

## Avatar 1231

### Chapter 1231: Round 14 Finished

The antagonizing glares from Happy's supporters shifted straight towards Samsara. From this, it could be seen just how powerful an existence Happy was in their hearts, and Happy's recent performances on the point rankings lived up to these hopes.

After losing to Tiny Herb in Round 8, Happy began their win streak. Starting from Round 9 until the recently completed Round 14, Happy had won six rounds in a row. Four of Happy's six perfect 10-0s had taken place within these six rounds, and their other two 9-1 wins were domineering enough too.

During these six rounds, Samsara had achieved three 10-0s, two 9-1s, and one 8-2. Comparing their total points gained in these six rounds, Happy actually beat Samsara by 2 points; it was needless to say the other teams as well. Happy had unexpectedly taken the lead in the Alliance. Let alone Happy's fans, no one would take Happy lightly. Those who had hoped for Happy to fall couldn't help but feel nervous. Happy's achievements were too far off from their expectations.

After Round 14, Happy had taken another 10 points, moving up one place in the rankings with 89 total points and stepping down on Hundred Blossoms, who had been in seventh. More importantly, outside of the playoffs zone, Happy now led the ninth place Void by 10 points.

Team Void was very disappointed. The thought of Happy suddenly being ten points ahead of them, despite having the same points just the round before, had never crossed their minds. They couldn't blame any one person. In fact, over the course of the match, there had been no lack of highlights, matching vulgar post-match comment: we performed well, but our opponents performed better.

To be more specific, Void's long-time nemesis, Su Mucheng, was as domineering as ever, giving Void a huge headache. This was practically something that Void had never found a good solution to in their many years of existence. Then, there were the team competition strategies. Happy took a huge risk but succeeded with a beautiful opening, while their carefulness at the end thoroughly destroyed any last thoughts from Void. They had utilized their home map advantage extremely well.

"We lost to Happy. I can only say that this isn't the end. I look forward to our next match together," Team Void's Li Xuan said, concluding Void's post-match press conference.

Happy versus Void, a clean sweep.

Samsara versus Heavenly Swords was an even cleaner one.

In this round, Tiny Herb, Blue Rain, and Tyranny, the traditional three powerhouses ended their matches 9-1 against opponents much weaker than them. Apart from them, Misty Rain beat Hundred Blossoms 7-3 after losing to both Void and Happy in Round 12 and Round 13.

Even so, Hundred Blossoms still held onto 8th with a total of 83 points, just inside the playoffs zone. On the other hand, despite winning this round, Misty Rain's four consecutive losses had lost them a lot of points. Misty Rain was still 10 points behind Hundred Blossoms, sitting at 11th with 73 points. Their

hopes for playoffs were becoming dimmer and dimmer. It seemed to be proof that their unconventional playstyle didn't work in the pro scene.

Between the 11th place Misty Rain and the 9th place Void was Team 301, who lost 3-7 in their away game versus Miracle.

Team Miracle was currently at 14th place with 50 points. If not for the other new team Happy being so demonic, they would have certainly received much more attention. Up until now, as a newly joined team, Miracle was doing very well. They just happened to catch a good opportunity and fished up three experienced Excellent Era players. Their original lineup wasn't without its bright spots either. Guo Shao had received quite a bit of attention, especially out of all the new rookies this season.

Royal Style, who had previously been strong contenders for the playoffs, had thoroughly fallen. They had been beaten by Tiny Herb 9 to 1 this round and were currently in 12th place. Their position on the rankings didn't seem that bad, but what about their total points? With a total of 58 points, they were 15 points away from the 11th place Misty Rain, let alone the points difference between 8th.

Team Royal Style had been a team that had contended with Team Excellent in the finals of the Season 1 championships, but now they had fallen to such a level. But then again, the former three-time championship winners, Excellent Era, had been relegated and disbanded. In comparison, Royal Style was doing much better, at least they were far away from the relegation teams.

The two relegation teams, Bright Green and Seaside, had 27 and 23 points. The third to last place Team Radiant had 41 points. Their fates seemed to have already been decided.

Seaside wasn't too surprising. These past few years, they had always been struggling in and out of the relegations zone. However, Seaside used to have an All-Star player and character on their team. They had never swam in the playoffs, but they had been a solid mid-tier team.

Zhao Yang retired, and Boundless Sea was sold. They had been mourned for a time. Seaside hadn't given up though. They could only respect Zhao Yang's decision to retire, but for Boundless Sea, they knew that as a mid-tier team, raising an All-Star level character as well as a suitable player was a big burden. And just a single All-Star was no longer enough to carry the team in the increasingly competitive Alliance. A God like Zhou Zekai was someone who could only be chanced upon. What's more, Zhou Zekai had a team of skilled teammates supporting him before winning the championships. In order to further solidify their dominance, Samsara even added in Sun Xiang and One Autumn Leaf to their roster.

Seaside's resources were limited. Pouring in their resources for a luxury like an All-Star was something they couldn't support. Selling Boundless Sea had been a show of their decision to walk a more steady path of improving the strength of the team as a whole.

Hope is beautiful, but from the looks of it, Seaside hadn't really improved. In these fourteen rounds, they had even lost to Bright Green, their brother who was just as bad as them and sitting at 23 points.

The post-match press conferences for these two terrible teams were cold and deserted. The remaining reporters who stayed had great opportunities to ask whatever they wanted.

Did Team Seaside have any plans?

When a reporter asked this question, Seaside's captain, Zhang Lintao, showed an expression of perplexion, mumbling and faltering through it without actually saying anything.

Compared to these departing weak teams, the fans paid more attention to those fighting for the championship throne. The most watched match this round was Wind Howl versus Thunderclap. The Alliance also chose to broadcast this match. In the end, Thunderclap continued with their steadiness in the team competition, winning 6 to 4. Thunderclap relied on their five points from their team competition victory to steal the win from Wind Howl. At the end of the match, there cameras zoomed in on Team Wind Howl's team captain, Tang Hao, kicking a bottle of water away as he returned to his seat.

Anyone could see that Tang Hao was unhappy with this match.

2 points in the individual competition and 2 points from the group arena, giving them a 4 to 1 advantage. Wind Howl went into the team competition in high spirits, but in their home game, Wind Howl was downed with their tails behind their legs against Thunderclap.

Did Thunderclap have All Stars?

Xiao Shiqin was obviously considered one, but in the group arena, he didn't win against Tang Hao. There was no one in Thunderclap who Tang Hao cared about, yet in the team competition, this group of nobodies crushed them in the map that their Wind Howl had chosen.

"This is a disgrace!!" In the post match press conference, Tang Hao fully expressed his dissatisfaction. He didn't point his fingers at anyone, but rather his discontent towards his team as a whole for losing to Thunderclap. Even if Thunderclap was at 3rd place, in Tang Hao's eyes, Thunderclap wasn't a strong team.

"If a loss like this happens again, I really don't know what we'll have to fight in the championships," Tang Hao said.

Becoming the champions was Tang Hao's goal and Team Wind Howl's goal. They weren't satisfied with just being frequent playoff visitors. But this season, Wind Howl's performances had been inconsistent. Their momentum this season couldn't even compare to last season's. After thirteen rounds, they were only at 6th with 86 points. Although they weren't far from the other teams above them apart from Samsara, this wasn't enough for Tang Hao. Even in the regular season, he hoped to reach the same heights as Samsara. But after fourteen rounds, Samsara had 123 points, while Wind Howl had 90 points, a difference of 33 points.

Samsara. Samsara was supposed to be their only opponents. Thunderclap? How could a sudden upstart stop Wind Howl's advance? But Thunderclap really did stop them. How could Tang Hao not be unhappy?

After fourteen rounds, although Happy's recent six round point total surpassed even Samsara's, Samsara still stood far above in the rankings with 123 points. Even the second place Blue Rain was only at 99 points, an entirely different tier than Samsara.

What was even more terrifying was that Samsara had gone through a devilish schedule in the early parts of the season. The teams that could threaten them had already fallen under their hands. Their upcoming opponents might try to study them, but the disparity in strength would only result in them giving their

points to Samsara as expected. It was hard for people to think that these teams could drag down Samsara.

The suspense for this season was ending too fast, no?

Much of the media, players, and commentators expressed similar thoughts. Samsara's advance could not be stopped. There seemed to be no saving Bright Green and Seaside either. Those spots could be considered as locked into position. Then, next up, the only thing left to look at were the spots for the playoffs.

301, Void, Misty Rain, these three teams were outside the playoffs zone but they were still on the offense.

These three teams are going to need to work hard!

The people silently praised. If these three teams didn't put in more effort and make some chaos in the playoffs zone, this season's regular season would be too boring!

Chapter 1232: Round 15

After Round 14 ended, numerous reports and commentary appeared over the next two days. Scenes such as Tang Hao kicking a water bottle after a match were also reported, but those didn't make the headlines.

Tang Hao had yet to reach the point, where he could lose but still be the central character. The headlines sung for the winners.

Happy's fifth 10-0, Thunderclap's team competition record, and Samsara's fifth 10-0 would not be neglected. 123 points in 14 rounds, leading the second place team by 24 points, these were absolutely ridiculous achievements. This dominance cemented their place as the true central characters this season. Even though there was competition, the Esports Home's headlines displayed Samsara's 10-0. Happy would have to give way. Even Thunderclap's team competition record was inferior in front of Samsara.

Team Samsara had won all 14 matches, while Thunderclap had lost to Royal Style in Round 9. Thunderclap was one missing from a perfect win streak, a pity.

The headlines gave more than enough respect towards the bellwether, but the detailed discussion consisted more of Happy and Thunderclap. After all, Samsara's perfect win had been against Heavenly Swords. To everyone, this win should be easy as pie without any worries of losing. What was there to talk about? However, Happy and Thunderclap were different. Happy had a perfect win over Void, while Thunderclap made a comeback against Wind Howl. Those matches had high-level content to talk about.

After discussing these two team's performances this round, everyone agreed by chance that how long their momentum would continue for would be something to pay attention to.

Next round, Happy would be challenging Lightly in their away game, while Thunderclap would be welcoming Misty Rain in their home game.

No one questioned Happy's strength anymore. Facing the 16th place 46 point Lightly, victory seemed to be there's already. People were simply wondering whether Happy would be able to pull off another 10-0. As for Thunderclap versus Misty Rain, given Misty Rain's recent ups and downs, as well as their questionable unconventional playstyle, Misty Rain would be facing Thunderclap, who excelled at the team competition. Very few people had hopes for Misty Rain.

In fact, more people were looking towards the round after, Round 16, because Happy and Thunderclap, these two teams that had given them the most surprises this season, would be facing against each other in Happy's home game.

Get out of the way, Round 15!

Quite a few people had these sorts of thoughts.

But time couldn't be skipped. Each round needed to be played one at a time. Round 15 couldn't just pass by in the blink of an eye. On 12/13, Round 15 began on schedule, and the broadcast chose Hundred Blossoms welcoming Void as the highlight match.

In the end, Hundred Blossoms barely beat Void 6-4. There were no changes in their placings on the rankings. Eighth place and ninth place were neighbors, but the difference between them were night and day.

A rather surprising result this round was Blue Rain losing 4-6 to Parade in their away game. Blue Rain had a huge lead after the individual rounds, but unexpectedly lost in the team competition. With this loss, Blue Rain instantly slid down from 2nd to 5th. And right below Blue Rain was Happy, who had advanced another place once again this round.

Happy won their away game against Lightly 9-1; everyone felt that it was a pity they couldn't get one more point for a 10-0. Coincidentally, Samsara also got a 9-1, although their opponents were 301.

Tyranny and Tiny Herb won 8-2 against their mediocre opponents. Another surprising result was Wind Howl, who had the situations reversed by Thunderclap last round, once again stumbled, losing their home game against Royal Style 7-3.

This time, Tang Hao didn't kick a water bottle, but in the post-match press conference, he didn't even show up. His attitude showed just how unhappy he was with Wind Howl's recent performances.

Wind Howl had lost three rounds in a row, and their placings were dropping. Right now, they were at 7th place, lower than Happy by 5 points.

But to be fair, Wind Howl's opponents these three rounds had been Hundred Blossoms, Thunderclap, and Royal Style, all fairly strong opponents. With the team competition's 5 points lost in each of those rounds, Wind Howl had obtained 3, 4, and 3 points. Using comparisons like 8-2, 7-3, looked to be huge disparities, but because the team competition was worth 5 points, these were the most common results.

In an 8-2 win, if the losing side had won the team competition, it would turn into 3-7. In a 7-3 win, if the losing side had won the team competition, it would be a 2-8.

In reality, the wide disparity between points was a result of the way the rules were set up. It was completely different than a 7-3 or an 8-2 in football.

Wind Howl's three consecutive losses were these point differences. It could be said that their strength still had a solid foundation. However, three consecutive losses still raised some doubts over them, although in comparison to the public, Wind Howl themselves had a huge reaction to it. After two losses in a row, their captain Tang Hao couldn't bear it anymore and kicked a water bottle. After their third loss in a row, he wasn't even in the mood to show up for the post-match press conference.

"I think our loss streak ends here..." With their captain not there, vice captain Liu Hao spoke up in the press conference.

Yes, Liu Hao.

The former Excellent Era vice captain had switched to Thunderclap and became Thunderclap's vice captain. In the summer, he transferred to Wind Howl and gradually created a position for himself. After their original vice captain Fang Rui left, Liu Hao was appointed vice captain.

After all, Liu Hao was skilled, and he had plenty of experience. He had acted as vice captain and as captain before, so he had experience in leading. At Wind Howl, he was seen as someone who would be a great help to Tang Hao.

For example, Tang Hao had gotten angry and didn't show up to the press conference, while Liu Hao talked fluidly as if he were used to be in this position. It was as if their captain didn't exist.

Everyone was a bit astonished at his bearing, but then again, of course Liu Hao was used to this because when he had been in Excellent Era, their captain Ye Xiu never showed up for press conferences. It was always him who had to face the media as the vice captain. Liu Hao had experienced his team's captain not participating in the press conference countless times. How could he not be calm?

Experienced with the media, he resolutely expressed that they would definitely win next round. The reporters quickly checked next round's schedule. Next round Wind Howl would be facing Heavenly Swords in their home game. These three rounds never really showed whether Wind Howl was truly weak. Next round, as long as their mentality was fine, they shouldn't have any problems winning against Heavenly Swords. However, Team Wind Howl's team captain and core, the Tang Hao who succeeded the senior as the junior, seemed to be undergoing an unbearable setback!

"I'm not worried at all," Liu Hao continued to speak calmly, "Our captain thirsts for victory more than anyone else, so he also feels more ashamed than anyone else when he loses. But when the match comes, he'll still be striving for victory. That I believe without a doubt."

A good answer!

Wind Howl's PR team felt very gratified. They were especially moved by their vice captain this time. Thinking of their previous Wind Howl vice captain for many years, Fang Rui... what an irresponsible guy! He would often babble nonsense in the press conference without the bearing of a vice captain at all. The PR team wanted to rush up and beat him up numerous times.

As the PR team, they looked at things from their perspective, and to them, the difference between Liu Hao and Fang Rui was light years apart. As for Fang Rui being an All-Star, what did that help? It didn't!

With Liu Hao's skillful response, Wind Howl's captain Tang Hao's attitude after three consecutive losses didn't garner any particular attention. When the press conference ended, Wind Howl's PR team gave Liu Hao a huge thumbs up and started chatting with this newly appointed Wind Howl vice captain.

This was the scene for Wind Howl, but how about Blue Rain, who had been upset?

Blue Rain's performance in the early season had been quite strong. Apart from their loss to Samsara 3-7 in their away game, whether it was Tiny Herb, Tyranny, or Wind Howl, they always had the last laugh.

But after the early season, Blue Rain was a team whose honeymoon had clearly ended. In Round 11, they lost to Hundred Blossoms 3-7 in their away game. In Round 12, they had a beautiful 5-0 lead in their home game, but Thunderclap won the team competition to even it up 5-5. In Round 13, they were knocked down by Royal Style 4-6 in their away game. In Round 14, Blue Rain unexpectedly lost to Parade.

From their performances these few rounds, Blue Rain had stayed at 2nd place. It could be seen just how strong Blue Rain's opening in the early season was. However, in an instant, this 24 point difference disappeared. After the end of Round 15, Blue Rain dropped three places from 2nd to 5th. They were now only 5 points away from Happy, who was in 6th. 5 points. In Glory, this could be a difference of just a single round.

Blue Rain's decline wasn't just this past match, but rather during this phase. However, no one had been so frustrated to the extent of kicking a water bottle like Tang Hao. In their post-match press conferences, their captain and core replied calmly to the reporters' questions as always.

Where did Team Blue Rain's problems lie?

This was what everyone was wondering.

"I think, it's just a matter of bad luck," Team Blue Rain's captain, Yu Wenzhou, smiled.

"If we keep saving up all the good luck like this, then I think it'll be a good thing when the playoffs come around!" Yu Wenzhou continued.

Saving up luck...

The reporters didn't know whether to laugh or cry. This was a completely unscientific explanation! However, speaking of playoffs, Blue Rain's recent performances had truly started to worry people about their playoffs spot. They never directly said that they would definitely win. They just gently took out the word "playoffs" as if it were as simple as eating food.

This was also a form of confidence!

Chapter 1233: Thunderclap's Secret Weapon

After the early season ended, all sorts of twists and turns started appearing.

Blue Rain, Wind Howl, Misty Rain, and Void, these powerhouses all experienced different degrees of setbacks. In comparison, Tyranny, who had a disappointing start, stayed firm in this smoke-filled battlefield.

Tyranny had only obtained 47 points in the first 8 rounds, tying with Hundred Blossoms for 7th and 8th place, right at the edge of the playoffs zone. But in their next seven rounds, Tyranny obtained 58 points. Not only did their performance not decline, it went up.

Of course, a part of that was because Tyranny's opponents weren't that strong. However, facing these mediocre opponents, Tyranny won quite a few 10-0s and 9-1s. The points they should have gotten were gotten. That was the sort of air they gave off. On the rankings, they had quietly climbed to 3rd place.

Placed ahead of them was Tiny Herb with 106 points. They had the same consistency as Tyranny, rarely losing points against weak teams. However, against strong teams, Tiny Herb faltered. The other top five teams, Samsara, Blue Rain, Tyranny, Thunderclap, could bump into Tiny Herb in the regular season, the playoffs, or the finals.

But in these fifteen rounds, Tiny Herb always lost to these four teams, whether it was their home or away game.

If you said that Tiny Herb's strength didn't belong there, then that would be false. If you looked closely, you would see that in these four rounds, the final point tally was always 4-6.

This meant that Tiny Herb always won two individual competition rounds and the group arena, but lost in the team competition. If Tiny Herb had won the team competition, their matches against these four teams would have been 9-1.

Team competition...

Tiny Herb's weakness seemed to be obvious. It looked like there was something stopping them in the team competition, stopping them from beating the top teams. From the statistics, people discovered another surprising fact. Tiny Herb had yet to lose a group arena. Even in their 2-8 match against Void, their points had been through the group arena.

Apart from Tiny Herb, no one else had achieved such a feat this season.

The strengths and weaknesses of many teams had been exposed. While everyone was discussing these enthusiastically, they could not ignore Happy's existence.

Samsara had never lost the team competition, Tiny Herb had never lost the group arena, as for Happy? One person had never lost an individual round!

Ye Xiu. He had retired, returned, and then switched classes, but his performances on stage were as eye-catching as ever. After getting swept 0-10 in Round 1 against Samsara, Ye Xiu started playing in the individual competition, becoming a stabilizing piece for Happy. From then on, no matter if it was a loss, this 1 point had never left Happy's pockets. Before, Ye Xiu had always stayed hidden, never appearing on camera. After returning to the scene, even though he wasn't particularly great for the media, he at least didn't completely avoid them, though it was hard to say if that was a curse or a blessing.



Another week quickly passed, and 12/20 welcomed the Glory Pro League's sixteenth round. The most hyped match was Happy versus Thunderclap, the two most surprising teams this season, were chosen without question as the highlight match.

Thunderclap was in 4th place with 104 points, while Happy was in 6th place with 98 points, a difference of only 6 points. This round was Happy's home game. If they did a good job, they could pass Thunderclap in just one round. But if they wanted to do a good job, beating Thunderclap in the team competition was necessary. Up until now, Thunderclap had only lost to Royal Style in the team competition. In all of their other matches, they always won the team competition. Even down 5-0, they had won, tying the score. And the the team they had tied was Team Blue Rain, who had the Master Tactician, Yu Wenzhou.

Just how mysterious were Thunderclap's team tactics? Many people were curious and had even studied this issue. At the moment, opinions differed, and when Xiao Shiqin was interviewed, he simply smiled and gave three words as a reply: believe in yourself.

What was that supposed to mean? Was that his philosophy? Was that the way to a psychological win?

Not many approved of his reply, so everyone continued to analyze Thunderclap's mysterious tactics. Confrontations between Master Tacticians were always the best research material, so this match would bring in more valuable data. Happy's Ye Xiu, may be the current 1v1 King with a 14 round win streak, but don't forget that this old general was also one of the four Master Tacticians.

"You guys are doing well!"

"Back at you."

After a quick greeting, the two teams went to their own sides. As the two most surprising teams this season, each knew how the other felt. Thunderclap's captain, Xiao Shiqin, could be considered as having the deepest impression of Happy before the season. He had fought against Happy in a bitter struggle in the Challenger League. In particular, the group arena 1v3 had nearly killed Happy's heart, but in the end, Happy was the one to have the last laugh. Excellent Era lost in the Challenger League finals, and Xiao Shiqin, who had risked everything to run to the Challenger League in hopes of a better future, looked like an idiot. There had been no lack of mockery thrown at him.

Xiao Shiqin should hate Happy very much, no?

This was also a popular pre-match topic. As a result, as soon as the broadcast started, the camera zoomed in on Xiao Shiqin, hoping to catch something, especially during the greetings between the two teams on stage before the match. The camera spent nearly 70% of the time focused on Xiao Shiqin's face. When Xiao Shiqin shook Ye Xiu's hands, the cameras locked tightly onto him. The crowd fixed their eyes on his expression and held their breath.

Murderous spirit!

Let's see some murderous spirit!

The drama loving people hoped to see some sparks.

But all they saw a very normal and warm smile.

He's hiding it well!

The drama loving people didn't believe that Xiao Shiqin bore no hatred towards Happy. Since they couldn't see any murderous spirit on him, that must mean Xiao Shiqin was hiding it. Afterwards, even when Xiao Shiqin was just wiping his glasses, his actions were interpreted in all sorts of ways. It was like everyone suddenly became body language experts.

The individual competition began, and Happy's first player would be...

Ye Xiu, Ye Xiu again.

Everyone knew that Ye Xiu always went out first. In that case, it was easy to come up with a strategic plan to counter him.

But did that matter?

Ye Xiu's 14 consecutive wins was the best answer.

It didn't matter. Even if you knew Ye Xiu would be the first player sent up and prepared a countermeasure, it was no use. The winner would still be Ye Xiu.

Was that because the ace players defended the group arena for those 2 points instead of 1?

These were some people's opinions, and it was a valid reason. However, arranging the lineups was up to every team. If you're going to send your ace player for the group arena, then who are you to blame for not getting that one point in an individual round? This sort of perspective had a bit of sour grapes feeling to it.

As for Thunderclap? Who would they send?

Thunderclap performed spectacularly in team competitions, but in the individual competition and group arena, their performances weren't too noteworthy. Apart from Xiao Shiqin, no one else in their team was particularly eye-catching. They probably didn't have anyone for Ye Xiu, right?

A name popped onto the screen. Thunderclap's first player in the individual competition was...

Mi Xiuyuan.

Not a sound could be heard. Everyone looked at Xiao Shiqin, and then started whispering to each other.

Mi Xiuyuan? Who was that?

The crowd was discussing this question. The reporters were hastily looking at their data. On the broadcast, Pan Lin had been predicting who Thunderclap would send onto the stage and when the answer was revealed, he said "Ah, so it's Mi Xiuyuan." After that came silence. He was also caught off guard. Who the fuck was this?

"Mi Xiuyuan... a new rookie this season?" Li Yibo was flipping through his data as he said earnestly. He had a "in the end, nothing can trouble this senior" look on his face.

"Ah... before, it seems like..." Pan Lin was also looking through his data, "he's never appeared on stage before." He finally confirmed it.

"Yes," Li Yibo said.

"But this round, facing Happy and the 1v1 king Ye Xiu, Thunderclap sent him up!" Pan Lin's voice started rising.

"Yes."

"Why? Could he be a secret weapon?" Pan Lin said. The camera zoomed in onto this rookie, who was pulled aside by captain Xiao Shiqin. The two people looked in one direction. The camera followed their line of sight to Ye Xiu.

"Xiao Shiqin is personally giving him instructions. What has he come up with to beat Ye Xiu? Yes, let's look at Mi Xiuyuan. His class... Assassin. Ah, could he be looking for a one hit kill?" Pan Lin started displaying his imagination.

Xiao Shiqin finally finished talking with Mi Xiuyuan. The young player stepped onto his first match on stage.

This was truly an amazing first appearance on stage. The broadcast gave him quite a few close-ups. Everyone instantly took note of this new Thunderclap rookie.

He was the secret weapon prepared for Ye Xiu! Everyone thought to themselves. They sucked in a deep breath of air and looked forward to the match.

After 3 minutes 42 seconds, Mi Xiuyuan returned to his seat.

Accounting for about 2 minutes to walk to his player booth and then about 1 minute to walk back to his seat, this match took precisely 58 seconds, not even a minute.

Mi Xiuyuan lost.

There were no hidden killing moves nor a one hit kill. The two players loaded into the small 1v1 map chosen by Ye Xiu and then quickly came across each other. Ping ping pong pong, Mi Xiuyuan's Assassin died.

Secret weapon?

A super killing move?

The entire world wanted to laugh.

Chapter 1235: Calm Individual Rounds

Commentating Happy's matches is truly filled with opportunities and challenges! Pan Lin sighed endlessly. There never seemed to be a lack of topics, and it was always full of traps.

Of course, this time, it wasn't Happy's fault. Mi Xiuyuan was from Thunderclap. However, Thunderclap's opponent was Happy, so Pan Lin's first thought was to focus on Happy. Fortunately, Pan Lin's remark had only been a hopeful guess, not a serious analysis, so it didn't result in too embarrassing of a situation. Pan Lin could already feel a premonition creeping into his heart though.

The broadcast still gave Mi Xiuyuan more than enough camera time.

Losing an individual round in less than a minute was very embarrassing for a pro player. But when the cameras locked onto Mi Xiuyuan, he looked calm. After he returned to his seat, the entire Thunderclap team even stood up and clapped their hands to welcome him. Dai Yanqi even rubbed Mi Xiuyuan's head roughly as if she were a big sis, despite only being a third year rookie.

"It looks like... Thunderclap gave up on beating Ye Xiu, so they just sent up a rookie to gain some experience," Li Yibo carefully observed for a while before speaking up.

"Uh, I don't know how much experience a less than one minute loss is going to bring to a player," Pan Lin said. His words carried a slight sting to it. He clearly wasn't happy with Thunderclap's methodology. As for whether he was unhappy with Thunderclap's arrangements, or because Mi Xiuyuan didn't turn out to be a secret weapon, no one knew.

The match continued. Su Mucheng went after Ye Xiu, while Thunderclap's Fang Xue went after Mi Xiuyuan. Fang Xue was also an Assassin. In the end, he was no match for Su Mucheng, and Happy won yet another point.

2-0. The crowd riled up. Cries for another 10-0 started echoing around the stadium.

But in the third match, Thunderclap unexpectedly sent Xiao Shiqin, while Happy sent Mo Fan.

Xiao Shiqin was famed as a Master Tactician, but his 1v1 skills weren't weak. In Thunderclap, he was often the anchor for the group arena, but in today's match, he came out in the individual competition. What arrangements had Thunderclap made?

"Xiao Shiqin vs Mo Fan... these two have actually fought before in the Challenger League. At that time, it was in the group arena. Xiao Shiqin performed spectacularly that round, winning the group arena with a 1v3. Let's see how their rematch is going to turn out," Pan Lin set the backdrop for the match.

The atmosphere that Pan Lin had drawn out for this match didn't end up appearing. Xiao Shiqin won with a steady lead against Mo Fan.

Pan Lin and Li Yibo didn't know what to say. The match was so dull. What should have happened, happened. That was all there was to it.

The emotions of the loser weren't as calm as the match.

As Mo Fan walked down from the stage, he didn't have that usual expressionless face. His gaze had stopped on Xiao Shiqin. A clear pondering expression showed.

After losing twice to the same person, Mo Fan was searching for where the issue lay. Even if there was a difference in strength, competition wasn't just about strength, it was about utilizing that strength.

Seeing Mo Fan's attentive expression, Ye Xiu didn't say anything. Once you reached a certain level, improving depended more on yourself. After all, the only person who truly understands you is you yourself. Other people could only help give and clear the clouds.

How to beat Xiao Shiqin?

If Ye Xiu could instruct him on how to do it with just a few words, then pro players would be of little value.

With the individual competition finished, Happy led 2 to 1. A 10-0 was impossible now, and the crowd appeared somewhat downcast. Happy's fans had been spoiled too much by Happy's crazy performances recently. If it wasn't a 10-0, they couldn't feel satisfied. Despite not being a powerhouse, Happy's fans had the same expectations as powerhouses.

For the following group arena, Pan Lin and Li Yibo both believed that Happy had an advantage. After all, Thunderclap's players weren't very top notch. Happy at the very least had Fang Rui as the anchor. In addition, while Tang Rou's image may have been destroyed, her explosiveness hadn't.

"If nothing surprising comes, Happy's chances should be fairly high," Li Yibo's cautiousness had already reached this point. He was too afraid to even use the word winning, only saying their "chances should be fairly high." Fairly high chances didn't mean he thought Happy would definitely win. Li Yibo was truly quite crafty.

But in the group arena, no surprises came and Happy won.

Pan Lin announced this expected outcome and discovered that he unexpectedly felt a bit bored.

What's going on? Am I too used to being slapped by Happy? Am I masochist? Taking advantage of the long break between the team competition and group arena, Pan Lin did a deep self reflection.

In the meanwhile, the two teams were preparing for the following team competition.

"Something feels off," said Fang Rui.

"What is it," Ye Xiu said.

"I don't know. It's just a feeling," Fang Rui said.

"This senior also feels like something's off. It's too calm," Wei Chen said.

"It won't be for the team competition," Ye Xiu said.

"Are you saying they've been saving up their strength?" Wei Chen asked.

"Maybe not saving up strength, but in the individual rounds, their strength wasn't very impressive. However, to be so calm despite losing so many points means that they must be incomparably confident in the team competition." Ye Xiu said.

"Confidence in themselves? Could that actually be the reason for their dominance in the team competition?" Fang Rui had evidently seen Xiao Shiqin's interview response about Thunderclap's performance this season.

"Without confidence, there will be a lot of choices that you'll be too afraid to make. The more confident you are, the more options you'll have, and the more variations there will be," Ye Xiu said.

"Are you talking about Xiao Shiqin? He's always been confident, huh," Fang Rui said.

"His confidence now isn't just in himself," Ye Xiu said.

Fang Rui was starting to understand. The others were as well. Everyone subconsciously turned their heads to look at Thunderclap. It turned out that Thunderclap was also looking at them. The two sides made eye contact, and Xiao Shiqin gave them a friendly wave.

"This match is really lacking the gunpowder..." This scene had also been grasped by the cameras, but the broadcast was currently playing ads, so Pan Lin could only say this to himself in private. If his mics were on, saying these words definitely wouldn't be good. He would have to comment on the friendly and peaceful relations between the two teams.

"This match isn't going to be easy. Everyone, focus. Let's start things slow," Ye Xiu said.

He obviously studied all of his opponents, studying the styles of the players and the team's tactical styles. However, Thunderclap, this strong team competition team, was truly difficult to deal with.

Thunderclap was not like Samsara. Samsara's overwhelming momentum was inseparable from the strength of the individual players. The image of the Battle God One Autumn Leaf was slowly being transformed. On Samsara, One Autumn Leaf was no longer that unrivalled "one". There was another "one" beside him, Cloud Piercer.

Many people had been worried about compatibility issues between Sun Xiang and Samsara, but their worries never turned into a reality. And as a result, Samsara's incredible win record came about. Sun Xiang and Zhou Zekai were titled as the "Two No.1s" this season. Two number ones pointed that the two best players had number one characters to go along with them.

Possessing this powerful duo, Samsara was able to achieve this perfect win record. But Thunderclap? The individual rounds showed that their players weren't top of the pack. However, their team competition record had 14 wins. Why? Tactics!

Thunderclap had always relied on tactics to win. However, their tactics had never brought them to such formidable heights. According to the current public opinions, if Thunderclap could continue their team competition win record, then the Four Master Tacticians should be changed. Xiao Shiqin should be taken out and given an even greater title.

After all, Ye Xiu, Yu Wenzhou, and Zhang Xinjie, whether it was now or before, the chips held in their hands were quite a bit stronger than Xiao Shiqin's. Their teams were similar to Samsara. All of them possessed top individual players.

It was like a chef cooking food.

Ye Xiu, Yu Wenzhou, and Zhang Xinjie had fresh high-quality ingredients and had the skill to turn those ingredients into wonderful dishes.

But Xiao Shiqin was someone who could take mediocre ingredients and turn them into just as, or perhaps even more delicious dishes. If one looked at it from this perspective, it was obvious who was superior.

When these words came out, many agreed with this opinion. However, someone soon pointed out: Last season, in the Challenger League, Ye Xiu had taken rotten food and then beat Xiao Shiqin, who had outstanding Excellent Era ingredients. What did that mean?

As a result, the other side took this season and brought out Xiao Shiqin's matches against Yu Wenzhou and Zhang Xinjie. Thunderclap had won those team competitions. This was also a solid argument.

The only remaining uncertainty was Ye Xiu.

This time, the ingredients in Ye Xiu's hands were far better than his ingredients back in the Challenger League. The rookies had grown. Su Mucheng and Fang Rui had joined. The team now had two All Star characters, and the other characters had improved significantly as well.

On the other hand, Thunderclap's roster dimmed in comparison to Su Mucheng and Fang Rui. Their characters were more in line with the gradual step by step improvement from not-so-wealthy teams.

Ye Xiu's ingredients had vastly improved, while Xiao Shiqin's ingredients had diminished in quality compared to Excellent Era. This time, what would the confrontation between the two sides be like?

The start of the match was approaching, and the commentators focused their discussion of this round's team competition on this fight between two Master Tacticians.

Whoever won would become the existence above the Four Master Tacticians.

Pan Lin didn't directly say these words, but many people thought of it. Everyone's eyes were focused on the screen as the match began.

#### Chapter 1236: Thunderclap's Aggressive Offense

The map was War Grasslands, a map divided by rocks and shrubs in a staircase-like arrangement. The spawn points were located on the northeast and southwest corner, and after each side crossed their two story high platforms, the two teams would meet on a field of grass. It was a map, where the two spawn points were relatively close together, and it was often used by teams who liked rushing their opponents. The map restricted more tactical teams to a certain extent because of the close distance. If the offense was launched fast enough, the other side might not have time to set up any tactical formation.

Pan Lin quickly introduced the map before the two teams loaded into the map. However, both Thunderclap and Happy were tactic-heavy teams. By choosing this map, who exactly was the one being restricted? The map had been chosen by Happy, and Pan Lin didn't dare try to guess what Happy was planning, so he simply stopped the subject there. After explaining the features of this match, he was done. As for why Happy chose the map, Pan Lin let the viewers guess, he himself wasn't going to open his mouth. Out of consideration, he also didn't toss this hot potato to Li Yibo. Li Yibo noticed his good intentions and gave Pan Lin a smile.

A map suitable for a fast offense.

As a result, as soon as the teams loaded in, the viewers looked at the two teams spawning, wanting to know which team would take the initiative.

"We'll rush them!"

It was Thunderclap. Xiao Shiqin immediately gave the order.

Everyone was surprised.

Even though Pan Lin and Li Yibo weren't analyzing the situation out loud, anyone who understood Glory would have their own thoughts. These two were just afraid of getting their faces slapped. They certainly had their own viewpoints in their mind.

From their view, Happy had chosen this map, so the one to rush the opponent should be Happy. However, it was Thunderclap who decisively gave the order as soon as the match began.

Thunderclap's players didn't have any objections towards their captain's orders. They immediately went into position and started moving as a whole.

Thunderclap had spawned on the northeast corner. This map was split into three-story platforms. Two of these six three-story platforms made up the spawn points, while the other four were support zones, lined up symmetrically from east to west. The two starting points were linked to their respective east and west support zones by two-story platforms. The three-story support zones of the northeast corner and southeast corner were directly linked together by large slopes that met in a grassy area in the center. The six three-story high platforms were not directly connected to each other and could only be traveled to through two-story or ground regions. As a result, the fighting often took place in these two-story or ground story regions.

Thunderclap wanted to rush, so they didn't take a roundabout path. The team charged out from their three-story high spawn point directly down towards the grasslands.

How close were these spawn points? The answer could be seen right now. As soon as Thunderclap leaped down to the grasslands, they saw Happy also leaping down. The two sides could already see each other.

"Yo, nice rush!" Ye Xiu typed in the public chat.

"Same to you," Xiao Shiqin replied.

"No, we're moving strategically," said Ye Xiu.

"That's a bit of stretch, don't you think?" Xiao Shiqin replied.

Moving strategically required at least a little bit of coyness. In this map, if one walked along the two-story high platforms, the rushing opponents would not be able to see them so quickly. But Happy charging directly towards the grasslands? How was that moving strategically? Unless they thought Thunderclap wouldn't do the standard rush.

"Rushing isn't your style. Shouldn't you guys be waiting and watching first before coming up with counter strategies?" Ye Xiu said.

"We can't wait and watch because you guys would also wait and watch," Xiao Shiqin replied.

He hit the nail on the head...

Waiting and watching was a part of combat. Another part of it was pre-match preparations, studying the opponent and coming up with countermeasures beforehand. These two teams both had the same tactical style, so when the two confronted each other, it became awkward.



To put it simply, the two teams were used to waiting for their opponents to act before they acted. If neither side acted first, then there would be no fight.

"So?" Ye Xiu asked.

"So we can only fight," Xiao Shiqin said in the public chat. This wasn't a bluff, because in the team chat, he clearly gave the order: "Go!"

Thunderclap set out and charged at their opponents.

Everyone was shocked. Team Thunderclap had been watched closely this season, but they had never taken the initiative and attacked aggressively. After all, their players and characters weren't that great. A direct clash often relied on each individual player's own skill to be effective.

But against Happy, Thunderclap unexpectedly launched an aggressive attack!

No one would regard Happy as a weak team anymore. The return of Ye Xiu and Su Mucheng, the class-changed Fang Rui, these three All Stars had proved that their skills were still at the peak. In terms of individual player skill, even Xiao Shiqin, who was the best in Thunderclap, didn't seem a match to any of Happy's top three. However, Thunderclap had bravely rushed at Happy, an unprecedented aggressiveness. They had never done this against any other team.

Why?

Every person who followed Thunderclap this season asked this question.

While no one else in the Alliance dared to underestimate Happy, Thunderclap did the very opposite. Was this... a psychological tactic?

"You're coming to us? Are you underestimating Happy?" Ye Xiu asked.

"Of course not," Xiao Shiqin, who was already charging over, replied.

"Then it looks like we'll need to be careful," Ye Xiu said.

"You always need to be careful in a match," Xiao Shiqin said. In the team chat, he gave another order: Scatter!

Thunderclap had spread into a line and surrounded Happy in a wing-like formation. On the left end was Dai Yanqi's Elementalist, Firebird Messenger. On the right end was Xiao Shiqin's Mechanic, Life Extinguisher. These two were at the very tip of the wings as if they were going to escape.

Positioned in the middle was Cheng Tai's Grappler, Shattering Wind. And Zhang Jiaying's Cleric, Returning Wind, was between Shattering Wind and Firebird Messenger. Between Life Extinguisher and Shattering Wind was Fang Xuecai's Assassin, Demon Talent.

"Thunderclap is being very proactive. They've quickly pulled apart into a formation very skillfully. Did they practice this specifically for Happy? What are your thoughts on this formation, Coach Li?" Pan Lin had restrained himself for a long time, but he was still a passionate commentator in the end.

Thunderclap had chosen an unprecedented aggressive offense. This surprising choice instantly riled him up. He excitedly shouted and dragged Li Yibo into the water as well.

Li Yibo was in an awkward spot! He hadn't even figured out why Thunderclap would choose to go on the offensive against Happy, when Pan Lin directly asked him to explain Thunderclap's offensive formation.

"Uh, this... it looks like they're planning on surrounding Happy and then shrinking the circle," Li Yibo snorted.

"But Happy isn't lacking in attackers!" Pan Lin immediately answered back.

"Thunderclap surely has a method to deal with them. Let's see what they're going to do," Li Yibo was finally able to dodge this topic.

These two could pass over it with some vague words, but Ye Xiu, who was playing on stage, couldn't be so unclear.

Xiao Shiqin's decision for an aggressive offense had surprised him. He said "being underestimated", but he knew that Xiao Shiqin wasn't that type of person. Even when facing Seaside or Bright Green, the two weakest teams practically guaranteed to be relegated from the league, Thunderclap still carefully planned out their strategy. Xiao Shiqin wasn't someone who underestimated his opponent. If he dared to attack aggressively, then it could only mean he was confident that it would work, that in a direct confrontation, Thunderclap would have a greater chance of winning than Happy.

Their chances of winning didn't come from their players or characters individually. It was publicly acknowledged that Thunderclap was weak in this area. Thunderclap's chances of winning came from their tactics. For example, their team must have spread out for a purpose.

But for what purpose?

It wasn't just Ye Xiu asking this question.

However, no one else's judgement was more accurate than Ye Xiu's because Ye Xiu knew better than anyone else who the weak point of their team was.

Lord Grim retreated to Little Cold Hand's side.

"Group up, towards..." Ye Xiu typed. He wanted to have everyone group up and break through an opening in Thunderclap's formation, but when he swept his eyes across their formation, he discovered that he wasn't able to find such an opening.

Thunderclap's five characters were in a very simple line, but they used each of their classes well, allowing for the best possible options from any direction. If Happy tried to break through, they would be met with a lot of trouble no matter which direction they went towards. There were no clear holes or weaknesses. Breaking through from any point would be troublesome, which also meant that breaking through from any point would be the same.

"Firebird Messenger, break through!"

Ye Xiu had only hesitated for an instant. He quickly made a firm decision. As soon as Happy heard the order, their decisiveness in carrying it out was not much worse than Thunderclap's.

"Oh? We've been underestimated!" Happy's intentions were clear. Dai Yanqi, who was controlling Firebird Messenger, used Ye Xiu's own words from before. Happy had clearly chosen this direction to break through because they thought it would be easier to do so.

"But this is all according to plan!" Dai Yanqi followed.

When she said these words, everyone's hearts thumped. No one thought Thunderclap would just rashly attack. They felt like Thunderclap must have an ulterior motive. Dai Yanqi's "all according to plan" immediately confirmed this notion.

Whether or not the viewers believed in it wouldn't affect who won this match. Dai Yanqi's words were aimed as a psychological attack towards Happy. However, even if Happy believed her, it was probably too late for them to make adjustments.

That was what most people thought, but on stage were a particularly special group of people amongst the countless Glory players...

"Dang, that girl said it's all according to plan. We should find a different breakthrough point," Wei Chen said.

"Sure." Ye Xiu said.

As a result, Happy really did make a switch. Everyone turned towards Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher instead of Dai Yanqi's Firebird Messenger.

Fuck!

The viewers were dumbfounded. This was a high-level pro match! You guys are just going to switch up your tactics because the opponent said a few words? Where's your determination? Decisiveness? Confidence?

Chapter 1237: Thunderclap's Focus

"Ah, the older generation really is..." Dai Yanqi was also dumbstruck. She had already put her guard up. Who would have thought that Happy would turn away so decisively just because of the words she said? This sort of reason wasn't logical! But the problem was that it truly happened, and Dai Yanqi couldn't help but feel a bit afraid. She hadn't ruined her own team's rhythm, right?

"Concentrate. Defend your position well and get back on track!" Xiao Shiqin messaged the team chat. Seeing the captain's words, Dai Yanqi seemed to have been hit by a tranquilizer and calmed down. Soon afterwards, her Elementalist Firebird Messenger hurried forward.

"Be careful of them switching targets," Xiao Shiqin added.

"Switching targets?" Dai Yanqi was a bit surprised.

The crowd was in an even more of an uproar, because just when Xiao Shiqin typed out those words, Ye Xiu had typed in Happy's team chat: turn!

All of Happy suddenly turned around and switched back to Dai Yanqi's Firebird Messenger. Their shift towards Xiao Shiqin had been a bait. Unfortunately, Xiao Shiqin saw through their little trick and promptly warned Dai Yanqi not to cut in too deep. Dai Yanqi had originally readied a Teleport, and the moment she paused because of the warning, she saw Happy suddenly turn around and rush towards her.

"How crafty," Dai Yanqi wasn't a chatterbox, but she was among those who liked to talk in matches. As she grumbled, Firebird Messenger quickly retreated. Her staff flashed with lightning and a Lightning Bolt shot out. It was the very first attack in this team battle.

Lightning spells were fast, but in the end, it wasn't as immediate as firing a bullet. It only took the blink of an eye for elemental power to condense into electricity, but it still took some time, enough to react to. To pro players, a window for reacting and a close enough distance to complete the necessary action was more than enough.

Firebird Messenger's Lightning Bolt pierced through Happy's formation, but it didn't hit anyone. Following afterwards, Dai Yanqi had Firebird Messenger activate Absolute Focus and cast the Level 75 skill, Fire Bird. A Fire Bird formed at the tip of her staff and flew out with its wings spread. The heat waves swept over the grasslands, wilting the once tall and straight stalks of green grass. Stalk after stalk bent over to half the size of their surrounding friends.

Compared to Lightning Bolt, the area covered by Fire Bird was much larger, so Happy could not just open a path for the spell to pass by. Since it was no longer possible to continue maintaining their formation, Happy split up to the left and right. As the Fire Bird flew, the heat waves blurred their figures.

From the rear, sounds of machinery turning could be heard. They hadn't targeted Xiao Shiqin, instead, it was Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher who took the initiative to look for them. The knee-high grass hid lots of the ground machines. Happy could only see rustles from wherever the machines passed by, but they didn't know what exactly was hidden in the grass.

Firebird Messenger retreated as Life Extinguisher advanced.

But Firebird Messenger didn't back away too hard, and Life Extinguisher didn't advance too fiercely either. They seemed to be intentionally leaving Happy some space. These two long-ranged classes carefully controlled the distance, maintaining a certain gap between them.

The unknown machines traversing along the ground were getting nearer and nearer from multiple directions, arriving at different times.

Landmine Quake!

Fang Rui's Boundless Sea leaped into the air and slammed his two hands towards the ground. A wave of formless and colorless qi could be seen from its effects on the grass as it spread out towards the surroundings with Boundless Sea at the center.

Boom boom boom boom!

When the rustling grass and the grass wave collided, fire and light exploded into the air, creating a plume of smoke. Fang Rui had timed it well. He didn't care what the machines were and simply let out a Landquake Mine to destroy them.

But... those weren't all of them.

Who knew how many machines Xiao Shiqin had put into this wave. There were still three rustles in the grass. Perhaps they hadn't arrived yet, or perhaps Xiao Shiqin had maneuvered them away, but either way, they had avoided Boundless Sea's earthquake and started charging towards Happy again.

Qi Bullet!

Boundless Sea punched in the direction of a rustle.

However, Qi Bullet's flight speed was nothing worth noting. The mechanical tool sped up and easily evaded it.

Bang! Bang!

Lord Grim's Myriad Manifestations Umbrella transformed into its gun form and fired twice. But under the cover of the grass, it was difficult to get a good aim. After two shots, the rustling was still there.

Ta ta ta ta...

Su Mucheng saw that Lord Grim's few shots didn't hit, so she had Dancing Rain use Gatling Gun. The stream of bullets chased after the rustling grass in a line, finally shooting it into a smoke and fire. Su Mucheng didn't stop. While her skill was still in effect, she immediately switched to a different direction. However, Xiao Shiqin was clearly wary of Happy catching them all in one fell swoop. He had all three of his machines move along paths far from each other. Even though Su Mucheng quickly switched directions, she didn't have much time left on her skill. After a few bullets, her Gatling Gun stopped.

However...

Ta ta ta ta...

Lord Grim's Gatling Gun fired. His attack path followed along Dancing Rain's previous path. If you didn't look at the starting points of the bullets, it was practically impossible to tell that this attack had actually been done by two people.

Boom! The machine on that path exploded. When Lord Grim turned his gun, he still had half of Gatling Gun's duration left. Bullets chased after the last remaining mechanical tool, but who would have thought that it wouldn't be enough! Everyone could clearly see that the bullets landed on the right patch of grass, but the mechanical tool seemed to be perfectly fine!

Mechanical tools weren't like summoned creatures with health. They would go boom with just a knock. A bullet hitting, let alone multiple, was enough. The only explanation was that it didn't hit, but... the bullets clearly landed on it, unless...

Ye Xiu suddenly reacted, but it was too late. A patch of grass rustled in front of them, and then something suddenly leaped up out of the grass.

This wasn't a mechanical tool that traversed on the ground. It was an aerial Air Drop. However, Xiao Shiqin had it fly extremely low so that it would be covered by the grass. But because it wasn't touching the ground, Ye Xiu's previous attacks missed because of the slight deviation in position. At this moment,

Air Drop was suddenly in front of them. Its stomach opened up and was just about to drop some bombs...

Boom!

The Air Drop suddenly exploded before it could drop any bombs. Amidst the black smoke, a white flame could clearly be seen.

Sacred Fire!

Prediction and timing were An Wenyi's strengths. At the most crucial moment, a calm Sacred Fire block the Air Drop.

The crowd applauded.

This wave of machines had happened in just a few short seconds. All of Team Happy had worked together to intercept these machines. Their teamwork had been beautiful.

"Pay attention. The other side's Assassin has disappeared..." Fang Rui typed in the chat.

Fang Xuecai's Assassin Demon Talent had been between Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher and Cheng Tai's Shattering Wind, but he was now nowhere to be seen.

Was he crawling through the grass, or was he using the Thief skill on his weapon, Stealth? Ye Xiu and the others started searching the grass. No matter which option he had chosen, any movement in the grass would leave behind a trace. The grass was only knee-high. The Mechanic's mechanical tools could hide there quite cleanly, but it wasn't so easy to hide an adult.

Demon Talent was gone right now, but Dai Yanqi's and Xiao Shiqin's pincer was still ongoing. While Happy was busy cleaning up Life Extinguisher's machines, Firebird Messenger took the opportunity to cast two high-level spells. Without trying to make any predictions, lightning and fire AoE spells were cast directly above Happy's heads. From the looks of it, she wasn't trying to stop Happy from advancing, but trying to blast Happy's formation apart.

A pincer from the front and rear. An Assassin gone without a trace. Chen Tai's Grappler, Shattering Wind, was the closest to Happy. He was constantly moving, and even though he had yet to make an attack, his presence alone gave them quite a bit of pressure. Happy had to dodge the attacks from the front and rear, while also making sure they weren't grabbed by Shattering Wind. If a Grappler grabbed them, the formation would certainly fall apart. Shattering Wind was moving around, looking for an opening. As Happy dodged, they also tried to see if they could swallow up Shattering Wind. However, Thunderclap had Xiao Shiqin watching over. His judgement towards tactics was clear and precise. Only the crowd knew just how dense Thunderclap's chat was. The density of messages was not lower than that of their match against Blue Rain.

Was Xiao Shiqin planning on using these varied and complex tactics to outpace Happy?

However, Happy's leader was Ye Xiu, not Yu Wenzhou. Their tactical skill was the same, but in terms of hand speed, if you said Ye Xiu was superior to Yu Wenzhou, then even Yu Wenzhou's most loyal fans could only concede tearfully.

Why? Why did Thunderclap need to make things so complicated? Xiao Shiqin made numerous commands, and every player's movements and attack rhythms were constantly changing. Not only were they adjusting according to Xiao Shiqin's instructions, but they had their own plans too. Thunderclap had clearly prepared this set of tactics.

What exactly is this?

"I get it!" Li Yibo suddenly shouted. His skill level was still far higher than the average player's. He saw through Thunderclap's tactical intentions first. But right after he yelled it out, he immediately felt regret. He was exposing himself too much! Why am I so overjoyed? I should be calmly explaining the thought behind Thunderclap's tactics. That would have made me look even more knowledgeable!

Unfortunately, the deed had been done. Pan Lin helped lead him in: "Coach Li, you've seen through Thunderclap's intentions?"

"Haha, I had a feeling earlier, but now I'm certain. Thunderclap is doing exactly what I had thought," Li Yibo said mysteriously.

"Please guide us Coach Li." How could Pan Lin not know of Li Yibo's cunning plot. In his heart, he was looking down on him, but out loud, he had to praise him.

"Thunderclap's strategy is similar to their one against Blue Rain with lots of variations. But when facing Blue Rain, they were mainly focused on varying and adjusting their tactics. Right now, they're more focused on their attack positioning and variation in rhythm."

"The purpose is the same. They're targeting a certain player on the opposing team. Against Blue Rain, their target was Yu Wenzhou. If Yu Wenzhou is unable to give out enough commands on time, Blue Rain would have trouble keeping up with Thunderclap's fast-changing tactics. Against Happy, their target is An Wenyi, Happy's healer!" Li Yibo said with certainty.

Chapter 1238: Symbol For a Healer

Happy's healer, An Wenyi!

Li Yibo spoke with power and resonance, but since this was a live broadcast, he probably didn't know how many boos came his way when he said these words.

Happy's weak point was An Wenyi. We don't need you to say that. Who doesn't know it?

Yes, everyone knew, including Pan Lin. He hadn't thought that Li Yibo's secret ace would be such an obvious answer. After staring blankly for a few seconds, he finally followed up: "Yeah... An Wenyi really is Happy's weak point."

"Yes," Li Yibo was still smiling confidently, "Everyone knows this, but who among Happy's previous opponents fully took advantage of this weakness?"

Pan Lin was stunned again. He could hear that Li Yibo's words had substance to them, and he subconsciously started thinking about Li Yibo's question. Had any of Happy's previous opponents specifically created a plan to target An Wenyi?"

"We won't talk about matches too far in the past. Let's take a look at the two rather strong teams that Happy had faced in their recent win streak, Misty Rain and Void. Our friends who have watched Happy's matches against these two team, recall Happy's performances in the team competition," Li Yibo betrayed the key points in his analysis.

"Happy's performances in those two matches?" Pan Lin echoed as he pondered in his mind. His perception was quite a bit higher than the average player's. After thinking about it for a bit, he found out that he truly wasn't able to find anything.

"In Misty Rain's match, Happy utilized the terrain to set up their formation. At that time, An Wenyi's Little Cold Hands hid behind that big rock. Misty Rain didn't have the conditions to launch any attacks directly towards him," Li Yibo answered.

Pan Lin completely remembered now: "In Void's match, Happy switched out their Cleric to get into position faster. By the time An Wenyi went onto the field, Void only had four players remaining, and Happy's victory had pretty much been decided at that point."

"For those interested, we can go even farther back. In their match against Hundred Blossoms, even in the Challenger League finals against Excellent Era, these matches against strong opponents give us an even clearer picture."

"Right," Pan Lin completely understood what Li Yibo wanted to say.

"Happy's tactics seem similar to Thunderclap's in the sense that they're always targeting a certain person. However, Happy's tactics are always built off a foundation: protecting their weak point, An Wenyi. In every match, they will always try their best to end the battle without there being too great of a burden on An Wenyi," Li Yibo said.

"Xiao Shiqin has completely seen through this point, so in this match, he's taken the initiative to strike preemptively at Happy's tactical framework. He doesn't plan on letting Happy set up a situation easy for An Wenyi," Pan Lin said.

"Yes, so that's why their offensive rhythm is constantly changing. For a healer, grasping the opponent's offensive rhythm is extremely important. A healer needs to pay attention to any possible dangers, sometimes even needing to predict a crisis ahead of time, in order to prepare a long cast time heal in advance. Does Happy's An Wenyi have the ability to deal with such a hurried situation?" Li Yibo said.

The broadcast team coordinated with him and cut to An Wenyi's point of view.

His screen was shifting around extremely chaotically.

Sure enough, the situation was just as Li Yibo said. Before a healer healed, the first thing that needed to be done was to figure out who needed to be healed, which meant that the healer couldn't solely pay attention to his opponents. The healer needed to look at the overall situation from time to time. However, Xiao Shiqin had set it up such that the battle was spread out all around. An Wenyi could not simply look in one direction to observe the battlefield. He had to look towards one side and then look towards a different side from time to time. Along with Thunderclap's constantly changing rhythm, his inability to keep up and his confusion was completely exposed by the cameras.

The broadcast and the crowd's electronic screens aptly showed the health bars of the two teams.



This sort of image was usually shown to let the viewers know which side's healer was controlling the field well. A good healer would keep his teammate's health above a certain safe line at all times. The health bars would leap up and down like musical notes.

But the health bars of Happy's characters were a complete mess. It was like he was banging around clumsily without any vision. No one could tell what An Wenyi's safe line was.

Without a safe line, it wasn't possible to heal dependably.

Happy's stadium was quiet.

An Wenyi was Happy's weak point. This had been known since the very beginning, but up until now, it had never been fully exposed because every time the team lost, it didn't look like An Wenyi was dragging down the team. But when Li Yibo gave his analysis, everyone discovered that though An Wenyi didn't drag down the team in Happy's losses, he didn't contribute too much in their wins either. An Wenyi's role in Happy seemed to just be a symbol, letting the opponents know: we have a healer. Had Happy ever used any tactics that relied on their healer? Never. Even though An Wenyi had his moments of brilliance, he had always played under relatively safe conditions - conditions that Happy had set up for him.

But in this round against Thunderclap, Xiao Shiqin didn't give them an opportunity to set up these conditions. These multi-directional and constantly changing attacks forced out Happy's weakness. In a team battle, if the healer could not keep up, the entire team would suffer. Thunderclap's attacks weren't focused on any one person. They frequently changed targets, forcing An Wenyi to constantly search for their focuses, pressuring him into making more mistakes.

Happy wasn't routed yet. Their team still had Ye Xiu and Ye Xiu's Lord Grim. The unspecialized had limited healing capabilities, but it was better than nothing. These heals might be enough for crucial saves, but relying on Lord Grim to keep up the entire team's health was impossible.

What are they going to do?

This was Happy's home stadium, so the crowd was obviously worried for Happy. Thunderclap couldn't be too relaxed either though. Maintaining this sort of battle tempo without making mistakes was not an easy task.

"Keep this up!" From time to time, Xiao Shiqin would give encouraging words to boost the team's morale.

Thunderclap's offense was maintained extremely well. No matter how amazing a team's tactics were, if the team couldn't carry it out, then it was pointless. And in terms of execution, Thunderclap's players were second to none. This team had always relied on tactics to beat stronger teams. The team's players were very accomplished at tactics, even more so under Xiao Shiqin's guidance. They understood his commands very quickly and executed them smoothly.

"Happy's in trouble," Li Yibo was already announcing it.

"Let's see if they've got a way out!" Pan Lin said.

"Thunderclap is utilizing the map extremely well. I nearly forgot who chose the map," Li Yibo chuckled.

"Uh... I'm sure Happy chose this map for a reason." Pan Lin chose his words carefully because he had a premonition that as soon as he came out and announced Happy's demise, he would definitely be slapped in the face.

Li Yibo could feel Pan Lin's cautiousness and laughed. What could Happy do in this situation? No matter which direction you rush towards, you won't be able to escape from battle. Thunderclap doesn't need to trap you here. As long as they can continuously harass you and can stop your healer from being effective, this harassment is equivalent to damage. And enough damage means that it's their win! In addition, Thunderclap's leader is Xiao Shiqin. With him watching over, what tactical intents could be hidden from him?

"Cheng, pressure with triangular movement!"

"Dai, turn 30 degrees."

"Fang, move back."

Commands continued to be given as Happy wasn't just sitting there letting An Wenyi deal with the pressure himself. However, their intentions were always seen through by Xiao Shiqin, who would promptly respond and stop Happy from escaping this situation.

"Fuck. Bullying the rookie, you call that skill!" Fang Rui complained in the public chat.

"Keep pressuring them. Fang, move a little towards my location." Xiao Shiqin was unmoved. In a match, there was no such thing as trash talk only for the purpose of complaining. The words that jumped onto the screen always contained a message, which would automatically be read by the eyes. This sort of small distraction could lead to an unconscious change in emotions and ultimately, a mistake. Xiao Shiqin wouldn't be affected by it though. As soon as Fang Rui said these words, his first thought was that the opponents would be making a move soon, so he immediately warned his team to be wary.

Sky Piercing Strike!

After Fang Rui's grumble, Boundless Sea pushed out a blast of qi. The qi swept past the grass directly towards Life Extinguisher.

Laser Beam!

Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain immediately added to Boundless Sea's attack with a Laser Beam.

But their coordination was a bit off beat, so the effects weren't the most optimal. Xiao Shiqin's Life Extinguisher easily dodged it. However, his line of sight left that area for a short moment.

Chaotic Rain!

At this moment, greenish purplish raindrops suddenly poured down. It was Chaotic Rain summoned by a Warlock.

"Oh, so those attacks were cover for Chaotic Rain. Then, they plan on using Chaotic Rain's AoE to attack. In that case, we need to..." Xiao Shiqin thought and prepared to give another order.

Wait...

1, 2, 3, 4...

Happy was missing a person!

The missing person was Lord Grim?

"Where's Lord Grim?" Xiao Shiqin hastily asked in the chat. Did he disappear from view while I was dodging those attacks? Even if I didn't see him, my other teammates should have, right?"

"Ah?" His teammates all gasped in surprise.

No one saw?

Xiao Shiqin didn't ask further. Everyone's "Ah?" was clear enough.

Had there been a blind spot in everyone's field of view at that instant?

Was that a coincidence, or... had it been set up?

Xiao Shiqin reflected on this question. If it was the latter, then Happy's plan was currently being set in motion. Ye Xiu's Lord Grim was hiding in the grass. What was he planning on doing?

"Cheng, approach and search. Fang, support him." Xiao Shiqin immediately ordered.

Chapter 1239: Hoist By Your Own Petard

Thunderclap's two close-ranged classes rushed forward. Xiao Shiqin didn't even blink as he looked around. But Thunderclap's attack formation didn't weaken because of this though, and Xiao Shiqin didn't neglect his shotcalling.

Happy might just be purposely trying to confuse them, using this to divert their attention and reduce the pressure. Xiao Shiqin considered this possibility. So even as Shattering Wind and Demon Talent pressed forward, they weren't just looking for Lord Grim, they maintained their attacks toward Happy's players. Happy didn't reduce the pressure, and in fact because of Lord Grim's disappearance, they had to work even harder under the conditions of a 4v5.

Show yourself!

Xiao Shiqin thought to himself. Ye Xiu couldn't play like this all the way until the end.

"2 o'clock." In the Thunderclap chat, Dai Yanqi suddenly called out. As she spoke, she prepared to fire a spell in that direction.

"Don't split your attention, leave it to me!" Xiao Shiqin immediately shouted. He was scared of this scenario exactly. If everyone switched their attention to target Ye Xiu's Lord Grim, then wouldn't this situation, which they had established with such difficulty, be broken? Seeing Dai Yanqi's Firebird Messenger already turning her head and about to cast in that direction, Xiao Shiqin truly applauded Ye Xiu.

It was just a small trick, but it caused a great disruption to Thunderclap's strategy. Ye Xiu truly understood the players' logic and reactions too well. At a time like this, anyone who suddenly

discovered Lord Grim's whereabouts would instantly try and attack, and with that, Thunderclap's strategic rhythm would be disrupted.

"But it's a shame, Ye Xiu's opponent is Xiao Shiqin." After seeing Xiao Shiqin's direction in the team chat, Li Yibo spoke with a smile. With an omniscient view, they of course saw Lord Grim's actions more clearly than Xiao Shiqin could. Li Yibo reached the same conclusion as Xiao Shiqin, but seeing that Xiao Shiqin saw through it entirely and was prepared against it, Li Yibo didn't feel like going to praise Ye Xiu.

"Yeah..." Pan Lin agreed, his heart beginning to waver. It looked like Happy was really struggling in this match! Should he begin to sing praises for Thunderclap?

As Pan Lin wondered, the situation onstage changed again.

The exposed Lord Grim suddenly began to move. Dai Yanqi's attack toward him had been stopped by Xiao Shiqin, but he still continued to charge toward Dai Yanqi.

"Don't panic, it's Mechanical Seeker," Xiao Shiqin called.

"Haha, seen through again," Li Yibo laughed. "A Mechanical Seeker and a character are very different in size, and so they move a little differently. Perhaps a lot of people wouldn't be able to tell the difference, but Xiao Shiqin is an expert Mechanic!"

The little trick once again failed to come to fruition. Ye Xiu seemed rather helpless, and Lord Grim finally charged out, this time toward Zhang Jiaxing's Returning Wind.

Attacking from behind to try and save your allies?

Xiao Shiqin smiled. He'd already thought of this possibility long ago!

Fang Xuecai's Assassin Demon Talent twisted and used a Shining Cut in the direction of Lord Grim's movement. If this kind of thing didn't happen, no one would notice, but as soon as it happened, everyone suddenly realized that Thunderclap's players, in maintaining their nonstop offensive, were coordinating with each other extremely well. The tactics of this team proceeded as precise and orderly as the gears of a machine.

Zhang Jiaxing wouldn't just sit around doing nothing. When he saw Lord Grim coming toward him, he cast a Sacred Fire, hidden in the grass.

Would it hit?

Zhang Jiaxing didn't know. He was too familiar with this opponent in front of him and knew just how scary he was. A little trick like this wouldn't be much use, would it?

This thought hadn't even finished crossing his mind when, at the position of his Sacred Fire, a blindingly white fire blazed to life.

It hit!

Fang Xuecai was delighted at this development, and of course he wouldn't let this skill-sealing opportunity slip away. Demon Talent used Swift Run and Swift Movements, prepared to instantly kill with a Heart-Piercing Stab.

This is?

Fang Xuecai stopped. A green-skinned Goblin waved a club as it came toward him. From its excited state, he could tell that it must have eaten an attack, otherwise how could it run so quickly?

This was a trap!

"It's a Goblin!" Fang Xuecai hurriedly sent a message. This lowest-level little summon was of course nothing to him, and he quickly took care of it.

A Goblin!

Xiao Shiqin jolted. This wasn't an attack from the rear to save the allies, this was... making a sound in the east and striking in the west!

Just as he reached this realization, Xiao Shiqin watched as the grass began to rustle once again. This time, Ye Xiu no longer bothered to hide Lord Grim's body, because now there was no one nearby to stop him.

Slide Kick, Charge, Colliding Stab, Shining Cut...

Lord Grim chained all of these low-level quick movement skills from various classes. Relying on the effects of all of these skills used consecutively, Lord Grim's speed at that moment couldn't be bested by even an Assassin, let alone any of the slower classes.

Cheng Tai's Shattering Wind wasn't fast enough to block him, and in an instant, Lord Grim was in front of his target.

"Captain Xiao, having fun?"

Lord Grim made his move. Dragon Tooth!

As soon as he knew about the Goblin, Xiao Shiqin instantly realized that he himself was Ye Xiu's true target, and he was already defending himself. But Lord Grim arrived too quickly, so quickly that Xiao Shiqin was feeling regret. Lord Grim could use skills to achieve this kind of movement speed; they really shouldn't have been tricked by that Goblin.

Roll!

Life Extinguisher rolled to the side, dodging the Dragon Tooth. He swung his Mechanical Box to the side and a Magnetic Field Coil was thrown onto the ground.

Boom!

The Magnetic Field Coil hadn't had time to release its magnetic energy when Lord Grim's spear pierced it, directly disrupting it. The spear jumped and again flashed in front of Life Extinguisher.

In the end, Ye Xiu was most familiar with handling a spear. All those years controlling the Battle Mage One Autumn Leaf hadn't gone to waste.

Xiao Shiqin could only have Life Extinguisher dodge again, but Lord Grim wasn't some ordinary Battle Mage. If the spear's range wasn't enough... The Myriad Manifestations Umbrella shifted to gun form, and Anti-Tank Missile was launched!

Boom boom boom!

The flames of the explosions swallowed Life Extinguisher whole, but at this moment Xiao Shiqin still sent a message in the chat. "Leave me, maintain the rhythm."

The Thunderclap players who had been prepared to rescue him suddenly stopped, but they understood their captain's intentions. Ye Xiu's powerful offensive toward Xiao Shiqin was his attempt at breaking the current situation. If the Thunderclap players broke formation to save their captain, Happy would be free of their current difficult situation, and might even be able to launch a counterattack. This could be considered a variation of BOX-1 tactics, and Thunderclap's players, with their high tactical background, instantly understood.

"Maintain the rhythm, respond as appropriate," said another Thunderclap player. It was Fang Xuecai, a longtime teammate of Xiao Shiqin's in Thunderclap, the vice-captain of Thunderclap. He knew that Xiao Shiqin didn't have much space to give commands, so he supplemented the strategic plan.

They couldn't gather the strength of the entire team to force a rescue, but they couldn't not rescue him. Maintain the rhythm, respond as appropriate, a playstyle like that was to incorporate Lord Grim and Life Extinguisher into the rhythm of the battle as a whole. It was the logical way of breaking BOX-1 tactics.

But... To Thunderclap, Xiao Shiqin was more than just a battle core. He was the commander. This battle against Happy in particular required many directions from him, constantly adjusting their tactics and attack rhythm to target Happy's weak point, An Wenyi. But at this moment, under Ye Xiu's offensive raining down upon him, an offensive that could instantly defeat countless formidable players...

"How about it? Still have time to type any words?" Ye Xiu, shockingly, could still find the space to ask this question.

The crowd was silent. No one knew how to express their current emotions.

Xiao Shiqin... This was retribution, wasn't it?

Against Blue Rain, he had bullied Yu Wenzhou. Yu Wenzhou's handspeed was too slow to keep up with a rapidly changing battle, so Xiao Shiqin purposely directed his team so there were many changes and ultimately defeated Blue Rain.

And now, Ye Xiu, this Glory Textbook was teaching a lesson to the helplessly sighing Blue Rain. Was there really no way of dealing with Xiao Shiqin's harassment?

Of course there was, and it was simple. Tooth for Tooth, use their own strategy against them!

If he wanted to harass with a complex and changing battle style, Xiao Shiqin also needed to rely on a large number of commands. His handspeed wasn't a problem, but, when faced with this explosion of attacks raining down upon him...

"Your life or your commands?"

Ye Xiu's question was the dilemma with which Xiao Shiqin was currently struggling.

Thunderclap's players quickly realized as well, without Xiao Shiqin's commands, the amount of damage they were dealing was quickly slipping, and it seemed like Happy's weak point An Wenyi could endure this level. After all, he had walked with Happy through the Challenger League and played half a season with them on the main roster. He didn't neglect his daily training, either. Perhaps his talent was limited, but after a year and a half of growth, he was far from mediocre.

Thunderclap's strategy, broken!

The live crowd finally reacted with applause and cheers. And once An Wenyi was able to stabilize the situation, Happy's counterattack finally arrived. With regards to player quality, many people had already realized prior to this match that Happy was superior to Thunderclap.

"We have to save Captain!" Dai Yanqi said in the chat.

The others were also debating, but they also wanted to wait for Xiao Shiqin's direction. A "save" could be typed out! While he was tangled with Ye Xiu, Xiao Shiqin still occasionally had the space to issue a direction.

His life or his commands? This was the dilemma Xiao Shiqin faced.

To save or not to save? This was the choice Thunderclap had to make.

But Ye Xiu seemed like he knew that Thunderclap was facing this difficult decision. Lord Grim's attacks grew even more ferocious, so much so that people felt that the slightest slip could send Life Extinguisher straight to death.

Was it so bad that he couldn't even type a single word? The blood of the Thunderclap players went cold.

"Dai, help him!" At last, Fang Xuecai couldn't resist any longer, directing Dai Yanqi to give some support, or at least make an opening so that Xiao Shiqin could give a command. Just pointing them in the right direction would be enough!

"Understood!" Dai Yanqi's Firebird Messenger turned around.

The crowd saw all of this. Xiao Shiqin was suppressed, Dai Yanqi went to help him, this... this was a strategy often used by powerhouse teams with top-tier players during team competitions. Star 1v2.

This Ye Xiu... When the other side had stars, he played tactics with them. When the other side played tactics, he played as a star?

Chapter 1240: Bitter But Unable to Complain

Dai Yanqi shifted targets to Lord Grim. Fang Xuecai thought that as a long-ranged attacker, switching targets would be fast and easy. Dai Yanqi wouldn't need to approach either, saving time while still letting her take care of the other side simultaneously.

His thinking wasn't wrong. At the moment, this was the best way to maintain balance on the field. However, since she needed to take care of two sides at once, her presence on one side would be weaker. This small difference was quickly seized by Happy.

Who had Happy sent out for the team competition today?

Ye Xiu, Su Mucheng, Fang Rui, Wei Chen, An Wenyi.

Apart from An Wenyi, the rest were experienced veterans of the game. As soon as Thunderclap's balance tipped a little, those three raced towards a small opening that appeared.

Thunderclap's players felt their hearts suddenly turn cold. This feeling was as if they had caught a net packed with fish, but then a small hole ripped open in the net, resulting in all of the fish escaping for their life through this hole. In an instant, the hole enlarged, leaving them no opportunity to patch it up.

"Stop them! Stop them!" Fang Xuecai roared.

But Thunderclap's players felt powerless. A hole had been exposed already. They couldn't stop them. Agreeing by chance, everyone turned to look towards their captain. If Xiao Shiqin's shotcalling hadn't been cut off, this situation wouldn't have happened.

How could Xiao Shiqin not feel bitter? It wasn't that he didn't want to give out commands. If he had even a fraction of a chance, he would certainly take it to instruct his teammates on what to do. But he wasn't given any chances. He could only watch as their complete and perfect offense slowly fell apart due to a lack of precise adjustments. There had been numerous crucial moments that Xiao Shiqin had wanted to say something, but he couldn't, because he discovered that whenever these crucial moments appeared, Ye Xiu would suddenly press even harder.

Ye Xiu... he wasn't only looking at the opponent in front of him. He was also carefully watching over the entire battle and then adjusting his attacks according to the situation. If Xiao Shiqin tried to type anything, he would be taking on a full frontal assault from an unspecialized. Under Lord Grim's explosive storm-like attacks, he might just die as a result.

If he lived, there would at least be hope. If he died, then it would mean he wouldn't be able to give any orders anymore.

In this instant, Xiao Shiqin hated the Alliance's ban on voice chat. He could completely feel the helplessness and misery that Yu Wenzhou had felt facing against him.

Fang Xuecai had Dai Yanqi provide support for him, and he knew that this wasn't that great of a decision. The outcome could be disastrous, but what else could be done? If they had continued like that, it would have been disastrous too. Change always created something. For example, what if Dai Yanqi suddenly played out of her mind and was able to completely take care of both sides at once?

That didn't happen, unfortunately. As soon as Dai Yanqi switched targets, she didn't even get the chance to show if she could overperform. Happy had immediately seized the opportunity to break free from Thunderclap's offense. The players that Happy sent out this time were too experienced. They wouldn't miss such a golden opportunity.

Is it over?



No!

Not yet.

Happy had broken free from their offense, but Dai Yanqi didn't hesitate. She became even more determined to rescue Xiao Shiqin.

Good!

Xiao Shiqin felt grateful for Dai Yanqi's decision. When making a tactical decision, the biggest taboo was hesitation. For the tactics-oriented Thunderclap, no one was indecisive.

Lightning Bolt!

A bolt of lightning flashed in front of Lord Grim. The purpose of this predictive attack was that even if it didn't hit, you still had to be wary of it. This pause would at least let Xiao Shiqin free himself from a defensive position, giving him an opening to either counterattack or give an order to the team.

However, Lord Grim stubbornly took the step forward.

How persistent. The stun from lightning spells weren't weak. Even if you take it, an opening will still appear. But as Lord Grim stepped forward, he swung his Myriad Manifestations Umbrella to the side. The moment the Lightning Bolt arrived, his umbrella opened up with a whoosh.

Zzt. Lightning struck the umbrella, but before the electricity spread out, the umbrella closed, or it could be said that the umbrella never stopped. This was simply another attack towards Life Extinguisher. It was just that it came from the side, blocking the Lightning Bolt coming towards him in the passing. Lord Grim's offense wasn't interrupted one bit.

Dai Yanqi felt frightened by such precise movements, and she didn't cast her prepared follow-up. Dealing with Ye Xiu wasn't how she had thought it would be.

It wasn't until after she saw Life Extinguisher continue rolling to dodge did she regain her senses. She immediately cast another spell to attack, but Ye Xiu wasn't just fighting alone. The rest of Happy was helping him too. Before Firebird Messenger could cast her spell, a boom sounded first. Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain had started providing support for Ye Xiu. Not only did this attack interrupt Firebird Messenger's casting, it also helped blast Ye Xiu towards Life Extinguisher.

Fang Xuecai's Assassin, Demon Talent, rushed forward to try and stop Dancing Rain, but Su Mucheng had noticed him long beforehand. Dancing Rain Aerial Fired away. No matter how fast an Assassin's speed was, he wouldn't be able to catch up to her in a short amount of time. And right now, how could he have the time to blindly chase after someone? He wasn't like Dancing Rain. He wasn't a Launcher, who could move around while also providing support to the rest of the battlefield. His Assassin needed to get close. If he was just kited around by Dancing Rain, then his presence would be equivalent to empty air.

Fang Xuecai was helpless. He just thought of it as bothering Su Mucheng for a bit. He looked around to see where to go next and in the end, he locked onto Little Cold Hands.

An opening!

Fang Xuecai keenly discovered that because Happy had been trapped for so long, after breaking free, they ran wild, unexpectedly forgetting to protect their healer. If he could eliminate Happy's healer in one go...

This was definitely possible because Fang Xuecai's Demon Talent was an Assassin. He also knew Life-Risking Strike. He may not love the move as much as Void's Li Xun, but no Assassin would completely give up on Life-Risking Strike. The mere existence of Life-Risking Strike was a threat, and in certain moments like these, it could also be used.

Right now... is that moment...

Fang Xuecai pretended to have his Demon Talent continue chasing after Dancing Rain. Suddenly, he moved diagonally as if trying to circle around Dancing Rain. But halfway through this movement, his figure flashed. Shadow Clone Technique. His real body instantly moved towards Little Cold Hands, and he closely followed with a Shining Cut to suddenly reach Little Cold Hands' side.

Life-Risking Strike!

Fang Xuecai directly used this risky strike. Little Cold Hands' health wasn't full. He had been pressured by Thunderclap's fast changing offensive, resulting him in being unable to keep Happy's characters above a safe line. Every character including Little Cold Hands himself had lost quite a bit of health due to An Wenyi's panicked healing.

This is more than enough!

Fang Xuecai calculated it precisely. He was certain of this attack. They had analyzed An Wenyi's strengths and weaknesses very clearly. His reaction speed and hand speed wasn't that great. An Wenyi definitely wouldn't be able to react to this sudden sneak attack.

Go die!

Fang Xuecai roared in his heart. Afterwards, even if his own health dropped to nothing, if his character could trade for Happy's healer, then it would 100% be worth it.

But the instant the dagger was about to strike, Fang Xuecai saw the gown of Little Cold Hands flutter and a wave of qi circled around Little Cold Hands, slicing into Demon Talent's waist.

Qi Blade!

This was Fang Xuecai's final thought on the battlefield. After using Life-Risking Strike, he didn't have the health to take any attacks. A single Qi Blade was more than enough to take him down.

To use a Cleric as a cover and so perfect too! My intentions were completely seen through! Yet to dare use it at the last moment was brave. If that Qi Blade had been one beat too late, my dagger would have taken Little Cold Hand's life! Even if I were killed by the Qi Blade later, who cares?

This guy... is so bold, so dirty!

Demon Talent fell despite Fang Xuecai's unwillingness. Fang Rui hollered in the public chat: "This brother's Golden Right Hand is beyond precise!"

"Who would get actually get hit by such a cheap trick? You call this tactics?" Wei Chen sneered.

No one would have thought that in the blink of an eye, Thunderclap would lose a player. 4v5. The situation completely reversed. Thunderclap had no way of stopping Happy. Happy immediately found their target and focused on Life Extinguisher. They stopped at nothing to kill him and before Thunderclap's sixth player could arrive, Xiao Shiqin was sent out of the battle. Xiao Shiqin wasn't just another player in Thunderclap. Without him, Thunderclap's momentum was halted and, in the end, Happy won the team competition.

9-1. Another thrilling victory. Everyone was completely dumbfounded by this sudden reversal. Pan Lin and Li Yibo looked at each other with lingering fear in their eyes, especially Li Yibo. He had practically ascertained Thunderclap's win and nearly blurted it out, but he didn't, saving him face. As for Pan Lin, he had a feeling of relief. His caution had paid off. In the end, Happy had pulled off another bout of black magic.

"What a brilliant match..." Li Yibo said. He felt like he had just survived by the skin of his teeth and for a moment, he didn't know what to say.

"Yes, Thunderclap played very well for the first half, demonstrating how to give trouble to Happy."

"Happy also responded brilliantly. Yes... they... also showed how to stop Thunderclap's outstanding tactics." Li Yibo followed up with Pan Lin's words with some hesitation because Happy's way was similar to when Thunderclap beat Blue Rain. It was a sort of dirty way and shouldn't really be praised.

After Blue Rain had lost, they could only feel wronged at the voice chat restriction. But Thunderclap? They had benefited from it and then suddenly became victims to it. Thunderclap had no choice but to suffer in silence. Even if they were bitter about it, there was nothing they could say!

Chapter 1241: Keep Working Hard

The last time Thunderclap had failed in the team competition was during their away game against Royal Style in Round 9. After that, they went on a beautiful six round win streak, but in Round 16 their golden statue cracked again. And this time, their opponent was none other than the team Xiao Shiqin had already lost to last year in the finals of the Challenger League, Team Happy.

In that match, Happy had used lots of unusually exciting tactics against Excellent Era. In the Glory world, it was generally agreed that as Master Tacticians, Ye Xiu was still a bit more shrewd and ruthless. But after losing that battle, it seemed as though Xiao Shiqin had gained something. He returned to Thunderclap, which hadn't changed aside from the addition of the Cleric Zhang Jiaxing from Excellent Era, and he had obtained startling results for his team.

It was impossible for Xiao Shiqin not to be at least a little pleased. Such outstanding results would naturally bring high spirits. Xiao Shiqin now had more self-confidence than before. But this time, he once again fell before the opponents who had just recently defeated him.

When he shook hands with Ye Xiu after the match, Xiao Shiqin's emotions were complicated, and he was certainly a little frustrated. He felt that his year at Excellent Era hadn't been a waste, for in those depths,

he had learned a lot and grown a lot. But after growing and improving, he found that he still had no way of defeating this person before him. No one could find happiness in such a situation.

"Keep working hard next time!" Ye Xiu patted his shoulder, as though encouraging some rookie.

Xiao Shiqin smiled bitterly. Of course, he was no rookie, he was someone with prestige and reputation in this circle. But this person in front of him had more qualifications than him, had more honors, and had defeated him twice in a row. When Ye Xiu said something like that, how could Xiao Shiqin respond?

He could only smile bitterly like this and watch as the other walked aside. And then, another hand shook his, and patted his shoulder, and said, "Keep working hard next time."

Xiao Shiqin didn't know whether to laugh or cry. This Su Mucheng hadn't been like this during their time at Excellent Era together! After being with Ye Xiu, she had really changed a lot, hadn't she?

She hadn't even waited for him to say anything before vanishing, and another person shook Xiao Shiqin's hand, and patted his shoulder, and said, "Keep working hard!"

Fang Rui! By year, Xiao Shiqin was actually the senior of this kid, yet even he was going along with this act! Xiao Shiqin glared at Fang Rui, but Fang Rui cleanly ignored him and was all puffed up as he walked away.

"Kid, you gotta keep working hard!" After that, a more boastful voice reached his ear with this encouragement. This person skipped the handshake entirely and directly went to pat him on the shoulder.

"We're not like those little Blue Rain brats," the person said.

Little Blue Rain brats... Blue Rain did have a little brat, but Xiao Shiqin knew, in front of this person, "little Blue Rain brat" referred to more than just Lu Hanwen. Yu Wenzhou, Huang Shaotian, two major players in the Alliance, were really just little brats in this person's eyes.

Blue Rain's former captain, Wei Chen. The person with the most status to call the Blue Rain players little brats. Xiao Shiqin could say nothing to him.

After enduring four consecutive encouragements, this blatant ridicule, Xiao Shiqin really couldn't stand it much longer.

Was there more?

Xiao Shiqin adjusted his glasses and prepared to unleash some killer intent, but the youth who walked in front of him now was very respectful in tone.

"Thank you Senior for your teachings."

"Ah?" This sudden change of style caught him completely off guard. This person in front of him now was Happy's sixth player for this match, Qiao Yifan.

"You're welcome..." Facing this kind of respect, there was no way Xiao Shiqin could insert any mockery in his response.

The last one, An Wenyi, the weak point in Xiao Shiqin's eyes. This match, Thunderclap's strategies almost entirely targeted him. He must have a lot of resentment right now, no? As Xiao Shiqin thought this, he was already bracing himself. This was just a rookie, he couldn't lose in dignity.

But when An Wenyi came up to him, the rookie just extended his hand very ordinarily, shook hands, and nodded his head in acknowledgement. Without revealing any unusual expressions, An Wenyi departed.

The players of both teams finished their polite greetings just like that, and Happy's players gathered together and left, basking in victory. Xiao Shiqin was left onstage. He stared at the hand he had just used for the handshakes, and in the end he used it to pat his own shoulder. "You still need to work even harder, Xiao Shiqin!" he told himself.

During the post-match press conference, seeing those eager expressions of the reporters overflowing the space, Xiao Shiqin knew that this upcoming battle today wouldn't be a good one.

During this season so far, they had received too much phrase. But he should still be able to deal with an awkward situation like this!

He had to work hard! Xiao Shiqin lifted his chin, sat straight in his chair, and welcomed the media's interrogation.

The results of Round 16 of Season 10 continued to release, and those who liked statistics quickly found a pattern. In Round 9, the round where Thunderclap lost the team competition, there were five 10-0 swept matches. And this time, in Round 16, when Thunderclap once again lost the team competition, four 10-0 sweeps appeared this round.

Was Thunderclap's performance in the team round a weather vane for powerful 10-0 showings? The bored gave this title to Thunderclap's team competitions.

Looking at the four 10-0's, they were earned by Samsara, Tyranny, Blue Rain, and Wind Howl. Among them, Blue Rain and Wind Howl's performances had been lagging recently, but their 10-0 scores this round were a clean answer to those voices of doubt. And Samsara, after after achieving this 10-0, finally took the lead over Happy in terms of 10-0 match count. Right now, they had six 10-0 matches, one more than Happy.

Aside from them, Hundred Blossoms, Void, Misty Rain, Tiny Herb, and Miracle all achieved victory. This round had been a huge victory for the home teams - among all ten matches, it had been the home team who had won, and the victories were very close to what was predicted by comparing the teams' strengths on paper. There had been no surprises or unexpected outcomes, if one didn't count Happy's victory over Thunderclap as a surprise.

With this, Happy's ranking increased by one on the leaderboard. With 107 points, they were now in fifth place. And the team they had defeated, Thunderclap, was the only team among the current top ten that had lost during this round. Because the other teams had all gathered a sizable number of points this round, Thunderclap instantly slid down two places, from fourth to sixth, with 105 points. And the team that now rose to fourth was a team that had swept 10-0 this round, Blue Rain. Tyranny and Tiny Herb had the same number of points this round, but Tyranny had defeated Tiny Herb in their match, so Tyranny was second, and Tiny Herb third.

Even as the debate continued over whether or not Tyranny was still strong enough, the team had actually quietly climbed up to second place. Samsara was truly too strong this season, leading by such a large margin that people overlooked their presence. The conflict that people paid attention to was that between all of the teams aside from Samsara. People still held the impression that Tyranny was stumbling had nothing of the dominating strength they had shown last season, but just as the season was about to reach the halfway point, they had returned to their place second only to Samsara?

How in the world had Tyranny chased them up here? Even as everyone was still worrying over whether or not they could even secure a playoff spot, now they were actually second place on the leaderboard?

What was Tyranny's performance?

Everyone discovered that their minds were empty. Their impressions of Tyranny had apparently stopped at when they had begun their rotations. After that period of stumbling performances, they had begun to steadily obtain points. Had anyone noticed? Without drawing attention, they had already quietly risen to second place. This sort of cool and calm performance sent chills down everyone's spines. These old generals in Tyranny still couldn't be overlooked!

Although the rankings among the top 8 had changed, it was still the same eight teams. Wind Howl and Hundred Blossoms were sitting steadily at seventh and eighth place, respectively. Void was chasing them ferociously, but they were still five points behind the eighth place Hundred Blossoms. Below them were Misty Rain and 301, with 82 and 81 points. The gap between them and the playoff zone was in the double digits.

Behind the top 10, among the teams in the lower half, the team that surprised everyone was Miracle. After sixteen rounds of play, this team was at 13th place. For a team that had just joined the Alliance, such a performance was extremely outstanding. As of now, they were even higher up than Heavenly Justice, who had garnered such high hopes last season. Everyone praised Miracle, but it seemed like they had forgotten, the other new team this season was solidly in the playoff zone! But no one thought of Happy as some new team. They had Ye Xiu, Su Mucheng, Fang Rui, these All-Star level players with whom everyone was familiar. No one could continue to view them as some new team.

After this round, the end of the year was upon them. The Christmas event, the New Year event, and the first weekend of the new year, the All-Star Weekend, they were all rapidly approaching. The in-game event during summer break had been officially named Carnival, but for those in the Glory circle, whether pro or ordinary player, these two weeks crossing the end of the year made up the true valuable carnival.

Every year, the Christmas event that rewarded wonderful presents took place in-game. Ye Xiu had participated in this event for two consecutive years, with great profits. But this year wasn't like previous years. Christmas Day was a Wednesday, and on Friday they still had a professional match to play. The in-game event mainly had to be left to Wu Chen, leading the guild to participate. If pro players were interested, there was nothing stopping them from helping out, but if they spent too much energy there, it could ruin their condition for their match.

Competitive condition, this wasn't just something that existed in the competitive Glory scene. Any sort of competitor for any event had to maintain their condition for competition.

Generally, one's competitive condition would vary cyclically through the weeks. For any sort of event, competitors relied on practice to adjust and maintain their condition. With different events and different competitors, the changes in condition might be different. Some people might only reach their peak condition once a year, and others might reach it two or three times. This required specialized team scientific systems to help every person achieve some control. For Glory, the teams that were aiming for the championship needed their players to reach their full explosive potential during the playoffs.

Ye Xiu was the Glory Textbook, true, but that referred to his knowledge of the techniques of the various classes and the strategies within the game. As for competitive condition, which depended on an individual's skill, personality, skill, and even psychological strength, he truly had no solid grasp of it.

Happy didn't have anyone with such specialized knowledge; the Glory circle as a whole lacked such talents. After all, the Glory Alliance was a competition only ten years old, and everyone was still studying and researching how to best adjust the conditions of the Glory players.

For now, Happy had no way of having such a high-level department, and could only rely on Ye Xiu's intuition from years of accumulated experience to make judgments. And Happy's recent strong performance was unexpected even for him. They... had they entered their peak condition too quickly, too early?