

Presentation

After the promise comes the fall. After the fall comes the question: what now?

The Glass Tiger: Cemetery of Illusions is the volume in the trilogy where the game stops being the protagonist and gives way to people. Men and women who reached the edge not from moral weakness, but from believing in an escape that never existed.

In this book, the reader follows a support group made up of people addicted to digital betting games. Each meeting reveals a different story: how they discovered the game, what they did for a living, where they believed they were in control — and the moment they realized they were only trying to outrun their own pain.

This is not a book about turning ruin into spectacle.

It is a book about awareness.

By listening to these accounts, the reader understands that the game doesn't destroy only finances — it warps the perception of time, of hope, and of human relationships. The promise of easy

money reveals itself, in every story, for what it truly is: a postponement of pain that returns multiplied.

With a psychological, humane, and responsible narrative, *The Glass Tiger* shows that rock bottom isn't a single place — it's a silent process. And that getting out doesn't depend on luck, but on recognition, voice, and collective support.

Although set in Brazil, this is a universal story. Because the mechanisms of digital addiction cross borders, cultures, and social classes. And because the illusion of control is a global trap.

This book serves a clear purpose within the trilogy: to teach, without moralizing, that escape doesn't pay. That the game isn't worth it. And that facing pain, as hard as it is, costs less than vanishing in the attempt to avoid it.

The Glass Tiger is the book in which the reader understands, definitively, that there is no possible victory in this game — only the chance to break the cycle before it takes everything.

Enjoy reading!

CHAPTER 1 — THE ARRIVAL

Part 1: Arriving too early

Ricardo arrived too early.

He knew it before he looked at his watch — not by intuition, but by aversion. Arriving early meant brushing up against an interval. And an interval was the one thing his system had always tried to eliminate.

An interval becomes thought.

Thought becomes a crack.

A crack becomes a question.

And a question, in his world, was waste.

He turned off the engine, but he didn't get out.

Across the street, the building looked like it had been designed not to be found. No sign. No promise. No marketing language

pretending to offer comfort. No *you're not alone*. No *today your new life begins*. Nothing.

It irritated him in a very specific way: the way it irritates someone who's used to being seduced by a funnel. He stared at the facade the way you stare at an interface that refuses to show buttons.

"A place that doesn't try to capture you..." he murmured.

The line wasn't admiration. It was diagnosis.

"You didn't come looking for comfort," Lívia said inside him, with that calm that always sounded like an insult.

Ricardo tightened his grip on the steering wheel. The leather pushed back against the pressure like a small defeat.

"I came because they told me to."

"You came because you ran out of any argument worth a damn," she shot back. "And because, for the first time, your logs didn't explain you."

Ricardo smiled — a short smile, humorless.