing, making timely judgments was another.

At the moment of the opponent's pitch, one must determine what pitch it is and swing the bat timely; this isn't easy to accomplish.

Especially against someone like Li Xiu, who excels at various change-ups, coupled with an incomprehensible confidence; Rod couldn't help but feel somewhat nervous.

"Why is he so confident? Even when I offered to let him off a pitch, he refused and insisted on a life-and-death showdown. Though it was just a bluff, what is the source of his confidence? Whether it's Finger Fork Ball or curveball, given the speed he pitches, I should have a chance to hit it. But his confidence seems like he has a hundred percent certainty; exactly what kind of pitch could give him such confidence?"

As he thought about it, Rod's eyes suddenly lit up: "Could it be, he can also throw the Butterfly Ball? Want to gamble luck with me?"

The more Rod thought about it, the more it made sense, otherwise, he couldn't understand why Li Xiu was so confident.

Their physical conditions were similar; Rod had outstanding dynamic vision. Apart from the unpredictable Butterfly Ball, there's no pitch Rod lacked confidence in hitting.

"Right, it must be the Butterfly Ball," Rod concluded in his mind.

Li Xiu had already pitched the ball; it flew a bit slowly in the air; the Butterfly Ball is the slowest pitch, which further affirmed Rod's judgment.

"Pretending to throw a Finger Fork Ball? It's useless; I've seen through you. Since you want to gamble, let's gamble," Rod felt a surge of gambling spirit; aware the Butterfly Ball's trajectory was unpredictable, even with eagle eyes, it was of no use, he could only take a chance.

Rod swung the bat suddenly, aiming to hit downward. If it was a bet, then hitting lower also guards against Li Xiu throwing a Finger Fork Ball instead.

But while Rod swung the bat, he sensed something was amiss because the baseball flying over showed no unpredictable erratic movements; it didn't seem like a Butterfly Ball.

"No matter; if it's a Finger Fork Ball, I can still hit it." The bat had swung out, thinking further was pointless; Rod could only swing with full force.

Yet, when the ball reached him, Rod appeared petrified, with a face full of shock and disbelief.

"Why... Why is it a slow straight ball... no variation at all..." Rod watched the ball fly over the top of the bat and hit the strike zone.

From an observer's perspective, it seemed like Li Xiu threw a soft, weak straight ball, while Rod intentionally missed it.

Chapter 22: Chapter 22 Fly's Eye

"So much for your smooth talk, it's all about throwing a fixed game," Jin Zhenhuan sneered, twisting his lips disdainfully.

From an outsider's perspective, it indeed looked like a tacit game, but only Rod knew in his heart that he lost this round, and lost thoroughly. That slow straight ball was even more terrifying than his Butterfly Pitch.

The Butterfly Pitch relies on luck, while Li Xiu's slow straight ball showcases psychological maneuvering and immense confidence.

A slow straight ball like that is the easiest for others to hit, yet it greatly disadvantaged Rod, an expert. This was no longer about ball skills, but a psychological battle.

Rod gave Li Xiu a complicated look and stepped onto the pitcher's mound.

There were no more retreats for him. After losing this point, he had no choice but to win. Against someone like Li Xiu, ordinary breaking balls stood no chance. Rod felt as if Li Xiu had seen through him completely, like standing naked before him.

"Let fate decide!" Rod's gambling spirit surged again, and he recklessly threw a Finger Ball.

As the ball flew through the air, it moved unpredictably up and down, left and right. Though not fast, its trajectory was impossible to foresee.

Rod had no idea where the baseball would ultimately fly; he could only pray that Li Xiu wouldn't hit it by chance, and that it wouldn't stray out of the box.

Finally, Li Xiu swung his bat, but unfortunately didn't make contact. When the ball struck within the box, Rod excitedly clenched his fist tightly.

"Is this the Butterfly Pitch?" Li Xiu wasn't dejected at all; instead, he seemed somewhat pleased.

Compared to the Finger Fork Ball, the Butterfly Pitch had more variation and was even harder to predict. However, the Butterfly Pitch's trajectory was difficult to control and depended on luck.

Of course, this reliance on luck was for ordinary people. After seeing Rod's Butterfly Pitch, Li Xiu already had other thoughts in mind.

"Rod, what was up with that pitch?" After Rod returned to the stands, Jin Zhenhuan called him over.

Previously, Jin Zhenhuan thought Li Xiu and Rod were just playing a fixed game, but seeing Rod throw the Butterfly Pitch, he sensed something was off.

If it were truly a fixed game, Rod wouldn't have needed to throw a Butterfly Pitch. That thing's trajectory is impossible to control, and it might even stray out of the box area, risking a lot. There's no need for Rod to take such a risk.

"That person is terrifying." Glancing in the direction of Li Xiu, Rod sighed and said, "If it were a real match, I would have lost, and lost thoroughly."

"What do you mean?" Jin Zhenhuan didn't understand and frowned as he asked.

Rod then explained the details, leaving Jin Zhenhuan and several administrators visibly unsettled.

"Are you overthinking it? Maybe Li Xiu didn't think it through that much, he just intended to play a fixed game," Jin Zhenhuan couldn't believe Li Xiu could manipulate people's hearts to that extent.

"No, I'm not overthinking it. That person is as terrifying as a demon; he saw right through my heart. In front of him, I feel as uncomfortable as being naked, and this feeling still gives me goosebumps." Rod shook his head and said.

"Is he really that formidable?" Jin Zhenhuan couldn't help but look toward where Li Xiu was, his brow furrowing even tighter.

Originally, he had absolute confidence that from any aspect, Li Xiu couldn't possibly beat him. But for some reason, there was an inexplicable uneasiness in Jin Zhenhuan's heart.

Now Li Xiu had tied three matches consecutively. If he were to duel with Li Xiu next, it would be a decisive battle with no second chances, leading to inevitable death for one.

"With my ability, I can hit it out of the park even if he throws a breaking ball, he's bound to lose." Jin Zhenhuan knew this was true, yet the unease in his heart wouldn't fade.

After the third round ended, those who had claimed rewards chose to exit the trial, leaving only Li Xiu and Jin Zhenhuan on the stands.

With little time left on the countdown, Li Xiu still showed no intention of quitting, determined to face him in a duel, making Jin Zhenhuan hesitate instead.

"Li Xiu, are you truly not afraid of death? You should know very well that as either batter or pitcher, you're destined to lose. I can offer you a chance: apologize now, and I'll consider sparing your life," Jin Zhenhuan said to Li Xiu with a high and mighty stance.

"No need," Li Xiu calmly replied without even looking Jin Zhenhuan in the eye.

Seeing Li Xiu's seemingly fearless demeanor, the unease in Jin Zhenhuan's heart grew stronger.

"What if Li Xiu can also throw a Butterfly Pitch?" Jin Zhenhuan suddenly thought of the possibility. Such an unpredictable pitch, even if he wasn't fully confident in hitting it perfectly, could lead to severe consequences if he hit the ball out of bounds, as there would be no second chances.

Feeling increasingly unsettled, Jin Zhenhuan said to Li Xiu again, "It would be meaningless to kill you like this; I'll let you live a few more days. Take your time to consider whether your life is more important or that pointless pride. You're welcome to find me any time once you've decided. As long as you apologize, I'll spare your life."

With that, he left the trial ground without waiting for Li Xiu's response.

Li Xiu had anticipated Jin Zhenhuan's departure and remained unaffected. Jin Zhenhuan's retreat in their previous confrontation had already indicated his mental collapse.

"With one remaining, the final trial begins. The rules are as follows..."

Li Xiu appeared on the pitcher's mound, and at the batter's position, his silhouette appeared. Similar to the last C-level final test, his opponent was an enhanced version of himself, with physical qualities one and a half times his own.

"Looks like the C-level difficulty final test follows a similar model. I wonder what the B-level and A-level final tests look like?" Li Xiu glanced at the silhouette. The trial rule was a one-ball win, with no second chances.

Without hesitation, he pitched. The white baseball darted up and down, left and right in the air. As it reached the silhouette, despite swinging the bat, it missed, slipping under the bat and landing within the box.

"Final trial completed, rewards being randomly generated..."

Soon, four reward icons appeared on the screen.

Skills, Demon Core, Attributes, Talent, but there was no entry ticket Li Xiu was hoping for. However, even if there were an entry ticket, he had no intention of choosing it.

His physical attributes were still not enough, and even going back in would be useless, as he still couldn't wield that Blood Patterned Pistol.

Li Xiu chose the skill. Talent is basically similar to skill, except one is active, the other passive.

Li Xiu preferred having control, so he leaned towards choosing skills.

The skill icon transformed into a beam of light, projecting in front of Li Xiu, morphing into a white ring entity.

Li Xiu inserted his finger into the ring, which immediately shrank and branded onto his finger before slowly disappearing.

Fly's Eye: C-level skill, grants temporary enhancement to both eyes, lasting for one minute.

Chapter 23: Chapter 23: No More Opportunities

Li Xiu attempted to use the Fly's Eye. His deep brown pupils instantaneously dilated, covering his entire eyes, leaving no trace of whites visible.

On closer inspection, one would notice that those deep brown eyes were filled with grids, resembling the compound eyes of a fly, appearing both eerie and terrifying.

After activating the Fly's Eye, the world in Li Xiu's eyes seemed slightly different, with an expanded field of vision and some visual differences.

A minute passed quickly. Trying to activate the Fly's Eye again, he felt a severe pain in his eyes, like being pricked by needles, promptly halting its usage.

"E-level skills can be used for three seconds, C-level skills for a minute. I wonder if there are limits for A-level and B-level skills, and what about S-level skills?" These skills intrigued Li Xiu more and more.

The only way to acquire skills is to complete the final trials, but it's incredibly difficult for most people to pass.

For example, in the C-level final task, one must defeat their 1.5x enhanced shadow incarnation. It appeared that Li Xiu completed it with ease, but in reality, the average person would find it difficult to defeat a shadow incarnation 1.5 times stronger in physical ability and skills than themselves.

If the C-level final task is already this difficult, B-level and A-level are even harder to imagine. There probably aren't many Trial Takers with advanced skills.

Someone as lucky as Ah Fei to possess S-level skills is even rarer.

"Skills like the Fly's Eye are also useful for a Magic Armor Master, so I can acquire more skills in the future." Li Xiu planned inwardly, knowing that even if he left the Abyss Base, he could access other Trial Grounds to acquire skills.

"Before the S-level trial, there are two more trials. If I'm lucky enough, I might gain two more skills." Li Xiu pondered, even as he was being teleported out of the Trial Ground.

Old Gu took away the Demon Core he had obtained, but Jin Zhenhuan was nowhere to be seen.

Li Xiu didn't care about Jin Zhenhuan. The moment he backed down the first time, it was certain he would never have a chance to defeat Li Xiu.

Before being sent back to his room, Li Xiu glanced at the two Magic Armor Masters. The Demon Armor they wore was an older version, certainly not as powerful as the latest models. More importantly, this kind of Demon Armor had some design flaws.

"As long as there's a chance to get close to a Magic Armor Master, seizing the Demon Armor is not difficult." Li Xiu had long been planning on how to seize the Demon Armor.

He didn't truly pin his hopes on Ah Fei's plans. He wasn't accustomed to relying on others; his own thoughts were the most important and reliable.

"Cooperation is built on trust. How can I trust you again?" Ah Fei said coldly when she saw Li Xiu return.

Now only the two of them were left in the room, so they spoke more freely.

"Are you referring to the baseball incident?" Li Xiu smiled.

"What do you think?" Ah Fei didn't find it amusing at all.

"What if I said it was truly my first time playing baseball, would you believe me?" Li Xiu asked.

"Do you think I would believe you?" Ah Fei certainly didn't believe him.

"Didn't you just say that cooperation is built on trust? Then, do you trust me?" Li Xiu countered.

Ah Fei was momentarily taken aback, opening her mouth to say something, but in the end, said nothing.

As Li Xiu stated, she indeed didn't trust him. But how could she trust in such matters? A person who first encountered baseball, with such physical abilities, ended up being the final winner in the trial, even beating people like Rod and Jin Zhenhuan. It wasn't reasonable or scientific.

It's not just Ah Fei; anyone in her place wouldn't believe it.

Neither spoke again, returning to their beds to rest. Until the trial reopened, they didn't have another conversation.

As Ah Fei predicted, it was another E-level trial, which repeated a previous one, another free throw showdown.

Jin Zhenhuan didn't participate in this trial, but Old Gu did. However, Old Gu was eliminated after the first trial, while Li Xiu unsurprisingly reached the end and once again passed the final test.

Faced with the choice between skills and attributes, Li Xiu opted for skills again, but the result left him somewhat irritated.

The skill reward was still "Burning Blood." Since the skill was repeated, it was as if he hadn't received anything.

"Are all E-level trial skill rewards the same skill? Had I known this, I might have chosen attributes instead." Li Xiu didn't pay much attention to it and returned to his room to continue preparing for the next trial.

The next trial was the most crucial. Ah Fei said it should be of B-level or A-level difficulty. With such difficulty, if it involved a test of physical fitness, Li Xiu might be in trouble.

However, Li Xiu believed that every trial had a technique to it. As long as it wasn't an absolute blowout, he had a chance to pass the trial.

Ah Fei still wasn't inclined to interact with Li Xiu, and even when the Trial Ground reopened, she didn't meet his gaze.

By this trial, only a few ordinary Trial Takers remained. With this trial, including the eleven administrators, there were just thirty-five people in total.

Jin Zhenhuan also participated in this trial. He had resolved to defeat Li Xiu in this trial.

"Welcome to the Sea Heaven Trial Ground. The trial difficulty is marked as B-level, with the following rules..." A B-level mark and trial rules appeared on the screen.

When Ah Fei saw it was a B-level test, her face turned grim. General B-level tests had quite high physical requirements. Many who underwent hundreds of physical enhancements couldn't even withstand the first trial, let alone someone with Li Xiu's physical condition.

After reading the trial rules, Ah Fei's countenance worsened.

This time, the test was once again in the category of athletics, but instead of the 800 meters, it was the 400 meter hurdles.

It wasn't an elimination at the end, but anyone who didn't finish in the top ten would die, the same if they couldn't finish under thirty-eight seconds or touched a hurdle.

What's the concept of running 400 meters hurdles in thirty-eight seconds? The previous world record for men's 400 meters hurdles was 46.78 seconds. Thirty-eight seconds meant being nearly ten seconds faster than the world record. Is this a speed humans could achieve?

Furthermore, there were eleven administrators with physical abilities superior to Li Xiu. In terms of running, they would absolutely not lose to Li Xiu. Even if Li Xiu ran within thirty seconds, he still couldn't outpace those eleven administrators, let alone Jin Zhenhuan.

In Ah Fei's view, this was purely a contest of physical abilities, and with Li Xiu's physical strength being somewhat inferior, he had no chance of winning.

"I'm sorry. I didn't expect it to be this kind of test." Ah Fei finally spoke, expressing her apology.

"Why are you apologizing?" Li Xiu asked curiously.

"Do you really not understand? This test, you can't win. If there's anything left undone, you can tell me now. If I have a future, I'll find a way to help you complete it," Ah Fei said.

"No need for that. I will fulfill my own wishes." Li Xiu replied calmly.

"She's right. You have no chance. Better get your affairs in order. This time, I won't give you another opportunity," Jin Zhenhuan said, appearing completely confident in his victory.