

## Avatar 1001

### Chapter 1001: Don't Underestimate Your Opponent

Seeing Tang Rou's expression, Ye Xiu made sure to give her a reminder. He had to say something that stunned everyone who heard him.

"Hey, don't underestimate your opponent!" Ye Xiu ran out of his seat and called out to Tang Rou.

Underestimate your opponent?

Xiao Shiqin was heading to the player booths and almost tripped when he heard these words. What was that? It sounded very unfamiliar? How long had it been since he heard someone utter those words?

Xiao Shiqin steadied himself. He couldn't help but turn around and look. After all, he didn't really have a good understanding of Tang Rou's personality. From her performance on stage, Xiao Shiqin couldn't see any reason for Tang Rou to underestimate him. Could it be that after a year away from the Alliance, he had already been ignored to such an extent?

Don't underestimate your enemy. Xiao Shiqin stared blankly for a long while until he saw Tang Rou reach her player booth. Only then did he continue walking.

When he got into his player booth, he had adjusted his mentality. He was an All Star player, who had seen all sorts of storms and waves after all. Something like that wouldn't drive him to his wit's end. However, he didn't lose his vigilance. He had a good grasp of Tang Rou's skill level from her match recordings, but perhaps she was hiding her strength? Or perhaps she had a mysterious trick up her sleeve that she had prepared specifically for him?

Xiao Shiqin carefully pondered over every possibility. It was this mentality that allowed him to become a Master Tactician, who cared deeply about the small things.

Ye Xiu warned Tang Rou not to be careless, but it resulted in Xiao Shiqin putting up his guard.

The match began. The map was Docks Town. When the offline tournament kicked off, the maps chosen for the finals had been announced beforehand. A team like Excellent Era would certainly researched these maps thoroughly. They had no doubts that they'd reach the finals. As for Happy, just in the match against Jade Dynasty, Qiao Yifan had fully utilized the map to his advantage. Just from this alone, it could be seen that Happy didn't dare to be negligent in studying the maps for every match. Thus, their focus naturally wasn't as concentrated as Excellent Era's. Even though the map was new, Excellent Era's understanding of it was most likely deeper than Happy's. The Esports Home issue released on this day had mentioned this point in the pre-match analysis. In addition to this, throughout the broadcast, the commentator hastily did some analysis during the map loading screen.

The Challenger League finals was a very important match. Even the broadcasting side wouldn't slack off. The previous broadcasts were all commentated solo, but for this match, the golden casting duo of the Glory League, Pan Lin and Lin Yibo, were both assigned.

After Pan Lin quickly introduced the advantages and disadvantages each side had for this map, Li Yibo lost no time and commented on how the map could be utilized.

"This Dockside Town carries the tradition of maps chosen by the Alliance. The style is all-around. Fighting in the water, streets, indoors, and so on could all be taken advantage of on this map. But then again, I feel like calling this map Alley Town would be more appropriate?" Li Yibo commented.

"Haha, Coach Li, you're right. This map really should be called Alley Town. Okay, everyone can see that the two characters have loaded in. The one on the upper left corner of the map is Team Happy's Tang Rou. Her character is Soft Mist. The one in the lower right corner is Team Excellent Era's Xiao Shiqin. His character is Life Extinguisher, a character we are all very familiar with. He's left our sight for almost a year now! Now that he's appeared again, I'm sure many of our viewer friends are feeling reminiscent." The commentator Pan Lin said.

"The difference between him and the other players on Excellent Era is that Xiao Shiqin transferred into Excellent Era after Excellent Era was relegated last season. From this point, we can see his determination and foresight." Li Yibo said.

"Yeah, he obviously didn't join Excellent Era to play in the Challenger League. What he's looking at is Excellent Era's future next year." The commentator Pan Lin said.

"At this point, it should be the next half of this year." Li Yibo said.

"But he still has to help Excellent Era win this match first. Right now, the two characters have started moving. Tang Rou's Soft Mist is going straight towards the center, while Xiao Shiqin is moving more strategically." Pan Lin said.

"That's his usual style." Li Yibo said with understanding.

"Yes, I don't think there's a need to say too much about Xiao Shiqin. Then, let's talk about Team Happy's Tang Rou. What are your thoughts, Coach Li?" Pan Lin said.

"Hm, I've been paying attention to this player recently. Her skill is quite good. From what I've heard, there are numerous teams that are interested in her. Her future prospects are boundless!" Li Yibo said.

"Okay, Tang Rou's Soft Mist has already reached the center of the map, but there are no signs of her opponent."

"It seems like she's already realized that her opponent is moving more strategically. She's now having her Soft Mist move around." Pan Lin continued to speak as he watched the match.

"As a Master Tactician, Xiao Shiqin's playstyle is not limited to only one style. His style is dynamic. For a rookie like Tang Rou, who hasn't played Glory for very long, this could be quite fatal." Li Yibo added in a comment. From his omniscient view, he could see that Xiao Shiqin had already located Soft Mist and was currently circling around her.

"It looks like our previous analysis was correct. Excellent Era has a deeper understanding of this map. It seems like they've focused their research towards the finals early on." After seeing the path that Xiao Shiqin took, Li Yibo sighed with sorrow, "On the other hand, Happy's player appears to be a bit lost! A rookie's ability to grasp an unfamiliar map can't compare to a veteran's."

"Good! Right now, Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher has already successfully circled around to Soft Mist's side. Tang Rou still hasn't noticed and is still moving forward. Ah, the terrain up ahead is very wide. Is she trying to letting the opponent find her?" Pan Lin said.

"If this terrain is used properly, she might be harassed to death by the Mechanic!" Li Yibo predicted how things would develop.

"Then what will Xiao Shiqin do? Life Extinguisher is quietly following behind her. Is he going to play dirty? Life Extinguisher hid a Bouncing Mine. It looks like he will be playing dirty! Mechanical Seeker has been sent out. And then..... Air Drop! Life Extinguisher summoned an Air Drop. He's going on the offensive!" Pan Lin said.

The two things nicknamed "Rising Winter Melons" flew above Soft Mist's head. Their stomachs opened and bombs rained down. Soft Mist rolled on the ground. After getting up, she dashed forward. The two "Rising Winter Melons" chased after her. The bombardment of bombs practically landed at her feet. A huge scene exploded behind her. Fire and earth flew everywhere.

The Air Drop was thrown behind her and kept on dropping bombs until the skill's duration ended. The instant the place quieted down, Tang Rou heard a kaka sound. She looked down. A little Mechanical Seeker had run up to her feet. Soft Mist hastily jumped up and her spear leapt at the small robot, creating a huge explosion.

"Tang Rou's reaction speed is very fast, but it's not over yet....."

Pan Lin wasn't able to finish his words, when he saw the airborne Soft Mist suddenly move towards the side.

"Ah, she dodged it??" Pan Lin cried out in astonishment.

From his omniscient view, he obviously saw it very clearly. After the Air Drop and Mechanical Seeker, Xiao Shiqin had thrown out an Air Compressor. This gadget used air pressure to attack the target. When it was initiated, it didn't release any light effects. The only clear warning was a bang, similar to when a champagne bottle was opened. The Mechanical Seeker's explosion covered up that sound, yet even in this situation, Soft Mist was able to evade it.

"How did she find out? How did she move in midair?" Pan Lin continued to be surprised. Usually, Coach Li Yibo would explain. Inviting him over as the guest was for him to interpret these complex interactions!

This time, when Pan Lin cried out, the person to his side was also quiet. He turned to look and saw that Li Yibo was also furrowing his brow in astonishment. It seemed like he didn't know either. The commentator didn't have to see through it and talk because these complicated situations were for the specialist to interpret. Li Yibo was their specialist in this case. If he couldn't see through it, it would be a bit embarrassing!

Pan Lin had already thrown the question out though. Even if Li Yibo couldn't answer it, he still had to give some sort of answer. He had the broadcast replay that scene for him. He carefully studied it, while the battle continued. Soft Mist landed on the ground and headed towards the Air Compressor.

Life Extinguisher's whereabouts had been exposed. He turned around and ran. Soft Mist chased after him; her foot landed on the Bouncing Mine that Xiao Shiqin had buried earlier.

The Bouncing Mine exploded. Soft Mist rolled, negating the knockback from the explosion. Soft Mist got up and continued to chase after Life Extinguisher, ignoring the scraps from the Bouncing Mine flying at her.

The broadcast seized the moment to play a quick cut of when Soft Mist leaped to avoid the Mechanical Seeker and her dodged the Air Compressor. The camera focused, zooming in on the instant Soft Mist's spear hit the Mechanical Seeker. Then, the replay went into slo-mo. Everyone saw it clearly. After the Mechanical Seeker blew up, the spear that should have been retracted suddenly moved sideways and stabbed into the ground. Soft Mist used this as leverage to quickly move through the air, allowing her to avoid that Air Compressor.

"In this instant, it wasn't possible for Tang Rou to have seen that Air Compressor, so there's only one possibility. When the Mechanical Seeker exploded, she heard the sound of the Air Compressor starting up." Li Yibo explained.

"This..... Is that possible?" Pan Lin asked.

"Uh, very experienced players might be able to differentiate between the sounds." Li Yibo said.

"But Tang Rou is only a rookie!" Pan Lin exclaimed.

"It looks like this rookie has extraordinary talent!" Li Yibo could only explain, but this explanation was actually correct. Tang Rou really did have incredible hearing.

Chapter 1002: Night-Blooming Cereus

The battle was still ongoing. After taking the chance to broadcast a slow motion replay, the camera quickly returned to the match. Pan Lin and Li Yibo hastily turned their attention to the match after analysing that quick exchange.

Against the damage from the Bouncing Mine's fragments, Soft Mist chased after Life Extinguisher's disappearing figure as the latter turned the corner. For Tang Rou, what was around that corner was unknown, but the audience had an omniscient viewpoint and could clearly see what was lying in wait. When Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher turned the corner, he immediately threw down an Electromagnetic Coil.

Electromagnetic Coil wasn't a trap which only triggered when stepped on. The effects of this skill was similar to a Ghostblade's Ghost Boundary, having an area of effect. It was just that compared to the flashy effects that a Ghost Boundary unleashed, the Electromagnetic Coil's power was much more discrete.

The clueless Tang Rou only cared about catching up as soon as possible with Soft Mist, eliciting a round of discussion from the spectating Pan Lin and Li Yibo.

"Tang Rou seems a little too hasty. If she pursues him like this, then won't she just fall straight into Xiao Shiqin's trap?" Pan Lin said.

"Yeah, any experienced player probably wouldn't engage a Mechanic with this sort of complex terrain. Mechanics have all sorts of strange gadgets, which are easily concealed in this sort of environment. Xiao

Shiqin has very successfully led Tang Rou into an area where he can utilize his advantages to the maximum," Li Yibo said.

"Tang Rou has already reached the corner." As the match developed, Pan Lin's speech quickened as well. "Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher is actually waiting right around the corner, definitely waiting for Tang Rou to step into Electromagnetic Coil's range to attack. However, with his current point of view, it's not possible for him to track Tang Rou's movements, so how will Xiao Shiqin know when to attack?"

"She's in!" Pan Lin yelled. And in the data shown on the broadcast, one of the numbers immediately skyrocketed: Tang Rou's weight.

"Ah! Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher struck at practically the same time. How did he do it?" Pan Lin yelled.

"Probably by the sound of her footsteps..." This question wasn't hard for Li Yibo to answer. Many pro players were able to use the sound of another's footsteps to judge the distance between them.

"Rocket Punch! A Rocket Punch flew out. Under the effects of the increased weight, Soft Mist's movements are slower, making it harder for her to dodge."

"Ah! She's..."

"Dragon Breaks the Ranks!"

"Tang Rou resolutely activated Dragon Breaks the Ranks as soon as Soft Mist stepped into the Electromagnetic Coil's range. She didn't even bother to dodge the Rocket Punch sent out by Life Extinguisher!"

Soft Mist charged at Life Extinguisher with her spear raised to cast Dragon Breaks the Ranks. Because of the effects of the Electromagnetic Coil, Dragon Breaks the Ranks didn't have the usual amount of overwhelming speed, but they were at such close range already; how many steps did it take to turn a corner, after all? Dragon Breaks the Ranks might be slower than normal, but it still arrived at Life Extinguisher's side in the blink of an eye. The Rocket Punch did hit Soft Mist, but Dragon Breaks the Ranks had a higher priority than many grabs. Rocket Punch's impact couldn't do anything to stop its momentum.

Xiao Shiqin couldn't continue his offense, hurriedly making Life Extinguisher dodge, avoiding the Dragon Breaks the Ranks.

As for Soft Mist, she had used the charge to force herself out of the range of the Electromagnetic Coil through pure brute force. Without hesitation, she followed up by stabbing a Dragon Tooth at Life Extinguisher.

Life Extinguisher rolled to avoid it, and quickly opened up his Rotor Wings upon getting back to his feet. With a single rise and fall, he flew over the wall. During his descent, he even turned around to toss a grenade back. Who would've expected that, with just this glance, Xiao Shiqin got a glimpse of Soft Mist's right elbow twisting back, her spear dragging along, as a magical pulse began to swirl over the spear and shoot towards the tip.

The grenade landed and the spear stabbed forth, the magical pulse turning into a massive dragon. All that was blocking its way was a wall, so it smashed right through!

With an immense boom, the fierce Rising Dragon Soars the Sky tore through the wall. The skill ended there, but Soft Mist had already charged through the hole in the wall, the spear in her hand pointed at Life Extinguisher.

Wasting a powerful move just to break a wall? And before, preferring to use a Dragon Breaks the Ranks to push through the electromagnetic field instead of just stepping back a bit?

Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher had activated an Accelerator to hurry the hell out of there because the situation had spiralled out of his control a little. Tang Rou's extremely straightforward way of dealing with things had destroyed his rhythm completely.

As for Pan Lin and Li Yibo, they weren't able to say a single word about Tang Rou's choice of action. It was only until this cat and mouse situation that didn't have much to it that they realized that they had to continue commentating.

"This Tang Rou... er..." Pan Lin tried to formulate a response.

"It's crude," Li Yibo then said with confidence, "But she managed to succeed."

"Now Xiao Shiqin needs to adjust his rhythm. I trust that what happened just now will make him rethink his judgement of his current opponent. The way to deal with this participant, Tang Rou, how would you put this... it's not something on a technical level. Xiao Shiqin needs to get a better understanding of his opponent." Pan Lin said.

"Yes." Li Yibo nodded continuously from beside him. "Taking such a choice of action in this situation requires extreme courage, and Xiao Shiqin wasn't completely prepared for that. However, the match has only just begun; let's wait and see what happens next!"

"Life Extinguisher's Accelerator has ended, but Life Extinguisher managed to gain a safe distance, using the speed advantage given by the skill. Soft Mist hasn't had much of a chance to use any of her Chasers, so she has no buffs at the moment. I believe that Xiao Shiqin won't give her the opportunity in the future either," Pan Lin said.

"Yes, after seeing the headstrong attitude of participant Tang Rou, I feel that Xiao Shiqin will avoid facing Tang Rou head-on, continuing to use a more strategic playstyle," Li Yibo said.

"Yes, now he's beginning to move strategically again. Let's see what sorts of arrangements Xiao Shiqin has in mind this time?" Pan Lin said.

Offstage, at Happy's bench, Chen Guo had thought that Tang Rou had this match in the bag. If it were any of their previous opponents, they probably would've been hunted down and crushed in shock by that relentless offense. Yet this match, Tang Rou's opponent was truly worthy of his identity as a top pro player. He didn't panic at all when Tang Rou destroyed his tactical rhythm, decisively retreating and bringing the match back to how it had been in the beginning with ease. He was still running and Tang Rou was still chasing, but in this game of cat and mouse, the initiative had switched hands twice already. At first, Xiao Shiqin was guiding the match, the initiative in his hands, then when Tang Rou mucked up his rhythm with pure brute force, she had snatched the initiative from him. Now, somehow, the initiative was back in Xiao Shiqin's hands.

The two characters darted about the Dockside Town, Xiao Shiqin using his gadgets in a continuous offense that Tang Rou found impossible to guard against. In comparison, she didn't seem to be able to do much of anything. She didn't manage to snatch a single chance to close in on her opponent like before. Who had the advantage was obvious; you could even say that Tang Rou was in the palm of Xiao Shiqin's hand.

"What... what should we do?" Chan Guo, watching offstage, was getting extremely anxious. However, from her point of view, it seemed to be futile. Xiao Shiqin's playstyle seemed impossible to beat and she couldn't think of anyway that Tang Rou could turn this around.

Beside her, Happy's members were all very solemn, obviously not able to see a way out of this situation either. However, Tang Rou was someone who liked to create miracles. Accomplishing the impossible was her hobby. That's why everyone still held a thread of hope in their hearts, hoping that she would create another miracle to surprise everyone.

Yet, it never came...

The pace never experienced another change throughout the battle and, bit by bit, Soft Mist's health was chipped away until she fell.

Chen Guo couldn't believe her eyes.

It wasn't like she had thought it was impossible for Tang Rou to lose. She just didn't think it was possible for a match with Tang Rou in it to be like this. If you used a single word to describe it, then there was no more suitable word than depressing. The pleasant surprise that had erupted at the beginning didn't change the mood of the match at all.

Chen Guo watched as Tang Rou walked out from the player booth and off stage towards Happy's bench. Boos accompanied her all the way over and Excellent Era's fans didn't show any sort of mercy for a beautiful lady like Tang Rou. When Happy first appeared, Soft Mist was the core reason for the defeat of the face-slapping challengers. For these people, their hatred of Tang Rou was only second to Ye Xiu. Seeing Tang Rou lose in such a helpless way, the stadium was filled with cheer and Excellent Era's fans were revelling in her misfortune.

"This is only the beginning!"

"Who's next?"

"Now that's what disparity means!"

Excellent Era fans yelled aggressively, putting all their effort into making a ruckus, especially those in the section of the audience closest to Happy, doing their utmost to boo Happy. Excellent Era's win in the first round had lit a flame in these repressed fans' hearts. All this time, they had been waiting for Happy to be humiliated, yet that had come back to slap them in the face repeatedly. Now, their team had personally come to punish Happy, how could they not be excited?

An Wenyi and Luo Ji both looked around in surprise, obviously not prepared for this sort of situation. Never mind those two, even Wei Chen looked a little pale. Back when he was in the pro league, it wasn't nearly as impressive. The Challenger League didn't have any away or home game differences, but with

the influence they had as a powerhouse, Excellent Era managed to turn Liulisong Sports Arena into something like their home turf.

"It's so bloody loud. How come it feels like we're in Excellent Dynasty Convention Center?" In the audience, a person seemed to be very annoyed by the cheering of the Excellent Era fans beside him, complaining as he pulled his hat lower. The so called Excellent Dynasty Convention Center was the stadium that Excellent Era played in for their home games. This person didn't seem to be a stranger to this sort of cheer.

"There's nothing we can do about it, Happy is losing rather terrifically, after all!" Another person said before tilting his head to the side. "What are you thinking, Little Gao?"

"Ah... Probably..." The one who was referred to as Little Gao also had his hat on very low, just like the rest of his companions, gazing at the familiar figure on Happy's bench.

Don't give in! Yifan.

Chapter 1003: Glory Really is Hard

The three hiding in the audience carefully spectating the match were three members of Team Tiny Herb, Xu Bin, Liu Xiaobie, and Gao Yingjie.

Although Liulisong Sports Arena wasn't Tiny Herb's home stadium, City B was Team Tiny Herb's turf. Hearing so many people cheering with such excitement for another team on their own turf made Liu Xiaobie, who was born and raised in City B feel extremely uncomfortable.

"Happy didn't take out too much of their opponent's health. The next few rounds will be rather hard on them." Xu Bin was the one whose focus was constantly on the match. After all, he had only transferred to Team Tiny Herb for a year now and he wasn't a local either, so in regards to emotions, he wasn't as involved as Liu Xiaobie.

"Yeah, I would never have expected..." Liu Xiaobie turned his attention back to the match, also expressing his surprise. Who in the pro circle had gotten to know Soft Mist earlier than them? Back then, it was still when the tenth server had just opened and everyone had been playing on level twenty something smurfs when they had first met this young lady.

The Soft Mist was a complete newbie back then, and now? In under a year... It was because of this sort of history that Tiny Herb's players didn't dare to underestimate her. In reality, if Tang Rou wasn't an irregularity among Glory players, she would probably be Liu Xiaobie and co's teammate by now - which Glory player would reject an invitation from a champion team like Tiny Herb?

"Who do you think will go next for Happy?" Xu Bin wondered. They weren't unfamiliar with Happy's players at all. In the previous battle for the newer bosses, the pro players had rotated in teams to fight off Happy's players, and gotten to understand them. One should remember, if two teams didn't enter the playoffs, they only crossed swords twice a year. Against Happy, they probably fought once a week during the battle for bosses.

"Yifan probably won't appear in the group arena, right?" Liu Xiaobie said after glancing at Gao Yingjie. He knew that these two young men were special to each other, and knew that the reason Gao Yingjie had decided to come today was to support Qiao Yifan.

"With the current situation in Happy, they just might have him play," Xu Bin said. When he joined, Qiao Yifan had already left the team, so they didn't have much interaction. However, after Happy rose to infamy, this name was often mentioned in Team Tiny Herb and Xu Bin knew who he was now.

"It's not Qiao Yifan..." It was then that Gao Yingjie shook his head, because he had already seen that the member of Happy that stood up to go onstage wasn't Qiao Yifan.

Mo Fan After his match against Mysterious Fantasy, this was the second official match of his since coming to Happy.

"How is it? How do you feel in this sort of competitive atmosphere?" Ye Xiu looked at Mo Fan, who stood up in preparation to go onstage.

Mo Fan originally planned to ignore everyone and head off to the player booth. Upon hearing Ye Xiu's words, he hesitated, but still stopped. He didn't even turn his head, just standing there and thinking for a good while before replying, "Noisy." After that, he walked towards the booth.

By then, Tang Rou had returned from the booth and when they brushed past each other, they didn't interact much. Tang Rou said, "Good luck" and Mo Fan simply nodded in response.

Tang Rou, having returned to the bench, wore an expression of disappointment. Chen Guo hesitated and didn't manage to say any words of comfort in the end. This match's situation really was rather ugly. Considering Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher's remaining life, Tang Rou had been crushed. It didn't even count as a morale victory, which made things very hard for Chen Guo.

"How do you feel?" She heard Ye Xiu ask directly and simply as she hesitated.

"Disappointed," Tang Rou replied.

"Heh, don't worry about it. No one in the entire pro circle would dare say for certain that they can win against a player of Xiao Shiqin's caliber. You win some, you lose some," Ye Xiu said.

"I know that." Tang Rou nodded. She wasn't naive enough to believe that there really was such a thing as being invincible. Walking next to the river, whose shoes wouldn't get wet? That was the way competition was.

"But I was helpless against him," Tang Rou said. This was the point she was truly disappointed about. Throughout the entire match, she couldn't grasp any sort of advantage, being led around by the nose. This sort of helplessness was a terrible feeling.

"If this was something that could be solved with just a few words, then I would've told you them before you even went up. The person you were up against is one of the best in Glory. If he had any fatal flaws that just anyone could exploit, then he wouldn't be where he is now. Work on improving yourself, in all aspects. There'll be no more shortcuts from here," Ye Xiu said.

Tang Rou gazed at the replay shown by the projector of the match just now. However, there really wasn't anything to see in the last match. The opportunity Tang Rou had created for herself at the

beginning of the match might count as interesting, but considering the results of the match, it was much less impactful.

"Glory... Really is hard..." Tang Rou sighed, gazing at the powerful yet helpless figure of Soft Mist.

"That's precisely why it's fun, no?" Ye Xiu asked.

"Yeah." Tang Rou nodded, her gaze already turning to watch the second match that was about to start. Her defeat had been devastating, but it would also provoke her determination to pursue this. She was already focused on the next match, ready to learn what she could from it.

As the hologram was projected, the second match officially began. The map wouldn't change in the group arena, but the spawn point would change randomly, but would usually stay in opposing corners.

"Deception, huh..." Xiao Shiqin gazed at the second player on Happy's side. Since this was only his second official match, the amount of info they had on Mo Fan was pitiful. However, just that one match had fully displayed Mo Fan's style.

Xiao Shiqin had studied that match in depth, but he still didn't dare to let his guard down.

The last match was against Tang Rou, an opponent that appeared so often that there was a surplus of data for him to research. From Xiao Shiqin's view, Tang Rou's playstyle didn't have any strategic element to it. It used a simple and crude method to destroy an opponent's rhythm and build up a new one herself. In this, if she ever managed to succeed, her opponent would lose the initiative. Speaking mechanically, her ability didn't lose to any pro player.

Xiao Shiqin had thought he managed to fully understand Tang Rou's style, but who would've thought that in the match against Tang Rou, his rhythm had still been destroyed by her. That unreasonable and extremely offensive play style displayed a persistence that Xiao Shiqin had not expected at all. It was a good thing that he wasn't some random player, but a veteran. After having his rhythm destroyed by Tang Rou, the one who built a new one up wasn't Tang Rou, but himself.

With this prior experience, Xiao Shiqin had to revise his prior judgement. Did he hold back too much on his estimation of Happy's strength?

If this was true for Tang Rou, who they had a lot of data on and had done a lot of research into, then could Mo Fan, who they only had one match worth of data on, be hiding some huge potential?

"Okay, now the match has started. Xiao Shiqin is still choosing to move strategically. As for his opponent, Team Happy's Mo Fan, has only played one match in the offline matches, or rather, the entire Challenger League. Coach Li, did you watch that match?" Pan Lin began the discussion as the match began.

"Of course, that match left quite a lasting impression on me. It can be seen that this participant, Mo Fan, has extreme patience, and has an accurate understanding of when to attack and when to retreat," Li Yibo said.

"Heh, actually, this character's name, Deception, I believe many know, belongs to the infamous scrap-picker of the Heavenly Domain. Coach Li, do you think his playstyle and habits were developed through his scrap-picking?" Pan Li asked.

"I think that it's very likely," Li Yibo said confidently. "Patience, timing, being able to execute a full retreat, these are all very important skills a scrap-picker should have.

"However, I think we shouldn't spend too much time on this topic," Pan Lin said.

"Yes, let's watch the match." Li Yibo didn't continue to speak about it either. After all, scrap-picking wasn't an honorable activity. Talking about the art in scrap-picking here wasn't a good idea.

Both sides had decided to move strategically, moving in a roundabout method towards the center of the map.

The place where the two characters should meet was currently devoid of life. As for Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher? He had stopped a little ways away from this area. His character didn't reveal himself, but instead sent out an Electron Eye, that drifted along the wall and over.

The range view of the Electron Eye wasn't as wide as the characters. In the limited shot, Xiao Shiqin looked around carefully. Then suddenly, snowflakes appeared in the shot and his view turned back to normal. Electron Eye's view had disappeared.

"As expected of an observant scrap-picker!!" Pan Lin cried out in astonishment.

"Yeah, he spotted even such a tiny Electron Eye. What terrifying observation skills," Li Yibo agreed.

"And from such a distance, such a small target, his shuriken was extremely precise!" Pan Lin added.

"This match seems to be a game of cat and mouse, but who the cat is and who the mouse is hasn't been decided just yet!" Li Yibo exclaimed.

Chapter 1004: Ninja and Mechanic

"Oh? Life Extinguisher has started to move." He had originally thought that the two players would need more time to figure out their opponent's location, but it looked like Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher made the first clear move. Life Extinguisher turned around, went into a secluded alleyway off to the side, and began advancing forward resolutely.

Pan Lin saw the alley. The direction that Life Extinguisher was heading towards was very obvious. Pan Lin started getting excited: "This direction... Life Extinguisher is trying to circle around Deception. Xiao Shiqin is already aware of Deception's location. He found out after that Electron Eye. Just what did he see?"

The broadcast immediately replayed the scene from the Electron Eye. Everyone's eyes went wide, but up until it was destroyed, no one saw anything eye catching.

"How did Xiao Shiqin do it? Coach Li?" Pan Lin asked.

When Li Yibo watched the replay, he had watched even more seriously than anyone else, because he knew that if Pan Lin couldn't figure it out, the problem would be thrown his way. That was his responsibility as a consultant, but this time, Li Yibo really didn't find anything from this replay. When Pan

Lin asked this question, Li Yibo grunted as if he were about to reply, but then he suddenly said: "Wait, let's take a look at Mo Fan's Deception first."

Mo Fan's Deception suddenly started moving. He had been crouching down on the corner of a rooftop. At this moment, he drew back from the corner, but he didn't get up. He simply climbed in this way onto another rooftop.

"Does Mo Fan know Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher is moving towards him?" Pan Lin cried out in a surprise. Deception's movements were like a praying mantis hunting its prey.

From the omniscient view, the viewers watching could see the movements of the two characters and didn't dare to breathe. It was as if saying something would reveal the hidden movements of the two sides, but in the stadium, Excellent Era's fans were jumping and cheering madly because if this scene continued to develop like this, Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher would be the ambusher.

This was also why the competitors were sound-isolated from the outside crowd during a match. If not, a warning from a third party could affect the outcome of the match.

"Life Extinguisher is closing in. It looks like his target is obvious. Xiao Shiqin knows that the other side is hiding on this rooftop! But the problem is, that was before. Deception is no longer at that position."

"Life Extinguisher is still moving forward. Oh..."

When Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher was about to reach his destination, he looked like he was about to send attacks towards that rooftop. Because of his class's features, Life Extinguisher didn't need to approach. Right when Life Extinguisher was fiddling around with who knew what mechanical tools, Deception activated the Disappearing Body Technique and slowly climbed down noiselessly from the rooftop behind Life Extinguisher.

Cut Throat!

Deception initiated with an Assassin skill. His knife slid across Life Extinguisher's neck, and blood spurted out as a ray of cold light flew out. Xiao Shiqin only just noticed. Life Extinguisher didn't turn his head back and immediately rolled. However, Mo Fan wasn't slow. With a Broken Flash, he kicked the fleeing Life Extinguisher up into the air.

Storm Shuriken!

Deception swung his hands and a storm of shurikens shot towards the airborne Life Extinguisher. The shurikens wove a net. Let alone in the air, it would have been difficult to dodge even while standing on flat ground.

Life Extinguisher was hit by multiple shurikens. During this time, Deception had closed in. He swung his ninjato and struck Life Extinguisher with Flame Cut. Bang!

At the same time Deception cut Life Extinguisher, Xiao Shiqin had already counterattacked. Even though he was unable to dodge the cut, he was able to turn his body and fire a merciless gunshot at Deception.

It was only a normal attack, so the damage could be tolerated. Mo Fan seemed to ignore it. After getting shot, he leaped up and Bird Fell onto Life Extinguisher.

Boom!

When Bird Fall hit Life Extinguisher, a flame burst forth. That obviously didn't originate from Bird Fall. Life Extinguisher had stealthily thrown a grenade, which exploded when Bird Fall hit.

Life Extinguisher crashed into the ground because of Bird Fall, but Deception could not follow up. The shockwave from the grenade's explosion flung Deception to the side too.

"Beautiful!" Li Yibo shouted, "The timing of that grenade was too perfect. Everyone, look. If this grenade had exploded earlier, Deception's Bird Fall wouldn't have landed. The shockwave of the explosion has lower priority than Bird Fall. Deception's attack would have hit Life Extinguisher, and Deception would have dropped to the ground along with Life Extinguisher. However, by having the explosion come immediately after Bird Fall hit, Deception was sent flying away, unable to continue his combo."

"Shadow Clone Technique!" Pan Lin suddenly roared.

Deception suddenly used Shadow Clone Technique, instantly teleporting to Life Extinguisher's side, but before he could attack, Life Extinguisher raised his arm. His punch seemed to instantly expand as it flew towards Deception.

Mo Fan reacted extremely quickly. Deception stepped to the side and the Rocket Punch flew past him. By the time he turned back, Life Extinguisher had already rolled to the side. In his original location was a small gadget instead.

Bang!

Air Compressor's unique sound effect was extremely distinct. A high pressure air blast was released. With the distance between them, Deception had no way of avoiding it and was instantly sent flying into a wall.

Life Extinguisher half squatted on the ground. His hands never stopped to rest. Mechanical Seeker, Air Drop, Predator, Cruiser... All sorts of offensive Mechanic gadgets barraged Deception. At the same time, under the effects of an Amplifier, all damage from his skills was instantly doubled.

Boom boom boom boom boom.....

All sorts of noise erupted. Deception had only just crashed into the wall, and in the next second, he was covered by fire and light. Apart from gasping at Xiao Shiqin's combo, nothing else could be said. He had clearly been the one ambushed, but a short moment later, he was the one dealing more damage to the ambusher.

What could be done? This was a game after all. If this was real life, Deception slitting his throat would have been enough to instantly kill him, but in the game, life was a calculable statistic. A sneak attack would only let you seize the initiative. It wouldn't let you win with a single strike.

Excellent Era's fans had been worried for Xiao Shiqin the previous minute. Now, they were cheering again. The ones closest to Happy continued to shout.

"Did you see that? That's true skill! Skill!!!!"

"Fucking scrap picker, go pick up trash!"

Just when the crowd was riled up, Life Extinguisher stopped attacking. The numerous bright lights receded. In the hole blasted apart by this fierce wave of attacks, there was no Deception to be seen. The only thing that lay in the hole was a charred scarecrow.

Ninjutsu - Body Replacement Technique!

Body Replacement Technique and Shadow Clone Technique were similar, but because the substitute was a scarecrow, it was easy to distinguish it from the real body. It was mostly used as an escape tool. However, in the pro scene, there was no such thing as an absolute escape. A winner had to be decided in a match. Body Replacement Technique was often used like Shadow Clone Technique in this case. It was the sign of a sneak attack or a counterattack.

As soon as Xiao Shiqin realized something wasn't right, he immediately stopped attacking.

Where did Deception's real body go? Life Extinguisher spun around in a circle, but he didn't see any signs of Deception.

The teleportation range of Body Replacement Technique wasn't very large. Deception should be within his line of sight, but he wasn't. That could only mean one possibility!

The earth beneath Life Extinguisher suddenly started rumbling. A blade leapt up out of the ground. However, Xiao Shiqin already knew what was coming. When the effect of Underground Tunneling Technique was cancelled, Life Extinguisher had used Rotor Wings to fly up into the air.

Underground Tunneling Technique missed. Life Extinguisher immediately threw a grenade as a congratulatory gift. Deception hastily dodged and threw several shurikens at Life Extinguisher, but as the number one Mechanic, how could Xiao Shiqin's control over Rotor Wings be questioned? Life Extinguisher weaved around in the air, dodging all of Deception's shurikens.

Mo Fan saw that he couldn't get anything more and began retreating, but with the other side looking down from above, it wouldn't be easy to run. He could only use a skill: Ninjutsu - Smoke Bomb.

Thick purple smoke pervaded the area. The user of the skill would not be affected by the effects. Mo Fan had his Deception turn around and run. However, Xiao Shiqin immediately had his Life Extinguisher fly lower to the ground. The air flow induced by the rotating Rotor Wings dispersed the thick smoke. Not long afterwards, Deception was uncovered.

Mo Fan saw that quietly slipping away was impossible. He quickly formed a hand seal. While the cover from the smoke bomb had yet to be completely blown away, he activated Shadow Dance.

Upon seeing this, Xiao Shiqin had Life Extinguisher throw down an Electromagnetic Coil and then used a Rocket Propellor. Despite having the absolute speed advantage, he didn't retreat. Instead, he continued to throw down all sorts of tools in preparation to face Shadow Dance directly.

Mo Fan didn't mind. His goal was still to retreat. Shadow Dance was merely a distraction. Seeing that Life Extinguisher's attention had been attracted, his real body immediately ran outside of the range of Shadow Dance's heart, causing the numerous shadow clones to disappear, but then several Rising Winter Melons hovered over his head and exploded. The skills wantonly used to contest Shadow Dance weren't wasted. They actually headed straight for Deception.

## Chapter 1005: Missing the Crucial Opportunity

"No wonder Xiao Shiqin is one of the Master Tacticians of Glory. His ability to switch targets is very quick and fluid. All sorts of gadgets are rushing towards Deception again, while Life Extinguisher is not in a hurry to head over. He's just like a general devising a plan. Being such an excellent Master Tactician, wouldn't he be even more outstanding if he were a Summoner, Coach Li?" Pan Lin said.

"Haha, I know what you mean, but I believe a pro player with qualities like Xiao Shiqin would be able to produce great results no matter what class he picked."

Li Yibo's answer was fairly evasive, so Pan Lin promptly gave a laugh as he caught on. "Haha, that's very true."

"Deception is now trapped by Life Extinguisher's attacks. Does he have any method to escape? The Body Replacement Technique is currently on cooldown. Oh, there's the Shadow Clone Technique! Deception used Shadow Clone Technique. Ah, it's unfortunate... The Shadow Clone Technique didn't allow to let him escape from Life Extinguisher's attacks." Pan Lin said.

"It seems like Xiao Shiqin was ready for all these methods and enlarged the effective area of his attacks. He should be starting to shrink it now." Li Yibo said.

"As expected, the attacks are focusing in on the true Deception. Ay, if Deception's current body is the substitute, while the substitute is the real him, wouldn't this be an opportunity?"

"Ah!" Pan Lin cried out after finishing his sentence because the Deception that was surrounded by attacks was instantly destroyed. It was impossible for any character to be so weak. Evidently, his theory had been correct. Deception actually used a clone to pretend to escape. This was done so he could lure Xiao Shiqin away. His real body would only start to take action when he got into attack range.

"Haha, Mo Fan actually did it, but the results don't seem to be too good!" Li Yibo said.

"True... Xiao Shiqin's target switching is truly too fluid and too beautiful!" Pan Lin gasped in admiration. In reality, this was because Xiao Shiqin's reactions were a lot quicker than the commentators. When Pan Lin was still talking about his theory, Life Extinguisher had already started to adjust his attacks. When Pan Lin cried out "Ah!", the attacks were already heading towards Deception's real body. The clone was simply taken down in passing as it was still within range.

Deception continued to suffer under Life Extinguisher's continuous attacks. All kinds of gadgets emerged nonstop: ones flying from the sky, ones scurrying along the ground, and even ones coming out from underground. Deception was dodging and running, but he couldn't even find any opportunities to escape, let alone retaliating.

The broadcast gave a close-up shot of Deception's Body Replacement Technique cooldown. Under the current circumstances, apart from waiting for the rescue skill to come off cooldown, there seemed to be no way out.

Everyone looked at the stopwatch and counted quietly in their heads.

Three, two, one.....

The clock flashed, and the Body Replacement Technique went off cooldown. Deception's hands started to form the hand signs. The action was so quick that it seemed like a blur for everyone else. His silhouette shook. After the fog scattered, all that was left behind was a straw dummy. At the same time, Life Extinguisher's focused attacks started to expand and increased in range.

Deception's straw dummy didn't attract any fire power. On the contrary, his real body started to receive attacks the moment it reappeared. . Although the attacks were weaker than before, there were only one or two seconds of peace before the attacks focused on him again. The lonely straw dummy was left in its original spot all by itself, and none of the attacks bothered to strike it.

"Xiao Shiqin was vigilant about this and calculated the opponent's cooldown time. This is one of the biggest differences between a pro player and a normal player." Li Yibo sighed at once.

Even though he had waited for the life-saving skill for so long, it didn't manage to save him in the end. Even though there was only one opponent, Mo Fan felt as if he were surrounded by tens of thousands of troops. No, it was even more serious than that. When he was scrap picking, although he was actually surrounded by many, they might not necessarily attack him. The scrap picking areas tended to be areas of conflict, so the players were too busy clawing at each other's necks. As a result, they didn't tend to scrap pickers as much.

However, there was only one opponent, so the focus of Xiao Shiqin's attacks was extremely obvious. Mo Fan tried to control Deception to break out using whatever methods he could think of, but none of them worked. It only took a single person to create such an impenetrable net. It has been a long time since Mo Fan had felt so nervous.

No one was born an expert. Mo Fan had been a noob before too. At the time, he was constantly put in dangerous situations where he was isolated and surrounded by enemies. Slips happened quite a few times. However, as he continued to improve, he could do as he liked in chaotic battlefields. Even if there were occasional slip ups, there were a lot of reasons for it. At least, he had never felt so nervous or felt a sense of crisis again.

Despite having only one opponent attacking him, Mo Fan felt as if the pressure of being surrounded by danger during his days as a noob had returned: He wanted to leave, but there was no way out.

Was this the end?

Amidst all kinds of explosions, Life Extinguisher's silhouette was faintly discernible, and his whereabouts were still rather ambiguous.

If he couldn't escape, what about attacking him?

When the thought popped up in his head, the silhouette appeared among the lights once again. Mo Fan subconsciously controlled Deception to throw a Shuriken from his hand.

Xiao Shiqin was cautiously controlling his skills. He had witnessed Mo Fan's excellent escaping techniques. Mo Fan could find opportunities at the slightest opening. However... he obviously lacked experience in high-level matches. If he didn't use the Body Replacement Technique right away, and left it available to use, it would have made things much harder for Xiao Shiqin. If a skill was used and it failed, it would be useless, but if it stayed unused, it would always stay a threat. The opponent would

have one more option to be wary of. Unfortunately, he used it immediately. Next, the cooldown for Shadow Clone Technique was almost up. What would he do?

While Xiao Shiqin was thinking about this matter, something flashed on his screen. As a veteran, he didn't attempt to work out what it was, and controlled Life Extinguisher to dodge aside. When he spun his view to see what it had been, he saw that it was a Shuriken.

Not good!

Xiao Shiqin's heart tightened, this dodge resulted in a small pause in his attacks. If this was a normal opponent, they might not be able to grab this chance, but this guy was an escape artist. Would he let go of such an opportunity that he had created?

Xiao Shiqin hastily attempted to correct it, but as he expected, dodging the unexpected attack caused a tiny mishap in his rhythm. Mo Fan was able to grab onto this moment, and Deception's silhouette rushed out of the fires of battle in the blink of an eye.

"Sigh! It looks like I'll have to put in a lot of effort again..." Xiao Shiqin thought, but he didn't expect that Deception didn't leave after rushing out of his barrage. Deception flicked his hands and several more Shurikens flew out. Deception himself also followed closely behind.

He wants to attack!

Xiao Shiqin realized that Mo Fan wasn't planning to escape. After looking at the skills he had available, he realized that majority of them had been thrown out already. Deception had left them in the dust.

A skill that was used was equal to nothing! Xiao Shiqin was thinking about it just moments before, but he was now put in a similar situation.

Flame Cut!

Deception slashed down with a Flame Cut from behind the Shurikens. Life Extinguisher jumped aside, and activated the Rotor Wings to start to move. However, before he could move another step, Deception instantly dashed in front of him.

Shadow Clone Technique!

Mo Fan used it to block Xiao Shiqin's path. When he appeared, an attack was launched by a series of quick hand signs. He didn't give Xiao Shiqin any opportunity to guess which was the real character.

Ninja Technique: Hundred Streams!

Several streams of water shot towards Life Extinguisher like arrows. Life Extinguisher dodged, but this was exactly what Deception had anticipated. Deception jumped and stomped on Life Extinguisher's shoulders with a Bird Fall. The moment he pushed down, he swung out the rope's end on his ninjato. He was able to accurately loop it around Life Extinguisher's neck with a Body Bind Technique and threw him into the ground ruthlessly.

"He caught him! Deception caught Life Extinguisher! Xiao Shiqin is unable to get away this time." The commentator, Pan Lin, cried out. The stadium bubbled with excitement, Deception was completely suppressed just moments before, and he was able to suddenly strike back. Audiences loved these quick

changes in pace the most. Of course, this wouldn't include Excellent Era's fans as the current situation had shut their mouths. They nervously watched Xiao Shiqin's performance, while they accumulated repelling energy.

"Mo Fan's wave of attacks is splendid, and the way he grabbed that opportunity was quite exciting. With such a counterattack, the situation should... eh? What?" Li Yibo was just commenting on Mo Fan's performance, and was about to give new anticipation towards this match. However, Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher was able to break out within the time it took him to speak.

"Oh no, Mo Fan made a mistake. How could he let Xiao Shiqin break out so easily after spending all the effort to retaliate!" Pan Lin sighed.

"Flying Cicada Double Sting!" Pan Lin suddenly raised his voice.. His shout clearly contained anticipation. Unfortunately, all hope was lost in his continuing sentence. "The Flying Cicada Double Sting missed, it's too late... If it had been activated just a little bit earlier, it would have been better!"

"Indeed, there seems to be some minor problems in Mo Fan's linking of his attacks. When fighting against opponents like Xiao Shiqin, even the slightest mistake will be punished..." Li Yibo sighed.

"Mo Fan is still controlling Deception to keep attacking, but the chances are slim..."

"Mm, Xiao Shiqin has already readjusted, he's just waiting for his skills to come off cooldown!"

"It's begun!"

"He sent a Predator out, followed by an Air Drop... Mechanical Seeker is blocking the way. Deception has no way of breaking out, he's facing an encirclement once again."

"Sigh, what a pity." Li Yibo shook his head continuously.

Chapter 1006: Reverse Psychology

If Tang Rou's performance could be likened to a night cereus in bloom, then Mo Fan's performance was just the same flower blooming a few more times.

In the beginning, he had used a shuriken to destroy the Mechanic's Electron Eye, giving everyone a small surprise. Then, he managed to successfully ambush Life Extinguisher, giving everyone a small climax. Then, in a dire moment, he managed to struggle and create an opening, making a beautiful counterattack, and giving everyone an even larger climax.

However, no matter if it was a surprise or not, small climax or large climax, they were all extinguished in the blink of an eye. Mo Fan had caused some trouble for Xiao Shiqin, but it didn't manage to have any influence on the overall match. In the end, Deception fell in his struggle. Xiao Shiqin had managed to successfully one vs two. Even worse was that he hadn't taken much damage in either round. This round was a little better, after all, Mo Fan had managed to obtain a few chances to attack. However, overall, Life Extinguisher's health had only gone down by a third. Still having so much health after taking out two people in the Group Arena gave him a terrifyingly huge advantage.

"Mo Fan has thoroughly shown us his ability, but I think he still doesn't last long enough in those crucial moments. What do you think, Adviser Li?" Taking the pause in Happy's switching of players, the broadcast began replaying some scenes from the match, and the shots were mostly Mo Fan's shining moments. Pan Lin then began to commentate.

"It's true. Two times he managed to grasp the upper hand, but his opponent quickly turned the tables. This participant has many problems regarding how he deals with different situations. It's obvious that he is rather inexperienced. Let's hope that this match helps him grow a little!"

The two people commentating seemed to both look at Mo Fan in a favorable light. However, the audience present couldn't hear this. Even if they did, the Excellent Era fans wouldn't care. As Mo Fan walked back to the seats from the booth, he was sent off with boos from all sides. As a scrap-picker, most players hated him, so the jeering directed at him was confident and self-righteous. They could even jeer a little about Happy. They even accepted this kind of person into their ranks? Where was their integrity?

Mo Fan was emotionless, completely ignoring the noise around him and walking back to Happy's bench. Everyone looked at Ye Xiu, watching how he would communicate with Mo Fan.

Yet Ye Xiu didn't approach the other or even turn his head. He simply said, "Sometimes, it's better to save your skills for later."

Mo Fan didn't respond, returning to his seat without a word. It was only after a pause that he suddenly made a noise of confirmation.

As for the others, they were all solemn. Before, Chen Guo had even been imagining how Happy might be able to crush Excellent Era in an overwhelming victory, but reality was a cruel mistress. After two rounds, Happy had already lost two heads and only managed to take out a third of their opponent's health. Wei Chen, the third to go up, was uncharacteristically serious, not even saying anything shameless, just nodding his head at everyone before heading off to the booth.

The previous two matches had been complete defeats, unable to even show the difference between the strength of their accounts. Wei Chen with his Windward Formation, heading up now, was the one with the strongest equipment in all of Happy. However, his opponent, Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher, was an All-Star level character. Disregarding the quality of the equipment, Windward Formation's eight pieces of silver equipment was nothing compared to Life Extinguisher in terms of quantity. Life Extinguisher had a whole eleven on him.

Chen Guo's optimism died completely. Watching Wei Chen walk step by step to the competition booth, anxiety rose in her heart.

They couldn't lose this round; good luck, Old Wei! Chen Guo silently encouraged. She saw him walk towards the competition booth, not even responding to the boos from the Excellent Era fans. Today's Wei Chen was completely focused because of the dire situation they were in. He didn't even have the energy to spare for shamelessness.

The third round quickly started and, as always, the characters spawned and the commentators introduced the players.

This was the third time Xiao Shiqin had entered the Group Arena already, so there was no need to introduce him again in such a short span of time. Pan Lin and Li Yibo's discussion naturally focused on Wei Chen.

"Those who haven't been fans of Glory for long would probably be unfamiliar with this player, Wei Chen. However, if there are any Blue Rain fans around you, you might want to go up and ask them about it. Wei Chen was the first captain of Team Blue Rain, and in the first years of Glory, he was one of the figures at the very top. I doubt anyone expected him to return after all these years. Wei Chen has often gone on the field in these past matches. Adviser Li, what do you think of Wei Chen's current status?" Pan Lin said.

"So many years have passed, but Wei Chen's playstyle really hasn't changed a bit!" Li Yibo exclaimed, casually making a boast about his experience, before beginning to comment. "From these few matches, he hasn't lost any of his experience or awareness despite not having fought in a pro match for so long, and he also has the advantage being of a veteran: his mental fortitude. However, in regards to performance, I feel that none of the past matches have really pushed him enough to show his limits. Maybe this match can show us what level he's truly at? How will Wei Chen respond to this player who is currently at the top of the Alliance?"

"Ok, let's turn our attention to the match. Xiao Shiqin has, again, let Life Extinguisher take a more strategic route, and Wei Chen's Windward Formation... Uh, he... wandered around a little and didn't leave, staying at his spawn point. Heh, this... seems to be exactly the same as how he started the past few matches! We can hear very loud booing from the audience present. Seems like the audience really doesn't like this strategy. I trust that after using it several times, Wei Chen is clear on what the audience thinks, but he doesn't seem hesitant at all!" Pan Lin explained the current situation.

"Heh, that's always been Wei Chen's style. For victory, he's willing to do anything," Li Yibo said in a tone that suggested he understood Wei Chen very well, once again lowkey boasting.

This time, Pan Lin decided to cooperate. "Actually, Adviser Li, you've fought Wei Chen back when you were a pro player, so if it's possible, could you analyze Wei Chen's intentions for us from an opponent's perspective?"

"This, it's probably a psychological tactic! When a player doesn't meet their opponent, very rarely will they guess that their opponent hasn't even moved. Not being able to find their target after so long, they'd begin to worry and become impatient. Meanwhile, Wei Chen can wait off to one side, building his advantage on a psychological level," Li Yibo said.

"But... Won't everyone know after they watch the match recordings?" Pan Lin said.

"Yes. It's precisely because it's so simple, that no one would expect him to use it over and over again." Li Yibo said.

"Reverse psychology!"

"That's right." Li Yibo nodded.

"But... after the participant knows that there's this chance that he'll use it, they'll probably go over when they don't find him. That way, he can't build a psychological advantage!" Pan Lin said.

"Then what if they can't find him when they come over?" Li Yibo said.

"Oh..." Pan Lin came to a sudden understanding, "So this is to confuse his opponent and make sure they can't guess his intentions!"

"Actually, the intention of this playstyle is precisely to make sure his opponent can't guess his intentions," Li Yibo riddled out.

"Okay... Now we can see that Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher is approaching the center of the map. Naturally, he didn't find Windward Formation. Life Extinguisher seems a little hesitant; it seems like Xiao Shiqin isn't sure how to proceed!" Pan Lin said.

"It's because Xiao Shiqin must've seen Wei Chen's match recordings, so he knows of the possibility. And it's because he knows of the possibility, that he has to be wary of it. What he's afraid of isn't Windward Formation staying at his spawn point, but Wei Chen countermining him, making him believe that Windward Formation hasn't moved when he is actually making his way over strategically." Li Yibo said.

"However, it seems that Windward Formation hasn't planned to do that now." Pan Lin said.

"But Xiao Shiqin needs to make sure." Li Yibo said.

As expected, Xiao Shiqin had Life Extinguishers wander around the area. After still not discovering his opponent, he began to make his way towards Windward Formation's spawn point.

"Life Extinguisher is coming; what will Wei Chen do? Will he have Windward Formation move and continue to trick Xiao Shiqin?" Pan Lin cried out.

In reality, the stadium was filled with booing, and even the audience watching the live broadcast on TV were getting impatient. No one was interested in a single man act like Xiao Shiqin running around trying to find his opponent; everyone was waiting for the two sides to clash. This made things hard for the commentator, who discussed this sort of boring situation as if it was extremely interesting.

"Life Extinguisher is quickly approaching, but Wei Chen doesn't seem too intent on having Windward Formation leave!" Pan Lin said, glancing at Li Yibo. The situation wasn't as Li Yibo had predicted.

"This is probably a reverse psychology of last time's reverse psychology\*. Wei Chen predicted that his opponent might guess that he would move his character to try and confuse him, so he instead just left his character there, to achieve an unexpected goal," Li Yibo said.

"Uh... This... it's possible..." Pan Lin agreed uncertainty, looking at Li Yibo helplessly.

Reverse psychology of a reverse psychology, that was a tangled riddle that only Li Yibo could come up with. Pan Lin didn't know how skilled Li Yibo used to be as a pro player, but he dared to assert that Li Yibo must have great mental fortitude as well and wouldn't be defeated by any sort of trash talk. He was just way too thick-skinned.

Li Yibo carefully analyzed Wei Chen's actions and Wei Chen didn't disappoint him, staying there with his proud "reverse psychology of reverse psychology."

In the stadium filled of booing sounds, Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher had finally arrived and the two characters faced each other. Wei Chen's Windward Formation attacked immediately, waving his hand and casting Chaotic Rain.

Chapter 1007: Details

"Life Extinguisher has entered Windward Formation's line of sight. Wei Chen immediately had Windward Formation launch an attack. Chaotic Rain has already been cast. Xiao Shiqin.... Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher dodged it..." Pan Lin instantly became excited as soon as the attack came out, but it ended up having a strong start but a weak finish. He obviously didn't want that to happen. He had hoped to talk about how Xiao Shiqin was caught off guard and panicked because of Wei Chen's sudden attack.

Unfortunately, Life Extinguisher dashed diagonally, nimbly circling around Chaotic Rain's effective range. Xiao Shiqin reacted without delay, not at all rushed. Evidently, Wei Chen's Windward Formation standing there and attacking didn't have any of Li Yibo's "reverse reverse psychology" to it. Xiao Shiqin had been prepared!

After dodging Chaotic Rain, Xiao Shiqin waited to counter attack. Another curse from Windward Formation flew over. A Hexagram Prison suddenly emerged, attempting to seal him in, but Xiao Shiqin reacted promptly and had Life Extinguisher dodge it too. At the same time, he also threw out a Mechanical Seeker. The little robot strode cheerfully, marching towards its target.

At this distance, Xiao Shiqin obviously wasn't hoping for this skill to damage Windward Formation. It was mainly to distract him, so Wei Chen would have to split his attention elsewhere and have a harder time locking him down.

Wei Chen seemed to not have noticed the robot though. Windward Formation waved his Death's Hand and continued to point it at Life Extinguisher. Curse after curse was cast, up until the little robot was about to reach him. Only then did Death's Hand move. A Curse Arrow shot out. Bang! The little robot was shattered into dust. Windward Formation didn't seem to be affected at all and continued throwing out attacks.

"Xiao Shiqin attempted to use a Mechanical Seeker to distract Wei Chen, but it failed. Wei Chen deserves to be called an experienced player. This type of method isn't able to faze him." The commentator Pan Lin saw this scene and quickly commented on it.

"After beating two clearly inexperienced players, Xiao Shiqin will need to make adjustments in this match. He can't keep playing like he did before!" Li Yibo sighed.

Xiao Shiqin didn't need anyone to remind him.

Seeing how his little distraction produced no effect, Xiao Shiqin was deeply moved by his opponent's efficiency. As a player who had joined in season four, Xiao Shiqin had never fought against Wei Chen before. In order to prepare for this match, he had looked up recordings from the past. From a tactics perspective, watching those past recordings didn't help much because of Glory's foundation in the game. As the level cap increased, new strategies and tactics would be created. Back then was still the

Level 50 era. Those past tactics wouldn't work in this day and age. Xiao Shiqin simply wanted to get a feel for his opponent's style from these old matches. He felt like he wasn't getting enough information from the Challenger League. Most of the time, the gap between the opponents was too wide. There was nothing valuable to learn from those matchups.

From the match recordings of Team Blue Rain's old captain, Xiao Shiqin's deepest thought was that Huang Shaotian had truly inherited Team Blue Rain's glorious tradition of trash talking!

At the same time, Xiao Shiqin once again felt gratified at Yu Wenzhou, whose hand speed was no good. If Team Blue Rain's two ace players had both inherited that non-stop trash talking tradition, it would have brought disaster upon the entire Alliance.

How lucky, how lucky.....

After rejoicing inwardly for a bit, he obviously had some understanding of Wei Chen's style. Wei Chen was an aggressive player. His tricks or his disrespect for his opponents were simply a way to disrupt the opponent's mentality. Because after every little trick came a sharp wave of attacks.

Warlocks were proficient at controlling their opponents. His style seemed to be made for this class. As for whether Wei Chen picked this class because of his style or the class made him play in such a way, Xiao Shiqin didn't know. From those past matches, Xiao Shiqin deeply felt that facing this player required staying calm and maintaining steadiness. This wasn't easy. You could restrain your actions, but how could you restrain what you felt? As a result, it could be seen from those past matches that many clearly strong players lost miserably against Wei Chen. The performance that those players displayed wasn't at all what it should be.

There were exceptions though. The one that stood out the most was his current teammate, Ye Xiu. In that year's match, Wei Chen wanted to distance himself from Ye Xiu to assail him with trash talk, but Ye Xiu rushed towards him and slapped him relentlessly until there was no future left in Wei Chen because he was already dead.

It was like that.....

Xiao Shiqin had thought up a way to deal with Wei Chen, and the person who gave him the greatest lesson just happened to be Wei Chen's teammate, Ye Xiu.

Life Extinguisher, who had been dodging Windward Formation's attacks the entire time, suddenly stopped and was hit by a Voodoo Curse.

It was only a DoT skill. Xiao Shiqin smiled. Life Extinguisher didn't dodge the attack and instead launched his own attack.

Hunter!

This wasn't the same as that Mechanical Seeker. Hunter was far faster than a Mechanical Seeker. As soon as the mechanical dog landed, it immediately pounced on Windward Formation.

Blood Siphon Curse, Soul Entanglement.

Life Extinguisher was hit by two more curses. Xiao Shiqin didn't have any intention of dodging those two, although he did dodge the Binding Curse. While he ate those two curses, Life Extinguisher launched two more of his own attacks.

Air Drop, Self-propelled Artillery.

After releasing Hunter, he started an attack from the skies and the ground. Even though Life Extinguisher was suffering from several debuffs, that wouldn't kill him so quickly. He used forceful attacks to destroy the other's control.

Warlocks had cast times, so they had no way of casting curses under such concentrated attacks. Windward Formation withdrew and retreated.

"Windward Formation is falling back! Xiao Shiqin paid the price of three debuffs to win this opportunity to launch a dense wave of attacks. Wei Chen has no choice but to retreat. Windward Formation is starting to move. Hm... he's only going to here..... here....."

The commentator Pan Lin hesitated for an instant. Air Drop's surprise attack had arrived. Bombs dropped down from the stomachs of those Rising Winter Melons. Boom boom boom boom. Explosions erupted one after the other. However, these bombs exploded above Windward Formation's head, so the only things that fell were a few effect scraps. Windward Formation had found some cover for his head with just a few steps back. In the end, Air Drop was only able to get him to move to a different platform.

"Wei Chen found some a good cover. Air Drop is unable to reach Windward Formation, but there's still that Self-propelling Artillery. Ah.... the Self-propelling Artillery can't reach here either. Windward Formation has a cover in front of him. Self-propelling Artillery isn't able to get to this height."

The machines summoned by Mechanics weren't huge fierce metal beasts. The majority of them were small precise gadgets. The Rising Winter Melons from Air Drop were about the size of a watermelon. The Self-propelling Artillery was even smaller. A washbasin was big enough to hold it.

Stopping these attacks wasn't impossible. If not, if Air Drop actually dropped bombs like a real bomber, wouldn't the map just get completely decimated?

As a result, Wei Chen found two covers, easily blocking both of these attacks. Behind those high walls, Windward Formation didn't delay and started casting. After reaching this position, he continued his attacks on Life Extinguisher. As for that Hunter, he had trapped it with a Hexagram Prison long ago. That stupid dog was fearless and tried to escape. It was a challenge of skill priority which ended with the dog being turned itself into a pile of scrap metal.

Xiao Shiqin had eaten three debuffs to launch those attacks, but all of them were stopped just like that. What stood in his way had just been a platform and a tall wall.

"Wei Chen utilized the terrain beautifully, blocking Xiao Shiqin's attacks. We talked about this when the match first started. Team Excellent Era should have a greater understanding of the maps than Team Happy. Xiao Shiqin's performance has confirmed this conjecture. His familiarity with this map is as if this is one of his home maps, but it looks like the two details that Wei Chen used to block his attacks were details that he hadn't studied!" Pan Lin said.

"This... Xiao Shiqin might have known about them, but he probably didn't think that Wei Chen would be able to react so quickly!" Li Yibo said.

"It looks like Xiao Shiqin underestimated Wei Chen's familiarity with the map. Disregarding everything else, Wei Chen has never left this part of the map ever since he started. Even if he wasn't familiar with it at the start, he's got to be familiar with it by now! Haha...." Pan Lin said half-jokingly, but Li Yibo was surprised.

He thought of when this round first started. Wei Chen's Windward Formation didn't leave and instead strolled around the spawn point. Could it be that this guy really had been studying the map? He planned on fighting Xiao Shiqin here, so he utilized the time it took for Xiao Shiqin to reach there to study the area around his spawn point?

Yes, it must be like that!

Li Yibo was certain about his guess because at this moment, Wei Chen once again utilized the terrain to beautifully to negate Xiao Shiqin's attack. Pan Lin was currently in awe!

However, this discovery couldn't be talked about! Because previously, he had been certain that Wei Chen's movements at the start was a part of his "reverse reverse psychology". If he said that Wei Chen was actually utilizing this time to study the terrain, wouldn't that be the same as slapping his own face?

Chapter 1008: Focused Playstyle

This wasn't the first time Li Yibo had dug himself into a hole like this. With the experience he gained in all these years, his mastery of digging out was top notch.

"Wei Chen leaving Windward Formation there wasn't just a psychological battle. He even took that time to familiarize himself with the environment. Now he's able to utilize the environment to his advantage and grasp the upper hand firmly." Li Yibo was composed as he continued talking, still not denying the idea of a psychological battle as he explained his new discovery.

"So that's how it is!" Pan Lin was enlightened. He hadn't manage to notice that. As for Li Yibo's thick skinned eisegesis, he was long since used to it and couldn't be bothered to say anything about it.

"In fact, from the beginning of their exchange, Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher has been continuously suppressed. The few times that he attempted to take the initiative back, he was easily thwarted by Wei Chen. These few counterattacks have fully utilized the environment."

"Ah! Life Extinguisher has taken yet another blow! Once again, the terrain was fully used to his advantage. The Curse Arrows struck from a dead angle and a Soul Slice from the right. Xiao Shiqin made the decision to let Life Extinguisher take the better of two evils, the Curse Arrows, but he never noticed that there was a Binding Curse in the shadows of those Curse Arrows!"

"Xiao Shiqin is in a very passive situation right now, but he's already understood where the problem lies. Look at his actions. He isn't trying to counterattack anymore, but turn and retreat to regroup," Li Yibo said.

"However, he's taken a Binding Curse, so taking another wave of damage is certain."

"Death's Door, Wei Chen has directly activated the powerful move Death's Door. He wants to trap Life Extinguisher in this corner! It seems like he's noticed the change in Xiao Shiqin's intentions and is willing to bet all his chips on this powerful skill, Death's Door. The duration of the Binding Curse is just enough for Death's Door's chant. Just this skill might not be enough! However, if this Death's Door hits Life Extinguisher, then he can use a round of attacks to deal massive damage to Life Extinguisher!" Li Yibo, who was usually composed and talking like a master presiding over the rivers and mountains, had now become excited as well as the match crescendoed. Everyone stared intently at the progress of Windward Formation's cast time. What would happen once this skill was unleashed?

"Ah! Life Extinguisher moved first!!!" Pan Lin suddenly yelled. "He's managed to struggle out of the Binding Curse early. Windward Formation's chant seems a step too slow."

"This is simply a character advantage! This is an All Star level character's advantage. Usually, the duration of a Binding Curse is more than enough time to cast a Death's Door, but Life Extinguisher's spirit resistance has allowed him to escape the Binding Curse earlier. Windward Formation's Death's Door.... Huh, this Death's Door...." Li Yibo suddenly came to a halt in the middle of his sentence. Windward Formation's chant ended a little too late, and this lateness was meant to be the crucial opening for Life Extinguisher's successful escape, but in reality, that wasn't what had happened, because this Death's Door had a larger range. Life Extinguisher might've been able to get the chance to run earlier, but he was still under the control of this Death's Door.

"Life Extinguisher didn't manage to escape! He's still within Death's Door's range. How come this Death's Door seems larger than the usual Death's Door we're familiar with? Coach Li?" Pan Lin said.

"Yes, this Death's Door does have a larger range indeed... at least two levels higher than the usual Death's Door," Li Yibo said.

"Two levels higher, how excessive!" Pan Lin was shocked. For a powerful skill like Death's Door, one level would cost an immense number of skill points, and for this skill, it's crowd control was more important for Warlocks who specialized in control, not damage. So, for this powerful skill, usual skill builds wouldn't max it out, only upgrading the skill to meet their needs. Especially for pro characters, they would be built according to their team's style, strategies, so they went for an efficient build. After all, skill points were limited, if it really was possible to max out all skills, then this problem wouldn't exist. For Warlocks, a maxed out Death's Door? That was common amongst most normal players, but in the pro scene, you couldn't even describe it as being like phoenix feathers and qilin horns, because it didn't even exist.

"This... is probably a habit from Wei Chen's years in the online game after retirement! Having gotten used to it, he probably finds it hard to change his habits," Li Yibo explained weakly. How would he know that the main reason for the grandiose Death's Door was that Windward Formation had more skill points than most pro characters. For many characters, investing in this skill would have been a burden, but for Windward Formation, two levels up was nothing, and his Silver weapon Death's Hand added a level, too. For other Warlocks it maybe excessive, but for Windward Formation, this was an economic build for him.

"Ok, though Life Extinguisher used his higher spirit to get out of the Binding Curse earlier, Windward Formation used his higher level Death's Door to keep him within the area of control... Windward

Formation is now on the offense again, and Life Extinguisher... Life Extinguisher is continuously using gadgets, but within the range of Death's Door, this is simply a waste! Life Extinguisher hasn't just gotten on the field, this is already his third battle. Why would Xiao Shiqin waste so much mana?" Pan Lin was dumbstruck, staring at the match.

Originally, there was only one target in Death's Door, but Xiao Shiqin's continuous release of mechanical tools caused more and more miasma to coil out from the Death's Door, dancing across the field. However, these mechanical tools were fragile and couldn't be controlled to dodge like the character itself could, mostly being swiftly caught and destroyed by the miasma. Even so, Xiao Shiqin continued to make Life Extinguisher throw them out relentlessly and black streams flew all over the area Death's Door covered, explosions everywhere, coming from the gadgets that Life Extinguisher was throwing out. Soon enough, the reason for his actions became crystal clear. Using this chaos, Life Extinguisher somehow managed to escape from Death's Door's range.

"Ah... Life Extinguisher escaped! The attacks Windward Formation sent in combination with the Death's Door didn't manage to hinder him at all. The field was too chaotic and this was all caused by Xiao Shiqin's willingness to sacrifice his mana to create this opening."

"Sacrificing mana to keep his health. This is probably the only thing Xiao Shiqin could do. Actually, this isn't the first time he's used this method to escape a Warlock's control," Li Yibo said.

"Oh?"

"He's done this in a match against Blue Rain before," Li Yibo clarified.

"Oh? Against Yu Wenzhou's Swoksaar?"

"Of course. Since Yu Wenzhou isn't as up to task regarding hand speed, he didn't manage to keep pace in such a chaotic situation like this and Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher managed to escape. For Wei Chen, he is no longer in his prime, so his reaction speed and mechanics can't keep up with a situation like this either. Blue Rain's ex and current Warlock players were both thwarted by this method of Xiao Shiqin's, this coincidence..." Li Yibo sighed.

"However, Xiao Shiqin still isn't a good position!" Pan Lin pointed out.

"That's true. He used a great amount of mana and doesn't have much left. If he can't consume it efficiently, his mana probably wouldn't last for the duration of this match," Li Yibo agreed.

"However, this is already his third round. What he's done so far is already enough of a victory!"

"Of course, it's almost a one versus three. Xiao Shiqin has already done his best."

The two were analyzing the match, talking one after the other. From their words, it was clear that they didn't think Xiao Shiqin had a chance to win this match anymore. Though he had successfully thwarted Wei Chen's plan to trap him, he had used up too much mana, and next, unless...

"Ah, Xiao Shiqin hasn't left. After a strategic repositioning, he turned around and went on the offensive!!" Pan Lin yelled in surprise. He and Li Yibo had both thought that after escaping, Xiao Shiqin would have Life Extinguisher leave the area that had been the target of Wei Chen's thorough research. They never expected him to turn after escaping and mount an offense.

"Uh, it seems like Xiao Shiqin feels that there's no point in stalling any further, hoping to use this wave of attacks to deal as much damage as possible to Windward Formation and pave the way for the next player on his team!" Li Yibo guessed.

"Air Drop! However, this time Windward Formation has no cover within reach... Just escaping from Death's Door, Xiao Shiqin has already used up a lot of skills, so most are still on cooldown. However, he's using what he can to initiate attacks. He added a lot of normal shots, making up for the lack of skills to combo! Wei Chen doesn't seem to be dealing with this round of attacks very well! That first Air Drop forced him to move and stop his attacks."

"Self-propelling Artillery! This cooldown ended just at the perfect time to be used there."

"Huh? There seems to be a Cruiser over there. When did he summon that? Windward Formation is retreating, trying to find cover against the Self-Propelling Artillery. Aiya, he's been trapped. Windward Formation's path was blocked by that Cruiser so he can't get to the cover he needs and can only face the Self-Propelling Artillery head on. Aiyou, he's not dealing with those blasts well!"

"The Hunter is in pursuit, too. Life Extinguisher's offense is very consistent. He's seen through Wei Chen's use of the environment. Windward Formation retreats, ah! A Mechanical Seeker darted out from around the corner and he didn't see it either. He didn't see it and was hit... Windward Formation was hit by the Mechanical Seeker's explosion and the Hunter has lunged for him... Coach Li... This..."

Li Yibo, who had been making a calculated guess about Xiao Shiqin paving the way for the next player on his team, was stunned by Xiao Shiqin's relentless offense and immediately opened his mouth to express a new opinion. "Is Xiao Shiqin planning to wipe Windward Formation out in one wave? Let's see if he can do it."

Chapter 1009: A True Mechanic

Eh, does Life Extinguisher have enough mana to wipe him out in one go?" At this time Pan Lin raised a question, one that almost everyone was concerned about. Life Extinguisher's mana was indeed very low, especially after it had been squandered in order to escape from the clutches of Death's Door. It looked as if it could run out at any moment.

Li Yibo didn't immediately reply. After carefully examining the situation for a moment, he finally responded. "Xiao Shiqin is currently using many normal attacks to connect his offense and suppress his opponent. He is being extremely careful."

"From their mana..." As Pan Lin looked at Life Extinguisher's mana consumption and Windward Formation's health decrease, he was momentarily stumped.

Li Yibo once again didn't reply. However, when he carefully examined the situation again, he too couldn't figure out the problem. From his observations, there was definitely insufficient mana. However, Life Extinguisher's attack rhythm was very steady. At this moment, when his mana had been completely exhausted, he had suddenly started holding his fire. Li Yibo thought that this kind of thing shouldn't happen when fighting against a peak pro player.

Digging himself into a hole was something that Li Yibo hadn't done infrequently. However, when he could avoid it, he always did. Now, he didn't dare to recklessly come to a conclusion, because he was very aware of the fact that players at Xiao Shiqin's level couldn't be completely understood by him in this day and age.

Life Extinguisher's assault continued, yet many of the spectators had already forgotten to watch the battle, instead focusing on Life Extinguisher's mana bar. They wanted to see when the light blue bar, which showed the character's fighting strength, would reach its limit.

Still not there, never there!

Life Extinguisher miraculously continued his attacks, fighting very conservatively. It wasn't at all like the previous two matches, especially not like the one with Deception, large-scaled and ostentatious. If the match with Deception could be called indiscriminate bombing, then Life Extinguisher's current offensive could be likened to driving a train, car after car cleanly crossing in front of you. Every car accomplished its mission, never failing once.

"A very efficient offensive . . ." After a long period of silence, Pan Lin finally jumped out with this line.

"Indeed," Li Yibo nodded. So far, Life Extinguisher had landed every hit without fail. Each blow had managed to achieve its purpose, something that was almost unbelievable on a professional stage. It wasn't as if his opponent was a corpse.

Except, at this moment Windward Formation seemed to be a corpse, being rigidly suppressed.

"Wei Chen ... has fallen into a trap." Li Yibo suddenly came to this conclusion.

"What?"

"Xiao Shiqin just reversed the situation, utilizing the terrain. Everything Wei Chen relied on before has suddenly become a trap. See ..." Just as Li Yibo said this, the screen showed Windward Formation backed into a corner from trying to evade the attacks. However, just as he turned, a land mine suddenly exploded. Wei Chen had nowhere to hide, because he was being attacked from all sides.

"When was that landmine placed?" Pan Lin suddenly yelled out. "Since Xiao Shiqin began his offensive, Life Extinguisher hasn't had a chance to visit this position."

"What about before?" Li Yibo asked.

"Before ..." Pan Lin suddenly had a vague impression, "It appears that he had come over, but at that time ..."

"At that time he was still being suppressed by Windward Formation's use of the terrain," Li Yibo continued.

Pan Lin was shocked. Absolutely and thoroughly shocked. He even forgot that he was currently providing live commentary. He had no words to describe the amazement he was currently feeling in his heart. Xiao Shiqin had actually placed a land mine at this spot at that time. This meant that he had already planned his attack at that moment.

Xiao Shiqin wasn't at all unaware of Wei Chen's strategy of utilizing the map. He had simply beat Wei Chen at his own game, using himself as an experiment to reveal Wei Chen's plans. In fact, he had already made plans to counterattack at that time. Every move he made now had been precisely calculated. This was how his highly efficient offense had come about.

Master Tactician Xiao Shiqin. His fundamental grasp of Glory had only truly been revealed at this moment. He had this sly old fox in the palm of his hand, completely reversing everything that Wei Chen depended on. The following offensive had pretty much followed a defined sequence of events. Every move pressured Wei Chen, giving him no choice but to respond as expected. And each of these responses unfortunately gave Xiao Shiqin more opportunities to make things difficult for him, to the extent that basic attacks became the main method of reducing Windward Formation's health. This could be easily seen in the statistics outputted by the system.

In terms of effectively injuring Windward Formation, the percentage of damage done by basic attacks was an astonishing 41.12%. This was indeed an extremely unusual circumstance, and as a result the broadcast specially cut to an image of the statistics to display to the viewers.

There wasn't another explosion nor another mistake.

Xiao Shiqin's movements truly seemed like those of a Mechanic, highly efficient and accurate.

Excellent Era was victorious. Xiao Shiqin had completed a 1v3, bringing Excellent Era a beautiful opening in the group arena, one that couldn't possibly be more perfect. The Excellent Era fans in the stadium couldn't control their excitement. The cheers they made drowned everything else out. Even words said face-to-face needed to be shouted to be heard.

In this situation, Wei Chen could only imagine the treatment he would receive. Yet, he was already past the point of caring about these things. As he returned to his seat on Happy's side, his face was grave, to the point that Chen Guo almost couldn't recognize him. His face was full of disappointment and concern, disappointment about this match, and concern for how the following matches would play out. This ... where was the shameless Wei Chen that they were all so familiar with?

"With Xiao Shiqin's successful 1v3, we can pretty much guarantee Excellent Era's victory in the group arena. The real question is how many points can they obtain."

"Under the new system of calculating points based on the number of players, even with this big of a lead, the team in the lead can't relax. Of course, Happy is even less likely to let their guards down. So, who will Happy send onstage next?"

The camera pointed towards Team Happy's preparation area. The person who stood up was completely unfamiliar to the camera, because prior to this, he had never allowed himself to appear on screen, refusing any coverage. Except this time, after coming out of retirement, he didn't seem to resist at all.

"It's Ye Qiu!!" Even though Pan Lin didn't recognize him, he could see who it was from the competition's lineup. "Now he ought to be called Ye Xiu, but simply changing a name doesn't erase much. Happy's fourth player is indeed Excellent Era's former captain, the founder of Glory's first dynasty, God Ye Qiu. After announcing his retirement, he suddenly established the grassroots Team Happy to return to the Glory scene. Throughout the Challenger League, he has brought us many surprises. And now, he and his team have reached the Challenger League finals, but blocking their path now is his old mother team, the

team with which he won endless glory and countless cheers with. Now, Ye Xiu is representing Team Happy onstage. Team Happy has had a very unfavorable beginning in the group arena, while Excellent Era resolutely sent out their God Xiao Shiqin, showcasing his might in the group arena. Even though his character's mana is mostly depleted, I can't imagine that he'll back off easily. In the previous round, Xiao Shiqin also had this miniscule amount of mana, using basic attacks to dish out 50% of his damage and achieving an ultimate victory. How will he perform this round, facing against Ye Xiu?" As soon as he saw Ye Xiu onstage, Pan Lin was also excited. Why had this year's Challenger League received so much attention? Wasn't it just for this very moment?

"Ye Xiu is walking towards the competition area. Communicating in the stadium is very difficult now. If I took off my headphones right now, all I would hear is booing. That's right, sounds of booing. The audience is currently booing Ye Xiu very loudly. The following match is, in reality, one that many are unwilling to watch. Especially the Excellent Era fans; this booing is their protest. Their former hero has now become their enemy. For a long time now, this has been a type of cruelty in the pro scene. Ye Xiu had once borne the weight of far too much of Excellent Era's troubles. Now, his animosity is something that many fans are unable to accept. This type of attitude is something we can all understand. However, a competition is still a competition. No matter what, we're still hoping to see an exciting round."

"At present, Ye Xiu has already entered the competition booth, and both characters have already been loaded. The match is about to begin. From the data on-screen, we can see that Life Extinguisher truly has very little mana left. If he still wants to kill his opponent like this, then I think his normal attacks would have to make up for more than 95% of his damage output, right?"

From the moment Ye Xiu appeared, Pan Lin had remained excited. Even as Ye Xiu walked over to the player booth, he had talked incessantly, not pausing until this moment when he had finally given Li Yibo a chance to get a word in.

"He he, there's really no point in calculating this. Life Extinguisher's remaining mana really isn't enough to launch any kind of offense. Even during the last round, although normal attacks did a significant amount of the damage, the things that truly suppressed and controlled Windward Formation were still his gadgets. With Life Extinguisher's current mana supply, there's really no suspense to this match. Let's instead watch in anticipation for the dialogue these two will exchange!" Li Yibo said.

Dialogue?

There was no dialogue.

As the fourth round of the group arena began, Xiao Shiqin finally stopped relying on tactics to open the match. Instead, he directly controlled Life Extinguisher to move towards the center of the map, directly meeting Lord Grim in the middle. The two sides clashed without hesitation. Life Extinguisher's mana level was indeed too low to back up his attacks. After a few exchanges, Life Extinguisher's mana ran out completely, and afterwards, the match concluded in the most straightforward way possible: after typing out a GG in the public channel, he directly withdrew from the match. (Author Note: GG is a polite phrase used in esports meaning Good Game. If you don't know this, let me spread the word).

Withdrawing meant admitting defeat. In the esports scene, this had always been allowed, and Glory was no exception. Although Life Extinguisher still had some health left after his mana ran out, Xiao Shiqin

decisively used this method to withdraw. No one in the audience felt much regret about this. Rather, they exploded in enthusiastic cheers and applause.

At this, even Excellent Era's boss Tao Xuan smiled in satisfaction, standing up to applaud. In this manner, he showed his support for Xiao Shiqin's decision to directly withdraw.

Continuing to skirmish and tiring out the opponent a bit would also have been okay. However, with this kind of dominating lead, continuing to fuss over small amounts really wouldn't be proper for a former dynasty team. Tao Xuan felt very gratified that Xiao Shiqin had not brought his habits from his previous team over to Excellent Era. This kind of relentless fighting really didn't suit Excellent Era, especially against this kind of opponent. As for Xiao Shiqin's performance, Tao Xuan was truly pleased. He had integrated into this team well, possessing the style that the team should have.

At this moment, Excellent Era's second player had already stood up, a youth that was unfamiliar to many people. Under the cover of the stadium's cheers for Xiao Shiqin, he silently walked towards Excellent Era's player booth.

#### Chapter 1010: Excellent Era's Rookie

"Team Excellent Era's second player for this match is now heading for the stage. I believe many of you are unfamiliar with this pro player. His name is Qiu Fei, and was promoted from Team Excellent Era's training camp just this season. The team underwent large adjustments during the time of its elimination this summer. Three core players left the team with Xiao Shiqin joining. In addition to that, Qiu Fei was selected to join the front lines from the training camp." Pan Lin introduced the Excellent Era player upon his debut.

"Yes, if we add on the fact that Ye Qiu retired last winter, and the addition of Sun Xiang, Excellent Era changed almost all of their core members within the last year and a half." Li Yibo said.

"Yeah, especially their captain Ye Qiu, and vice captain Liu Hao. These two core players left. Then there's also He Ming, the member who appeared mostly as the sixth player in the matches. He and Liu Hao were traded for Xiao Shiqin, and joined Team Thunderclap. There was also Guo Yang, who joined Team Wind Howl last summer." Pan Lin introduced Excellent Era's trades.

"Mm, all the players that left Excellent Era are doing well this year." Li Yibo spoke.

"Indeed, they are now part of the main rosters of their respective teams. Team Wind Howl, which Guo Yang joined, also went through some large adjustments throughout the year. There's the addition of Tang Hao, the new ace, and Zhao Yuzhe, last season's Best Rookie, as the main roster's pillars. With the addition of a capable player like Guo Yang, Team Wind Howl's performance this season has been outstanding. We can say that the team has risen to the top of the league, no?" Pan Lin said.

"Yes, for Team Wind Howl, they no longer have to think about whether they can make it to playoffs. They should be considering how they can make it to the finals." Li Yibo said.

"Liu Hao and He Ming have also been very good after joining Team Thunderclap. Team Thunderclap was very close to squeezing into the finals in the first half of the season. However, after the Glory's update in the winter season, Team Thunderclap took a hit to their placings and are currently slipping behind."

"That's unavoidable for updates like these." Li Yibo said.

"True, as for Qiu Fei, he's a rookie found by Excellent Era after all those outstanding players left the team." Pan Lin rounded back to what was currently happening.

"There's a lot of strong rookies this season!" Li Yibo sighed.

"Yes, like Lu Hanwen of Blue Rain and Gao Yingjie of Tiny Herb. Both of their performances this season have been outstanding, so much so that they even played at All Stars."

"I've noticed something interesting. The classes of Lu Hanwen, Gao Yingjie, and Qiu Fei coincidentally all match the class of their team's ace players."

"Yes... They will all become the future of their team as well as the league's."

"However, compared to Lu Hanwen and Gao Yingjie, who have experienced the matches from the league, Qiu Fei can only fight in the Challenger League this season!"

"Although he's played a few matches... uh, this might seem disrespectful towards Excellent Era's opponents, but I've got to say: the level of the opponents in the Challenger League aren't really a good judge of Excellent Era's level."

"That's true." Li Yibo agreed.

"That's why for Qiu Fei, this is the first challenge he's ever truly faced!" Pan Lin said.

"This is a pretty big one too. His first opponent is Ye Qiu."

"Yes, is there anyone else on this planet who knows Battle Mages better than Ye Qiu?" Pan Lin said.

"Keep it low, there are also a lot of outstanding pro players internationally." Li Yibo laughed.

"Alright....." His words from before were only a form of hype, so he didn't try to argue back. He continued to talk about the highlight player, Qiu Fei: "If Excellent Era nurtured this player with the intention of making him the successor, then the first player he would have succeed would be Ye Qiu!"

"Obviously."

"Then when Ye Qiu was still part of Excellent Era, he would have taught Qiu Fei through words and example. The both of them might be familiar with each other." Pan Lin said.

"But Ye Xiu has changed classes since, and no one has ever seen this type of character before in the pro scene. No one would dare to say they are familiar with his class." Li Yibo said.

"But with Ye Qiu's familiarity with the Battle Mage, he wouldn't simply forget about it after changing classes! If it were like that, this match will be even harder for Qiu Fei." Pan Lin said.

"That's not entirely true," Li Yibo laughed, "Ye Qiu knows about the Battle Mage, but that doesn't mean he knows the player. The Qiu Fei that he knew was the Qiu Fei from one and a half years ago. Young players like Qiu Fei won't be in a set shape in all areas, so no one can predict his growth. If Ye Qiu is trying to understand him by sticking up with the past, then I believe Qiu Fei will definitely give him a

surprise this match. There must be a reason for Team Excellent Era to arrange such a young player to fight this round. I think it might be based on this mindset."

Pan Lin was truly convinced by Li Yibo's thinking: "You are right."

"Alright, Qiu Fei has already entered the competition area, the match is about to start!"

When Ye Xiu started to appear on stage, the topics of the commentator increased. After the appearance of Qiu Fei, the two echoed each other and talked nonstop. Now that the match official started, Pan Lin's spirit also rose. He personally looked forward to such a showdown.

"The current screen is now showing information about Qiu Fei's character, Combat Form. Team Excellent Era is worthy of possessing the Battle God, One Autumn Leaf. Qiu Fei's Combat Form also has good equipment. His character has ten pieces of Silver equipment. This is comparable with many of the top God characters! The character's stats are also outstanding. 1314 Strength and 1310 Intelligence. Qiu Fei's Combat Form inherited One Autumn Leaf's style, where the Strength and Intelligence are relatively balanced."

"Haha, when I saw that data, I was also shocked! Those stats are even higher than One Autumn Leaf's!"

"Hahaha, it seems like you must have forgotten for a moment, that it's the Level 75 generation. You were probably comparing this data with One Autumn Leaf's data from the Level 70 generation."

"I was. It's a habit gained from commentating for a few years, so I wasn't able to adjust my mind at the time." Li Yibo said.

"I hope that, after this match, whether it's Combat Form or One Autumn Leaf, both will leave a new impression in your mind. Alright, the match has officially started. The map is still Dockside Town, and both characters have appeared at the spawn point, what will they do?"

"Oh! None of them are moving strategically! Neither of them are moving strategically, whether it's Ye Qiu's..... Sorry, he now goes by Ye Xiu, whether it's Ye Xiu's Lord Grim or Qiu Fei's Combat Form, neither of them are moving strategically. Both of them are heading straight for the center of the map." Pan Lin shouted.

"Mm, what Qiu Fei did was correct. Even if he could give Ye Qiu, uh... Ye Xiu a lot of unknown moves, in terms of tactics, I think it would be best if he didn't try to surprise Ye Xiu." Li Yibo said.

"You're right."

"As for Ye Xiu, if this were the first round of the group arena, he would have carried out some form of tactics, but after Xiao Shiqin continuously fought three people from Happy, the morale is in dire need of an increase. They would need a person to stand out and fight resolutely, then defeat them directly. This would be a way to boost morale. After all, the group arena isn't everything, there's still the team competition afterwards. If Happy is in fear of Excellent Era's grandeur, then they will definitely lose. The most urgent matter for Ye Xiu is to save Team Happy's morale."

"That's right. Okay, both of them have now gotten closer to the center of the map. They should be opponents that are familiar with each other, and they might still have the bond of teacher and student."

However, they didn't exchange any words and headed straight towards the center to fight. There are still around 40 units of space between them, so they will meet soon."

"30 units! Oh! He attacks! Ye Xiu launched the first attack. Lord Grim is running while firing his gun." Pan Lin shouted.

"Lord Grim's Silver weapon is very interesting and can change into various kinds of forms. As far as we know, it already includes the weapons of the six main classes. This is why Ye Xiu can control Lord Grim to easily use all the skills an unspecialized can use among the six main classes. A lot of newer players might not know too much about the unspecialized class. This playstyle was popular for a certain amount of time in the early days of Glory. However, the main problem was changing weapons to use skills. As everyone knows, many of the skills in Glory can only be used with the corresponding weapon of that class, so an unspecialized would have to change his weapon constantly in order to continue using skills of all the classes. Putting the matter of how complicated and often he would have to change his weapon aside, the cooldown between changing weapons also needed to be taken into consideration. This would confine the options the unspecialized could take. However, the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella in Lord Grim's hand perfectly solves all of those problems. The various forms of transformation his umbrella undertakes doesn't seem to have any cooldown. It could be said that this weapon is specifically designed for an unspecialized character. Okay.....we can save this topic for later, so let's watch the match for now." Li Yibo saw that the two had already clashed in the match, so he stopped with his introduction on the information.

"Qiu Fei controlled Combat Form to dodge Lord Grim's previous fire. Lord Grim didn't use a kiting method despite having the advantage of a greater attacking distance. He still continued to rush straight at Combat Form."

"Combat Form attacks and starts with Falling Flower Palm!"

"Lord Grim moves and successfully dodges!"

"Oh! There's a small detail here..."

"Tyrant's Destruction!!!" Pan Lin's yell cut off Li Yibo's attempt to explain. Li Yibo was helpless because the fight was intense from the very start. He didn't have the chance to take advantage of what happened to give some high-level explanations.

"Lord Grim blocked it! This is the Blade Master's Guard! Combat Form's Falling Flower Palm was connected very suddenly with Tyrant's Destruction. Lord Grim had no way to dodge, so he could only use Guard to catch it." Pan Lin cried.