

# 48 Hours a Day

## Chapter 7: Desert Island Survival

Zhang Heng climbed up the stairs and pushed the blue steel door open.

Considering everything he had seen on his way to the bar and the group of young men and women swaying their bodies downstairs, he thought that while the style might be different, it was not going to be that much different in the dance room either.

However, in reality, this place was more like VIP lounges at international airports.

When he pushed the door open, Zhang Heng felt as if he had stepped into another world. Soft lights, red Persian rug, leather sofa, silverwares on the side table, light refreshments and fruits laid out on the buffet table, and a small bar counter on the right. When the door closed behind him, a gentle and soothing piano music entered his ears.

The pounding music downstairs had probably exceeded 100 decibels. Even though he was not a professional, Zhang Heng knew that material of a container had next to none soundproofing property.

But the truth was right in front of him—when the door shut behind him, the noise outside was completely cut off.

Perhaps it was because Zhang Heng had recently experienced something even more inconceivable than this, he seemed to have developed a certain immunity to similar events. He quickly regained his composure and continued forwards after only a brief moment of doubt.

“Welcome,” the woman in a red evening gown standing behind the bar greeted.

Zhang Heng looked around the room, and saw that other than himself, there were about another dozen of people in the lounge. Some were

seated in banquettes not far from where he was standing, chatting away while others sat alone. But what puzzled him was that even though the person nearest to him was only about a few meters away, he could not see their faces clearly.

It was a very strange experience. He could sense that there was nothing wrong with his eyesight, and his retinas were able to form a clear image but there was something that was preventing the signal from reaching his brain.

Zhang Heng refused to believe in this nonsense, and tried very hard to concentrate. He was feeling like he was about to break through the invisible barrier when a nauseous feeling suddenly surged from his stomach. He had to hold onto the bar to keep himself from falling.

Right on cue, a glass of lemon water was placed in front of him.

“Relax. This is something all the new players who had just arrived here experiences. Unless the other party allows it, the faces of the players are, by default, in incognito mode. As a matter of fact, your voices have also undergone a special process. What you hear is not the actual voice. This is to protect you to the greatest extent.”

“But I can see your face.” Zhang Heng picked up the water and thanked the bartender. Because of the dim lights and the fact that he was distracted by the others, he only just realized that the bartender looked very familiar. She was wearing lipstick and a different outfit. She looked as different as night and day but Zhang Heng recognized her. “You are... the bartender from the maid café?”

“Not bad. Your observation skills are sharper than I expected.” The bartender was wiping a glass cup. She was still as frosty as she was earlier today. “No one stipulated that one person can only work one job, right? By the way, I’m just a receptionist here. I don’t need to conceal my face like players do.”

“I’m sorry. Since I walked in, you kept mentioning words like ‘players’ and ‘receptionist’. Forgive me for being forthright but I have no clue what game it is that I’m joining. Blackjack? Texas Hold’em? Legends of the

Three Kingdoms? E-sports?” Zhang Heng asked as he settled down on the stool in front of the bar.

“I normally don’t like to brag about my employer in front of the customers, actually, I don’t like bragging about that at any time, but this time, I have to say—congratulations, Mr. Zhang Heng. You’re very lucky to be a part of the greatest game in the history of mankind. I can promise you that all the other games that you’ve ever played before this are weak and pathetic. This game will completely change your life.”

“That is a rather high evaluation.”

“Oh, quite the contrary. No compliment can compare to the game itself. Now, it’s your turn to answer one of my questions. What do you think makes a person truly himself?”

The bartender put down the now sparkling glass. Her expression was solemn.

Zhang Heng took a sip of the lemon water and then answered, “DNA?”

“That’s not wrong. Each of us has a unique set of DNA, and some parts of our bodies have been coded since birth. Your looks, family, family history of illness... But fortunately, even then we still have a lot of choices—you can go to university, work, build a career, become a primary school teacher or astronaut or something.”

There was a strange flash of light in the bartender’s eyes, and she was speaking faster. “Put aside all those things that had already been determined... Let me phrase my question more accurately—What do you think makes a person who he is today? For example, how is it that astronauts could walk in space? How could a boxer knock his opponent down on stage? What is it that makes a teacher pick up teaching aids?”

“Experience? You’re talking about experience and learning that makes us who we are today?” Zhang Heng quickly understood what the bartender was trying to convey. Cocking his brows, Zhang Heng commented, “But I still don’t get what this has to do with me joining the game.”

This time, however, he did not get any answers.

“No amount of words can describe what you can witness yourself. Mr. Zhang Heng, your first round has begun. Please cherish this hard-to-come-by experience. I look forward to meeting you again.” The bartender winked knowingly at him.

The hour hand on the clock on the wall was pointed at eleven.

The next thing he knew was a strong dizzy feeling rushed to his head and caused his vision to blur again.

Had he fallen into a trap?!

Zhang Heng’s first reaction was to suspect that the lemon water. That was the only thing he had tasted. From the moment he set foot into the bar, he had been on high alert. He never expected to see a familiar face—and that caused him to let his guard down a little. He did not know when it happened, or what powerful anesthetic was added that one little sip could have such a powerful effect. He could feel his head getting heavier and heavier until he could not resist anymore, and allowed himself to collapse onto the bar until he was completely unconscious.

He did not know how much time had passed in between, was it days, hours or seconds?

A stranger’s voice rang in his ear.

*[Verifying player’s identity...]*

*[Identity confirmed. Random extraction of newcomer’s quest for player number 07958...]*

*[Extraction complete—Current quest is Desert Island Survival]*

*You were on a cruise and encountered a terrible storm as you were traveling near the equator. The ship deviated from its course and the radar and sonar on the ship, the GPS and satellite phones on the ship were, oddly, not working. Without direction, you’ve traveled aimlessly on*

*the seas for a month. Unfortunately, you encountered another even bigger storm. At the time of the incident you were standing on the deck and a giant wave swept you into the ocean. When you finally opened your eyes again, you found yourself lying on an unfamiliar beach.*

*[Mission target: Survive for 40 days on this island]*

*[Mode: Single player]*

*[Time flow rate: 480] (One hour in the real world is equivalent to 20 days in this game. After 40 days, the player will be forcefully returned to the real world)*

*A friendly reminder, the game will begin in 5 seconds. Players, please get ready.*