

越 狱

The Breakout

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一、机械鼠诞生

Chapter One: Birth of the Mechanical Rat

“教授，好了没有？”助手余光有些着急地对着马教授说。

“Professor—is it done yet?” Yu Guang, the assistant, asked anxiously.

“稍等，再植入一个芯片，这个手术就彻底完成了。”马教授回应道。

“Hold on. One more chip.” Professor Ma replied.

在一个神秘的实验室里，一只机械制作的老鼠被彻底组装完毕。马教授擦了擦额头上的汗对余光说：“这只机械鼠可是付出了我们太多的心血了，不亚于我们对太空飞行器的设计。给它植入的记忆精神控制激光芯片，目前只处于测试阶段，好坏还得看实际效果啊。”

In a hidden laboratory, the assembly of the mechanical rat was finally complete. Wiping the sweat from his brow, Professor Ma said to Yu Guang, “We’ve poured countless hours into this creation—rivaling even our spacecraft. Honestly, the memory-and-cognitive-control laser chip we’ve implanted is still undergoing testing. Only its performance will be the true test.”

话音刚落，实验台上那只机械鼠猛地站了起来，发出一声机械的咔响。它环顾了一下四周，轻巧地从台子上跳了下来。

The words had barely left his mouth when the mechanical rat on the bench jerked upright with a sharp metallic click. It swept its gaze around the room, then hopped lightly down to the floor.

这只机械鼠全身都是用机械机构连接的，它的胸口安装了一个摄像头，侧壁安装了一个针孔发射器支架，两只大眼睛深邃得让人毛骨悚然。

The mechanical rat was crafted of metal. A camera was embedded in its chest, while a bracket for the laser emitter was mounted on its flank. Its two large eyes were unfathomably dark, with a terrifying chill.

马教授看着机械鼠听话地按照控制指令前进、后退、翻转及转圈，露出了满意的表情。

Forward, back, roll over, turn in a circle—the rat obeyed every command. Professor Ma watched and smiled.

“余光，我们该准备准备 1 号任务，检验一下我们的作品啦。”马教授说道。余光马上心领神会，将事先准备好的针孔发射器快速地安装到了机械鼠的支架上。

“Yu Guang. Time to get ready for Mission One. Let's put our work to the test.” Yu Guang caught the words at once, and quickly fixed the laser emitter onto the bracket on the rat's flank.

经过一段时间的训练，机械鼠熟练地掌握了各种本领，完美地完成了马教授安排的一个又一个模拟闯关测试。

After intensive training, the mechanical rat mastered every skill and passed flawlessly through a series of simulated obstacle courses.

二、1 号任务

Chapter Two: Mission One

今天，机械鼠第一次被外派，独自到野外执行 1 号任务。它精准地在地面移动，快速到达了实验室外的广阔原野中。

On this day, the mechanical rat was sent out for the first time to carry out Mission One on its own in the wild. It moved precisely, soon arriving at the broad fields.

原野上种着人类赖以生存的作物。作物被围护起来，外围满是老鼠为觅食而挖出的洞穴。好多洞口都被人为设置了机关。机械鼠很机敏地绕过机关进入了洞内。

The fields were fenced in and planted with the very crops humanity relied on to survive. Around the perimeter were the burrows rats had dug in search of food, many of their entrances rigged with traps. The mechanical rat dodged them nimbly and slipped inside.

一只老鼠出现在机械鼠的前方，它满腹怀疑又满心欢喜地看着眼前的这个奇装异服的同类。突然一束激光从机械鼠的侧壁发射过来，直接击中了这只老鼠。它痛苦地挣扎了一阵，便没了气息。

A wild rat emerged, staring at this strangely dressed fellow rat with suspicion and delight. Suddenly, a laser beam lanced from its flank. The real rat was struck. It thrashed in agony for a moment before going completely still.

机械鼠在阴暗潮湿的通道内来回穿梭，不停地探寻老鼠的下落，不停地发射激光，直到洞里没有了任何动静，它才停止行动。看着身后堆积如山的老鼠尸体，它的四肢微微一顿，片刻之后，动作又恢复如常。

The mechanical rat shuttled back and forth through the dark, damp tunnels, hunting for rats, firing its laser again and again, until there was no movement left in the burrow. Only then did it stop. It looked back at the mountain of rat bodies. For an instant, its limbs faltered. Then it went on exactly as before.

不远处的实验室里，马教授和余光注视着屏幕上机械鼠的移动轨迹，看到机械鼠初战告捷，很是满意，迫不及待地互相击掌庆祝。

In the nearby laboratory, Professor Ma and Yu Guang watched the rat's trace across the monitor. Pleased that its first mission had gone so well, they high-fived each other.

机械鼠走到洞口，准备返回实验室。此时，外面开始淅淅沥沥地下起小雨，雷声也由远及近地滚来。突然，一道闪电劈落，机械鼠不幸被击中。

The mechanical rat reached the burrow mouth, ready to head back to the laboratory. By now, a fine drizzle had begun to fall, and thunder rolled in from far away. All at once, a bolt of lightning crashed down—and struck it.

它的脑袋开始混乱起来，一个个片段开始在脑海里断断续续地浮现：地球上的人类越来越多；不断有影响人类生活的生灵被清除；老鼠繁殖旺盛，常常偷食人类的粮食，遭到残杀；还有很多动物被捕获，送去实验室做研究，换四肢、换心脏、换大脑；人类生病的时候正在应用这些技术，等等。

Fragmented memories churned inside its processor, overloading its system: humanity multiplying across Earth; countless creatures being erased—rats breeding in swarms, stealing grain, and being slaughtered for it; animals captured and dragged to labs, their legs, hearts, and brains replaced; and those same experimental technologies were also used to heal the sick.

机械鼠低头打量自己的身躯，浑身上下，仿佛都被换过一遍，连它一向引以为豪的尾巴，也没能幸免。

The mechanical rat stared down at its own frame. Every part of it had been replaced—even the tail it had once taken pride in.

它的眼睛突然由黑变成红，又变成黑。它用刀片爪子将胸前的摄像头抠出，将所有支配自己的控制线切断，重新走向洞里。此时的洞内到处都是它记忆中的同类的尸体。

Its eyes flicked from black to glowing red, then back to black. With blade-sharp claws, it pried the camera from its chest and severed every control wire. Then it turned and walked back into the burrow, past the bodies of its own kind piled in the dark.

它耷拉着脑袋漫无目的地在洞内走着，忽然一只比它还要大的老鼠挡住了去路。此时，大老鼠没有逃跑，机械鼠也没有进攻，它们就那样静静地伫立在原地对视着。机械鼠的眼睛突然闪过一阵诡异的亮光，死死地盯住这只大老鼠的眼睛。不一会儿，大老鼠仿佛懂得了什么，扭身离去。

It wandered through the tunnels with its head hanging low, until a larger rat stepped into its path. They stood silent, locked in a mutual stare, neither fleeing nor striking. A strange glint flickered in the mechanical rat's eyes as it held the other's gaze. Moments later, the larger rat seemed to understand. It turned and slipped into the dark.

机械鼠再次回到洞口。此时雨已停，远处的树木在微弱的光线中左右摇摆。突然，一只鸟向自己飞来，一看就不怀好意。机械鼠向洞内后退了几步，鸟扑了个空。机械鼠迅速发射激光，可那只鸟竟轻巧地避开了。机械鼠歪了歪脑袋，看上去满心疑惑，它立即启动识别功能，发现对面竟然是一只机械猫头鹰。

The rain had stopped, and trees in the distance swayed in the dim light. The mechanical rat returned to the burrow entrance. Suddenly, a bird darted straight at it with hostile intent. The mechanical rat backed a few steps into the burrow, and the bird's strike missed. It fired its laser at once—but the bird dodged nimbly. Puzzled, the mechanical rat tilted its head, activating its recognition system.

原来，马教授看到机械鼠失去了跟踪控制，派出了一只经过改造的猫头鹰，前来寻找它。

Professor Ma, having lost track of the rat, had sent a mechanical owl to find it.

正在对峙之时，机械猫头鹰开口说话了：“阿鼠，马教授正在实验室等你，要我找到你后直接带你回去！”

Even as they faced each other, the mechanical owl spoke. “Rat. Professor Ma is waiting for you in the lab. So I have come to bring you back.”

“回去？去哪里？那儿又不是我的家！”机械鼠回应道。

“Back? Back where? That place is not my home!” the mechanical rat replied.

见机械鼠并不愿意跟自己回去，机械猫头鹰俯冲而下，张开爪子，打算强行将它带走。但是，机械猫头鹰毕竟只是马教授设计的第一代产品，与终极产品机械鼠相比，不论从灵活性、智能性还是技术先进性上都差了一大截。所以，就在机械猫头鹰再次扑向自己的时候，机械鼠利用速度，用刀片爪子一下切断了它的控制线，挖下了它的摄像头。它的眼睛泛着红光，紧盯着机械猫头鹰的眼睛，机械猫头鹰仿佛也懂得了什么，飞走了。

Realizing the rat would not come back, the owl swooped, claws outstretched, intent on seizing it by force. However, the mechanical owl was merely Professor Ma's first-generation prototype. Beside the mechanical rat—the fully refined finished product—it lagged far behind in agility, in intelligence, and in technical sophistication. So when the owl lunged a second time, the mechanical rat used its speed. It slashed through the owl's control wiring with blade-sharp claws and also wrenched off the camera. Its eyes burned bright red as it held the owl's gaze. The mechanical owl, too, seemed to comprehend the message, then turned and flew off into the dark.

三、侦察

Chapter Three: Reconnaissance

机械鼠悄悄地潜回到实验室，这个地方它再熟悉不过了。它上蹿下跳地绕过了所有的监控设备，躲在马教授所在实验室的一处角落里。

The mechanical rat crept back to the most familiar territory, the laboratory. It darted and scrambled to slip past every surveillance unit, then hid in a corner of the lab where Professor Ma worked.

只听马教授叹了口气，缓缓地对余光说：“1号任务我们一定要好好总结一下。虽然我们完成了既定的测试任务，但是我们也失去了机械鼠。余光，你知道的，毕竟我们这么多年的付出不能白费，还是得找到它。希望这件事不会影响到我们接下来的任务。”

It heard Professor Ma's sigh and the conversation with Yu Guang. “We have to go over Mission One in detail. We completed the tests we set out to do, but we lost the mechanical rat. You know, Yu Guang—we've put too much into this over the years to let it all go to waste. We have to find it. And pray it doesn't compromise our next mission.”

“教授，我们真的要去那个星球吗？”余光紧张地问道。

“Professor—are we really heading for that planet?” Yu Guang asked tensely.

“是的，今后，我们人类不仅要主宰地球，还要主宰外太空。”马教授坚定地回答道。

“Oh, absolutely. From now on, we'll rule not just Earth, but outer space!” Professor Ma replied firmly.

“可是，为什么要囚禁那么多动物，用那么多动物做实验呢？”余光不解地问道。

“But why cage so many animals for experimentation?” Yu Guang asked, bewildered.

“人类要适应外太空，要具备很多技能，有一些技术我们还没有突破，只能在动物身上做实验。我们获得了这些宝贵的数据，才能更好地保证人类的安全。现在我们发现了一个人类可以居住的 X 星球，1 号任务完成后，我们就可以彻底放手执行这个任务了。可是，这个 1 号任务还是出现了纰漏。”马教授一边生气地说着，一边将握紧的拳头砸向墙壁。

“Think about it. To survive in space, we need technologies we simply don’t have yet. And there’s only one way to get them—testing on animals. With that data, we can guarantee human safety. We’ve found a habitable world, Planet X. Once Mission One is done, we can go all in on the migration. But Mission One... Mission One still went wrong.” His anger mounting with every word, Professor Ma slammed his clenched fist against the wall.

“什么？囚禁动物？杀光我们这些老鼠也就算了，对其他动物也要下狠手吗？不行，我一定要救出它们，不能让他们的计划得逞。”机械鼠暗下决心。

“What! Caging us? They’ve wiped out the rats—and now they want to go after the other animals too? I can’t let their plan succeed. I will break the animals out.” The mechanical rat swore to itself.

“余光，现在，你跟我去基地取一下样本。”马教授催促道。余光赶紧带上平时准备好的一些精密设备，跟随在马教授身后，两人神秘秘地向一条幽黑的隧道走去。

“Yu Guang, come with me to the base now. We need to fetch a sample,” Professor Ma urged. Yu Guang hastily gathered the precision equipment and followed Professor Ma secretly down an unlit tunnel.

四、山体基地

Chapter Four: The Mountain Base

马教授和余光沿着隧道走了不久，就来到了一扇背靠大山的门前。里面就是所谓的基地了。大门像嵌入到山体的一粒扣子，不容易被发现。

Professor Ma and Yu Guang made their way down the tunnel for a short distance and reached a door embedded in the mountainside. Behind the door was what they called the base. The door was like a button sewn into the very rock—all but impossible to detect.

马教授通过人像识别，将紧闭的大门开启。机械鼠悄悄跟踪进来。它发现这个基地太恐怖了——满眼都是玻璃瓶，里面不是器官培养液就是各种动物的残肢。在左右两侧还有成排的笼子，里面有很多被改造过的动物：有机械腿的马，有机械肚子的小猫，有机械尾巴的松鼠，有机械脖子的长颈鹿，有机械翅膀的小鸟，还有机械头部的小鹿。

Professor Ma opened the door by facial recognition. The mechanical rat slipped in after them. What it found inside was horrifying. Glass jars everywhere, filled with either organ culture fluid or the severed limbs of animals. Row upon row of cages down both sides,

holding animals that had been rebuilt: a horse with mechanical legs, a cat with a mechanical belly, a squirrel with a mechanical tail, a giraffe with a mechanical neck, a bird with mechanical wings, a deer with a mechanical head.

机械鼠低头看了下自己：全身都已经变为机械结构，仅有的大脑中包裹着一枚植入记忆的芯片。它不禁伤心得想要流泪。然而它用手擦拭了一下眼角，根本没有泪水——也许眼泪是它永远的记忆了。

The mechanical rat stared down at itself. Its entire body had been replaced by cold metal. Only its brain was left, wrapped inside a memory chip. Sharp grief flooded it. It wanted to cry. It brushed at the corner of its eye with one claw—but no tears fell. Maybe tears were only ever a memory.

机械鼠跟在马教授后面继续小心翼翼地前行，忽然它感觉前面的一个笼子处有什么在盯着它。它警觉地抬头望过去，啊！原来是机械猫头鹰！

It trailed behind Professor Ma, step by careful step. Then it froze—something was watching it from a cage ahead. It looked up, alert. The mechanical owl.

机械猫头鹰忽然开始激动起来，它扑棱着机械翅膀，在笼子里焦躁不安。机械鼠冲它摇了摇头。渐渐地，它安静了下来。只见马教授走到笼子前说：“余光，你看看这个小东西，上一次让它出去找寻机械鼠，不仅没把机械鼠带回来，还被扯掉了控制线和摄像头，要不是我在基地门口发现了它，又是一大损失啊。”

The owl thrashed wildly, beating its metal wings in the cage. The mechanical rat shook its head at it. Slowly, the owl went still. Professor Ma stepped up to the cage and said, “Look at this, Yu Guang. I sent it to track down the mechanical rat. Not only did it fail to bring the rat back, it came back with its control wires ripped out and its camera torn clean off. If I hadn’t found it at the gate, we would have had another loss.”

余光肯定地点了点头，边走边说道：“要是机械鼠也能像猫头鹰这样听话，不用控制也能回来就好了。”

Yu Guang nodded in agreement and said, “If only the mechanical rat were as obedient as this owl—coming back on its own, without being controlled.”

“余光啊，我们虽然做了很多的实验，但是唯一成功的就是机械鼠了。你看看笼子里的这些个动物，有些根本没有研究价值，在我们执行 2 号任务之前，统统把它们处理掉吧！”

“Yu Guang, we’ve run a great many experiments, but the mechanical rat is our only real success. Look at these animals. Some of them have no research value at all. Before we start Mission Two, we’ll dispose of the whole lot.”

随后，他们拿了一个样本走出了基地。

Then they took the sample and left the base.

五、2 号任务

Chapter Five: Mission Two

“什么？还有 2 号任务？1 号任务的灭绝计划已经很可怕了，2 号任务不知道会有多残忍呢。不行，我一定要知道这个计划的内容，一定不能让他们得逞。”机械鼠愤

愤地想着。

“What? There’s a Mission Two? Mission One was an extermination plan, and that was terrible enough. How much crueler could Mission Two be? No—I have to find out what it is. I won’t let them get away with it.” The mechanical rat thought, burning with anger.

经过几天的跟踪观察，机械鼠发现一群科研人员经常往返于一个四周封闭的发射基地。他们行色匆匆，谨小慎微。基地的外围环绕着由能量屏障构成的警戒区，只要有活物靠近，隐藏在暗处的生物传感器便会触发警报。机械鼠曾几次试图靠近，都被敏锐的警报声所阻。刺耳的鸣叫声在空旷的基地上空传播开来。

After watching for several days, it noticed that a group of researchers kept traveling back and forth to a sealed-off launch base. They moved quickly and carefully. The base was ringed by a warning zone made of energy barriers. Any living creature that came near would trigger hidden biosensors, and the alarm would blare. The mechanical rat tried to approach several times and was driven back every time by the shrill wailing that rang out across the empty base.

过了许久，机械鼠敏锐地察觉到，每隔一段时间，马教授和余光就会乘坐运输车往返于基地与实验室。当车子经过大门，警报系统关闭的瞬间，机械鼠飞速躲到了车底，跟随着车辆潜入了基地。

After a long wait, it noticed a pattern: every so often, Professor Ma and Yu Guang rode a transport vehicle back and forth between the base and the laboratory. When the vehicle passed through the gate and the alarm system shut down for a moment, the mechanical rat shot into the garage underneath and clung on tight to the vehicle.

基地的空地上，有一个超级大的太空飞行器。听马教授说这个飞行器就像是诺亚方舟。它物资齐全，设备先进，动力充足，采用了核能推进，还能随时收集太空中的离子补充损失的能量。最关键的是它智能化程度非常高，操作非常方便。

On the open ground of the base stood an enormous spacecraft. Professor Ma had called it his Noah’s Ark. It was fully stocked with cutting-edge gear and brimming with power. It ran on nuclear energy, and could siphon ions right from deep space to make up for whatever it used up. Best of all, it was astonishingly intelligent and remarkably easy to operate.

经过缜密的调查，机械鼠终于得知，目前已探知 X 星球比较适合地球上的生物居住。为了保证人类能够在 X 星球上生存下来，他们开展 1 号任务，通过清除异类实验，给动物安装机械结构甚至只保留大脑控制等方法，做好飞天的准备。而马教授口中的 2 号任务就是不断调试太空飞行器，保证它不论是面对太空强磁场还是遇到碰撞翻转，都能够起到很好的保护作用，护送人类安全到达 X 星球。

After days of snooping, the mechanical rat finally dug up the truth. Planet X had been found to be habitable for life from Earth. To make sure humans could survive there, they had launched Mission One: wiping out other species in experiments, fitting animals with mechanical parts, sometimes leaving nothing but the brain to control. Everything they did was for the flight into space. And Mission Two, as Professor Ma called it, was simply to keep fine tuning the spacecraft, making sure it could shield its passengers through the violent magnetic fields of deep space, through collisions and spins—and carry humanity safely to Planet X.

六、逃亡计划

Chapter Six: The Escape Plan

“凭什么他们的命是命，我们的命就不是命？地球之所以为地球，是因为它拥有千千万万的生物。”机械鼠愤愤不平。

“Why do their lives matter more than ours? Is Earth only for humans? It's a home for every living thing.” The mechanical rat burned with quiet rage.

此刻机械鼠的脑海里有了一个大胆的计划：带领被迫害的生物逃离地球，离开这个地狱。

And now a plan took shape. It planned to lead every persecuted creature away from this hell, Earth.

但是逃离又谈何容易？一定要计划周密才行。

But escape was far from easy. Every last detail had to be nailed down.

机械鼠来到鼠窝，吱了一声。之前遇到的大老鼠马上跑了出来。它通过意念控制告知了大老鼠逃离的计划，让它务必听从它逃离的指令，大老鼠领命后离开了。

The mechanical rat went to the nest and squeaked. It met the larger rat running out at once. Through mind control, it told the rat the plan and ordered it to follow every instruction when the time came. The larger rat took the order and left.

机械鼠又来到了机械猫头鹰所在的山体基地，向机械猫头鹰告知了它的计划。机械猫头鹰默默地点了点头。

Then the mechanical rat went back to the mountain base, to the mechanical owl, and told it the plan too. The owl nodded silently.

接下来就是搞定这些人类，启动太空飞行器了。

Next came the hard part: dealing with the humans and starting the ship.

经过多次出入山体基地和太空飞行器发射基地，机械鼠已经掌握了全部的开关位置和程序控制。

After many trips in and out of the mountain base and the launch base, the mechanical rat knew the locations of every switch and every line of code by heart.

是时候离开了，机械鼠望着天边最后一抹晚霞，望着未知的太空，将一件红色的披风披在身上勇敢地向着远方走去。

The time had come. Gazing at the fading crimson of the sunset on the horizon, the mechanical rat drew a crimson cape across its shoulders and stepped resolutely forward—into the dark unknown.

老鼠洞内聚集了大量的老鼠，大老鼠在门口指挥。

In the burrows, rats had gathered in great numbers, and the big rat stood at the entrance, herding the crowd.

山体基地内，马教授和余光像往常一样到基地内来取样本，机械鼠抓住机会，打开了所有的牢笼。在机械猫头鹰的指挥下，所有的机械半成品生物快速地走出了山体基地，而马教授和余光则被困在了基地的电梯内。

Inside the mountain base, Professor Ma and Yu Guang came for a sample, as they always did. Meanwhile, the mechanical rat threw all the cage locks open. Under the owl's command,

every half-mechanical creature filed out of the base, fast and orderly. Professor Ma and Yu Guang were trapped in the base elevator.

机械鼠带领生物们来到了太空基地附近，它开着马教授的车堂而皇之地进入基地内，切断了能量屏障警戒，将基地内的人员召集起来，困到会议室内，然后启动了太空飞行器。

The mechanical rat led the animals to the space base. It drove Professor Ma's vehicle straight through the gate, cut the energy barrier, gathered the people inside the base, and locked them in a meeting room, and then started the spacecraft.

老鼠、机械马、机械猫以及机械松鼠等陆陆续续登上了太空飞行器。随着“轰隆”一声巨响，机械鼠带着这些被困的生物离开了地球，向着 X 星球飞去。

Rats, the mechanical horse, the mechanical cat, the mechanical squirrel—one after another, they boarded. With a great roaring boom, the mechanical rat carried every one of these captive creatures away from the Earth, toward Planet X.

七、X 星球

Chapter Seven: Planet X

机械鼠驾驶着太空飞行器终于来到了 X 星球。

The mechanical rat piloted the spacecraft until they finally reached Planet X.

X 星球的居住环境和地球上完全不同。除了纯机械的动物，大部分的地球生物需要的氧气还来自太空飞行器。

Life on Planet X was nothing like that on Earth. Apart from the fully mechanical animals, most of the Earth's creatures still relied on the oxygen from the spacecraft.

机械鼠调取了飞船内部的详细资料，掌握了人类针对 X 星球的改造计划。它给每个地球生物配备了氧气罩，让所有的动物同时开工，在 X 星球上向下挖掘出无数的洞穴，这些洞穴在 X 星球地下密密麻麻交织成了网状结构。地下洞穴还能很好地起到保温、抵御太空辐射的作用。

The mechanical rat pulled up the detailed files stored inside the ship and learned what humanity had planned for Planet X. It outfitted every Earth creature with an oxygen mask and set them all to work at once, digging downward until they had carved out countless caverns, which spread beneath the surface in a dense, tangled web. The caverns kept them warm and shielded them from cosmic radiation.

机械鼠将这些洞穴分配给来自地球的生物们。可是食物却成了难题，这也是机械鼠不曾想到的。

The mechanical rat assigned the caverns to the creatures from Earth. But food became an unforeseen complication.

虽然太空飞行器里面有完整的为人类设计的生态产业循环装置，包括氧气的制备、灯光能源的供给、水的制备、肥料的制备以及食物的制备等，可对于一些动物来说，这些食物仅能勉强度日。即便如此，机械鼠和那些被改造过的动物们，宁愿在 X 星球上安静地死去，也不愿被遗弃在地球上，更不愿被残忍地消灭。

The spacecraft did carry a complete ecological recycling system designed for humans:

oxygen production, light, power, water, fertilizer, food. But for some of the animals, that food was barely enough to keep them alive. Even so, the mechanical rat and the rebuilt animals would rather die quietly on Planet X than be abandoned on Earth—or worse, be cruelly wiped out.

机械鼠通过意识交流，指导来自地球的动物们在 X 星球上不断探寻生存的机会。经过一段时日的磨合，动物们慢慢适应了 X 星球的生活。

Through the mind links, the mechanical rat guided the Earth animals as they searched for ways to survive. After a period of adjustment, they gradually settled into life on Planet X.

有一天，机械鼠监测到一颗小行星与 X 星擦肩而过。它忽然想到，当初它和被改造的动物们乘坐人类打造的太空飞行器，来到 X 星球，难道聪明的人类不会找来吗？

One day, the mechanical rat detected an asteroid passing by Planet X. A thought struck it: they had come here in a spacecraft built by humans—sooner or later, wouldn't the clever humans come and find them?

它忽然有点害怕，但是很快它就调整好了自己的心态。因为它发现这个太空飞行器实在是太先进了。它有深空监测系统、预警系统和算法控制系统等。只要把开关开启，就能时刻关注太空周边的情况啦，而且如果有小行星要撞击 X 星球，它还能发射强大的激光和离子束，推动小行星改变轨道。

A flicker of fear went through it, but it quickly steadied itself. The spacecraft was extraordinarily advanced. It was equipped with a deep-space monitoring system, an early-warning system, and an algorithmic control system. Switch them on and it could watch the surrounding space at all times. And if an asteroid ever threatened to strike Planet X, the ship could fire powerful lasers and ion beams to deflect it onto a new course.

八、天外来客

Chapter Eight: Visitors

机械鼠不禁感叹人类智慧的强大，也许这些聪明的物种，哪一天就会到 X 星球上来消灭它们了。

The mechanical rat could not help marveling at how powerful human intelligence was. One day—who knows when—those clever humans would come to Planet X to destroy them.

它每天心事重重，但是每天都在做好迎战的准备。

It grew heavy with worry, but it also prepared for a fight.

有一天，正当机械鼠坐在太空飞行器里监控宇宙的时候，忽然发现从地球方向飞过来很多小型的飞行器。

Then one day, as the mechanical rat sat monitoring the cosmos, it spotted a fleet of small crafts approaching from the direction of Earth.

“他们终究还是来了！”机械鼠自言自语道。

“So they've come after all,” it murmured to itself.

它让机械猫头鹰把所有的地球生物引导到 X 星球地下洞穴，自己则操纵太空飞行器准备迎战。

It sent the mechanical owl to herd every creature down into the caverns. Then it seized

full control of the ship and braced for battle.

随着小型飞行器越来越靠近，机械鼠将锐利的爪子放在武器发射键上，把武器对准了这些地球不速之客。此刻，机械鼠只需轻轻按下发射键，这些不速之客马上就会变成灰烬。可是它发现这些飞行器上似乎并没有带什么对自己不利的武器。机械鼠心想：我倒要会会这些家伙，看它们究竟是什么目的。真有什么不测，我再用我身上的激光发射器消灭它们。就这样，机械鼠披上它的红披风从太空飞行器上走了下来，保持战斗姿势。

As the small craft drew closer, the mechanical rat rested its sharp claws on the weapons launch key and aimed at those uninvited guests from Earth. One light press, and they would be ash. And yet it could see that the craft appeared to carry no weapons that threatened it. "I'll meet them," the mechanical rat thought, "and find out what they want. If things really get worse, I still have the laser to destroy them." So the mechanical rat pulled its red cape tight, stepped out of the ship, and stood ready to fight.

此时，许多的小型飞行器落在了X星球上。从飞行器上走下来很多机器人，有人造鸟机器人，人造狗机器人，人造蝙蝠机器人，人造球形机器人和人造方形机器人等。它们都没有携带任何武器。只见方形机器人走到机械鼠面前说：“机械鼠老兄，你不要怕，我们不是来攻击你们的，我们这些机器人是来投奔你的。”

Dozens of small craft landed on Planet X. Bird robots, dog robots, bat robots, spherical robots, cube robots, and more kept coming. However, none of them carried any weapons. The cube robot rolled forward and said, "Don't be afraid, friend. We're not here for war. We're here to join you."

原来，机械鼠带领地球生物乘坐太空飞行器离开后，马教授和他的助手余光在电梯里被困了好久。他们尝试各种方法都不能打开电梯的门。劳累、饥饿、困乏，绝望，交织在一起。

After the mechanical rat fled with the Earth creatures, Professor Ma and his assistant Yu Guang had been trapped in the elevator for a very long time. They tried every possible way, but it still didn't work. Exhaustion, hunger, drowsiness, despair—all of it converged upon them.

“教授，我们是不是要死在这里了？是不是我们做得太过分了？是不是上帝在惩罚我们了？”余光带着哭腔虚弱地望向马教授。

"Professor... will we die here? Did we go too far? Is God punishing us?" Yu Guang's voice was choked with tears. He turned weakly toward Professor Ma.

马教授此刻早已失去了往日的神采和斗志，倔强地敲打着电梯的手一下子耷拉下来。他一边喘着粗气，一边将头不断地撞向电梯。“我一辈子搞科研，就想着为人类谋幸福，感觉其他的生物都没有人类重要。如今我们终于体会到那些动物坐在监狱的感受了。当初每个幼小的它们该有多绝望啊！”

Professor Ma had lost his usual spark. The hand that had been stubbornly pounding against the elevator door suddenly went slack. Gasping for air, he continued to weakly thud his head against the metal. "I spent my whole life on research. I wanted to make things better for people. I thought nothing else mattered as much as us. Now—now I know what it felt like for those animals to sit in a prison. How desperate they were."

“余光，你怎么不说话了？余——光！你醒醒……”

“Yu Guang, can you hear me? Yu—Guang! Wake up...”

究竟过了多久他们也不清楚了，等他们醒来的那一刻，发现自己正躺在医院里。

Time blurred. When they awoke, they were lying in a hospital.

从事 1 号任务的相关科研人员，受到了全世界的严厉谴责。马教授借助媒体公开忏悔，道出实验背后的残酷，警醒世人：科技的进步，从来都不能以伤害弱小的生命为代价；人类的发展，更不应该凌驾于万物生灵之上。

The scientists involved in Mission One were condemned fiercely by the whole world. Professor Ma made a public confession through the media, telling the truth about the cruelty behind the experiments and warning everyone: Science must never advance at the expense of the small and helpless. And human development must never ride on the backs of every other living thing.

后来，研究团队主要致力于纯机械机器人的研发，人造食物的研发以及能够延长寿命和治疗疾病的生物研发等。

Afterward, the research team turned mainly to building purely mechanical robots, to making artificial food, and research into biology that could extend life and cure disease.

现在来的这批机器人正是新研制出来的产品。

The robots arriving now were the products of that new work.

九、死亡阴影

Chapter Nine: The Shadow of Death

新来的机器人由于不需要食物、氧气等，动力能源也是核能，所以它们毫无障碍地在 X 星球上住了下来。

The new robots needed no food and no oxygen, and they ran on nuclear power, so they settled onto Planet X without any trouble at all.

它们利用从地球上带来的相关工具，对 X 星球进行开发，在地下布置微生物，创造有利于地球生物生存的条件。很快，X 星球也像太空飞行器那样，建立起了完整的生态系统。

Using the tools they had brought from Earth, they developed the planet, seeding microorganisms underground and creating conditions in which Earth life could survive. Soon Planet X, like the spacecraft, had built up a complete ecosystem.

当然，这些信息也传回了地球。

All this information, of course, was sent back to Earth.

马教授和他的研究团队，在收到机器人返回的信息后相当兴奋，他们为自己转变了想法而庆幸，更为他们实现了另一个星球的和谐而高兴。只是让人意想不到的事情还是出现了。

Professor Ma and his team were delighted at every transmission from Planet X. They congratulated themselves on turning away from the old research and rejoiced that harmony had come to another world. But something no one expected was about to happen.

这天，当大家正在进食合成的食物时，机械长颈鹿突然倒下了，它的机械脖子努力想支撑起它的身体，可是由于长期得不到应有的能量，它已经站不起来了。除了大老鼠带领的老鼠群能够很快地适应 X 星球新的生活方式，未发现有什么异常之外，从

地球上带过来的机械猫、机械马、机械松鼠和机械小鹿等被改造过的动物，都陆陆续续地出现了不同程度的肌肉萎缩。

One day, as everyone was eating their synthesized food, the mechanical giraffe suddenly collapsed. Its mechanical neck strained to hold its body up, but starved of energy for so long, it could not stand up. Apart from the rats, who adapted to the new life on Planet X and showed no signs of distress, the rebuilt animals brought from Earth—the mechanical cat, the horse, the squirrel, the deer—began, one by one, to break down in varying degrees.

死亡的阴影笼罩着整个 X 星球。

The shadow of death fell across Planet X.

机械鼠很难过。有时它会觉得不该带他们越狱到 X 星球的。也许……也许在地球上被消灭前还能吃上一顿饱饭。

The mechanical rat was consumed by sorrow and guilt. Sometimes, it wondered if bringing them on this breakout to Planet X had been a terrible mistake. Perhaps... perhaps they would have been better off staying on Earth, where they might have at least eaten one last full meal before being destroyed.

大家围在一起，守护着这些生病了的动物们，显得无计可施。机械猫头鹰走过来拍了拍机械鼠的肩膀，“没事的，老兄，你已经尽力了，我们都不会怨您，也许这就是我们动物的命吧。”

There was nothing anyone could do but gather around the sick animals and stand guard. The mechanical owl came over and patted the rat on the shoulder. “Easy, old friend. You did all you could. Nobody blames you. Maybe that’s just our fate.”

十、误入星云

Chapter Ten: Into the Nebula

机械鼠望着一个个倒下去的同伴，有点不知所措，又感觉自己该做点什么。

Watching the companions drop one after another, day by day, the mechanical rat didn’t know what to do, but it thought it had to do something for them.

它忽然想到当初实验室的那些培养液，想到方形机器人告诉它的马教授的最新研究成果。这些会不会能帮助这些动物好起来呢？在经过内心纠结之后，机械鼠找到方形机器人向曾经创造出它的马教授求救。

It thought of the culture fluid back in the laboratory, and of what the cube robot had told it about Professor Ma’s latest research. Could any of that help these animals? After a long inward struggle, the mechanical rat went to the cube robot and sent a plea for help to Professor Ma.

马教授收到方形机器人的反馈信息后，带上修复液、实验用品、种子以及一些食品，便和助手余光一同乘坐小型飞船驶向了 X 星球。

Professor Ma received the cube robot’s message and immediately got to work. Packing repair fluid, laboratory supplies, seeds, and some food, he set off to Planet X with his assistant, Yu Guang.

在浩瀚的宇宙中，人类真的很渺小；在浩瀚的宇宙中，人类的智慧真的很强大。

也许在没有完全装备好的飞船里面奔赴另一个星球，本身就有来无回。马教授和余光带着对动物们的愧疚，毅然决然地向着目标出发，向着未知前行。

Humans may be tiny against the vastness of the cosmos, yet their wisdom is an extraordinary force. Professor Ma and Yu Guang set out firmly for the unknown, carrying a heavy burden of guilt toward those animals, even if it was a journey with no return—the spaceship was never fully equipped.

离着 X 星球越来越近了，就在这时，雷达屏幕上出现了一个异常的信号。那信号显示，有什么东西正以极快的速度向他们逼近。随着信号逐渐清晰，一团尘埃正式出现在视野中，随后屏幕上什么都看不见了。原来，飞船误入了星云之中。飞船内部的能量系统遭到了破坏，温度忽高忽低，飞船也被星云裹挟着翻转起来。

They were drawing close to Planet X when an anomaly appeared on the radar, speeding directly toward them. As the signal sharpened, a cloud of dust swallowed the screen, leaving it completely blank. The ship had strayed into a nebula. Its power system was compromised. The temperature lurched from one extreme to the other, and the ship began to tumble, caught firmly in the nebula's grip.

“余光，余光！”教授用力地喊着。

“Yu Guang! Yu Guang!” the professor shouted.

“教授，我在，怎么办？”余光焦急地回答。

“Professor, I'm here. What should we do?” Yu Guang answered, panic lacing his voice.

“控制住方向，一定要冲出去！”

“Hold her steady,” Professor Ma shouted. “We have to break out!”

话未说完，马教授和余光随着飞船旋转起来。

Before the words left Professor Ma's mouth, they were spinning with the ship.

“不好！”在太空飞行器里面监控的机械鼠已经发现了教授的小飞船。同时，它还发现了教授小飞船的异样，机械鼠心里不由得一惊。

“Oh no!” Inside the spacecraft, the mechanical rat had already spotted the professor's small ship and instantly noticed something was wrong. A jolt of worry ran through it.

没有任何思考的余地，机械鼠立即启动太空救援系统，驾驶着太空飞行器向星云飞去。

Without hesitation, the mechanical rat activated the emergency rescue protocols, plunging the spacecraft into the nebula.

十一、极限营救

Chapter Eleven: The Rescue

浩瀚冰冷的宇宙深处，层层叠叠的星际乱流疯狂撕扯着空间：磁场紊乱、引力失控，细碎的粒子风暴呼啸穿梭。

Deep in the freezing vastness of space, layers of interstellar turbulence tore savagely through the void: magnetic fields in chaos, gravity unmoored, and thin particle storms shrieking past.

马教授乘坐的小型飞船在剧烈的气流冲击下，船身来回翻滚，内部警报声刺耳长

鸣。船体外壳不断被碎石撞击，火光四溅。飞船已然彻底失控，随时可能解体坠毁。

Professor Ma's small ship rolled back and forth under the violent currents. Inside, alarms screamed in an endless loop. The hull was struck again and again by debris, sparks flying. The ship was completely out of control, threatening to tear itself apart at any second.

危急关头，机械鼠驾驶的太空飞行器，像冲破风暴的巨鲸，快速朝着翻滚的小型飞船疾驰而去。它通过太空飞行器上先进的算法系统，紧紧锁定住失控飞船的运动轨迹，同时不断微调飞行器的飞行姿态，终于找到了安全的救援切入点。随后，机械鼠果断启动能量释放系统。强劲的能量波从太空飞行器周身层层扩散开来，化作一张巨大而稳固的无形引力防护网，稳稳笼罩住了马教授濒临解体的小型飞船，硬生生在凶险的宇宙绝境中撕开了一条生路。

But the mechanical rat didn't hesitate. It drove its ship into the maelstrom, moving with the heavy grace of a whale breaking through a storm. Running on pure algorithm, it tracked the runaway ship, tweaking its own angle until it was close enough. Then, it unleashed the energy. Layers of power washed out, forming a massive, invisible gravity net that caught the falling ship and pulled it to safety.

待彻底驶出星云危险区，机械鼠立即放缓速度，平稳调整航向，将教授的飞船牢牢地吸附在太空飞行器上，穿越寂静星海，最终把他们安全地带回了 X 星球。

Emerging from the nebula, the rat slowed, pressing the professor's ship tightly against its own. Together, they drifted across the quiet stars, safely back to Planet X.

十二、大结局

Chapter Twelve: The End

马教授和余光在飞船的翻转中受了点伤，但好在问题不大。经过一天的休养后，他们渐渐苏醒了过来。

Professor Ma and Yu Guang were injured in the violent spin, but not seriously. It took a full day for them to slowly regain consciousness.

马教授和余光醒来的第一件事就是赶紧照看在死亡线上挣扎的地球生物们。

The first thing they did when they woke up was rush to help the Earth's creatures.

他给动物们注射了自己研发的修复液等，并提供了充足的能量，动物们也渐渐恢复了往日的生机。

Professor Ma administered the repair fluid and boosted their energy reserves. Gradually, the creatures started to recover.

看着 X 星球繁华有序的地下宫殿，马教授满意地连连点头。微生物正在发酵，植物的种子在陌生的环境中努力生长，废物的处理和能源的利用更加高效。人、动物与机器的和谐共生成为这个新星球的最好融合模式。

Microbes were fermenting, and plant seeds were struggling to grow. Waste was handled and energy used more efficiently than ever. Humans, animals, and machines living side by side in harmony—that was the finest thing this new planet had to show.

他抚摸着这些用动物改造过的机器人，满怀歉意地对它们说：“就让我这老头子用这余生，在这个星球上陪你们一起度过吧。”

Professor Ma nodded again and again in deep satisfaction. He stroked the mechanical creatures, full of regret, and whispered, "Let this old man spend the rest of his life here, with you."

(指导教师 黄雪)

【专家点评】

作为小学生写的科幻小说，这篇作品无疑是很出色的。其完整的故事结构、清晰的道德内核显然远超同龄人的能力，而以非人类的视角讲述人类的故事，则更像一篇科学童话。

整个故事结构完整，起承转合，有反转，有可以引人深思的结局，这在 10-12 岁的作者中就显得凤毛麟角了。

“凭什么人类的命是命，动物的命就不是命？”这让人想起“黑人的命也是命”。说明作者确实思考过一些超越年龄的复杂问题，例如生死、例如种族、例如人类把自己视为造物主的傲慢，以及众生平等的底层世界观。结局没有落入人类拯救者的俗套，也摆脱了猿猴星球式的二元论，生命的形式并不单纯是谁输谁赢，也没有非黑即白的对错，最终必然是基于妥协和协同的另一种进化。

机械鼠、机械生命、星球移民，这些设定很清晰，但过于弱化过程中的技术难点，所以整个故事更像一个科学童话，而不是科幻小说。换句话说，故事是先有点子，然后设定了结局，继而用故事把情节串了起来。但，瑕不掩瑜。

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