

Avatar 1171

Chapter 1171: The New Season's Tyranny

The reporters couldn't even keep count of how many times Happy managed to cause such a commotion.

1v3 within five rounds!

It seemed like Ye Xiu was making things hard for her on purpose, yet Tang Rou seemed ever so satisfied. Could it be that they had some way ensuring their victory?

The reporters hurriedly checked for Happy's scheduled matches, but after they checked, they were dumbstruck once more.

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to call Happy's match schedule a journey to death.

Round 4, Happy would play their home game against Team Tyranny.

Round 6, they'd be welcoming Blue Rain in a home game.

Round 8, still on their home turf, Tiny Herb would come knocking.

The three teams at the top of the Alliance were all congregated in the next five matches. Happy might have the home advantage all three matches, but if you wanted to complete a 1v3 at the hands of these three teams, that was a senseless dream.

Ye Xiu, you really do have a grudge against Tang Rou! Right? Right?

Several reporters had their heads raised to observe Ye Xiu's expression, while the others checked the other two teams.

Round 5, Happy would challenge Team Parade in their away game, a below average team like Radiant.

In their away game in Round 7, however, their opponent was Team Heavenly Swords.

Team Heavenly Swords?!

The quick thinkers immediately let their imaginations take flight.

From what info they had gleaned from the situation in the Heavenly Domain as well as what Ye Xiu let leak during a certain press conference, it was clear that Team Heavenly Swords and Team Happy had good personal relations.

If they had the confidence that they'd be able to achieve a 1v3 within the next five rounds... Was Heavenly Swords their ace up the sleeve?

Heavenly Swords would let them win?

The Glory Alliance had never had any match-fixing issues in the past. At most, all they had were teams whose morale had depleted with their hope for their goals lost. This sort of situation would usually appear at the end of the season, when the conclusion to the regular season had been set. No team would lose their fighting spirit at the beginning of the season.

Though there might have never been such a case in history, that didn't stop people from making these malicious guesses. Almost all the reporters believed that there must be something fishy going on with such an absurd promise. Even Chang Xian. Although he wouldn't suspect Happy of faking a match, there must be something going on.

The press conference came to an end before the reporters could figure things out. In the end, all the questions were about if Tang Rou could achieve her 1v3 or not, and no one else cared about anything else regarding this match. Even when the victorious Team Radiant came to the stage, the reporters were still discussing Happy among themselves. After it was announced that they could start asking questions, someone stood and asked a very courteous "congratulations to Radiant for winning the match, how did you feel about it" before the reporters went silent.

The reporters were all absent minded and Team Radiant's players, having come over delighted about their victory, were dumbstruck.

Before the match began, the cheers for Happy were ever so loud. It was clear that no one was treating them like a new team to the Alliance anymore, but a team far above Radiant.

Radiant hadn't been at all angry about this. Three All-Stars, just the player lineup seemed much grander than anything Radiant could offer. But so what? It wasn't as if Radiant had never seen a team with three, or even more, All-Stars. It wasn't as if they had never fought these teams before. When had they ever given up in the face of these odds?

Compared to those powerhouse teams, Happy was nothing, no?

Radiant valiantly received Happy's challenge. Radiant had never expected to find any breakthrough point in the three All-Stars, but the others, the rookies, became Radiant's focus.

They had chosen Tang Rou. She was someone who already held an important position in the team, even being placed as the last defender in the group arena. It was clear how much the team trusted and depended upon her.

Against Tang Rou, Radiant had made ample preparations. Thus, from the group arena to the team competition, Tang Rou had been completely within their grasp, burying the 7 points Happy might've gotten.

Compared to many other teams, Radiant really wasn't very strong, but they hadn't gotten to the point where they could be bullied so easily. This time, using their home advantage, and ample pre-match preparations, they had won a match that many thought hopeless. They were excited and delighted, prepared to discuss their victory at the press conference. Yet, why did they end up ignored like this?

Why would this happen?

The three members of Radiant that attended didn't understand. They weren't that famous, and their team wasn't that powerful, but that didn't mean they should be ignored like this.

At the same time, at another, slightly later, press conference, things were heated.

The most eye catching match of the round, Samsara's away game against Tyranny, had just ended.

Countless players, moved by the persistence of Tyranny's veterans, were wishing them well, hoping that they would be able to get good results in this season, hoping that they would end their pro careers satisfactorily, hoping that they could strike a fierce blow at the Samsara that had shattered their dreams last season.

The result was disappointing.

Team Samsara, challenging Tyranny on Tyranny's home turf, ended up winning by a significant margin of 8:2. They had only lost two points in the individual competitions, and managed to successively overwhelm Tyranny in the group arena and team competition.

And to think, this was their away game. Samsara was truly terrifying this season. With three rounds over, they had won flawless victories in two rounds, and in the third round, against a strong team like Tyranny, they had managed to win with an 8:2. With a total score of 28 after a mere three rounds, Samsara was still far in the lead.

As for Tyranny, at the end of three rounds, they had a total of 19 points, sliding them right back to number eight, the last position for the playoffs.

This opening no longer had an iota of the momentum they had displayed last season. Everyone's worries for Tyranny seemed to have become reality. With another season over, how much had the state of Tyranny's veterans slipped? After last season's close call, had these veterans' morale truly been unaffected? It seemed, with the loss they suffered against Samsara on their home turf, that the things that people were unwilling to see were really occurring.

Was Tyranny truly no longer capable of recreating its past strength? Many fans had already begun crying in the audience after seeing the result of the home game against Samsara.

In the post-match press conference, the air was heavy. Tyranny was comprised mostly of veterans. Many of the reporters offstage had accompanied them for years. Even for those who hadn't, after these weeks of appearing in one another's sight, asking questions, they had manage to grind out some form of acquaintanceship.

Tyranny's upset represented the decline of the era they pursued. Each veteran reporter sympathized with this sorrow. At a time like this, it was mostly newer reporters that would tactlessly touch upon sensitive questions for Tyranny to answer.

"In the new season, Tyranny has already fallen behind Samsara's immense lead by 9 points in three rounds. When faced with them directly, Samsara managed to claim 8 points in their away game. What will Tyranny do next? Will there be any changes made?" A reporter asked.

Make changes?

What changes?

Switch out the old for a newer generation and let that era truly become buried in the past?

"Tyranny will, indeed, make some adjustments." Onstage, Vice Captain Zhang Xinjie answered this question.

"Oh? Could you give us some idea of the specifics?" The reporter asked.

"We will probably introduce some rotation, in order to make the team operate more efficiently," Zhang Xinjie replied.

Rotation! Did that mean that Tyranny was preparing to switch in newer players? Did that mean that the players of that era would be truly leaving the stage?

The reporters gazed at the stage. When Zhang Xinjie spoke, Han Wenqing's and Lin Jingyan's expressions were as calm as ever.

"Then, what is Tyranny's goal this season?" someone asked. Usually, in this sort of adjustment period, the team wouldn't set their goals too high.

"Tyranny only ever has one goal: to be the champions," Han Wenqing answered.

Was this the stubbornness of veterans? The reporters sighed.

"In the next round, Tyranny will face Happy. Is there anything you want to say?" Someone suddenly thought of such a question. Happy, Ye Xiu, this was a person from the same era as Tyranny's veterans. Though Happy had another old player, Wei Chen, his pro career was short; most people saw him to be a substitute or switch, rather than a core member of Team Happy.

"We hope to give everyone a spectacular match." A very standard answer.

"Happy's player, Tang Rou, said that she would achieve a 1v3 within the next five rounds or else leave the pro circle. As their next opponents, what are your thoughts on this?" Tyranny's match had ended late so the press conference was naturally later as well. The information regarding Happy's press conference had already travelled here, and this sort of interview style was something reporters were good at.

"Good resolve. If you want to try to accomplish that against Tyranny, then give us all you've got!" Han Wenqing said.

"Will Tyranny make any arrangements against this?" a reporter asked.

"No." Zhang Xinjie answered with one simple word, but the reporters believed him wholeheartedly. Tyranny's strategist was Zhang Xinjie. Why would this strict and careful Cleric change the rhythm of the team just because of a bet?

"I give my early wishes that Tyranny earns a good result next round." After saying that, the reporter ended his questioning. The other reporters soon followed up, most asking about the switching Tyranny would do.

After Tyranny and Samsara's match, the third round came to a close.

In this round, apart from Happy versus Radiant and Tyranny versus Samsara, two other unexpected conclusions cropped up.

Team Parade had taken down Team Royal Style, who seemed a little stronger than them, by 7-3 in an away game.

Team Hundred Blossoms, on the other hand, was defeated on their home turf by 301 Degrees with a 3-7.

Apart from that, the strong teams all won as expected, with scores above 7-3. After three rounds, the situations of the various teams were much clearer than they'd been after two rounds.

Chapter 1172: Happy's Problem of Coordination

The third round of Season 10 finished.

Samsara stood at the top of the point rankings with 28 points. Blue Rain and Tiny Herb were second and third respectively with 27 points. Wind Howl was fourth with 26 points. From the point rankings, these four teams made up the first tier. After them was the fifth place team Misty Rain with 22 points. Thunderclap was sixth with 21 points; their start was looking quite good. In seventh was Void. After a mediocre first and second round, they finally pulled off a dominating performance in the third round, winning against Seaside with a perfect 10 points, placing them at seventh. At eighth place was Tyranny with 19 points. Compared to last season, Tyranny had taken the largest step back.

Outside of the currently qualified playoff teams, the points dropped. Team 301 was at ninth with 14 points, Royal Style at tenth with 13 points. Parade, Happy, and Hundred Blossoms were eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth respectively with 12 points each. Speaking of which, the ranking for these three teams was quite complicated. Usually, if two or more teams had the same number of points, the teams were temporarily arranged in alphabetical order, by pinyin. If two teams had records against each other that season, they would be ranked according to who had the better record. For these three teams, Hundred Blossoms (Baihua) was first alphabetically. However, Happy had won a match against Hundred Blossoms, so Happy should be ahead of them. But in terms of alphabetical order, Happy (Xingxin) should be behind Parade (Hewu).

It was impossible to reach a consensus just from these three conditions. In the end, Hundred Blossoms' alphabetical advantage was removed and they became the bottom of those three teams. Of course, it was just the start of the season, so it didn't matter too much. But at the end of the season, when accurate rankings mattered, this type of impossibly muddled situation would usually be decided by an additional match. Using something like alphabetical order shouldn't decide a team's final ranking.

After Hundred Blossoms were the lower tier teams, who were all grouped up together. In last place in the relegation zone was Seaside, who had eaten two zeros in two consecutive matches, and currently had a heroic 2 points. Heavenly Swords was in second to last place with 5 points, but the team ahead of them, Miracle (Shenqi), was also at 5 points, only beating out Heavenly Swords (Yizhan) through their alphabetical advantage.

The point rankings as well as the performances of each team in the third round were reported and analyzed.

Happy! Happy again!

In the third round, Samsara and Tyranny was clearly the highlight match. Happy faced a mediocre Radiant, but how come they still made it to the headlines?

The mighty Tang Rou had achieved a 1v2 in the previous round. Why did she lose so badly this round?

Right after this crushing defeat, she claimed that she would achieve a 1v3 within five rounds? And if she didn't she would leave the pro scene?

Damn, this sister's so domineering!

Damn, this sister's so arrogant!

Damn, this sister's so bold!

Damn, this sister's so egotistical!

She had a brilliant victory in the second round, but an embarrassing loss in the third round. Yet even so, Tang Rou was still the most followed player in these two rounds. It was just like Wei Chen said. Whether the attention was good or bad, the attention towards Tang Rou was sky-high right now. After the 1v2 in the second round, quite a few reporters had wanted to interview Tang Rou. After the crushing defeat in the third round, even more reporters wanted to interview Tang Rou.

Seeing how popular Tang Rou was, quite a few people started asserting: promotion. This was definitely the media promoting her.

And the Esports Time reporter Ruan Cheng, who had challenged Tang Rou in the press conference and had Tang Rou make such an arrogant claim, had written a long, flowing article in a magazine calling this all a farce. So what if Tang Rou made such a promise? No one could force her to leave the pro scene. As long as her skin was thick enough, she could endure the pressure of public opinion, and she could give herself a classic excuse like "I can't give up my passion for Glory" or "I'm willing to endure anything for my fans" and so on... As a girl with indisputably good looks, she could definitely win quite some support.

Ruan Cheng's article generated a huge response. In terms of print media influence, the Esports Time was only slightly inferior to the Esports Home's weekly issue.

Those familiar with the Esports Time immediately understood after seeing that it was Ruan Cheng's article. This guy had set his targets on Tang Rou. His article had been written with for a purpose. It was to seal off Tang Rou's retreat path. Having given predictions for her retreat path, if Tang Rou still went along it, she would undoubtedly be viewed as someone with skin so thick that it couldn't be saved. She would receive a huge amount of criticism for it. Under this kind of public pressure, it would be hard to imagine what type of person could continue to survive.

After this article, many reporters tried all sorts of ways to reach Happy, hoping that Tang Rou could say a few words about it. However, Happy blocked them all. Tang Rou seemed to have disappeared. She gave no response to the criticism or the support towards her.

These days, Tang Rou was practicing like crazy.

In Tang Rou's loss against Radiant, the problems showed by Tang Rou were actually Ye Xiu's two biggest worries for her.

The first problem was that if the match wasn't enough of a challenge, she was unable to feel enthusiastic about playing and couldn't bring out her full potential. This sort of mental problem couldn't be described with numbers. It was an issue borne from Tang Rou's personality. In the game, she could

still win those non-challenging battles because of the huge disparity in skill between the two sides. But in the pro scene, that huge disparity didn't exist. Facing Radiant's half-health player, Tang Rou still had to concentrate. However, the situation was very different from when she faced Yu Feng and Zhu Xiaoping. In addition, Radiant studied Tang Rou's battle against Xiao Shiqin in the Challenger League and developed a strategy specifically to target her. In the end, the half-health Radiant player beat the full-health Tang Rou.

In the team competition, because Tang Rou felt guilty and ashamed for losing in the group arena, she really wanted to win. This sort of mentality ignited her fighting spirit, thus leading to Ye Xiu's second worry: if her fighting spirit burns too hot, she is unable to exercise restraint.

Both of these two points were issues stemming from her personality. Trying to reconstruct someone's personality was harder than climbing the heavens. These were something that she couldn't control. They came and went subconsciously.

The only way to resolve these issues was to improve her skill level.

It was just like in the game. Even if she couldn't display her full capabilities, she could still win. What she relied on was superior skill.

Understanding this point, Tang Rou focused on being aware of her mentality, while also increasing her practice.

Morning, afternoon, night. Apart from eating, sleeping, and the appropriate amount of exercise, Tang Rou practiced crazily day and night.

"Is this okay?" Chen Guo was a bit worried and asked Ye Xiu.

"It's always good for young people to practice more. The problem is only whether you have the motivation to persevere," Ye Xiu said.

"So you intentionally gave her the goal of completing 1v3 within 5 rounds, so she has enough motivation to persist with this high-intensity practice?" Chen Guo said.

"No... I'm afraid that her eagerness to win will go over her head and she'll win next round. That would be troublesome." Ye Xiu laughed bitterly.

"Even so, why didn't you give her more room? Even ten rounds would have been better!" Chen Guo said.

"If I say more, with her personality, what do you think she would do?" Ye Xiu said.

"Cut it down until she felt like it was right..." Chen Guo said.

"So if I say too much, she'll say she won't need so many rounds and she'll do it in just one. What then?" Ye Xiu asked.

"Fine..." Chen Guo surrendered.

"But what if, I'm saying what if, she can't do it. What then?" Chen Guo looked towards Tang Rou, who was hard at work, and whispered the question to Ye Xiu.

"Yes..." Ye Xiu said.

"What does that 'yes' mean?" Chen Guo was puzzled. Ye Xiu didn't explain, though. He looked at Tang Rou as well. This guy was pretending like he was being profound again. Chen Guo thought to herself angrily.

While Tang Rou was solving her individual problems, Happy also had other problems to fix. Their loss against Radiant in the group arena could be considered as Tang Rou's fault, but their loss in the team competition couldn't be blamed on any one individual. The team competition was fought as a whole. If any one part wasn't working properly, the other parts needed to take on some of that responsibility. And in the team competition against Radiant, Happy had done a very poor job here, even if there was Ye Xiu, Su Mucheng, and Fang Rui playing. When Tang Rou came apart, these three All-Stars failed to properly adjust the team's rhythm. In the end, Radiant seized an opening and beat them fiercely.

These three All-Stars were unable to adapt to the situation when facing Team Radiant. It sounded hard to believe, but in reality, there was a serious issue between these three All-Stars - they were still getting used to playing and coordinating with each other.

Fang Rui obviously required time for him to grow accustomed to his new Qi Master class. Apart from that, it was his first time playing with Ye Xiu and Su Mucheng. He needed time to get used to their rhythm and their habits. Even Ye Xiu and Su Mucheng, these two Best Partners, needed time to synergize with each other in a high-level competition.

It wasn't because the two were suddenly unfamiliar with each other after a year of not playing together. It was because Ye Xiu had changed classes.

The unspecialized, the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella, and the unpredictable skill combinations gave headaches to everyone in the Alliance. None of them were able to keep up with such rapid complex variations.

And "everyone in the Alliance" included his teammates Su Mucheng and Fang Rui.

They weren't all-class experts. They had never partnered with an unspecialized before. Their situation was actually the same as their opponents. The only difference was that because they couldn't grasp the unspecialized's rhythm, they couldn't properly coordinate with Ye Xiu.

In the first round, facing Samsara's powerful sweep, there wasn't enough time for this issue to come up.

In the second round, through the map Broken River, they never really had any direct confrontations facing Hundred Blossoms.

In the third round, facing the proactive Team Radiant and Tang Rou falling apart, the three All-Stars ran into a serious problem, where none of them were able to coordinate well with one another.

Before even killing any enemies, Lord Grim had dealt a fierce blow to Happy's teamwork.

"It looks like we need to practice harder too," Ye Xiu said after carefully reviewing their match against Radiant.

"Yeah!" Su Mucheng's expression was exceptionally resolute. Failing to coordinate with Ye Xiu, how could that be acceptable?

"Damn, I have to keep up with the pace of 120 short cooldown skills. I can already feel my golden right hand crying," Fang Rui said.

Chapter 1173: Intense Practice

After the three All-Star players of Happy carefully reviewed their performance, they began diligently practicing for the team competition. The other teams couldn't quickly adapt to this Myriad Manifestations Umbrella-wielding unspecialized, the likes of which had never been seen before. Those other teams could only try and gain experience through the meager bits of what was available to them: real battles, recordings, and their own imaginings. But Happy could directly practice coordinating with this umbrella-wielding unspecialized. They could come to understand him, they could grow accustomed to him, they could become familiar with this entirely new and unique class.

In this aspect, Su Mucheng and Fang Rui were at a disadvantage. Tang Rou, Steamed Bun, Qiao Yifan, and even Mo Fan had all interacted with Lord Grim for a much longer period of time than them. This was especially true for Tang Rou and Steamed Bun. No one else knew this kind of unspecialized, but for these two, this was just another class, always fighting right alongside them as they learned this game. They were the fastest to integrate with this unspecialized, and for now, they were the team players that could coordinate with Ye Xiu the best.

Qiao Yifan grew up in the normal system, and by the time he arrived at Happy, he already had a very solid foundational and technical strength. Like it was for Tang Rou and Steamed Bun, the unspecialized was an entirely new thing for him to learn and adapt to, but unlike them, he first had to unlearn some of his established preconceptions about Glory. So, although he had also fought for a long time alongside Lord Grim, his understanding was a little bit weaker than that of Tang Rou or Steamed Bun.

Then there was Luo Ji and An Wenyi. Luo Ji was also a blank sheet of paper that could adapt to Lord Grim, but the problem was that his skill level lagged behind, and he had no way of truly fighting side-by-side with Lord Grim. An Wenyi joined a little later, and he suffered from the same problem as Qiao Yifan. He had to unlearn some things in order to adapt to this entirely new class. Furthermore, his technical skill was also lacking.

And then there was Mo Fan. Just getting this solitary hero to coordinate with the team was already an endeavor and a half, never mind adjustment to Lord Grim in particular. The road was slow and long.

And all of these people were still better than Su Mucheng and Fang Rui, who had only officially arrived at Happy this season.

However, the skill, experience, and awareness of these two players was clear for all to see. After they began emphasizing this aspect of their training, their grasp of the unspecialized improved in leaps and bounds.

Tang Rou was training fiercely, the three All-Stars were training fiercely. The others had no reason to relax, and the entirety of Happy immersed themselves in fierce training. But Luo Ji, who wasn't with the rest of them and who still had to worry about his studies, couldn't keep up with Happy's current pace of training. Because of this, he was filled with anxiety. In comparison, An Wenyi, the other college student

here, was much more decisive. This person directly chose to take a leave of absence from school, and devoted himself to professional gaming.

"How did you convince your parents?" Chen Guo had asked him. She felt that, for a student, the greatest obstacle to this kind of decision would be the family.

"I gave them the prize money from the Challenger League," An Wenyi said.

Calm, rational, accurate!

These were the special traits of An Wenyi, the person whom Ye Xiu had found in-game despite his unexceptional skill.

The entire team was busy, and they invested more time than ever into practice. This made Guan Rongfei restless. He essentially never went outside, but now he often came to the practice room to hover behind Ye Xiu and cough meaningfully. He was anxious to finish research on the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella, and he needed Lord Grim's account card to look at the umbrella. But now that Ye Xiu increased training, the amount of time that the card was in use greatly increased, thus reducing the amount of time Guan Rongfei had to study the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella. This made him rather distressed.

This is also why powerhouse teams might make two or even three copies of Silver equipment, to facilitate study in the R&D department so there wasn't any conflict between them and the players.

But with Happy's current state and the material requirements for the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella, making an extra one was definitely unrealistic.

On days when he couldn't get the account card to study the umbrella, Guan Rongfei could only spend his time on the other classes. Equipment for the other classes was, for him, much easier than the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella. Especially Dancing Rain, whose equipment he had studied and developed for many years now. It was only last season, under the club's orders, that he had stopped working to raise the equipment to level 75. But now, he once again took up this research. He was so familiar with the equipment that he hardly even needed the account card - his mental visualization was enough.

Another week quickly passed, round 4 was just about to start. Happy was about to fight their second home game, and their challenger was the team that was currently the subject of much gossip, Team Tyranny.

One week of training wasn't enough to immediately cause drastic improvement. The results of training were silent and invisible steps upward, droplets that gradually accumulated into something significant. But after this week of intense training, at least Happy's spirits were greatly changed - every player seemed to be shining.

Extra training wasn't too much of a problem for young people, Chen Guo thought as she looked around at everyone.

But... what about you?

Chen Guo looked at Ye Xiu.

You're certainly no young person. But to let everyone come together faster, you joined in on the extra training. What kind of impact would such intense training have on a player of his age? Wei Chen, for one, hadn't kept up with this training pace. This let Chen Guo know that older players couldn't push themselves this fiercely.

Chen Guo was very afraid. She didn't even dare ask, because she knew that there was no point in asking. Even if this wasn't healthy, Ye Xiu had no choice but to do this. Only he could wield the unspecialized. This wasn't a class for which they could find a sparring partner.

Aside from well-wishes, Chen Guo could do nothing at all.

September 26th.

One day before the the fourth round of the Glory Alliance Season 10.

Happy, unlike other teams, was still intensely practicing. Other teams, on the day before competition, would generally go through lighter practice. The players still played the game, they wouldn't let their hands get cold entirely, but the lighter practice allowed them to get enough rest and keep their spirits up.

But Happy was still practicing as fiercely as ever. Relaxation time? To them, this had no meaning. Right now, what they needed was to improve as fast as they could. Another day of practice was another day of improvement. Without enough improvement, just taking a break before the match wouldn't change the match's outcome.

Chen Guo looked around at everyone in the practice room.

The weather lately had been alternating between heavy clouds and showers, and although the temperature wasn't high, the humidity made it seem hotter. The two high-power air conditioners in the training room worked incessantly to blow cold air through the room, but many players were still practice until their foreheads were slick with sweat.

They only had to move the mouse and keyboard, which meant that they were really only moving the parts of their body below the shoulder joint. They weren't running, they weren't fighting against some obstacle with their bodies. And yet they still managed to sweat from their exertion.

The tapping and clicking of the mouse and keyboard sounded like a curtain of beads falling to the floor. This tense and high-level atmosphere in the training room made Chen Guo feel like it was difficult to breathe. But she stayed and watched for a bit longer before quietly leaving the room.

When she went downstairs to the internet cafe on the first floor, she heard someone ask at the front desk, "Is Ye Xiu here?"

She went down a few more steps, and saw the panicked and terrified face of the young woman collecting money at the front desk. And then there was a shout in the Internet cafe, and then another, and another.

Chen Guo hurried down the staircase and saw the four people standing in front of the counter. And countless guests in the internet cafe had already left their computers and flocked over.

Han Wenqing, Zhang Xinjie, Zhang Jiale, Lin Jingyan... Team Tyranny, the four titans who had been named the Four Heavenly Kings, were standing right in front of the counter of Happy Internet Cafe.

The Internet cafe guests who recognized them instantly went wild.

This sort of thing absolutely never would have happened two years ago.

At that time, Chen Guo was still a diehard Excellent Era fan, and Happy Internet Cafe was still a favorite gathering place for all Excellent Era fans. If a Tyranny player appeared at the front desk then, who could predict what the impulsive fans would do?

But now, things were different. Ever since Chen Guo turned from a fan into a hater, Happy Internet Cafe was no longer filled with such passionate Excellent Era fans. Those that still came were calm and rational fans. They wouldn't necessarily do anything if they saw a Tyranny member.

And now, many of those that came to Happy Internet Cafe were fans of Happy itself. This forced Chen Guo install another door between the stairs and the second floor, and in the back of the building, there was now a direct exit from the second floor.

Fans were wonderful, but they could also be such a hassle!

After Su Mucheng officially transferred to Happy, there was even some shameless male who, carrying a large bouquet of flowers, said that he wanted to express his love to Su Mucheng. Chen Guo was so scared that she almost called the police. At these times, having the more delinquent-like Wei Chen and Steamed Bun around actually made Chen Guo feel a little safer.

In an instant, the Four Heavenly Kings of Tyranny were surrounded by energetic fans.

To openly appear in an Internet cafe, these four Gods were too careless.

Fortunately, no one did anything excessive. Most people just came to watch. Some of the braver ones went up to ask for an autograph, or even begged for a selfie, until Han Wenqing furrowed his brow and everyone scattered back to their seats.

At this moment, Chen Guo realized that there had to be a reason that these Tyranny veterans dared to show up in an Internet cafe. Han Wenqing had the Intimidate skill, with no cooldown. He could activate it whenever he wanted.

This was the first time Chen Guo had met up-close this ten-year captain of Tyranny. Two years ago, this was the painful enemy! Excellent Era's potential fourth consecutive victory was lost to this person, which had earned her hatred.

But now, Excellent Era had faded into the mists, and Chen Guo did truly respect the fighting spirit of these Tyranny veterans. When they lost to Samsara last season, she almost teared up for them.

When interacting with people in the pro scene, Chen Guo often had to remind herself to project a strong aura. She, after all, was the boss of Happy. But in front of this Han Wenqing, Chen Guo felt that she shouldn't try to act all high and mighty in front of him. This was a person who would directly kick out the boss from the training room.

"You're looking for Ye Xiu?" Chen Guo went up to greet them.

"Yes. Is he here?" Han Wenqing asked.

"Follow me!" Chen Guo led the four upstairs, and took the opportunity to study the other three Gods. Zhang Xinjie, hair and clothing immaculate, wearing his glasses. When he stared straight ahead, he would never let his gaze wander to the sides. Zhang Jiale, a spirited and energetic figure, yet revealing a hint of melancholy. Was it because of too many second-place finishes? Chen Guo couldn't help but wonder. Lin Jingyan, the former number one Brawler, didn't have that delinquent aura that Wei Chen and Steamed Bun had. He was a very refined person, and when he saw Chen Guo looking at him, he even smiled and inclined his head.

Chapter 1174: A Casual Greeting

"Ye Xiu, there are people looking for you!" Chen Guo pushed open the door of the practice room. She was a bit excited to see the expression on Ye Xiu's face when he saw these four Gods suddenly appearing here.

"Who?" But to her disappointment, Ye Xiu didn't even look up.

"Me." Han Wenqing didn't let Chen Guo introduce him, he just directly spoke.

"What are you doing here?" Ye Xiu asked.

"Match," Han Wenqing said.

"The match is across the street," Ye Xiu said.

The atmosphere instantly grew cold.

The match was tomorrow. Tyranny had clearly arrived in City H a day early to rest and adjust their condition before the match.

"Everyone, feel free to take a seat!" Chen Guo had to try and diffuse the tension, inviting the four to sit on the sofas near the wall of the practice room.

"Practicing hard?" But Lin Jingyan didn't sit down, instead coming over to watch Happy practice.

"Do you have any dignity? Trying to sneak a peek at our practice?" Ye Xiu finally lifted his head, giving Lin Jingyan a disdainful look.

"Is this sneaking?" Lin Jingyan ignored him and stubbornly continued to look.

Right at that moment, Fang Rui happened to mess up.

"Haha, feeling the pressure from behind you?" Lin Jingyan laughed.

Fang Rui turned around and gave him two middle fingers.

"You changed classes pretty well!" But now Lin Jingyan stopped with the joking tone, and spoke sincerely.

"It's alright!" said Fang Rui.

The two fell into silence.

Former teammates, the number one Brawler and the number one Thief, the famed Criminal Partners, now both abandoned by their team. No matter how honorably they left, it would never be enough to make up for their feeling of loss. And now, one went to Tyranny to persist with the little light he had left, while the other came to the newly-formed Happy, changing classes to strengthen the team. Although they were no longer teammates, the goal toward which they strove was still the same. Now, they would face off against each other onstage. They could no longer strive toward this shared goal together. It was inevitable that one of them would lose.

With Fang Rui's practice interrupted, the team coordination practice could only stop as well. Ye Xiu stood up and looked at the four of them. "Did you need something?"

"Nah, we're staying nearby. We figured we'd come walk over and take a look." As Zhang Jiale said "walk," he himself was walking around in a circle around Happy's lineup of computers, finally stopping next to Ye Xiu. He looked at Ye Xiu's character Lord Grim, who was still onscreen. Lord Grim, the character that had caused so many headaches for the Gods, big and small, of the the pro circle.

"Hey, let me try your little toy here," Zhang Jiale said, trying to squeeze into Ye Xiu's seat.

"Don't you have any dignity? You also want to peek at our equipment stats?" Ye Xiu, of course, didn't give him any room.

"Haha, what secrets do you still have to hide? The stats have long been figured out already," Zhang Jiale said.

The stats of Silver equipment weren't displayed, but for a long period of time, Lord Grim had worn one Silver and twelve Orange equipment. A character's overall stats were displayed, as were those of orange equipment. With the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella as the only variable, it really wasn't difficult to deduce its stats.

"That was before, now we've levelled up, do you need us to tell you that too?" Ye Xiu said.

"Really? 75? How sharp, let me look." Zhang Jiale was still trying to force his way in. If talking about rules, his doing this was extremely inappropriate. Silver equipment were the secrets of all of the teams, no one would ever try to insist on seeing them. Zhang Jiale was taking advantage the fact that he was familiar with them, plus Happy with its grassroots origin didn't have a very serious atmosphere, so he could struggle like this.

"Go away, go play over there." Zhang Jiale was pushed away once and for all, and he could only bitterly give up. Watching him, Ye Xiu was all sorts of speechless. "Don't tell me you're really here to spy on us! For those sort of methods, we'll have to call the police."

"Call the police? How embarrassing is that?" Steamed Bun jumped up. He grabbed a bag of drinks from under the table and swung it around in circles, instantly creating a fierce meteor hammer.

"Guys, can you stop!" Chen Guo yelled, exasperated and feeling the beginnings of a headache. Normally, these Gods were all glittering and glamorous, and she couldn't help but worship them sometimes. But now that she thought about it, not a single one of them was older than herself.

With Chen Guo's scolding, the practice room quieted down.

"So what did you come here for?" Ye Xiu asked.

"It's been a while. We thought we'd come see you," Zhang Xinjie answered. When Chen Guo had gestured toward the sofa, in the end Zhang Xinjie was the only one to neatly sit down, and now he politely gave a response. This made Chen Guo feel that he was the only good person here.

"How about it, it's not bad here, right? Anyone want to come over? Our boss is right here, if you make a good plea, then maybe in the winter transfers you can hop on this championship bus," Ye Xiu said.

"You're really aiming for another championship victory," said Zhang Jiale.

"Who isn't?" Ye Xiu said, before adding, "Oh, you're not. You'd have to get rid of that 'another.'"

"You bastard!" Zhang Jiale cursed. Just in this room, there were many people who had never won a championship - Su Mucheng, Fang Rui, Lin Jingyan, none of them had. But Ye Xiu specifically attacked him, to mock his four second-place finishes, of course.

It was said that you shouldn't expose or attack someone's shortcomings, but because everyone here was friendly with each other, sometimes shortcomings were attacked like this. It was just like how Zhang Jiale insisted on looking at the equipment, which would be unacceptable in other contexts with different people. But the problem was, not only did he fail to see the equipment, he was still ridiculed by Ye Xiu. Zhang Jiale was rather depressed.

"If you're not here for anything serious then hurry up and leave, stop disrupting our practice." Ye Xiu started waving his hands to get them to leave.

"You're still practicing even now?" Zhang Xinjie furrowed his brow. To someone like him, who always maintained the strictest of practice schedules, practice the day before a competition was unthinkable.

"What do you understand!" This was what Ye Xiu said to this Glory Master Tactician, a man that really understood quite a lot of things.

Zhang Xinjie didn't retort. He stood up and said, "It looks like your team still has areas that need urgent improvement!"

Chen Guo gulped. Just from this one little clue, he was already able to make such a guess. This "only good person" was in reality quite terrifying!

"Not used to playing with unspecialized?" Zhang Xinjie looked at Su Mucheng and Fang Rui.

"Since you've guessed it, what else is there to say," Ye Xiu said, helpless.

"I hope that we'll have an exciting match," Zhang Xinjie said.

"We will," Ye Xiu said.

"See you onstage tomorrow." Han Wenqing left this final statement, and the four Tyranny players departed.

"I'm feeling dizzy. They seriously just passed by to come say hi? Don't they have anything better to do?" Seeing the four leave, Ye Xiu sighed.

"They completely guessed our current condition." Chen Guo thought about Zhang Xinjie's careful expression, and she shivered at how accurate his judgment was.

"It's not hard to guess," Ye Xiu said.

"So now what?" Chen Guo asked.

"We honestly don't have much hope of winning the team competition. We'll focus on getting the individual battles." As Ye Xiu spoke, he glanced at the time. "It's about time, let's take a look together at our opponents for tomorrow."

"Are we chasing them back here?" Steamed Bun asked.

"Huh?" Ye Xiu didn't understand.

"Aren't they our opponents tomorrow?"

Ye Xiu was speechless. Steamed Bun was being himself again...

After that, the entire team went to the strategy room. Tyranny's match recordings, especially those of the previous three rounds, had already been dug up and prepared. Every day, after doing the intense practice with the rest of the team, Ye Xiu still had to make time to organize all of these materials... Chen Guo deeply felt that they couldn't continue like this. Wei Chen could help to some extent, but he couldn't free Ye Xiu completely. Chen Guo could only be grateful that at least now they had Guan Rongfei and Wu Chen. Otherwise, if Ye Xiu had to manage things on those two ends as well, they would have to cut him into pieces.

Managing a pro team really wasn't easy! During this time, she had been trying to recruit helpers. On the guild side, things were going pretty well. A number of people had been drawn in, giving semi-professional help to run the guild. Even though these people weren't here, but work done in an online game didn't require everyone to be in the same place. As long as there was internet, things could be accomplished.

On the R&D side, Chen Guo also wanted to find more help. Her number one targets were the R&D workers of Excellent Era after the team dissolved. From Guan Rongfei, she had managed to obtain the contact information of three of his former colleagues. But when she reached out, she found that these three were still together, and were still at Excellent Era - New Excellent Era!

New Excellent Era had applied to participate in this year's Challenger League. When Chen Guo checked, they were advancing quite smoothly. Their current roster had Qiu Fei as the core player, and then some former Excellent Era trainees. This season's Challenger League didn't have any monster like last season's Excellent Era; everything was back to normal. Chen Guo casually looked over, and also discovered Team Jade Dynasty, one of the teams they had fought last season. After the entire team had been fired, it seemed like they'd gathered another group of people from who knows where to give it another shot.

At the time, Chen Guo had invited Lin Yi and the others that Jade Dynasty's boss had directly fired. They had expressed that they would consider her offer, and then there was no more news from them. Chen Guo contacted them twice more, but they were still wavering.

Not until the new season began did Lin Yi call her. He and two of the players from Jade Dynasty ultimately decided to join Happy, working for the guild in-game.

For them to reach this decision now, Chen Guo was quite able to understand Lin Yi's state of mind. In the end, he still wanted to be a pro player, and this entire summer, he was likely working very hard to try and find such an opportunity. But by the time the new season began, he had been unable to find a team, and so his dream of being a pro player was put to an end. So, he contacted Happy, and became one of their guild workers.

Relative to ordinary players, Lin Yi's skill at Glory was quite high. For him to be a team captain, he was exceptional in some areas. After he joined, he quickly became Wu Chen's most effective helper.

With the hard work of these people, Guild Happy's current development was very stable. On the high-end battlefields, because Ye Xiu and the others were no longer helping, the guild lost its overwhelming advantage. But in all of the various ordinary servers, Guild Happy was up and running smoothly. Happy finally had its own stores of basic materials filling its vaults. What had happened back in the day in the tenth server, with Ye Xiu selling his labor to obtain dungeon materials, would never have to happen again.

Chapter 1175: Tyranny Fanclub

September 27th, Glory Pro Alliance Season 10 Round 4 began, with Happy playing their home game against Tyranny.

The influence of a powerhouse team was incomparable. Although Happy now had a certain amount of popularity themselves, the crowd they could attract wasn't enough to fill the entirety of Xiaoshan Stadium. Compared to Excellent Era's glory days, when they'd sell out seats and even one ticket was hard to come by, Happy was still lacking.

But this time Tyranny had come, which drew many spectators. Plus, Tyranny itself had its fans organized everywhere. Many of Xiaoshan Stadium's seats were filled up.

For a weak team, this was an annoyance of something fortunate. When a powerhouse came, they could generate a lot of ticket revenue. But at the same time, when a powerhouse came, that meant defeat was likely.

For Happy, this was only their second home game, they didn't have any expectations regarding ticket sales. Even with so many spectators, Chen Guo wasn't particularly excited. Her focus was all on the upcoming match.

There were many highlights to watch for in this match. There was the confrontation between longtime rivals Ye Xiu and Han Wenqing, there was the former duo Fang Rui and Lin Jingyan, there was Tang Rou's promise of a 1v3 within five rounds. Unfortunately, although there were so many highlights, this match

wasn't the most beautiful in this round. At the same time, City S's Samsara was playing their home game against Blue Rain.

A showdown between powerhouses, the television broadcast stations wouldn't miss any of it. For those who wanted to watch the livestream of Happy against Tyranny, they would have to stream it online.

Xiaoshan Stadium, the away team Tyranny came onstage first. During an official match, the team members all wore their team uniforms. Tyranny, as a powerhouse team, had unusual influence. Throughout the country, their fans had formed their own fanclubs. Whenever Tyranny had a match, the diehard fans that travelled with the team to watch all their matches would contact the fans in whatever city they travelled to, and they would all come to the match together to cheer Tyranny on. Right now, on the west side of the stadium were gathered many Tyranny fans all wearing Tyranny's uniform, and when their team came onstage, they began wildly cheering and yelling, waving various banners and slogans. Compared to Hundred Blossoms who had come in the second round, their spirit was much stronger.

Although Happy now had quite a few fans, they didn't have these sort of organized fanclubs. Everyone came to cheer the team individually. In the face of the other team's powerful momentum with their organization, Happy's fans suddenly seemed very fragmented. Happy's home field was about to be conquered by Tyranny.

Tyranny's players waved to acknowledge the support of their fans, igniting more waves of excitement from them. It wasn't until the home team came out that Happy's fans started cheering, temporarily suppressing Tyranny's spirit. But it was only temporary. The unorganized and scattered cheers were no long-term match for the Tyranny fanclubs, and Happy's fans had to admit defeat first.

It seemed... they needed to create their own team fanclub.

Seeing all of this, Chen Guo thought back to when she was still an Excellent Era fan and her experiences with Excellent Era's fanclub. These fanclubs, although initially formed from spontaneous friendships, after obtaining a certain amount of unity and influence, the official club would give them a certain amount of support. Happy could also follow this pattern, but for now, since Happy had only just started, they didn't have any powerful clubs. During the Challenger League, Tian Qi and the other guild brothers had grouped together quite fiercely, but now unfortunately they weren't in City H. Building a home team fanclub would progress more smoothly starting from the fans in the city.

The noise of the fans reached a peak when the players of the two teams greeted each other. At this time, the fans would become the powerful backing of their respective teams, giving them momentum from behind. The Tyranny fans, with experience and training, was able to give their team an aggressively powerful momentum at this time.

After the teams shook hands and exchanged greetings, they returned to their player areas. The match was about to begin, and the players for the first battle of the individual round were announced.

Team Tyranny. Player: Lin Jingyan. Character: Dark Thunder, Brawler.

Team Happy. Player: Su Mucheng. Character: Dancing Rain, Launcher.

A faceoff between top-level players at the very start! The crowd went wild. The two players stood from their respective areas, and after a casual greeting, they headed toward the stage.

The experienced players entered the match, and the first battle swiftly began.

A one-on-one map, a village at dusk. It seemed less like a battlefield and more like a scenic view at twilight, slowly revealed by the holographic projection. This was a map with which Su Mucheng was very familiar. She liked the scenery of this map, and because she liked it, she became familiar with it, and once she was familiar, she could use it in a competitive match.

What about Lin Jingyan?

With his former partner Fang Rui, Happy knew all of his secrets. When they were choosing maps, they considered opinions from all sides. Following Fang Rui's reports, all of the maps they had chosen for today's match were ones that Lin Jingyan hadn't studied. Of course, on the other hand, any maps that Lin Jingyan hadn't studied, Fang Rui wouldn't have any deep understanding, either. He had grown up under the same training as Lin Jingyan, the only change being that one year when Lin Jingyan had left first.

That year, Wind Howl had made some adjustments to welcome the new core Tang Hao, so they had practiced a few new maps.

"However, these maps were to welcome Tang Hao, who had grown up in Hundred Blossoms. I think that even if they don't fit Tyranny, Zhang Jiale would probably be familiar with them anyway." This was Fang Rui's analysis. It was evident that the effects of a player transfer were complex and far-reaching. Those who thought that Glory was just about hitting and killing had a far too shallow understanding of this game.

So, for the first battle of the individual round, the player Su Mucheng selected a map she liked, Rainfall Village.

When talking about how big a 1v1 map could be, they would talk about this village. It was really an entire corner of a village.

The two characters loaded on the map and the battle began. After circling around a small hut in front of the spawn point, Su Mucheng already saw Dark Thunder ducking around and borrowing the scenery as cover, looking like he wanted to do some strategic maneuvering.

But at this point Lin Jingyan clearly saw Dancing Rain over here, so Dark Thunder stopped ducking around, and boldly walked forward.

"This map really doesn't have good cover!" Lin Jingyan said in the chat.

Su Mucheng replied with a smiley face.. Of course that was the case. A long-ranged attacker needed the target to exist in their line of sight; it wasn't good for a Launcher if there was a lot of cover. Su Mucheng chose a map she liked, but of course she would first consider how advantageous the map was to her in a battle.

"Here's not bad!" Lin Jingyan suddenly sent this message. Dark Thunder, in the afterglow of the setting sun, circled behind a tile-roofed house.

Su Mucheng smiled. Dancing Rain continued to move, and then she lifted her cannon. Power accumulated at the opening, a charged Quantum Bomb.

Dark Thunder, behind the house, was currently looking around. Lin Jingyan was truly rather unfamiliar with this map, and he was currently investigating to see if he could find something he could use to his advantage. He was trying to develop a strategy, he wasn't in a hurry to directly fight Su Mucheng. As an old veteran, it wasn't suitable if he always wanted to fight head-on to determine victory. A veteran should use the experience and tactics he had accumulated through the years. Leave the direct confrontations and the hand speed competitions to the youngsters!

As Lin Jingyan studied, he suddenly heard a "biu" sound, short and sharp.

Quantum Bomb!

The sounds of the Launcher's skills were quite loud, and they all sounded different. Just from the sound, you could distinguish the skill. Not only could Lin Jingyan hear that this was a Quantum Bomb, he could also tell that this shot was charged.

The power of a charged Quantum Bomb simply couldn't be compared to a direct instant shot. Lin Jingyan hadn't even figured out where Dancing Rain had appeared and he had no idea which way he should dodge. But ducking and rolling would at least reduce the area of his body that was exposed, and it was certainly better than just standing around and waiting to be attacked.

But Dark Thunder had barely started to roll before the powerful shockwave hit. The wall of that tile-roofed house was blasted into pieces, bricks flying everywhere, a few hitting Dark Thunder. The power of the Quantum Bomb could directly break through walls, and the rolling Dark Thunder was sent tumbling.

"Damn, that's dizzying!" Lin Jingyan controlled Dark Thunder to stand up, and saw that the Quantum Bomb had directly blown a hole in that wall. Through this hole, he could see the large open doors on the other side of this building. Dancing Rain? Lin Jingyan had no time to see those shadows clearly, for a beam of light shined at that door, as though to swallow it, but in the end it only passed through the doors, and then the hole, directly toward Dark Thunder.

Laser Rifle!

Across the house, Su Mucheng's attacks were still continuous. Lin Jingyan, who had just been knocked down by that Quantum Bomb, was clearly a bit slow to react to this. He was unable to dodge this Laser Rifle either, and was hit square on, directly pushed back into a pile of hay behind him.

The hay scattered around him, swirling in the wind like snowflakes. Dark Thunder waved his claw and burrowed out of the pile, only to see that Dancing Rain had already gotten a lot closer. She lifted her hand and a brilliant lighter flew toward him in an arc.

Is this still scientific? The throw was this far and this strong, yet the flames of that lighter were as stable as ever.

Lin Jingyan cursed silently, but he also knew, the lighter wasn't the point here, the fearsome thing was the subsequent Heat-Seeking Missile.

Once he accurately studied the path of that lighter, Dark Thunder retreated back, quickly returning to that haystack.

But the path of that lighter wasn't what Lin Jingyan had predicted. It seemed to fly a bit farther.

It was affected by the wind speed?

At this time, there was no time to ponder scientific principles. Dark Thunder retreated further.

Boom!

Dark Thunder was instantly surrounded by roaring flames. When that lighter landed, the Heat-Seeking Missile hadn't even arrived yet. The hay was ignited first.

Suddenly surrounded by fire, Lin Jingyan was clearly stunned for a moment, his controls a bit slow. Dark Thunder was just a few beats slow in escaping from the field of fire, and he was hit by the Heat-Seeking Missile.

The mushroom cloud rose into the sky, and the thick smoke again enveloped Dark Thunder.

Chapter 1176: Starting to Falter

They'd only been attacking for a short while now, only three attacks had been used, but the beautiful rural scenery had already gained a broken wall with a gaping hole, and an inferno of flames, and a rising mushroom cloud.

The sunset, the quiet evening beauty, was gone in an instant. The sight of Lin Jingyan's Dark Thunder pathetically crawling out of the thick smoke only added more tragedy to the setting.

But not all was lost. Dancing Rain continued to follow him with her attacks, and Dark Thunder had to jump this way and that to try and hide. Not long after, the map scenery was destroyed even further. This setting was beautiful, but the Launcher was a force of destruction upon this map. And this was a map that Su Mucheng liked...

Lin Jingyan didn't even have the strength to complain right now. He was at far too much of a disadvantageous situation right now, and as he looked around, he couldn't find a single suitable place where he could hide and catch his breath. In the face of a Launcher's firepower, everything on this map might as well be non-existent.

What a weak little village!

This was the only lament Lin Jingyan had left.

Was he going to just lose like this?

There was no way for Lin Jingyan not to think like this. If he lost, the media, the reporters, the commentators, the players, countless people, would they all once again start pointing at his old age?

Do I need your gossip? I know my own condition better than anyone else. Old age? Yeah, right! I'm not even thirty yet, okay?

Lin Jingyan had a very gentle and warm personality. In the face of all sorts of provocative questions, he generally wouldn't have any sort of aggressive response. But no response didn't mean that he didn't have any opinions. Lin Jingyan felt that he was still fine, that he could still fight.

But could he really still fight, or... or was he just unsatisfied, and motivating himself to make this sort of assertion? Sometimes Lin Jingyan himself was unclear, but he still believed in the feelings he had during a match.

This match was extremely difficult. But this was absolutely not because of his age.

On this map, Su Mucheng's offense was extremely coherent. All of the map's features could be used to help her attack. And Lin Jingyan wasn't very familiar with this map. But even if he were, it wouldn't have helped much. By now, the features had basically all been destroyed.

It was definitely because of that kid Fang Rui, Lin Jingyan could guess. But this sort of "selling out" was very logical, and while in Tyranny he had also given lots of reports about Fang Rui, possibly even more than what Fang Rui had revealed about him. After all, he had watched Fang Rui as he grew up, all the way from when he was a baby rookie switching classes and finally settling on a Thief. More could be seen when looking down as opposed to looking up.

Was there really nothing he could use to change this situation?

Lin Jingyan hadn't given up yet. He used the Glory knowledge he had accumulated over eight years.

Thick smoke, thick smoke, thick smoke...

Thick smoke covered the areas the Launcher had destroyed.

And then, the wind direction on this map...

Lin Jingyan studied his surroundings. Behind him, the Launcher's cannon shots were loud as Su Mucheng chased him closely.

Lin Jingyan had Dark Thunder duck through a cloud of smoke. It was much like the effect of a Smoke Bullet; once Dark Thunder entered, he couldn't be seen.

Su Mucheng immediately adjusted Dancing Rain's position.

Over here, a line at 2 o'clock... Lin Jingyan calculated, and continued to move Dark Thunder.

Still nothing?

Su Mucheng had Dancing Ran increase the angle,, but Dark Thunder was still nowhere to be seen.

Next, I can walk over here... this wall was half-exploded, a bit low, if I duck down... no, I'll be exposed. Too bad I don't have the Gunner's Slide Kick! Alright, I'll have to be a bit wasteful...

In a place where there was no target at all, Dark Thunder suddenly used a Tyrannical Chain Punch.

This skill was used to press an opponent onto the ground and flatten them. Naturally, there was a forward charge movement to throw the person. With this throwing animation, Dark Thunder passed over the wall as as though he were crawling.

Then over here...

Lin Jingyan continued his careful calculations.

Su Mucheng was surprised to realize she'd lost Dark Thunder's position.

He just vanished right from under her eyes? Su Mucheng didn't know where he was, so she could only look around randomly.

The audience had the greatest clue. The omniscient view of the battle showed them that Dark Thunder was currently circling around to the back. But the path he chose to get there, how come Su Mucheng couldn't discover him? Even though the screen displayed Su Mucheng's camera view, you needed to be able to visualize on your own to understand what was going on here.

Under his patient persistence, Lin Jingyan finally succeeded in circling around.

The audience let out some gasps. Even the home fans were feeling a little moved. And the Tyranny fans were shouting and cheering like crazy, as though they had just won a grand prize.

But even if he had successfully circled around, Lin Jingyan still had a ways to go! Even if he managed a beautiful sneak attack, that didn't necessarily mean he could close the gap between himself and Su Mucheng for good.

He had spent too long being attacked in the beginning! Lin Jingyan understood this clearly. This opportunity now had been difficult to come by, so he treasured it. Carefully and silently, he moved Dark Thunder forward.

Powerful Knee Attack!

Lin Jingyan finally launched his offensive. Dark Thunder, who had vanished from Su Mucheng's eyes for so long, suddenly appeared, but he was already behind Dancing Rain's body. The knee hit right at the center of Dancing Rain's back. After that attack finished, he followed with a Brick, knocking Dancing Rain dizzy.

Combo start!

One hit, two hits, three hits...

The system's combo counter jumped upward as Lin Jingyan fought meticulously. The veteran maintained the precision and accuracy of his controls. Although his hand speed had slowed, it was now more stable.

To directly take down an opponent with one system-counted combo attack was very unlikely. A pro player might be able to do it when fighting an ordinary player, but in an equal fight, there was no way to play so gorgeously.

So, false combos were created. When chaining attacks together, the usefulness of false combos couldn't be disregarded.

Lin Jingyan's ability to execute false combos was also quite significant. The true combo had already been interrupted twice, but with a precise false combo attack linked on, he was able to continue attacking.

Slap, Uppercut, Sand Toss, Tiger Flips the Mountain, then toss a Molotov Cocktail...

Lin Jingyan continuously adjusted his attack method.

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But in the gap between the Sand Toss and the Tiger Flips the Mountain, Dancing Rain suddenly fired a shot.

The powerful recoil changed Dancing Rain's position in the air. But the Tiger Flips the Mountain also came very quickly, and the swinging arm headed toward Dancing Rain in midair.

A grenade flew from Dancing Rain's hand.

Lin Jingyan ignored it. He wouldn't give up his currently ongoing offensive just to dodge this attack.

Tiger Flips the Mountain must stop her!

Lin Jingyan grit his teeth. With a swipe of his mouse, Dark Thunder's hands advanced swiftly.

Boom!

The light of the grenade swallowed Dark Thunder whole.

He missed... In the end, the Tiger Flips the Mountain hit nothing but air. The grenade hit Dark Thunder, and Dancing Rain's next attack landed as well, beginning the counterattack.

Lin Jingyan felt a twinge of sadness in his heart.

He hadn't been able to stop it?

If this was before...

Yes, to be suppressed by Su Mucheng at the start of the match wasn't because of his age. But this time, he failed with this Tiger Flips the Mountain, precisely because his reaction time and his speed were falling...

Uppercut, Sand Toss, then Tiger Flips the Mountain... Had he already fallen to the point where he would leave an opening with this combo?

To realize one's inability during a live match was truly a heartbreaking thing. Especially this kind of inability, in an area that couldn't be improved further. If he couldn't do this now, he would never be able to do it again. This is what the passing years brought; no one could turn back time.

Dark Thunder was once again beaten down.

Lin Jingyan, discovering that his ability was slipping, found his attention divided. He was unable to take back the initiative. In the first battle of the individual round, Su Mucheng won.

The stadium was filled with applause.

The scattered fans could still come together at this time to show their enthusiasm.

Su Mucheng came offstage and waved to greet the audience.

Lin Jingyan came offstage and smiled bitterly.

This time, if he was criticized again, he truly had no rebuttal.

Was he really starting to falter? Lin Jingyan lifted his head to look at the scoreboard in the stadium.
Tyranny: 0. Happy: 1.

It was just one point.

The difference wasn't so large!

It was still early! Lin Jingyan's thoughts suddenly cleared. If there was an opening in this combo, then in the future he'd just have to pay attention to it, that's all. How could he fill this opening, what effect would this opening have when fighting the various classes, would he need to warn his teammates to cover and coordinate in a team battle...

After they went back home, he would just have to study this!

As Lin Jingyan thought to himself, he returned to the player area.

"Your positioning was pretty good." Zhang Jiale praised him.

"Haha!" Lin Jingyan laughed. It was true, that bit of positioning was pretty good. He had lost some things, but gained some things as well. Perhaps he could no longer accomplish the Uppercut - Sand Toss - Tiger Flips the Mountain, but he could still accomplish this kind of clever positioning.

"Now, watch me!" Zhang Jiale gave Lin Jingyan a thumbs up, and Lin Jingyan responded in kind.

The second battle of the individual round.

Tyranny: Zhang Jiale, using the Spitfire Dazzling Hundred Blossoms.

Happy: Ye Xiu, using the unspecialized Lord Grim.

"Oh hey, it's you," Zhang Jiale said, as they shook hands before the battle.

"Scared? Kneel before me!" said Ye Xiu.

"We'll see who's kneeling in a bit," said Zhang Jiale.

"Such irrational confidence." Ye Xiu shook his head and sighed.

Zhang Jiale was a mighty God, what was so irrational about being confident? Ye Xiu's mockery was baseless.

"Fuck.." In the end, Zhang Jiale just cursed bitterly. Because he was clear that in a 1v1, his chances of winning were indeed not very high.

His Hundred Blossoms style relied on confusing the opponent and hiding himself. But Ye Xiu was the Glory Textbook, and his skill at playing a Spitfire himself was quite high. Compared to others, he could see through the skill composition of Zhang Jiale's Hundred Blossoms style, and then find the secret door to unravel it all.

There was a reason, after all, that Ye Xiu had been able to break through Blood and Blossoms by himself all those years ago.

But the past was the past, and now was now.

Without having fought, who knew the outcome?

Zhang Jiale shrugged his shoulders and entered the player booth.

Second battle of the individual round, begin!

Chapter 1177: Scared?

"Ah!"

The instant the map loaded, quite a few people in the crowd gasped.

Because the map that Ye Xiu had chosen for this round was the Arena.

It was a map used in game when two people wanted a fast match. It was incredibly simple and bare, a square expanse of flat land.

There were no places for shelter, and the area was also very small. When the two characters appeared, their eyes already met, and it would only take a few steps forward before they were within a Gunner's attack range.

"You actually chose this map..." Zhang Jiale said in the chat. The meaning of this map couldn't be clearer. It was a straightforward confrontation, nowhere for the opponent to hide or dodge. Of course, that also meant that you yourself couldn't hide or dodge, either.

"Heh, scared?" Ye Xiu asked.

Scared? Scared? Scared?

Online and offline, it was this same phrase over and over! Scared, my ass! Zhang Jiale fumed, and in an instant he released smoke and fireworks to surround himself, as though it were a small universe suddenly bursting into existence, sometimes shrinking and sometimes expanding.

Ye Xiu didn't hold back either. Lord Grim rushed forward!

The light and shadows shrouded him, an obstruction and an attack all in one.

Lord Grim instantly turned into smoke. What the lights attacked was only a Shadow Clone.

The real body was already behind Dazzling Hundred Blossoms. Cut-Throat! Light flashed from his hand.

Dazzling Hundred Blossoms rolled and avoided the attack and simultaneously retaliated with a grenade.

Lord Grim didn't retreat or dodge. With a whoosh, the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella opened up, and the explosion was blocked outside of the umbrella.

The umbrella closed, flames crackled in the air, the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella had already become a spear, and Dragon Tooth thrust forward.

Rolling, Dazzling Hundred Blossoms was still rolling, and he tossed another grenade of another unknown type.

Lord Grim still didn't give way, the spear was retracted, a slide-step, a palm thrust forward.

Falling Flower Palm!

The slide-step allowed him to avoid the newly thrown grenade, but Dazzling Hundred Blossoms was now two rolls away, a bit out of reach of the Falling Flower Palm.

But suddenly, a cold light appeared, it was Sword Draw!

The Myriad Manifestations Umbrella was retracted, this was the ready pose of a Falling Flower Palm, but having the weapon at one's side, wasn't that also the ready pose of a Sword Draw?

Two skills. One pose. But because of the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella's ability to shift between spear and sword, they were completely merged together.

This Sword Draw came faster and more unexpectedly.

The normal way to prepare for a Sword Draw was to notice the sheathed ready pose, but because the Falling Flower Palm pose, it was completely overlooked.

Dazzling Hundred Blossoms was hit by the sword, and blood droplets flew everywhere. Lord Grim took the chance to rush to Dazzling Hundred Blossoms' side. The Myriad Manifestations Umbrella was broken apart into two tonfas, one in each hand, and he came at Dazzling Hundred Blossoms with punches and kicks.

Sptifires weren't good at close-combat, and Zhang Jiale fought for his life to dodge and get free. Finally, he seized an opening, and a grenade hit the ground.

Burst Grenade!

A powerful knockback came out, a force that couldn't be blocked.

But before this, Lord Grim stepped once.

One step wasn't enough to escape the blow away effect of the Burst Grenade, but one step could change one's position relative to the grenade.

One step forward, the shockwaves from the Burst Grenade would hit Lord Grim's front.

One step backward, the shockwaves from the Burst Grenade would hit Lord Grim's back.

The damage from an AoE skill sometimes varied by whether or not it hit one's back. The Burst Grenade did not follow that rule. Thus, the damage and effects were entirely the same.

What was different was that, behind Lord Grim there was no one, but right in front of him was Dazzling Hundred Blossoms.

Lord Grim was pushed flying by the shockwave, but since he was sticking so close to Dazzling Hundred Blossoms, he immediately hit the other's body, and so Dazzling Hundred Blossoms was sent flying as well.

"You fucker..." Zhang Jiale wanted to cry. Who knew there were such shameless close-combat tactics?

The two characters were together sent flying. In midair, the Spitfire was still at a disadvantage in close-combat, and the midair Lord Grim was already making his next move.

By the time they were about to land, Lord Grim had already sent out a number of low-level attacks, and ultimately he didn't let Dazzling Hundred Blossoms land freely. Eagle Stamp, Falling Light Blade, Lord Grim was stomping on Dazzling Hundred Blossoms. And this wasn't the end, there was still a Punisher, several bullets sent to Dazzling Hundred Blossoms' head.

The crowd was shocked!

This was the map with which they were most familiar, this was the method of fighting to which they were the most accustomed. But who could fight with such rapid and fierce rhythm like these two?

Zhang Jiale could hold his own in the beginning, but after Lord Grim started close-combat, he was stuck on the defensive and sent into a mess. He'd only dropped that Burst Grenade with difficulty, hoping to send Lord Grim a little farther away, but Lord Grim had managed to take advantage of it, and he was pushed even more closely to Dazzling Hundred Blossoms.

The following nonstop sequence of an unspecialized's low-level skills was frankly dizzying. The viewers couldn't even count the number of skills, they could only watch the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella shifting back and forth, a feast for their eyes.

Attack, attack, nonstop attack. Lord Grim had the advantage all the way. When the occasional attack from Dazzling Hundred Blossoms hit him, it was clearly just his sacrificing a bit of health for a better offensive.

No way, was he really going to kill off Dazzling Hundred Blossoms just like this?

Everyone held this thought in their hearts. And in the end, Dazzling Hundred Blossoms was really killed off just like that.

The corpse fell at the corner of the map. Lord Grim sheathed his blade, opened his umbrella, and lifted it to the air to block the raindrops of blood that scattered down.

"These days, I've been training ferociously." Ye Xiu left this final message in the chat and cleanly exited the battle, collecting the point and leaving.

The crowd was stunned for a long time before they finally reacted.

This battle was already over. This was an entirely one-sided domination. And this opponent was by no means an ordinary person, this was the top God Zhang Jiale. In this battle, the unspecialized class revealed its heretofore unseen dominance, extraordinarily high skill speed and complex variations were used to their full potential. This time it was Zhang Jiale who met this opponent, so what if he were switched with other players? How would they fare? Would they also be ruthlessly beaten up like this?

When Zhang Jiale walked out of the competitor booth, his expression was still a little horror-struck.

Before, he had felt irritation at the difficulty of facing an unspecialized. This time, Zhang Jiale felt terror. That huge assortment of the low-level skills of 24 classes, the feeling of them endlessly striking his body with no opening to break free...

But just because he couldn't find an opening didn't mean that there was no opening. It was only because he was unfamiliar, because he lacked experience, that his reaction couldn't keep up.

This battle was pretty good for gathering intelligence, wasn't it? Zhang Jiale laughed bitterly. This was the only comfort he could take from this. He had actually suffered a perfect defeat. Zhang Jiale shook his head and sighed as he walked offstage and returned to the player area. Over there, Ye Xiu had also just returned. Seeing the other player look over here, Ye Xiu smirked. "Scared?"

Scared scared scared! Fuck off with your scared!

But this time, Zhang Jiale was truly a little scared...

For now, they couldn't fight this class. But it was alright. After this round, they wouldn't face him again for several months. The situation then wouldn't be the same!

Now was now. The future was the future.

Without having fought, who knew the outcome?

Zhang Jiale maintained this attitude. To Ye Xiu's "scared?", he shrugged his shoulders and sat back down in his seat.

The second battle of the individual competition was over. Happy: 2. Tyranny: 0, still.

The fans needed morale as well, and their morale generally came from the team's performance. When the team was low, how would the fans have the spirit to cheer you on?

Zhang Jiale's perfect defeat destroyed the fans' morale, and their lagging behind in the points had them in low spirits as well.

At least there was still the third battle, hurry and win a point!

The fans pulled themselves together to cheer Tyranny on. This was an away game, and so the fans were relatively lacking in numbers. Before, their unity and understanding was enough to knock over Happy's scattered fans. But now, their morale was cleanly killed, and meanwhile Happy was all riled up after such a perfect victory. The atmosphere of the home game was won back. After only a few cheers from the Tyranny fans, they were drowned out by the hollering of the Happy fans.

Round 3. Tyranny's player: Song Qiying, character: Striker, River Sunset.

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A rookie from Tyranny, onstage for the first time, playing the same class as decade-long core player Han Wenqing. And the name of the character he played was from the same line of the same poem as the name of the King of Fighting, Desert Dust.

Was this the successor to the King of Fighting?

The people couldn't help but make guesses. There were two ways to find successors for core characters. One was to raise someone within the team, and the other was to recruit someone from elsewhere who played the same class.

Once upon a time, Tyranny had raised someone to inherit the character. But Han Wenqing was old and strong, refusing to retire, and the person who was supposed to replace him could wait no more.

A pro player only had so many years to shine, and no one would be willing to passively wait and let their time run out. In Season 6, the Striker player who Tyranny had raised to replace Han Wenqing, named Jia Shiming, transferred out of Tyranny.

As it turned out, this was a wise decision. Han Wenqing continued to play from Season 6 to Season 10 now, and was the ace player for all that time. If Jia Shiming had continued to wait, he would have melted on the bench by now.

But after Jia Shiming left Tyranny, he hadn't managed to earn any big fame.

He had chosen to join Royal Style, and after playing with them for two seasons, he transferred to Void. Right now, he was still on Void, but he still had not made it onto their main roster.

Now it was already Season 10, four years of Jia Shiming's professional career had gone by, and no one still expected him to make any grand breakthrough.

Many people wondered, this player had been chosen to be a core player for his team, how did he end up without even a spot on a main roster? How did Tyranny pick people?

Even when Zhang Jiale and Lin Jingyan joined Tyranny, people brought up this point as ammunition for ridicule. They said that after Jia Shiming, Tyranny no longer trusted their own eyes when picking people, so they could only taken in powerful Gods that had already proven their strength.

This was only a joke, of course. Tyranny's training camp was still very seriously raising young and interested players.

Song Qiying was only 17 years old right now. Whether or not he would become Han Wenqing's successor had yet to be decided for sure.

But as long as he was skilled enough, they wouldn't need to ask Tyranny for any proof.

How would this rookie's first battle play out? As they waited in anticipation, Happy's player had already stepped onstage.

Fang Rui, the master of playing dirty...

Many people were already in mourning. For a rookie, no type of player was more hated.

Chapter 1178: Normal Etiquette

The battle loaded, revealing the map: Magic World.

It was a bit difficult to pin down exactly what kind of world the world of Glory was. There were firearms and cold weapons, there was magic, the Glory world truly encompassed too many things. So, in terms of maps, there was everything from magical dreamlands to a parking lot.

The map that Fang Rui chose was a strange, shifting little world crafted from magic, one of his preferred maps. Lin Jingyan would certainly know this, but Fang Rui wasn't deterred because of that. He was skilled at many maps, so even if Lin Jingyan told Tyranny everything, they wouldn't be able to guess which map Fang Rui would use for this match, and they couldn't specially prepare for every possible map. That was why choosing the map was such an advantage for the home team. Even if the opponent had some understanding of you, it would still be difficult to make any preparations.

The match began, and both characters began to move.

Song Qiying was a rookie that had never appeared onstage before. Aside from age and class, there was no information on him. Although he was only 17 years old, Fang Rui didn't dare underestimate him. After this season finished, Han Wenqing would have played for a full decade. If he still wasn't finished within two years, then some scientists should really take him apart for research.

Needless to say, Tyranny needed a new player to step up. And Song Qiying's age fit quite well. For now, he could play a few matches, gaining real experience and steadily growing up, and in two or three years he could play a big role.

Although Tyranny had made a mistake in the past, there was really no way of underestimating someone who was being raised to be a core player. After the battle opened, Fang Rui opted to lie low as he moved, strategically weaving this way and that as he moved.

On this map were countless magic lights and shadows which were unbreakable. If you touched some of them, you would take damage. Fang Rui knew the distribution of these magic lights like the back of his hand, but if a player was unfamiliar with them, then the battle would become extremely difficult.

In the three individual battles, Happy's map choices were all very distinctive. Su Mucheng chose a scenic map where the props could all be destroyed, Ye Xiu chose a simple and bare stadium map, and Fang Rui chose a magic map where nothing could be destroyed.

The carefully-moving Fang Rui neared the center of the map. He looked outwards, but he didn't find a trace of River Sunset.

Was he also strategically moving? Fang Rui found this unexpected. This was Han Wenqing's successor. Although every player had their own style, it was generally easier to transition if the successor had a similar style to the original. If possible, the team generally hoped that the familiar style of the core player could be passed down.

"Strategically moving? What a personality!" Unable to see his opponent, Fang Rui began his trash talk attack in the chat.

The message was sent, but the opponent didn't respond. The audience members exchanged looks with each other.

Because they knew, Song Qiying was not, in fact, using any strategic movements. He was heading straight toward the center of the map. He hadn't arrived yet only because his movement speed was a bit too slow.

Even with no opponent and no obstacles, Song Qiying had River Sunset move slowly, very slowly. The display screen showed Song Qiying's viewpoint, and everyone could see his camera constantly turning this way and that. But even if you were trying to defend against the opponent, you didn't need to start this early? It wasn't like the opponent could instantaneously teleport to any position on the map. For the two characters to meet, there was a minimum amount of time that would have to elapse first. But Song Qiying acted as though he were defending against something and continued to walk this slowly. After Fang Rui launched his trash talk attack, the crowd anticipated his response, but in the end, he didn't even acknowledge this message, like a stone facing the roaring ocean.

"What's up, too embarrassed to talk? The rookie's quite shy, this isn't like Team Tyranny's style at all!" Fang Rui continued.

"If there's no need, then a reply isn't necessary, it wastes time." Song Qiying suddenly sent this reply.

"Haha, then how come you just talked? Logically, your message wasn't necessary, a waste of time!" Fang Rui replied.

"No, this was my explanation of my position to you. After this, meaningless talk will be ignored as stated above," Song Qiying said.

"Oh really? Then what's considered meaningful talk?" Fang Rui asked.

No reply.

"How is this question not meaningful? If a discussion of what has meaning doesn't have meaning itself, that's just too ironic." Fang Rui was almost talking in tongue twisters, but still, no response.

"My friend, you're really quite resolute!" Fang Rui still didn't give up.

"You really won't say anything?" Fang Rui said.

"Looks like I'll have to think of a meaningful question, then!" Fang Rui said.

"Hm... Did you eat dinner yet?"

The crowd was about to die of impatience. This Fang Rui was only focusing on the trash talk, but River Sunset was already very close to his position, approaching in a roundabout way. Fang Rui had wanted to strategically maneuver around his opponent, but he was the one about to be strategically maneuvered. And he was still trash talking. Spewing this nonsense without losing control, do you think you're Huang Shaotian or something?

Straight Punch!

River Sunset finally circled around to a position with which he was satisfied. While Fang Rui was happily trash talking, he suddenly unleashed a Straight Punch. River Sunset darted forward and was at Boundless Sea's side in an instant, a fist flashing out.

But Boundless Sea seemed as though he were long prepared for this. With a roll, he easily dodged this punch, and even typed another word in the chat: Haha.

This guy!

The crowd was speechless. So Fang Rui had detected River Sunset's movements early on, but he purposely didn't do anything. He continued to use trash talk to pretend that he was distracted, luring Sunset River to take the initiative to attack.

The Straight Punch missed. Song Qiyong knew that Fang Rui had noticed him before. At this moment, when the attack was already started, even a normal player would probably continue to attack and see what they could accomplish. But Song Qiyong, after this one attack missed, immediately jumped backwards twice. He didn't continue to attack, instead taking a defensive stance.

"What's this, my little friend is a bit of a scaredy-cat? I didn't scare you that much, did I?" Fang Rui continued to blab in the chat, but in his heart he was a bit alarmed. He knew that Song Qiyong was about to ambush him, and so he had prepared to defend against it and launch a counterattack. Once the opponent's attack missed, he would seize that chance to attack. But in the end, this Song Qiyong immediately retreated after missing that one attack, completely throwing off his plans.

Was this guy really that scared, or did he see through my intention? Fang Rui couldn't help but wonder. Their two characters couldn't just maintain this three body unit distance without moving, of course. When he saw the opponent retreating, Fang Rui finally decided to attack. Boundless Sea's fist swung forward with a low-level Qi Bullet. Attack and disrupt, and then follow through.

But River Sunset didn't dodge this Qi Bullet. He sunk his stance, lifted his chest, left hand protecting his front, right hand bracing his waist, and then after he completed this pose he didn't move, as though he were a statue. Boundless Sea had already prepared a follow up to the Qi Bullet, but he saw River Sunset just take the bullet and sink into this stance.

"Fuck!" Fang Rui suddenly realized what was about to happen and he hurriedly tried to adjust, but the right fist had already swung forward.

A seemingly very ordinary fist, but Fang Rui knew what was about to happen. The attack that Boundless Sea had been preparing was shattered by this one punch, instant proof of its power. And then the punch reached Boundless Sea's chest, and with a burst of power, Boundless Sea was sent flying.

Emperor's Fist!

A punch that looked very ordinary, but hid a vast amount of power.

"You little brat!" Fang Rui was normally the one taking advantage of people, but now he was the one made a fool of. He was rather upset, but could the opponent's attack really be considered taking advantage? It was an upfront and noble punch, was there an attack any more unembellished?

In the end, this unembellished attack became the single thing that broke through Fang Rui's complex plan of attack, with his distraction, interference, preparation, follow-through, and so on.

One strong can defeat ten clever.

Realizing this, Fang Rui calmed down. He needed to carefully deal with this opponent, study his every movement.

Striker River Sunset, Qi Master Boundless Sea, these two Fighters began to brawl.

In the end, Fang Rui's skill was a step higher and he smoothly killed River Sunset. But his Boundless Sea didn't have much health remaining either, only 14%.

When the match ended, Fang Rui let out a relieved sigh, feeling a bit stiflingly hot. This match had not been won easily.

After thinking over this match in the competitor booth for a moment, Fang Rui finally prepared to leave the stage, but then he inadvertently saw Song Qiying standing right at the center of the stage, looking at him.

What's he doing? Standing in the middle of the stage, is he posing for the cameras? Fang Rui was mystified and continued to walk offstage, but suddenly he saw Song Qiying quickly making his way over.

"He's looking for me?" Fang Rui continued to wonder, stopping his footsteps and waiting. Song Qiying came over, and extended his right hand.

Fang Rui hesitantly shook his hand, and heard him say, "Thank you Senior for your teachings."

"Mm." Fang Rui didn't say anything, feeling that Song Qiying must have something else to say.

But no, that was it. After he said this, Song Qiying turned around and headed back.

Fang Rui stared after him, dumbfounded. As it happened, the judge came by to check on the competitor booth, and so Fang Rui asked him, "What's up with this kid?"

"Hm?"

"What'd he run over here for?"

"Shaking hands and giving thanks, normal etiquette for a match," the judge said lightly.

Fang Rui blinked. Indeed, it was the traditional etiquette to shake hands before and after a match. But now everyone was much more casual. Typically, they would just shake hands before a match, and shake hands after a team match, and that was it. For the individual and group rounds, they would skip on this post-match handshake, but this kid still came over to shake hands with Fang Rui.

"Did I inspire him in this match or something?" Fang Rui pondered over whether he had done any deep, significant thing in this battle. When he returned to the player area, he immediately complained to Ye Xiu. "This kid, he's nothing at all like Han Wenqing."

"Yeah," Ye Xiu nodded. "He's more like Zhang Xinjie."

Chapter 1179: A Positioning Expert

The individual competition had finished, and Happy had unexpectedly won all three points. This was a surprising result. But after thinking about it carefully, Happy's three All-Stars had went on stage in the

individual competition, so winning all three rounds wasn't too crazy. But then again, none of players Tyranny sent up for the individual competition were weak either. Lin Jingyan and Zhang Jiale were both top All-Star players.

But Lin Jingyan just ran around in a circle and then flashed before dying, while Zhang Jiale straight up suffered a crushing defeat. It was actually their new rookie Song Qiyang who performed well facing the master of playing dirty, Fang Rui. In that match, it wouldn't have been a surprise if Song Qiyang had won in the end.

Not earning a single point was a somewhat disheartening outcome for the Tyranny fans. They could already imagine how the media would talk about Tyranny, especially Lin Jingyan and Zhang Jiale. There would probably be a few irresponsible people that would grab at the opportunity to question if they were too old to play. Those guys would definitely ignore the fact that Ye Xiu, the person who beat Zhang Jiale, was also an old veteran.

After a short break from the individual competition, the group arena was about to begin. Because of Tang Rou's promise, the group arena was viewed with even more interest. From the ongoing discussion, this promise had attracted even more attention towards Tang Rou, but it had also damaged her image. Even just a casual remark claiming a 1v3 within five rounds was already too arrogant and egotistical, and putting her professional career on the line only made her claim even more irresponsible. Glory wasn't played alone. Tang Rou also had a team around her. Everyone could see that the team valued her quite a lot, so even many Happy fans could not agree with her reckless promise.

In any case, what's done was done. In the group arena, Tang Rou would be the first to go up. The other two would be Mo Fan and Steamed Bun.

It was an assembly of rookies. As for Team Tyranny, their first player would be the helper to the Four Heavenly Kings in the team competition, Qin Muyun, and his Sharpshooter Negative Nine Degrees. Their second player would be Bai Yanfei and his Elementalist Rota. Their final player was their one and only captain during Tyranny's ten years of history, Han Wenqing.

If Tang Rou wanted to 1v3, she would need to be beat these three opponents consecutively.

Many people didn't know what type of attitude they should be watching this match with.

If she really did complete a 1v3, it would be proof that her arrogance and ego were not unfounded. That would be truly displeasing.

If she failed to complete a 1v3 and left the pro scene, everyone would feel great, but Happy would have lost a dauntless general. Wouldn't that be bad?

This type of conflict made them feel annoyed at Tang Rou's rash act.

The match was about to begin. Even though Tyranny's failure to earn a single point in the individual competition disheartened their fans, they still cheered them on for the group arena. As for Happy? They had a huge lead, but seeing Tang Rou go on stage, the atmosphere of the crowd turned cold. The cheers for her were sparse and soft.

Chen Guo was very worried. She discovered that this event would greatly damage Tang Rou's image, even if she did succeed with a 1v3. Compared to how the crowd exploded when she completed a 1v2 in the second round, the crowd this time had become ice cold.

"Why did things have to turn out this way..." Chen Guo sighed. If she could go back to that day, she would have done everything she could to stop Tang Rou from going out to the press conference.

The countdown ticked. Five seconds later, the group arena began.

Despite receiving such criticism, Tang Rou's style hadn't changed. As soon as the match started, her character decisively charged towards the center.

Shouldn't we give her some applause? The crowd hesitated. They hesitated the entire time. On the other hand, Tyranny's fan group became more and more excited as the match progressed until they seized control of Happy's home stadium.

This time, the unwavering support from Tyranny's fans didn't disappoint. Tang Rou, with a 1v3 as her goal, lost in the very first round of the group arena.

The Tyranny fans were overjoyed. They obviously sent down merciless boos towards her. There were even many neutral spectators and a portion of Happy's fans that booed along with Tyranny's fans.

Tang Rou came down from the stage amidst the boos and returned to her seat in silence.

"This Qin Muyun needs to be studied carefully," Ye Xiu said.

"Oh?" Tang Rou looked at him.

"Keep working hard!" Ye Xiu said.

Tang Rou nodded her head.

Next up was Mo Fan. His one round suspension had been lifted; he and his Deception could come onto the stage again.

Happy's fans suddenly started livening up. Their treatment towards him was the complete opposite of their treatment towards Tang Rou. Tang Rou had originally been Happy's most popular player outside of Happy's Gods...

Chen Guo felt uncomfortable. She glanced at Tang Rou and saw her with her head up. Tang Rou's eyes were staring at the highlight replay of her fight with Qin Muyun. It wasn't until the scene shifted to the upcoming match did Tang Rou's gaze return to the stage.

Qin Muyun, who had beat Tang Rou, didn't have that much health left. His Negative Nine Degrees only had 11% health left, nearly at red blood.

Despite facing such a frail opponent, Mo Fan didn't rush over. He moved strategically as always. Qin Muyun also moved strategically. As a result, at the center of the map, neither of them directly appeared. They were all hiding, carefully observing their surroundings.

On the screen, the camera views of both players could be seen, letting the audience know which direction the two were looking at.

From Mo Fan's view, he had already locked onto the location of Qin Muyun's Negative Nine Degrees. Afterwards, he slowly started moving.

He's circling to his back...

Much of the crowd felt quite annoyed. The guy only had 11% health left, yet you still feel the need to sneak to his back? Just charge at him, bring him out, chase him, and kill him.

The opinions of the viewers clearly weren't being sent to Mo Fan's mind. Even if they were, it would be a question of whether or not he would accept their opinions.

Mo Fan was outstanding at sneaking behind someone. He quickly traversed in a circle towards Negative Nine Degrees' previous location. Yes, previous. While he was moving, Negative Nine Degrees had already moved, but Mo Fan didn't know.

It hadn't been easy for Deception to find his target, but by the time he got there, his target was nowhere to be found.

He had moved according to his predictions. In reality, he wasn't certain of his opponent's location either. Not finding his target either meant that his prediction had been wrong or his opponent had moved. Mo Fan didn't know which one was correct.

Just when he was thinking about what to do next, a sneak attack came from behind Deception.

Qin Muyun had moved away, but he hadn't gone too far. An important reason for why he picked his new spot was that he could see his previous spot.

His choice wasn't wasted. While Mo Fan was thinking that he had ran around for nothing, Mo Fan didn't know that he had already fallen into Qin Muyun's trap.

Through the scope of his gun, Deception's head was magnified extremely large!

Snipe! Headshot! Double damage. The powerful impact of the snipe pushed Deception's body askew. Negative Nine Degrees rushed out and immediately started attacking fiercely. Deception was suddenly enveloped in a rain of bullets. The Sharpshooter's attacks weren't as fierce as Launcher's, and their skills weren't as handy as Spitfire skills. In reality, most of their skills were simply normal attacks with buffs.

The number of bullets produced from Rapid-Fire, Dual Shot, Scatter-Shot, and other Sharpshooter skills were definitely the champions among other Gunner classes though.

Deception was in a tough spot. This time, Mo Fan didn't employ his favored strategy of running away and then searching for another opportunity later. Instead, he had Deception directly attempt a counterattack.

However, to counterattack, the first step had to be to break through Negative Nine Degrees' bullet rain.

Shadow Clone Technique? Smoke Bomb? Substitution Technique?

When an opportunity arrived, Mo Fan used his escape skills. However, to his surprise, he was still unable to escape. Negative Nine Degrees' attacks were always able to instantly shift to where ever he had just escaped to in pursuit.

"He's being suppressed that hard?" Fang Rui was astonished. Tyranny's old generals hadn't performed well today, but their rookies were giving a frightening show.

"His positioning is extremely good," Su Mucheng said. She was a Launcher and proficient at a support playstyle like Screen Cannon. With just one glance, she could see the key to Qin Muyun's complete suppression towards Mo Fan.

Negative Nine Degrees' position allowed him to cover all of Deception's options, including the possibilities from Deception's various Ninja skills. He wasn't just standing there either. Whenever Deception moved, he would always adjust according to the situation, maintaining his positional advantage.

"He's a positioning expert!" Ye Xiu concluded.

Positioning experts were especially suitable for playing long-ranged classes. Long-ranged classes had attacks with wider coverage. When melee classes picked spots, what they could attack was only limited to the area immediately surrounding them. When long-ranged classes picked spots, the area that they could cover was on an entirely different level. Very few players were like Ye Xiu, who picked flat maps without any obstructions. In maps with obstructions, long-ranged players with poor positioning skill would find it difficult to bring out their class's full capabilities.

Qin Muyun was this type of expert though.

After watching Tang Rou's match and this current one, Ye Xiu could completely confirm it.

"Positioning... Mo Fan is quite good at that too, no?" Chen Guo said.

"Mo Fan is an expert at picking static locations. Qin Muyun is an expert at picking spots while moving. The two are completely different," Ye Xiu said.

"Then this match..."

"If you can identify the opposing player's possible movement options, you can make accurate predictions. No matter how great you are at positioning, there will always be dead angles. Thus, after making predictions, the rest is up to reacting to the opposing player. However, Qin Muyun adjusts his position extremely fast. Trying to escape one step at a time isn't likely. In order to escape, you need to complete it one go. And when you do, you have to be careful that your choice wasn't read by him or else he'll just start suppressing you again," Ye Xiu said.

"From what you're saying, this guy sounds invincible..." Chen Guo said.

"If you have Mo Fan compete against him in positioning, then yes, he's practically invincible," Ye Xiu said.

"Then what should he do?" Chen Guo said.

"Find a way to restrict or interfere with his positioning," Ye Xiu said.

Chapter 1180: Dumb Method

All attacks began from positioning, and positioning came from choosing a position and moving there. Harassing an opponent and limiting their freedom to move was equal to interfering with the foundations of an opponent's offensive. This reasoning was very simple.

Ye Xiu had fully analyzed the problem at hand already, but Mo Fan clearly hadn't realized the key to resolving his current situation. Mo Fan, having specialized in scrap-picking, had honed the skills and awareness required for scrap-picking to an amazing degree. However, his other abilities fell short. After joining Happy, he relied on self-teaching due to his loner personality. Now, he was a registered pro player. His abilities were special in their own way, but Mo Fan was still greatly lacking a lot of theoretical knowledge.

In addition, Qin Muyun specialized in this sort of foundational skill, which was something easily dismissed by others. No reports had ever highlighted this ability of his. Ye Xiu and the others had also never noticed during their limited preparations. It was only now, at the match itself, that they noticed.

He's so hard to deal with, I can't shake him off!

Mo Fan currently had that vague idea. The reason why he was hard to deal with and impossible to shake off eluded him, and he didn't even think to try and find it.

His thought process was rather simple, just to run and shake him off. Deception kept running, but Negative Nine Degrees was like a personal satellite, always following him and suppressing him with bullets.

"This idiot!" Chen Guo watched anxiously. Mo Fan was currently just challenging Qin Muyun to a contest of movement. If Ye Xiu dared to say that Qin Muyun would be unbeatable at such a competition, then it was clear how large the gap was between the two. If they continued like this, would Deception be defeated by Qin Muyun with this amount of health?

Tang Rou had been defeated in the first round and, to her, this was a huge disappointment, because her goal was to accomplish a 1v3. However, in the group arena, leaving the opponent with 11% health left wasn't bad. However, Happy's second player didn't seem to have any way of dealing with this remaining 11%, and that was no good at all.

"Calm down. He's not as stupid as you think," Ye Xiu said, watching the match.

"What?" Chen Guo didn't understand.

"He's saving his skills," Ye Xiu said.

"Hm? What does he want to do?" Chen Guo didn't bother guessing and asked directly.

Her answer came in the form of a sudden change in action from Mo Fan.

Attack! A full frontal assault!

Ninjas were designed as a rogue-style class, talented at ambushing and assassinating. Currently, he was acting more like a main DPS, using brute force.

Smoke Bomb, Substitution Technique, Shadow Clone Technique, Storm Shuriken!

One Ninja tool, one disruption skill, one disruption plus movement technique, one projectile. Finding an opportunity, Deception unleashed four consecutive skills. Negative Nine Degrees' movements were still not disrupted. Mo Fan had never noticed that it was Negative Nine Degrees' movements that were causing him trouble,, but the purpose of these four skills wasn't to disrupt his movements.

These four skills were just to create an opening.

Ninja Arts: Shadow Dance!

The four skills were just to create a chance for this powerful skill.

Deception quickly leapt to Negative Nine Degrees' side. Negative Nine Degrees moved about the encirclement. His precise choice of pathing and positioning were just starting points while on the offensive, but when on the defensive, they were sometimes everything. Negative Nine Degrees was actually able to dart out of the encirclement.

However, it had cost him. His health had fallen even further.

Deception's offensive didn't end there. Attack, attack, attack, relentlessly attack.

The health of both sides were dropping. Deception's might be depleting faster, but Negative Nine Degrees had started with less health.

"What a dumb method!" Ye Xiu exclaimed.

"Hm?" Chen Guo didn't understand.

"He's copying Little Tang," Ye Xiu explained.

Chen Guo started, and then, when she looked back, she realized something.

Qin Muyun was still that Qin Muyun. When he had fought Tang Rou, he might have won, but it cost him almost 90 percent of his health. It was clear that facing Tang Rou's style was still very stressful for him.

Mo Fan couldn't find where the problem lay, but he had watched the previous match. He knew that with this way, he could lower the opponent's health. Thus, after saving up his skills, he launched a fierce offensive. He might have not be as intense as Tang Rou, but Negative Nine Degrees didn't have much health left anyways.

So this was the dumb method... As Chen Guo thought to herself, she glanced at Tang Rou who was next to them. Was Ye Xiu's analysis of how Mo Fan should deal with Qin Muyun for Tang Rou to hear?

In the end, Mo Fan won, but Deception had lost almost half of his health. Compared to Qin Muyun's 11 percent, Happy had still lost.

Tyranny's second player Bai Yanfei stepped into the arena.

As a member of Tyranny, you had to be at least a little tyrannical. Bai Yanfei's Elementalist really shouldn't be called Rota, but Cannon Tower*.

Elementalists didn't have as good of an attack range as Launchers, but when discussing AoE, magic won against technology. Out of all the light, dark, fire and ice elements, the character Rota focused on AoE

skills. When he charged into the middle of the map and didn't see Deception, he just unleashed a barrage of attacks onto the map and blasted Deception out of his hiding place before blasting him to death...

Rota didn't use up much health, but Happy was already at their last player, Steamed Bun. On the field, Steamed Bun had performed admirably, but in the end, he was unable to complete a 1v2. In the Group Arena, Tyranny had won back two points.

The Tyranny fans now really had something to be excited about. They organized their cheers, once again defeating Happy's home advantage. Next, was the all important team competition. The overwhelming cheers lasted until the lineup for the team competition was announced.

Happy: Ye Xiu, Su Mucheng, Fang Rui, Qiao Yifan, An Wenyi, Tang Rou.

This lineup seemed to be Happy's best lineup. Currently, it was the fourth round and Team Happy hadn't sent out any other players.

Tyranny: Zhang Xinjie, Lin Jingyan, Zhang Jiale, Qin Muyun, Song Qiyong, Bai Yanfei.

No Han Wenqing!

When the lineup for Tyranny was announced, the audience was in uproar, including Tyranny's own fans.

Switching people in and out for the team competition was a common sight, but core players were very rarely switched out. They were core players because they were irreplaceable in the team. The entire team's strategy revolved around them.

But now, Team Tyranny's lineup didn't include their captain of ten years. In the post-match interview after round three, they did say that they were going to introduce some rotation, but no one would have thought it would start from their captain, Han Wenqing.

They had switched in Song Qiyong, who played the same class as Han Wenqing. He might have fallen in the individual competition, but he did rather well. He was one rookie that people would be keeping an eye on.

Discussions arose. Was Tyranny already transitioning between a new and old core player?

If even Han Wenqing was beginning to back down, then what about Zhang Jiale? Or Lin Jingyan?

The entire stadium was filled with whispers as the players met center stage to shake hands.

"How come Old Han isn't playing? He afraid?" Ye Xiu asked with a smile.

"Rotation," Zhang Xinjie replied briefly. Anything he could say had to be true, had to be fact.

"Even core players are being rotated?" Ye Xiu voiced the crux of the problem. Rotation was normal, but rotating out core players was only done when it was necessary. It wasn't normal.

"It's none of your business!" Zhang Jiale retorted. Zhang Xinjie didn't say anything else, silently nodding in agreement to Zhang Jiale's words. Since it was none of their business, there was no need to explain.

"Fine, let's fight then!" Ye Xiu didn't bother to continue the conversation. The members of each team got in place. In the end, Happy, even after their week of specialized training, wasn't able to defeat Tyranny's experienced players. With Tyranny's Master Tactician's flawless planning, Happy wasn't able to cause any upsets. In the team competition, Tyranny won against Happy, gaining another five points. After losing all three points in the individual competition, Tyranny won the group arena and team competition, turning the tides and winning Happy 7 to 3.

There was no need to talk of how excited Tyranny's fans were. As for Happy, disappointment was inevitable, but their spirits weren't all that low, since after all, Happy's loss wasn't too ugly. The only awkward aspect was that Tang Rou, who had said she would complete a 1v3, had been defeated in the very first round. However... Tang Rou wasn't very well liked among Happy's fans either recently. Most people didn't mind seeing her fail. Not many people would feel sorry about this.

In the post-match interview, most of the questions were about the 1v3, as expected. Tyranny replied with the attitude they always had and showed their support to Tang Rou's promise. This answer clearly wasn't something the media wanted. Currently, very few media outlets were on Tang Rou's side. The more mockery they could get from other team, the better.

In Happy's press conference, Tang Rou didn't attend, but they couldn't escape these sorts of questions. However, the reporters really stood no chance against the few that attended. Especially that Wei Chen, who didn't even play during today's match, spewed out words at the press conference he somehow got to attend. The questions surrounding the 1v3 had been somehow swerved off topic to the Alliance of the past. He had rambled for ten minutes and the reporters were all at a loss...

Happy and Tyranny's match had its spectacular moments, but nothing that could really be written about. It was Tyranny, with their rookie replacing their core player captain in their team competition, that became the center of discussion.

The most popular match of the round, Blue Rain versus Samsara, had finished by then as well. Blue Rain, challenging Samsara in an away game, didn't manage to halt Samsara's momentum in the end. The final score was set at 3 to 7. Blue Rain had gained a point in the individual competition and two points in the group arena.

In these two consecutive rounds, one home game, one away, both against the powerhouses of the Alliance, Samsara had truly been tested and passed these tests. Who could stop Samsara's advance? This became a hot new topic. Tyranny had fallen, Blue Rain had fallen. Who was next? Tiny Herb? Or Wind Howl?