

Avatar 1321

Chapter 1321: Flash Past That Shield

A 26 round win streak was crazy.

When that win streak would end was undoubtedly on everyone's mind. The outstanding player who could break that win streak would look extremely amazing too. As a result, as long as it was Happy's away game, the home crowd would always hold high expectations for their home team, hoping that they would be the ones to end this legendary record.

Tiny Herb's fans were no exception. After Xu Bin's name showed up on the big screen, the crowd immediately let out wild cheers. It was truly rare to have such excitement for the individual competition. The excitement was all because of Ye Xiu and that ridiculous win streak of his.

Amidst the cheers, Xu Bin stood up and walked onto the stage. On the other side, his opponent Ye Xiu had already entered his player booth.

The home team Tiny Herb held the right to choose the map, and they naturally wouldn't give Ye Xiu the simple maps that he liked.

Corrupt Flower Garden.

Flowers, plants, rock gardens, fountains, pavilions, and winding corridors, a map with plenty of substance. Tiny Herb had chosen this map to counter Ye Xiu's playstyle.

The match began, and the two characters spawned.

Having chosen this map, Xu Bin had a strategic opening planned out. Xu Bin had Angelica take a roundabout route along the left path. He borrowed the rocks in the rock garden as footing and jumped a few times onto the top of a pavilion.

The map wasn't very large. This high point allowed him to oversee the entire map. Xu Bin looked around and easily found Lord Grim's whereabouts. It looked like Ye Xiu didn't mind playing tactics on this map with his opponent. Lord Grim was also taking a roundabout path at the opposite end of the map. When Xu Bin located him, Ye Xiu also noticed Angelica on top of a pavilion.

The two sides had both found each other, making their next moves more difficult to figure out. Xu Bin had Angelica continue standing on top of the pavilion and observed Ye Xiu's movements. Then, he saw Ye Xiu have Lord Grim run towards him.

We're just going to end up fighting like this?

Wouldn't that mean their strategic movements had been for nothing? Neither player would hold any advantage.

In the broadcast room, the caster and two commentators were starting to discuss this question.

"Xu Bin holds the initiative. There's no way he didn't think that his actions would also expose himself. Perhaps that was even his goal," Ruan Cheng expressed.

"Lord Grim is closing in. Right now, Angelica is already in Lord Grim's attack range. It's just that Lord Grim hasn't started attacking yet," Pan Lin said.

Lord Grim rushed towards Angelica, but Angelica just stood there and didn't run. Lord Grim wasn't just charging in blindly. He suddenly stopped. And at that instant, Angelica's feet had started shifting slightly. But after he saw Lord Grim stop, he also stopped.

"This distance..." The three in the broadcast room began analyzing Lord Grim's sudden halt.

"He's outside the range of a Knight's Heroic Leap," The three looked over the two characters' skills and quickly came to that conclusion.

"Oh? Heroic Leap is that much of a threat?" Pan Lin said.

"For a player who can seize opportunities, it's quite a threat," Ruan Cheng said.

"However, Ye Xiu seems to have noticed this point," Li Yibo said.

"The two really aren't budging an inch!" Pan Lin sighed. At this moment, Lord Grim stood just outside of Angelica's maximum range and confidently started casting a spell.

Angelica still didn't move.

This distance wasn't too close for a magic spell, and Xu Bin figured he would have time to react when the spell came out.

Blizzard!

Lord Grim casted a Blizzard. Hail and snowflakes crashed down.

Angelica stepped to the side and dodged it. He wouldn't be hit by this sort of skill.

Lord Grim casted two more spells, a magic one and a curse. Xu Bin simply had Angelica dodge them without any intentions of counter attacking.

"Xu Bin is starting his grind..." Li Yibo said.

Pan Lin had a headache. Xu Bin's slow grind was difficult to cast. He was just dodging Lord Grim's low-threat spells right now, but no one knew what his purpose was.

"You're not planning on coming down?" Ye Xiu spoke.

"There's no rush," Xu Bin replied.

"Then I'll come up?" Ye Xiu said.

"Sure!" Xu Bin happily accepted.

As a result, Lord Grim opened up his Myriad Manifestations Umbrella. The umbrella's ribs flipped outwards and started whirring. Lord Grim floated up with a Rotor Wings.

Fly!

Lord Grim suddenly rose to the skies. Ye Xiu watched Angelica's movements closely.

He moved!

Ye Xiu said he would come up, and he really did, but suddenly, Angelica came down.

Heroic Leap!

Xu Bin had Angelica use Heroic Leap. As Angelica jumped up, he slashed down with his knight sword. However, there was still some distance between him and Lord Grim! Ye Xiu was using Rotor Wings, and he wasn't going to crash into the attack.

Angelica crashed to the ground. The shockwaves from Heroic Leap carried a force that flattened the surroundings.

Angelica suddenly waved his hands towards Lord Grim, Taunt!

Lord Grim wasn't able to control himself and headed straight for Angelica. However, he had already let out an attack. Taunt didn't stop the target from attacking.

Angelica lifted his left hand. The Sighing Wall, the sturdiest shield in all of Glory, welcomed Lord Grim's incoming attack.

"Defend to attack!" Ruan Cheng said.

"Defense is the offense!" Li Yibo remarked.

Having been Taunted, Lord Grim didn't seem to have any choices. He could only crash into the shield.

Shields didn't fear attacks. After blocking Lord Grim, Angelica could immediately counterattack.

Chance!

Countless people shouted.

But Lord Grim's Myriad Manifestations Umbrella also opened.

Shield versus shield.

Suddenly, everyone was uncertain.

Shield against shield. Neither side would take much damage, and the advantage of attacking after shielding no longer belonged to just Xu Bin. Everything had been reset to zero.

The two shields crashed against each other. Lord Grim had come from the air, so he had plenty of momentum. But in terms of shield strength, the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella was just a light shield. It couldn't compare at all to Glory's number one shield, Sighing Wall!

Shield Attack!

Angelica also used an attack.

The umbrella shield was no match. Lord Grim crashed into the shield and hung in the air, but then he immediately poofed into a cloud of smoke.

Shadow Clone Technique!

Angelica only hit a fake clone. The real body had flashed past the shield and was now in front of Angelica.

Ye Xiu didn't care about the control effects of Taunt. He actually wanted to get closer to the target. As a result, he just took advantage of Angelica Taunting him.

Falling Light Blade!

The sword was placed besides his feet, falling directly onto Angelica. The attack forced him back.

However, the knockdown from Falling Light Blade wasn't enforced. It could be teched with a Quick Recover.

However, Xu Bin unexpectedly did not Quick Recover and just fell to the ground.

"Beautiful! What precise judgement!" Ruan Cheng sighed. After Lord Grim's Falling Light Blade, a Sword Draw followed. If Angelica had Quick Recovered, the Sword Draw would have perfectly hit him. Who would have thought that Angelica would just fall like a corpse. The sword light from the Sword Draw brushed past him. After dodging the attack, Angelica immediately rolled to the side, his shield in front of him.

"Too slow!" Li Yibo shouted. Xu Bin's judgement had been accurate, but his reaction had been a tad slow. Even with the shield protecting him, Ye Xiu still held the initiative! After rolling to the side, Xu Bin should have immediately counter attacked.

But Lord Grim didn't seize this opportunity to attack.

A cold light streaked across Angelica's Sighing Wall.

"He activated Maelstrom Counterattack!" Li Yibo suddenly understood. No wonder he didn't counter attack. No wonder Lord Grim didn't continue attacking.

Angelica had activated Maelstrom Attack, which reflected all incoming attacks back to the opponent.

"Slow has always been Xu Bin's strength!" Ruan Cheng smiled.

Li Yibo felt his face turn red. He couldn't dispute that. Xu Bin's previous two responses had displayed his slow characteristic.

"Ye Xiu's offense has been interrupted," Pan Lin noted.

"Correct. By not Quick Recovering and then activating Maelstrom Counterattack, he's forced the pace to slow down. Ye Xiu couldn't even start his offense before being pressed down!" Ruan Cheng said. He was overjoyed at Happy with the disadvantage. However, he couldn't go overboard on the surface! Even though he had showed his bias, he had to display calmness. He couldn't be like "Haha, it turns out you couldn't do it". Instead, it should be "Haha, I knew you couldn't do it."

"Is that so?" Li Yibo suddenly chuckled.

The Lord Grim in front of Angelica suddenly disappeared!

No, not disappear. To be more precise, he had disappeared from Angelica's view. Lord Grim flickered and hid using Angelica's Sighing Wall as cover.

Xu Bin hastily lowered Angelica's Sighing Wall, but he still couldn't see Lord Grim. Lord Grim had crouched down along with his shield's movements.

Xu Bin had Sighing Wall move horizontally, but in that instant, Lord Grim flashed in the opposite direction of Sighing Wall's movement.

Movement skill!

"He's passed!" Pan Lin shouted.

Lord Grim circled behind Sighing Wall and started sending attacks towards Angelica.

"Lord Grim juke Sighing Wall like a football player," Pan Lin called out.

"Haha, Little Pan, that's an interesting comparison. According to you, Lord Grim hiding using the shield and crouching were all feints?" Li Yibo laughed.

"Haha, that's an interesting way to put it," Pan Lin praised back.

The two old partners commented excitedly. On the other hand, Ruan Cheng was feeling gloomy.

Even though he hadn't dared to favor Ye Xiu's opponent in this match, he had truly hoped someone could bring down this record. Happy having such a show-off achievement was truly annoying.

But it's probably not going to be this one...

After Lord Grim flashed past Sighing Wall, Angelica was now completely exposed in front of Lord Grim. The unspecialized blitz began. Countless skills poured down on him, and Sighing Wall was unable to protect him.

"This situation... it looks like even Xu Bin isn't able to slow it down..." Pan Lin said.

"He can't." Li Yibo didn't speak at first. He saw as Angelica tried to slow things down, but Lord Grim used a movement skill to directly move behind the attack and then dealt the final blow.

The win streak continued.

Chapter 1322: Together on the Battlefield for the First Time

1-0!

26 consecutive victories.

Ye Xiu's record, still yet to be broken, reached a new high. Pan Lin and Li Yibo relished in the feeling as they discussed. To the side, Ruan Cheng chuckled along once or twice, in a sour mood.

The second battle of the individual round.

Happy, Qiao Yifan, One Inch Ash.

Tiny Herb, Gao Yingjie, Kind Tree.

When the screen displayed the names of the next two players, these players preparing to go onstage were both stunned, and each instinctively turned to look toward the opposing team's player area.

In Team Tiny Herb, they had been the closest of partners. But one was in the sky, and one remained on the ground.

Qiao Yifan had always looked up to Gao Yingjie, admiring his talent, envying the attention and hope he received from the team. In comparison, Qiao Yifan had never been clear what kind of player he himself would turn out to be.

Gao Yingjie had always known Qiao Yifan's situation, and he very much wanted to help him, but he didn't know how. When the team announced that the team was letting go of Qiao Yifan, Gao Yingjie mustered his courage to find Captain Wang Jiexi, but the answer he received was "the team doesn't need him."

The answer was somewhat cold, but very honest. Gao Yingjie understood that this wasn't a game of house. The team didn't need him: there was no reason better than this. In Tiny Herb, the team was everything. If the team didn't have the need, then even someone with hundreds of talents and thousands of skills wouldn't have any reason to remain. Even Wang Jiexi, with all his strength, had to change his own style for the sake of his team. What player had the right to place himself above the team?

And so, this pair of good friends went their separate ways, each taking their own road to Glory.

In the next season, Gao Yingjie became part of Tiny Herb's main force and was voted into the All-Stars. His stardom was immeasurable.

Qiao Yifan, meanwhile, joined Happy, this Internet cafe team and charged through the obstacles of the Challenger League.

They both paid attention to the other's performance, noticed the other's growth, and felt joy when the other achieved results.

In the end, Happy won the the Challenger League and made it to the Professional Alliance. They once again met. But this time, they were no longer teammates, but opponents.

In Round 8, Happy played their home game against Tiny Herb. Qiao Yifan had played in the individual competition against Tiny Herb's Ghostblade player Zhou Yebai. He'd won that match and proved himself, and with his new technique, he'd earned a lot of attention.

Gao Yingjie's feelings were complicated. On one hand, he was extremely happy to see Qiao Yifan's current strength, but on the other, Qiao Yifan was now an opponent, and his success had brought failure to Tiny Herb.

And now, they themselves were about to decide who would win and who would lose.

After they shared a glance, the two of them turned away, each taking firm steps onto the stage.

Pan Lin and Li Yibo were also introducing these two with great interest.

"Qiao Yifan is a former player of Tiny Herb, entering the team at the same time as Gao Yingjie. I heard their relationship at the time was very good," Pan Lin said.

"Compared to Gao Yingjie's, Qiao Yifan's professional career has been much bumpier. In only three years, he's probably tasted warmth and coldness that many people haven't. A benchwarmer, eventually let go, joining the Internet cafe team Happy when he had nowhere else to go, taking on the Challenger League, then returning to the Pro Alliance, and it looks like he might even make it into the playoffs. Who knows, maybe he'll even play in the finals!" Li Yibo said.

"Haha, I agree with everything else, but maybe his luck was joining the internet cafe team Happy when he had nowhere else to go!" Pan Lin said.

"Ha, who would have thought that this Internet cafe team could get results like this?" Li Yibo laughed.

"Ahaha..." Ruan Cheng continued to laugh dryly to the side. Happy's current 1-0 lead prevented him from expressing his opinions. He was looking forward to Happy losing a match quickly, so that he could talk about the reasons why Happy wasn't a good team.

Qiao Yifan, Gao Yingjie, Ruan Cheng felt that his chance was here. Gao Yingjie had always been called a prodigy, and now he was already an All-Star-level player. And Qiao Yifan? A player that had been let go by Tiny Herb, he'd found a position for himself with his own strength, but the natural difference between him and Gao Yingjie perhaps couldn't be closed by just hard work. After all, the prodigy Gao Yingjie had also been working hard all this time.

The match began, and the two characters loaded in on opposite corners of the map.

"We finally have the chance to stand on stage together." A message soon appeared in the match chat. The first to speak was Gao Yingjie.

"Yes," Qiao Yifan answered. The last time their teams had fought, both of them had appeared in the individual competition, but they'd missed each other. In the team competition after, Qiao Yifan hadn't been on the roster. This was indeed the first time the two of them had met onstage.

"But it's a shame, we're standing as opponents now," Gao Yingjie said. Before, when Qiao Yifan had still been part of Tiny Herb, these two friends often talked about how they'd coordinate if they were ever onstage together, and they'd even done quite a bit of practice for it. But because Qiao Yifan never had the chance to appear onstage, the two had never been able to partner during an official match. And today, the two finally stood together onstage, but unfortunately people changed, and the combinations they'd practiced could no longer be used. The two were now opponents. Only one would be allowed to remain standing here.

"Good luck, go all out," Qiao Yifan said.

"I will," Gao Yingjie said solemnly. He was no longer that timid youth from before. His two hands controlled the keyboard and mouse without hesitation, and Kind Tree rushed forward.

Qiao Yifan's One Inch Ash had already advanced as well. This map choice leaned toward Ye Xiu's preferences - it didn't have too many complex features.

Soon, the two sides appeared in each other's views. In this situation where there was no cover and they were meeting directly, a Phantom Demon couldn't let the opponent get too close. Setting Ghost Boundaries required casting, and if someone was fighting them at close range there would be no time to cast. The power of the Ghostblade would shrink at least 70%.

Of course Gao Yingjie would know this piece of Glory common sense. As soon as he spotted One Inch Ash, he was already preparing to attack. A Phantom Demon prevented the opponent from closing in by using Ghost Boundaries, but a Witch had mid-range attacks, and to a certain extent could disrupt the opponent's casting.

But...

"So early?" Commentator Pan Lin shouted.

At this moment, although both sides had appeared in each other's view, they were still far from from being within attack range. But Qiao Yifan's One Inch Ash had already stopped moving forward and begun the casting for Ghost Boundaries.

"Isn't he being a bit too careful?" Pan Lin said.

By now, the casting was complete. Kind Tree was still relatively far away, so of course he wasn't affected. One Inch Ash had cast a Dark Boundary, which would put a Blind effect with 100% probability on anyone who entered it. This boundary wasn't placed at the limit of One Inch Ash's range, but slightly closer to himself. Once he set this boundary, One Inch Ash continued to charge forward.

In the blink of an eye, he had taken a few more steps, but then he stopped again and once again began to summon a Ghost Boundary.

"Whoa!" When Li Yibo saw how Gao Yingjie's Kind Tree had to circle around the Dark Boundary, he suddenly understood the meaning behind Qiao Yifan's placing the Ghost Boundary early.

Even though a Witch could ride a broom to fly, a Ghost Boundary's effects extended to the air above it. The area covered by this Dark Boundary instantly became a forbidden zone. By setting one here, Kind Tree was forced to go around, which increased the distance he needed to travel. And at this moment, One Inch Ash set his second Ghost Boundary.

Ice Boundary!

Another Ghost Boundary blocked Kind Tree's way. This new boundary bordered the edge of the Dark Boundary. There was no overlap, so the total area that these two boundaries could restrict was maximized.

Was the third Ghost Boundary on its way as well?

Seeing One Inch Ash's begin the movements of another cast, Kind Tree swept his sleeve and sent stars flying out.

Star Ray!

The stars became a ray of light shooting toward One Inch Ash, who dodged to the side. At last, his third Ghost Boundary summon was interrupted.

Lightning Chain!

Kind Tree once again waved his hand in the air, and a chain of flashing lightning fell towards One Inch Ash. Many of a Witch's skills used all sorts of strange magic items, and so most skills didn't have cast times. This was a big advantage for this class, and it was for this reason that Wang Jiexi could have his fast-paced, volatile, illusory Magician style. Gao Yingjie hadn't copied Wang Jiexi's style, but he took advantage of this speciality of the Witch class.

Two magic items in a row, both mid-range attacks, prevented One Inch Ash from finding the time to cast boundaries. Kind Tree, attacking and running at the same time, was already almost past the boundaries. But One Inch Ash wasn't just waiting where he stood, either. As he dodged these attacks, he was also changing position, and as Kind Tree circled around counterclockwise, One Inch Ash headed counterclockwise as well. The Ghost Boundary between them prevented Kind Tree from rushing toward him directly.

But a Ghost Boundary had a set duration, it couldn't last forever. Gao Yingjie paid close attention to One Inch Ash's movements - he couldn't let him have another chance to cast. But the issue was, even though Witches had the great advantage of not having to cast, they were also limited in range with their attacks from magic items.

One Inch Ash suddenly jumped back a few steps. As soon as Gao Yingjie saw this, he knew that he had retreated out of Kind Tree's attack range. And then, he calmly began another cast.

Yet another Ghost Boundary appeared in front of Kind Tree. Helpless, Gao Yingjie could only control his character to stop in his tracks.

Silence Boundary.

A character within this boundary would have all of their skills sealed. This effect was undoubtedly deadly in a high-level professional match. Kind Tree was again forced to go around the boundary.

"Qiao Yifan's control is excellent, but if he's playing like this, he's putting himself on the defensive side from the start!" Ruan Cheng finally found the opportunity to give some critique, and of course as soon as he opened his mouth he pointed out Happy's shortcomings.

"Hm, he might first want to establish the balance of the match, and then find an opportunity? Otherwise, how would he fight? If Gao Yingjie's Kind Tree directly got into close range, then he'd lose this match immediately! The current situation is pretty good. Given the characteristics of these two classes, it's not a surprise that the Phantom Demon is more on the defensive, no?"

"So that's to say, the plan of putting the Phantom Demon in the individual round is a bit hard to understand!" Ruan Cheng said.

Li Yibo was speechless. At this point, he was just using whatever he could find to criticize Happy! Everyone in Glory knew that Ruan Cheng was a stubborn Happy hater.

Chapter 1323: A Taste of Victory that Can't Be Shared

It was true that a Phantom Demon had greater use in the team competition, but using that to say that their 1v1 strength was weak was just nonsense. Perhaps many ordinary players would think this way, but that was only because it was harder to play Phantom Demon in a 1v1. Also, the map that Tiny Herb had chosen for this individual battle wasn't good for a Phantom Demon to reach full potential.

Yet even under these conditions, Qiao Yifan was still able to place his Ghost Boundaries very well, preventing Gao Yingjie from launching effective attacks. This was something that should be acknowledged with certainty. To emphasize losing the initiative, that was very much nitpicking.

Ruan Cheng of course knew all of this, but right now, he was going to point out Happy's flaws no matter what. In his opinion, the chances of Happy winning this match were very low.

A skill level that couldn't compete with the opposing talent.

The difficulty of playing Phantom Demon in a 1v1.

The map disadvantages.

With so many weaknesses, how could Happy not lose?

Qiao Yifan's performance right now was much stronger than Ruan Cheng had anticipated. But just to maintain the balance of the situation, Qiao Yifan had already sacrificed a lot. And Gao Yingjie? He was merely saving his strength and biding his time. As soon as Qiao Yifan left an opening, he would instantly launch a powerful offensive.

Hurry, hurry and make a mistake!

Ruan Cheng shouted in his heart.

But as he shouted, he watched as the Ghost Boundaries bloomed on the battlefield, like an endless river blocking the way between One Inch Ash and Kind Tree.

Ruan Cheng was beginning to pale.

Saving strength and biding time?

Things weren't that simple. In order to force Qiao Yifan to move so carefully and meticulously, Gao Yingjie couldn't be careless with his own movements either. He too needed to make decisions and plays with care and precision.

Kind Tree's positioning, Kind Tree's long-range attacks, they were all trying to break Qiao Yifan's rhythm. Even though Qiao Yifan was on the defensive, he used his defense to attack. The rhythm of this battle was firmly in his control.

"I've always thought that Happy's Qiao Yifan is a player that has been underestimated," Li Yibo exclaimed.

"But if he just continues to defend like this, will he be able to win this match?" Pan Lin brought up the key question. Even though Qiao Yifan could use his defense offensively, controlling the battle tempo, his One Inch Ash hadn't used any attacks at all. There was no way he could win this match if he continued like this.

Li Yibo furrowed his brow. Qiao Yifan himself must realize this issue, right? But he was still working hard to maintain this current situation. What was his plan?

At this moment, Ruan Cheng suddenly shouted, "A mistake!"

For Ruan Cheng to become this excited, of course it was a mistake from Qiao Yifan. Because he was just a hair slower in setting them this time, there was a gap in the seamlessly linked Ghost Boundaries, and Gao Yingjie immediately seized this opening. Before the Ghost Boundaries could block him, Kind Tree called forth a Tornado and flew close to the ground toward One Inch Ash.

"Just like I said! Qiao Yifan's defensive strategy here isn't a method of victory! As soon as there's a slight opening, Gao Yingjie can seize it immediately," Ruan Cheng said gleefully, flapping his mouth without end. Pan Lin and Li Yibo felt sympathy for Qiao Yifan, but because Ruan Cheng wasn't without reason, they couldn't just begin arguing with him on air.

Kind Tree traversed the blockade of Ghost Boundaries, a handful of Frost Powder already scattered on his weapon. One Inch Ash, however, was rolling to the side.

This was a very simple map without many features, but it still had some. One Inch Ash's roll took him behind a crumbling stone pillar, and when he crouched down, the boulder shielded his entire body.

This is-

Gao Yingjie's heart jumped. After Qiao Yifan used the map features for cover, he instantly noticed something about this surrounding region.

Something's wrong!

Gao Yingjie immediately controlled Kind Tree to throw a Lava Flask.

The flask shattered against the ground, and the lava within burst forth to cover the area, including the area where One Inch Ash was hiding.

But just before the lava reached One Inch Ash, swordlight flashed from behind the pillar and a Ghost Boundary landed first.

As expected.

Seeing the Ghost Boundary land, Gao Yingjie didn't even need to think before controlling Kind Tree to rush in a specific direction.

"Beautiful!" Li Yibo shouted, but this shout wasn't praising Gao Yingjie's smart reaction. When that Ghost Boundary appeared, the situation on the battlefield suddenly became clear. One Inch Ash's earlier setup, along with this Ghost Boundary just now, was squeezing Kind Tree into a small area.

That Ghost Boundary that had been thought to be a blunder absolutely wasn't one. That had been bait! Qiao Yifan had seen that there was cover here and knew that he had the chance to cast a Ghost Boundary.

Gao Yingjie must have realized this after coming over from far away and seeing One Inch Ash's actions. But unfortunately, Kind Tree's Lava Flask had arrived just a bit too late. The Ghost Boundary landed first.

Helpless, Gao Yingjie could only control Kind Tree to go to the position where Qiao Yifan wanted him. The damage that this Lava Flask caused One Inch Ash now was negligible.

Li Yibo glanced at Ruan Cheng and felt delighted.

Faceslapping, what familiar faceslapping! But before, the one who had been hit over and over was himself. Today, it was finally someone else's turn. With this guy here as contrast, Li Yibo could appear extremely wise and insightful even if he said nothing. Initially, Li Yibo had been rather irritated at this extra invited guest commentator, but now, he was glad that Ruan Cheng was here, setting off all these traps so that Li Yibo didn't have to take any damage.

Ruan Cheng's expression was extremely ugly right now, but the battle still hadn't ended. What would happen next? Li Yibo and Ruan Cheng were both experts, and so now that the battle had reached this point, both could tell what was the crucial point. Now, Qiao Yifan needed to cast one more Ghost Boundary to completely trap Kind Tree within. But he was currently in the middle of an expanse of lava, and the sustained damage was preventing him from casting. If he tried to face Kind Tree directly, he would also be interrupted for sure.

Cover. One Inch Ash still needed some cover. And so everyone's gazes swept around these ruins, to another worn down pillar that was eight units away from One Inch Ash's current position.

"Qiao Yifan must have studied and prepared all this beforehand. He's really extremely thorough with his planning," Pan Lin said, when the television broadcast focused in on this critical position.

"His earlier usage of Ghost Boundaries to maintain the balance of the situation was probably to buy time so he could look for an area on the map where he could develop his strategy. This map definitely isn't an easy one for him," Li Yibo said neutrally. He then prompted Ruan Cheng with a look that said "what do you think?"

Ruan Cheng cursed in his heart. Li Yibo's words just now were basically faceslapping him!

"Seeing how Gao Yingjie so decisively avoided the Ghost Boundary, I think he's already seen through Qiao Yifan's strategy. Eight units.. Will Gao Yingjie give him that opportunity?" Ruan Cheng still lifted up Gao Yingjie.

As the three of them were discussing, One Inch Ash suddenly rushed out, targeting that pillar that stood eight body-lengths away.

But Gao Yingjie's Kind Tree was a step faster. He threw a floating blue cloud of something toward that broken pillar, and very quickly, dark clouds formed above the pillar and thin shards of blue rain drops emitting a cold energy began raining down.

Hail!

Gao Yingjie wasn't going to compete with One Inch Ash in a footrace, nor did he want to try and take him head-on. He just tossed out this skill. The pillar could still serve as cover, but because the Hail would cause sustained damage, One Inch Ash could no longer duck behind it and cast. But to everyone's surprise, Qiao Yifan's One Inch Ash only took three steps in that direction. Before those blue raindrops had even hit the ground, he had already turned back the way he came.

One Inch Ash actually returned to the pillar he'd been hiding behind earlier. The lava was right under his feet, but no skill's effects lasted forever. Just as One Inch Ash hid himself again, the crimson lava on the ground was already dimming, hardening into still rock.

Not good!

Gao Yingjie had only just finished casting Hail. He hadn't expected that Qiao Yifan had merely rushed out as a diversion. Panicking, he immediately controlled Kind Tree to use another attack. But even though the Witch class had many instant-cast skills, there was still a time delay between throwing a magic tool and its effect activation. This bit of time was enough for One Inch Ash to lay down another Ghost Boundary.

Star Refraction!

By the time Kind Tree reached an angle where he could hit his target with these star cards that turned into magic rays flying toward One Inch Ash, the new Ghost Boundary had already landed.

This time, Kind Tree had nowhere to run. The Ghost Boundaries that One Inch Ash had placed one after another now linked into a huge formation, trapping Kind Tree within.

One Inch Ash stood forward.

For a Phantom Demon, trapping the opponent within your own linked Ghost Boundaries was already winning half the battle.

Qiao Yifan didn't hold back against his good friend. He meticulously controlled his character, summoning new Ghost Boundaries to perfect the arrangement. At this point, even though there were openings in his casting, he no longer needed to find some pathetic cover on this map. His own Ghost Boundaries finally became his most reliable and complete cover.

Qiao Yifan wouldn't let go of an opportunity like this.

His journey to this point hadn't been easy. If he hadn't met Ye Xiu, if he hadn't met and helped establish Team Happy, he likely wouldn't even be a pro player anymore.

And now, he'd grown from being an invisible presence let go by one team, to part of the main force of another team. And now, he had the chance to defeat the one whom his former team had labeled a prodigy.

How could he miss an opportunity like this?

What Qiao Yifan wanted was to prove himself to everyone, including the opponent in front of him now, his closest friend. But he still felt that it was a shame, that they had discussed this feeling of victory so often in the past, but had never had the chance to achieve it together. And now, the method of achieving it was to defeat the other side.

It's a shame, I can't share this taste of victory with you.

In the second battle of the individual competition Team Happy's Qiao Yifan won.

Chapter 1324: Trade

Happy had a 2-0 lead, which worried Ruan Cheng.

The entire Glory community knew that he didn't like Happy. If Happy were against some weak team, he definitely wouldn't have accepted the invitation for this event. But seeing that Happy would be playing an away game against Tiny Herb, Ruan Cheng felt like Happy would certainly lose, which was why he gladly ran over to slap their faces. Things weren't looking good, though.

He could tolerate Ye Xiu's win streak continuing, but a small-time figure like Qiao Yifan beating Tiny Herb's genius, Gao Yingjie?

Pan Lin and Li Yibo were discussing this round with great enthusiasm. Ruan Cheng listened unhappily on the side.

I'm not going to sit here and get slapped in the face, am I?

Ruan Cheng felt a bad premonition. Qiao Yifan's victory over Gao Yingjie made him uneasy.

The third players of the individual competition stepped onto the stage.

Happy's Mo Fan, Ninja Deception.

Tiny Herb, Liang Fang, Berserker Black Bamboo.

Seeing the matchup, Ruan Cheng felt his heart freeze.

After Mo Fan beat Samsara's Sun Xiang, the attention towards him grew. Happy had also given him more opportunities to go on stage, even so far as to include him in team competitions. His skill had received the approval of the community. It was just that people didn't understand his hit-and-run playstyle.

In this match, Mo Fan's opponent was Liang Fang, a very impatient player. Mo Fan's hit-and-run playstyle was a disaster for this sort of player.

A 3-0?

Ruan Cheng didn't even want to watch anymore. Pan Lin and Li Yibo were analyzing their playstyles though and just had to ask him his opinion.

"Mm..." Ruan Cheng replied spiritlessly, "Liang Fang needs to firmly hold the initiative for this match. This is the only way can he restrict Mo Fan's playstyle."

There was some reasoning to his logic, but it was mostly just empty talk. Who wouldn't be trying their hardest to take the initiative? Whoever held the initiative had an easier chance of winning. Who needed someone to tell them that?

The match began. Liang Fang headed straight towards the center of the map, while Mo Fan moved strategically.

The map Tiny Herb chose wasn't simple, but it wasn't overly complex either. Moving strategically could be done, but when Deception circled around to the center, Mo Fan found that there weren't too many places to mount sneak attacks.

As for Liang Fang's Black Bamboo? His line of sight was directly towards that side. Having chosen this map, he knew beforehand what places Mo Fan could possibly come out from. Mo Fan didn't lack patience, but in this situation, patience would just lead to a yellow card.

As a result, this time, Mo Fan happily had Deception walk out. Without saying a word, he attacked.

Mo Fan was direct enough, but Liang Fang was faster. He had been paying close attention to those few spots, certain that Deception could only come from there. As soon as he saw Deception come out, he released his readied attack.

Crimson Storm!

Liang Fang opened up with a Level 70 skill, quite a shocking move. Mo Fan was a bit surprised that his opponent would be so bold. He immediately tried to dodge, but the surging force just barely hit him.

Shuriken!

Deception attacked, throwing a shuriken towards Black Bamboo.

This Crimson Storm carried incomparable force, and its ending lag was just as formidable. When the Shuriken came, Black Bamboo could not move and could only take the attack. Then, Deception closed in.

Backwards Slash!

Right when the ending lag finished, Black Bamboo used a knock-up skill towards Deception. Deception nimbly leaped back and dodged it.

Flame Cut!

Flames came down facing the wind. Who would have thought that Black Bamboo wouldn't dodge though? Instead, he brandished his sword and let out a Wild Blood Strike. This attack didn't collide with Flame Cut. It went straight for Deception.

Trade?

Everyone who thought of this word felt dumbfounded.

Trading was a common Berserker strategy, but no one ever traded at the start of a match. This was because the effects of Blood Awakening didn't trigger until the user was below 50% health. The initial 50% health was no different for Berserkers, so it was usually used to get a feel for the opponent's playstyle and condition. Once their health reached 50%, Blood Awakening would activate, and then trading became a good choice. However, trading from the very start was rarely seen.

Liang Fang wasn't trading for nothing though; he was trading blows. However, recklessly burning several high-level skills in a row was truly a bit crazy.

The attacks from each player hit their targets.

Black Bamboo ignited into a flame man, while Deception was sent tumbling from the heavy blow.

Again!

As soon as his feet touched the ground, Deception straightened up and started advancing again. But the opposing Black Bamboo didn't even wait for the fire to extinguish. Half his body was still on fire as he also twisted that way and charged forward.

Dong!

This time, their weapons clashed, and the one to Guard was Deception.

Liang Fang wanted to trade damage, but Mo Fan didn't comply. It wasn't smart to keep up with a Berserker's frenzy. Once a Berserker reached a certain point, he would gain buffs. As a result, trading with a Berserker should only be done if he could gain an advantage from it. It couldn't be looked at purely in terms of numbers.

However, Liang Fang refused to let go and followed up with attack after attack. He let go of all defenses and traded. He didn't dodge any of Deception's attacks and ate every single attack.

"Liang Fang's playstyle..." Li Yibo was a bit shocked.

Liang Fang's playstyle seemed somewhat excessive. But the problem was that it was extremely effective against Mo Fan. Every move he did was a trade. No matter if Mo Fan retreated or attacked, his plans were always interrupted. His hit-and-run tactics couldn't be displayed properly. Liang Fang was using this sort of rough and crude method to entangle Mo Fan. They fought and fought, and while it didn't seem like Liang Fang was gaining any advantages, Mo Fan wasn't able to get into his own tempo.

"Liang Fang is playing well today!" Ruan Cheng's spirit suddenly shot up. Initiative? His words had actually been spot on. Right now, Liang Fang firmly held the initiative in this 1v1. Any attack Mo Fan made would end up as a trade to the extent that sometimes, Liang Fang would be on the losing end. Even so, he still held the initiative. Mo Fan could only slightly win the trades, but his tempo? His tactics? He couldn't display them at all!

"Tiny Herb has done a lot of targeted research on Mo Fan!" Ye Xiu commented from the sidelines. Liang Fang's unbridled playstyle wasn't because of his Berserker class. Tiny Herb had probably prepared this playstyle, specifically to counter Mo Fan. Berserkers could trade and so could other classes, but Mo Fan could not. As soon as he traded, his most threatening three axes* could not be displayed.

"He's being suppressed," Wei Chen said.

"It looks like there's nothing that can be done!" Fang Rui said

The difference in health between the two sides could clearly be seen. In terms of the numbers, Mo Fan had the advantage, after all, Liang Fang was recklessly trading away his health. However, everyone knew that Liang Fang held the initiative. The extra trickles of health lost in each trade weren't trading for Deception's health, but rather his tempo.

"Kill!!!"

Liang Fang roared in the chat. The more he fought, the more spirited he became. The more spirited he became, the crazier he fought. His attacks became even faster and even more swift, biting onto Deception even more tightly.

Colliding Stab!

Liang Fang had Black Bamboo use Colliding Stab. Unable to avoid it, Mo Fan would usually try and use a strong attack to trade, but this time...

Poof!

A puff of smoke. Black Bamboo's greatsword had hit a substitute strawman.

Substitution Technique?

He... ran?

Liang Fang was a bit startled. Before, when they had been trading blows, Mo Fan had never forced an escape.

But after retreating, he returned!

Deception rushed forward. Liang Fang regained his composure and readied to trade blows, even if it would be a losing trade.

Poof poof!

The sounds of attacks landing were crisp and clear. This time, the trade was completed in a straight forward manner.

"Again!" Liang Fang was having fun and started talking more in the chat.

"Haha, he's playing so confidently!" Ruan Cheng was in a good mood. But after the trade, Deception stopped tangling with Black Bamboo and chose to retreat.

"Where are you going!" Liang Fang was surprised. He immediately readjusted his offense. When he rushed forward, Mo Fan suddenly turned back to receive his attacks.

Attack. Another trade. Deception once again ran away.

Liang Fang was furious.

It was a trade anyways. Running away and then coming back, was that really necessary?

He didn't understand, so he continued implementing his original strategy. But Mo Fan had thoroughly changed up his plans. His three axes were being suppressed by this crazy trading, so he either attacked then ran, ran without attacking, or went all out on the offensive without running.

What type of playstyle is this?

This Mo Fan really loved this sort of hit-and-run playstyle, hah. Was it possible for him not to be so patient?

The audience sighed. However, the pro players on the sidelines could see the purpose behind Mo Fan's repeated tussling.

"Mm, nice!" After seeing a completed trade, Fang Rui nodded his head in approval, "Has that idiot Liang Fang still not figured it out yet?"

"It should be soon," Ye Xiu smiled.

Yes, he figured it out. It wasn't just Liang Fang, but the viewers who were paying close attention to the match had also begun to notice it. After Mo Fan switched up his tactics, the disparity between the two characters' health bars was growing larger and larger.

Was it because of Liang Fang's unbridled trading? Of course, that was one reason, but more importantly, Mo Fan had started making meticulous calculations. Every time he traded, he would carefully think it through. Can I gain an advantage? Is the advantage gained significant enough? If the answers to those questions weren't satisfactory, or he simply didn't know, he would immediately turn tail and run. This was why Deception would sometimes run away and not make the trade.

"If Liang Fang continues trading like this, he'll trade himself to his death," Li Yibo chuckled.

"He probably won't dare to keep trading now, will he?" Pan Lin said.

"Then how will he stop Mo Fan?" Li Yibo said.

The answer was that he couldn't stop Mo Fan.

Chapter 1325: Fluctuating APM

One skill, one step back. In the end, Mo Fan ended up setting this repetitive rhythm. Liang Fang's reckless health trade immediately became out of sync. By the time he realized this, he had already traded his health away for a disadvantage.

He lost.

In the individual competition, Happy ended with a 3 to 0. The entire stadium was speechless.

"Hahaha, Happy's performing well today!" Li Yibo commented.

"Do they plan on obtaining another perfect victory?" Pan Lin wondered.

Ruan Cheng heart thumped. If Happy really did destroy Tiny Herb in their away game, then it'd be like they had thrown him here naked - he'd be completely humiliated!

What the hell are you bastards doing!?

Ruan Cheng was even more desperate and worried than Tiny Herb's boss.

"Su Mucheng didn't go up for the individual competitions this round. Has Happy left her for the group arena?" Li Yibo said.

"Fang Rui, Su Mucheng, Tang Rou? Happy's group arena line-up is very impressive this round!" Pan Lin commented.

"In the eighth round, Happy's Tang Rou alone managed to wipe out two of Tiny Herb's members in the group arena and get to Wang Jiexi!" Li Yibo reminded them, "It's just unfortunate that the two players after Tang Rou didn't perform so well and were all defeated by Wang Jiexi in a 1v3 that turned the tides."

"However, it was after that round that Tang Rou stopped spearheading the group arena and switched to third position," Pan Lin lamented.

With that, the two side eyed Ruan Cheng together.

Yet, when Ruan Cheng had heard the two say that Happy had an unusually impressive line-up, his insides clenched. He didn't even register the discussion the two had afterwards.

"You think they'll have Tang Rou spearhead again?"

In the end, Ruan Cheng only heard that before the players for the group arena entered the stage.

Happy, Fang Rui, Su Mucheng, Tang Rou, as expected, an impressive line-up.

As for Tiny Herbm, they sent out Liu Xiaobie, Liu Fei, and Wang Jiexi.

"Seems like Tang Rou still isn't spearheading the round!" Pan Lin exclaimed.

"Yeah. Fang Rui leading and Tang Rou bringing up the rear, Happy hasn't changed that arrangement in a long time," Li Yibo noted.

"The match is about to start, let's see how the players perform!" Pan Lin announced. At the same time, the first player in each team were inserting their cards and loading into the first round of the match.

"Er, this map... It's a pretty rare sight in the group arena," the commentator and guests discussed upon seeing the map. The map Tiny Herb had chosen for their group arena was the same kind that Ye Xiu had set as his signature map choice this season: straight and simple. This kind of map often implied a test of mechanical skill. For individual matches, the maps could be chosen according to personal preference. However, in the group arena, there would be three people per team, and you needed to make sure that all three were comfortable with the map, thus, the map choice was rarely so extreme. Generally, maps with more varied content that could be useful in different situations would be chosen.

"This map choice... it'll probably negatively impact Happy's Fang Rui and Su Mucheng, but Tang Rou clearly prefers this sort of map," Li Yibo noted. "As for Tiny Herb... What do you think, Mr. Ruan?" Feeling that Ruan Cheng had gone silent for long enough, Li Yibo threw him a question helpfully.

"Ah... I guess they'll be alright since they're Tiny Herb?" Ruan Cheng guessed.

What on earth was he saying?

Li Yibo stared in shock and glanced at Pan Lin. Pan Lin seemed rather helpless as well. This Ruan Cheng really didn't have much mental fortitude! No matter if you're a fan or a hater, you should at least work

hard to support your side! Even if its complete bullshit, that's better than this utterly defeated look after a 3 to 0!

Li Yibo and Pan Lin could only leave Ruan Cheng with his answer that wasn't really an answer. On the field, due to the simple map, the two sides soon met and clashed in an open fight.

Swoosh swoosh swoosh swoosh!

Flying Swords' sword was as fast as lightning.

Liu Xiaobie was feeling rather depressed this season. He had wanted to become an all-star this season through his ceaseless hard work and improvement. Yet, Happy and Excellent Era's players had returned and the competition for this season's All-Stars was much tighter all of a sudden. Unfortunately, Liu Xiaobie once again wasn't voted in.

Swoosh swoosh swoosh!

Liu Xiaobie vented his frustrations through his mechanics. Flying Sword's attacks were swift and his pacing was solid. This level of skill was definitely enough to be considered All-Star level. It was unfortunate that the All-Star voting wasn't just about skill.

On the other side, Fang Rui, was in a very different position from Liu Xiaobie. Liu Xiaobie was just unable to become an All-Stars, and he, on the other hand, had been consecutively voted into the All-Stars, only to fail this season.

He also made light of this failure, expressing to the media that he always got in so it was pretty good that he had finally managed to drop out.

That sort of attitude was just asking for a beating to Liu Xiaobie. Many other also thought Fang Rui was unreasonable.

It was probably a little of both, but Fang Rui's performance really hadn't been affected by any of it. His performance had improved slowly as he got more used to the Qi Master, and his opponents, because of his chosen playstyle, often were unable to keep up.

However, Liu Xiaobie didn't fall into this disadvantage because he took the initiative to attack as soon as possible. His hand was speed rising dramatically.

Thus, the match progressed a little like Liang Fang and Mo Fan's match, both sides attacking fiercely and trying to prevent the other from using their preferred style.

However, compared to Liang Fang exchanging blows and blood, Liu Xiaobie had less to worry about with his offensive. For Liang Fang, he was also trading blood to win, and his defeat was because of it, too.

"This kid's mechanics is getting crazier and crazier," Wei Chen exclaimed with a hint of envy, observing the way Liu Xiaobie was displaying his hand speed.

"The point is that he isn't just fast, but also very steady. He has everything in his grasp," Ye Xiu added.

"Fang Rui's met trouble this time," Wei Chen noted.

"Yes. This isn't a good terrain for him," Ye Xiu commented.

Ye Xiu had used this kind of terrain to bully quite a few opponents himself, so he naturally understood what sort of foundation Liu Xiaobie's advantage was built upon. He also knew that it was because there was nothing that could be used on the map, thus Liu Xiaobie's rhythm would be very hard to break.

Perhaps he could find some openings in Flying Swords' attack, but Liu Xiaobie's mechanics were just too fast, so fast that these opens flashed by. When his opponent wanted to use them, they were already gone.

The only thing you couldn't counter was speed.* 1

In regards to Liu Xiaobie, this phrase was rather fitting.

"His APM is almost reaching 400..." The live broadcast gave a shot of Liu Xiaobie's APM data. Since the match was still ongoing, his mechanics were still ongoing, and thus the number wasn't stable, fluctuating at just under 400.

The system data wasn't smart enough to differentiate between effective APM and random keyboard mashing, but considering the situation on the field right now, there was little possibility for such noob mechanics to exist. Most, if not all, were effective.

For a single player game, even if Glory's mechanics were a little more complicated, an APM heading directly for 400 was still stunning. When the audience at the stadium noticed this data, sounds of awe rose from the crowd, and these voices were filled with pride. Liu Xiaobie was a player on their team, Tiny Herb.

For comparison, Fang Rui's APM data was quickly placed next to Liu Xiaobie's.

289, 290, 291...

The number kept rising.

"Fang Rui's APM is much faster than usual, too!" Pan Lin said, holding Fang Rui's previous match statistics.

"Of course. If he doesn't raise his hand speed under this sort of situation, he'd probably have been wiped out quickly," Li Yibo commented.

"However, there's still a 100 APM difference!" Ruan Cheng followed up.

Fuck!

Pan Lin and Li Yibo cursed to themselves simultaneously, glancing at Ruan Cheng.

Was this still that dispirited Ruan Cheng from after the individual matches? This kind of energy... Was Liu Xiaobie a Cleric or something? Had his near 400 APM healed this guy or something?

"Their hand speed has a gap, looking at the statistics, but from the situation, Fang Rui isn't at much of a disadvantage," Li Yibo noted.

"Heh. He's not at much of a disadvantage, but he's still at one," Ruan Cheng retorted.

"Fang Rui's current APM isn't his peak," Pan Lin added, looking through Fang Rui's info.

"His current APM is very steady," Li Yibo observed the APM stats on the screen. APM was calculated by the minute, but what was usually shown in a match was calculated by the second. It showed what the mechanics done in this second would be if maintained for a minute.

Fang Rui's APM was fluctuating at around 290, which meant that his hand speed was very steady.

"If given the chance, he'll give himself a burst of speed," Li Yibo said.

"What about Liu Xiaobie? Is this his peak?" Ruan Cheng smirked. He was, in the end, an expert, and wasn't ignorant.

Pan Lin naturally also had Liu Xiaobie's match statistics and, after taking a look, shook his head. "It's not... but, not all of his actions are effective. A lot of these statistics came from him making a bunch of useless actions at the beginning of a match to drive his APM up."

Li Yibo was carefully watching the match.

Chance. Fang Rui was waiting for a chance. Waiting for a chance where he could strike and break Liu Xiaobie's rhythm. Otherwise, if this continued, he would lose.

When would a chance appear?

Li Yibo couldn't be bothered to discuss with the other two. The pace of the match was so fast, so this chance would only appear for a mere moment...

There!

Li Yibo's eyes lit up.

"Cha..."

He only managed to get out the first half of the word because his speech wasn't nearly as fast as the two player's on the stage.

The APM statistics skyrocketed.

Fang Rui, 372!

This was his chance to turn the tables.

However...

He failed.

Just as Fang Rui's hand speed rocketed, Liu Xiaobie's APM also rose alongside it.

442!

The peak APM of the match finally appeared.

Liu Xiaobie used his immense hand speed to crush Fang Rui's defense.

In the end, the first match of the group arena went to Tiny Herb's Liu Xiaobie.

Chapter 1326: Fly Forth

"What an intense match!"

Victory had been decided and Tiny Herb's stadium was naturally filled with applause. Pan Lin and Li Yibo were discussing excitedly and Ruan Cheng's smile filled his face.

Liu Xiaobie won and Flying Swords still had 52 percent of his health left. Tiny Herb had established a good lead in the group arena and Ruan Cheng was, naturally, delighted. In that moment, he seemed like a hopeless Tiny Herb fan.

"Liu Xiaobie's performance this round was amazing!" Li Yibo commented, "He managed such a stable performance under this continuous high hand speed, making no major mistakes. Truly impressive."

"Indeed, his grasp over this techniques has become more and more solid," Pan Lin noted.

"Let's see how he performs this next round," Li Yibo said.

"Heheheh," Ruan Cheng started laughing dryly again. Like a noob, he childishly started doing calculations in his head: 48% of health to take out Fang Rui, still 52% left. He totally still had a chance to defeat Su Mucheng. Then, there was still Wang Jiexi for Tiny Herb. Tang Rou 2v1? Haha, it was clear that Tiny Herb would win the group arena.

However, reality soon gave him a harsh awakening.

"Seems like Liu Xiaobie really exhausted himself last round..." Li Yibo observed, watching the match.

"Yeah, he's clearly making more mistakes," Pan Lin added.

"And no matter how powerful his offensives can be with that hand speed of his, he has to be able to close in on his opponent first," Li Yibo brought up.

"Su Mucheng is very carefully not giving him such a chance and even sacrificed a lot of damage for it," Pan Lin said.

"Yes. She's using a very clever playstyle. However, isn't she a little too careful? There's no chance of Liu Xiaobie replicating what he had managed yesterday. Perhaps Su Mucheng can play a little more offensively. What do you think, Mr. Ruan?" Li Yibo realized that Ruan Cheng had stopped speaking again.

Fucking useless!

Ruan Cheng was cursing Liu Xiaobie in his heart.

The possibility of defeating Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain with 52 percent of his health was rapidly approaching zero. Not only that, but Liu Xiaobie hadn't managed to find a single chance to close in on Su Mucheng. Ruan Cheng really was worried that he'd be wiped out without even dealing 1 percent damage.

Good thing was, Liu Xiaobie hadn't lost that badly. In the end, he still found a chance to close in. However...

Ten percent!

That was how much health Flying Swords ended up taking from Su Mucheng. Ruan Cheng's lips were trembling. He wanted to start cussing up a storm in this widely live streamed broadcast.

"Tiny Herb had started out well... But they didn't manage to maintain the advantage they had gained!" Pan Lin exclaimed.

"Liu Xiaobie might've done better in the second position with such a draining playstyle!" Li Yibo suggested.

"Mr. Ruan? Alright, let's continue to observe the match." Pan Lin had wanted to ask after Ruan Cheng's opinion, but seeing how he was barely holding back his anger, he was afraid that the other would pull the quality of the entire program down with his answer.

Tiny Herb's second player, Liu Fei, came onstage. She was another female, Sharpshooter player, ID, Tasselflower.

They were both female pros, both Gunner players, but Liu Fei's renown was nothing compared to Su Mucheng's. She wasn't even on the main roster for Tiny Herb and only had the chance to perform in rotation. In this round, she had been placed in the group arena, and had just happened to meet the number one Gunner amongst female pros.

"Though Dancing Rain is down to 90 percent of her health, there is a skill gap between the two. So long as Su Mucheng doesn't make any major mistakes, she should be able to win." Li Yibo, who was now uncertain about making predictions, was bold enough to make one now. It was clear that no one thought that there would be any suspense as to the result.

No suspense didn't necessarily mean no surprises, though.

The battle between the two female Gunners was spectacular. Liu Fei was no god, not even a member of their team's main roster, but if she could manage to stay in the two time championship team Tiny Herb, then she would definitely be rather skilled.

Her performance was unusually impressive this round. Li Yibo's saying of Su Mucheng being able to win so long as she didn't "make any major mistakes" was a bit of an exaggeration.

It was good that Su Mucheng didn't slap him in the face.

"Liu Fei performed very well, but unfortunately, she was met with an opponent that performed even better." When Li Yibo made such an analysis, there was a lingering fear in his heart. If Su Mucheng didn't perform better, then the tides may have turned.

When Su Mucheng won, Dancing Rain still had 21 percent of her health left. Tiny Herb had reached their third player, their last defense, their captain, Wang Jiexi.

From the 52 percent lead they had at first, until this 21 percent disadvantage, Ruan Cheng had the urge to run away. However, Tiny Herb's stadium was still filled with energy. The impact that being overtaken and falling behind should've had on these fans was nowhere to be seen. It was rather strange.

"This atmosphere really is annoying!" Chen Guo exclaimed.

"Oh?"

"Look at these people. They're falling behind but as soon as Wang Jiexi appears, it's like they're fated to win or something." Chen Guo gazed over the audience in the venue, listening to their cheering.

Yes, that was the feeling the current Tiny Herb gave off. It wasn't like Tiny Herb was falling behind, but that victory was already in their grasp. Everyone was wearing an expression of utmost confidence. They completely ignored their future opponents, as if they were no more than bubbles that their captain Wang Jiexi could pop with a finger.

"Mucheng, crush him! Little Tang, crush him!!" Though she knew that the players in the booths couldn't hear her, Chen Guo still hollered.

Su Mucheng and Tang Rou, the two girls who were onstage on Happy's side were the two who were closest to Chen Guo. Seeing them ignored by the Tiny Herb fans like this, Chen Guo was exceptionally pissed off.

"It's not unreasonable that the Tiny Herb fans have such confidence," Ye Xiu chuckled.

"Who cares what reason they have." Chen Guo clearly wasn't looking for logic or explanations.

Ye Xiu smiled. The match was starting and everyone turned their attention back to the screens.

A simple and straightforward map naturally wouldn't have much of a build up. The two characters advanced, the chat remaining empty.

There was very little communication between players in today's match. Of course, there were some subjective reasons for that. For example, Fang Rui liked to trash talk, but he had been faced with Liu Xiaobie today, so there was no time to type in such an intense battle of hand speeds.

In this match, Wang Jiexi and Su Mucheng didn't seem to have any intentions to chat either. The two soon met in the center of the map and Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain unhesitatingly used her attack range advantage to fire the first shot.

Boom!

Missiles flew.

Vaccaria's movement speed didn't dip at all, even riding his broom directly towards the missile. Just as it was about to impact, he swerved and the missile flew past his shoulder. The movement was smooth. Was this missile really an attempt to stop him? Can't feel it!

Clap clap clap!

The stadium burst into applause. Just a dodge and the Tiny Herb fans acted like they had seen the climax of a match.

"Getting excited over nothing!" Chen Guo gritted her teeth.

"It really was rather impressive!" Ye Xiu said.

Chen Guo didn't reply because that voice of truth at the bottom of her heart told her that when Vaccaria narrowly dodged the missile without slowing down, she had almost abandoned her loyalties and cheered with the Tiny Herb fans.

"A technique that can really fan their excitement," Wei Chen commented, but then added, "But he wasn't just showing off."

Of course he wasn't. Wang Jiexi's action was simply to dodge in the quickest, easiest way. He had maintained his character's advance, so how could it be a mere party trick?

Anti-Tank Missiles!

Dancing Rain jumped backwards, launching three anti-tank missiles in a tri-shot formation.

The three missiles came one after the other. Vaccaria once again didn't dodge, charging right forwards.

What was he going to do this time?

"Holy shit!!" As the stadium erupted into cheers, Wei Chen cursed.

Vaccaria had, somehow, flew forwards, spinning his body like a drill, and drilled right into the tri shot. Then, his spin managed to narrowly pull his body out of range of each of the three missiles.

Brilliantly fast, amazingly precise. The broadcast replayed this moment in slow motion over and over again, as if they'd rather play this than the rest of the match.

"He's truly skilled!" Even Ye Xiu couldn't help but praise. This was the one that had almost accomplished a consecutive three championships after he had made history.

Vaccaria charged towards Dancing Rain at top speed, seemingly unstoppable.

Of course, Su Mucheng wasn't that easy of an opponent. As Vaccaria advanced, Dancing Rain was naturally retreating. As she retreated, she attacked, it was just that this didn't do much to stop the other's momentum and the two were slowly getting closer.

Star Ray!

Vaccaria finally entered a range where his Witch could attack. As he flew, he began to throw out magic tools.

The Star Ray that was formed from a Star Card shot forwards faster than its user.

Dancing Rain dodged, and with the effect the movement had, Vaccaria continued to close in.

Stinger!

Su Mucheng attempted to use a large AoE to stop him.

Vaccaria flew a level higher and darted in and out of the falling Stinger missiles, as if the explosions had nothing to do with him.

However, the closer he got, the harder it was to dodge.

Laser Cannon!

This time, Vaccaria wasn't able to fully dodge the attack, and the Laser Cannon struck his side, causing Vaccaria to spin in the air. However, it wasn't able to completely stop his advance. As he adjusted his form, Wang Jiexi took note of the way Vaccaria was thrown; even if he fell, he'd fall as close to his target as possible.

"God fucking shit!" Wei Chen continued to curse. Though cursing wasn't a rare occurrence for him, watching Wang Jiexi's performance today, his cursing had been elevated to a frequency it had never once reached in the past.

Only cursing could express his emotions, because he didn't know how else to express them.

Wang Jiexi and his Vaccaria flew forth, carrying Tiny Herb on their shoulders and unstoppable.

Chapter 1327: Reason

Dancing Rain fell.

Wang Jiexi was just this type of person. He never failed at crucial moments. He would lose, but he would never make anyone lose confidence in him. As a result, even if he was one against many, even if he were playing against three opponents from Happy like last time, Tiny Herb's players and fans would still put their faith in him.

That time, it was Happy's home game.

And this time, it was Tiny Herb's.

The moment Dancing Rain fell, Chen Guo could only see Wei Chen's lip moving. She reckoned that he was still cursing at something. As for the the actual contents? He probably couldn't even hear himself.

The cheers from the Tiny Herb crowd had drowned out all other noise, and this was just the reaction after killing off an opponent with only 21% health left. If Wang Jiexi was able to win this team competition, how excited would these Tiny Herb spectators become?

Chen Guo really hoped a bucket of cold water would splash onto the crowd and cool them down. At this moment, Tang Rou's Soft Mist spawned onto the field.

Wang Jiexi was able to beat Su Mucheng using only 8% of Vaccaria's health. Compared to his incredible skill, this loss of 8% wasn't even considered as anything by many. The 100% health Soft Mist and the 92% health Vaccaria stood together. Practically everyone favored the latter to win.

"Wang Jiexi! He truly deserves his reputation!!" After taking down Su Mucheng, who had beat Liu Xiaobie and Liu Fei, Ruan Cheng became ecstatic. His state of mind wasn't much different than that of the Tiny Herb fans. Pan Lin and Li Yibo looked at him, wondering whether this guy would pounce onto the table and hug the screen.

"As long as Wang Jiexi is here, Tiny Herb is unlikely to lose the group arena," Ruan Cheng continued to sigh. His tone was extremely similar to that of Xiang Linsao 1 *, when he said the words "I'm stupid, really stupid."

Pan Lin and Li Yibo was unable to respond to him. They were the official commentators of the match. Communicating with a brain-dead fan was impossible.

Fortunately, Soft Mist and Vaccaria had started fighting.

"Okay! Let's watch the match," Pan Lin's spirits rose.

"Dragon Breaks the Ranks!" Ruan Cheng shouted.

Pan Lin and Li Yibo were stunned. Where'd Dragon Breaks the Ranks come from?

"Hahaha, she didn't use Dragon Breaks the Ranks?" Ruan Cheng sneered.

Pan Lin and Li Yibo continued to be stunned. Tang Rou indeed like to open with Dragon Breaks the Ranks, but this was an official match and the official commentary. Your way of explaining things was a bit too problematic, no?

The two didn't have the energy to complain. Tang Rou was very direct. Whether or not she used Dragon Breaks the Ranks didn't affect her style. Pan Lin and Li Yibo were listening to Ruan Cheng's nonsense as the two players fought. They had unexpectedly missed such a detail...

The commentators were suddenly at a roadblock. The two people glared angrily at Ruan Cheng. Ruan Cheng was watching the match closely with excited spirits. The two characters were going back and forth, but from the switches between offense and defends, Wang Jiexi held the initiative.

"Wang Jiexi is worthy of his reputation!" Ruan Cheng praised.

Tu tu tu!

Pan Lin and Li Yibo were feeling like Ruan Cheng was pulling aggro onto Wang Jiexi, but with his praise, the two started feeling more and more disgusted with Vaccaria.

However, Vaccaria having the advantage was a reality at the moment.

She's improved again.

After half a season, Wang Jiexi and Tang Rou fought once again. This was his first thought.

Especially in terms of rationality.

Tang Rou's eagerness to win was extremely high. Whether she won or lost, she would never compromise or retreat. However, there were always times where compromising and retreating were the better options. These weren't a part of Tang Rou's vocabulary though. She would always choose a single path and continue forward. This choice would sometimes surprise the opponent, but it would also sometimes backfire.

However, this time?

As he praised her improvement, Wang Jiexi could only force a smile.

Her choices becoming more rational wasn't because she chose to compromise or retreat. It was because her choices became more precise when she charged forward.

Her understanding of skills had become more thorough, and she had accumulated more experience. She used everything she had to strengthen her always-forward playstyle.

This girl would always press forward when improving her own style. Wang Jiexi could only give her praise.

However...

Not enough!

While Wang Jiexi praised Tang Rou's improvement, Tang Rou once again felt the disparity in skill. Perhaps a part of it was because of the difference in equipment, but Tang Rou would never regard these as reasons.

She only wanted to win. She didn't want to lose.

A skill gap didn't necessarily represent a certain win or loss. Competition was fought, not compared.

But Wang Jiexi knew this reasoning even more clearly than her. He wouldn't relax facing a less skilled opponent.

Bang!

When Soft Mist's Dancing Fire Flowing Flames swung, it hit the Lava Flask thrown by Vaccaria.

The flask shattered, and lava flew out.

If Lava Flask directly hit a target, the lava would deal bonus damage. Wang Jiexi had unexpectedly used Lava Flash as an attack.

Lava splattered along with Stardust Extermination.

Dong!

A parry. Soft Mist's Dancing Fire Flowing Flames blocked Stardust Extermination. However, the lava that splashed onto Soft Mist quickly dealt damage to her.

Sure enough, she didn't retreat.

Her offense had become more rational, more coherent, and more threatening, but what about her defense?

There were many ways to defend while attacking. Directly eating damage was very bold and aggressive, but the most optimal choice should be the most rational and the most effective. It wasn't single mindedly pursuing a certain direction.

Excessively using a brute force method might turn out like Liang Fang, who traded too much of his health away and lost because he was unable to get it back.

If she could fight Yu Wenzhou 1v1, she would probably have a clearer understanding of this point. Unfortunately, the chances of that happening were very low. It wasn't necessary though. Ye Xiu had probably noticed this point too.

Tang Rou didn't need to practice her offense excessively. She should be focusing her time on her defense. Maybe she didn't like to defend as a result of her personality, and she didn't like to spend too much thought on it. But the problem was that the more she improved on her offense, the greater the imbalance between offense and defense.

No matter how great you were, it wasn't possible to always be the one attacking. There would always be times when the opponent would force you to defend. When one had a big lead, using a brute force method like eating damage was fine, but what about when one had a small lead or did not have the lead? Such an irrational choice would be fatal.

Just like now!

A Star Symbol suddenly shot at Soft Mist's eyes. Tang Rou had Soft Mist twist her body to dodge it and then stepped forward to close the distance.

But with this step forward, Star Symbol pulled closer. The instant Star Symbol blossomed into Star Ray, the radiating light filled half of Tang Rou's screen.

The Star Ray didn't land on Soft Mist, but the following attack did...

Because half of Tang Rou's screen was blinded by Star Ray's light, she couldn't see the attack. It was just an instant, an instant that the viewers would only be able to understand if they watched the replay in slow motion. However, Vaccaria took advantage of this instant to land an attack...

Lost.

Tang Rou fell.

Tang Rou lost again to Wang Jiexi.

Losing to a top God in the Alliance shouldn't be anything strange, but Tang Rou wasn't willing. She was never content with losing to any opponent.

And this wasn't her first time losing to Wang Jiexi. If you counted their fights, she had never won once.

"Hahaha, Wang Jiexi. He truly deserves his reputation. This hand was too beautiful!" The commentary was overtaken by Ruan Cheng. This guy looked like he wanted to jump onto the table and dance. In particular, when Tang Rou walked down from the stage, disappointed and regretful, Ruan Cheng became even more excited.

"Tang Rou still has a long ways to go before she can reach a God! Do the viewers still remember that 1v3 promise? I wonder if she still has such plans!" Ruan Cheng was radiating with delight as he remarked.

"Ahem, it was a splendid match," Pan Lin couldn't bear letting this guy continue talking.

"Tang Rou performed well today, but Wang Jiexi was more shrewd," Li Yibo said.

"Yes, Tiny Herb has won back two points in the group arena. Wang Jiexi didn't disappoint his teammates, the stadium, and all of the Tiny Herb fans watching this broadcast," Pan Lin continued to stir up the crowd.

"LONG LIVE THE KING!!" The Tiny Herb fans at the stadium shouted out this proclamation. Their respect for Wang Jiexi had reached such a level. Wang Jiexi didn't immediately walk down from the stage like Tang Rou did, after all, this was Tiny Herb's home stadium and the break between the group arena and team competition was rather long. He stayed on stage for awhile longer, waving his hands at the fans all around him.

Tang Rou went back to Happy's player area and smiled at the players comforting her. She sat down to the side rather dejectedly.

"Your attacks weren't bad," Ye Xiu turned his head and said to her.

"Not bad?" Tang Rou forced a smile. If they weren't bad, then why could she still not suppress the opponent?

"However, in a match, you can't always be attacking. Do you really think your opponent won't be able use even a single skill?" Ye Xiu said.

"I understand," Tang Rou knew that Ye Xiu's words were reasonable.

"In this match, how many of Wang Jiexi's attacks were able to stop your offense?" Ye Xiu said.

Tang Rou stared at the replay on the big screens. From time to time, it would show her a depressing moment.

"How to maintain your offense without it being interrupted is something you need to be very very very mindful of. If not, your offense will always be stopped. Several times of that, and you'll be left wondering where your health went," Ye Xiu said.

Tang Rou continued to stare at the replay. Those sorts of moments flashed on screen again and again.

"Starting from next round, you'll be placed first," Ye Xiu said, "That way you'll have more opportunities for real combat practice."

"Okay," Tang Rou nodded her head. She understood the reasoning behind Ye Xiu's arrangements. Going third might be the important anchor for the group arena, but if the other two players before her performed spectacularly, there might not be much left for her to do. Only the person going first in the group arena had the most opportunities to gain 1v1 experience.

"That won't be a problem, right?" Ye Xiu saw that Tang Rou didn't mind and asked Fang Rui.

"Of course not," Fang Rui said.

Ye Xiu put on a helpless face: "I originally wanted you to go first, so you would have more chances to get used to the class change. I put her as third to be the anchor and now, everyone needs to go first to practice."

"Haha, this suits her the most!" Fang Rui laughed, "In fact, the person who goes first can also practice as the anchor if she still plans on a 1v3."

"It's too bad there's only one person who can go first," Ye Xiu sighed.

Chapter 1328: The Stage on Sky Arena

After the individual competitions, Happy temporarily held a 3-2 lead. But Wang Jiexi's performance during the group arena had completely changed the atmosphere of the entire stadium. Even if Team Tiny Herb had a 5-0 lead, the fans might not be as excited as they were now.

This kind of atmosphere once again put Chen Guo in a bad mood.

Clearly, Happy was still in the lead, and clearly, the team competition had yet to be played, but the fans of Tiny Herb looked as though they had already won the final victory match.

Was this because of Wang Jiexi?

Looking at the Tiny Herb fans around her, Chen Guo noticed that their gazes were indeed fixated on one point - their team's captain, Wang Jiexi. Because Wang Jiexi had appeared in the group arena, and because Wang Jiexi would definitely appear in the team competition, they immediately had a different level of confidence in their team. To Chen Guo, this was a kind of blind faith. Tiny Herb performed very well during the group arena, but it wasn't certain how strong their performance would be during the team competition.

With such a ruckus in the crowd, the downside was that it filled the entire break between the individual rounds and the group competition, making it extremely difficult for Team Happy's members to communicate. If this was always the case, it would almost be a necessity for the teams to have a separate room to prepare in.

"These guys are acting like they've already won, we need to make them shut up!" Fang Rui expressed, with everyone understanding what he was referring to.

"There's no need to be influenced by the atmosphere, think about how calm we were when playing at Tyranny's home stadium," Ye Xiu said.

"Do you have to say these kinds of things on our behalf?" Chen Guo said.

"It's an objective matter of fact! Isn't it the same no matter who says it?" Ye Xiu asked.

"But now that you say that, there's no motivation for anyone to learn. If you don't believe me, just ask them," Chen Guo said.

"None at all," Fang Rui replied.

"Haha," Tang Rou laughed.

"Steamed Bun you shut up!" Seeing that Steamed Bun was about to say something, Chen Guo hurriedly stopped him.

"Alright then, since everyone is so unhappy about their arrogance, let's strike them a ruthless blow during the team competition! We'll focus on Wang Jiexi," Ye Xiu replied.

"Have you also lost all your rationality!" Chen Guo yelled.

At this moment, Qiao Yifan meekly raised his hand and asked, "When we were preparing for this round, didn't we practice to focus on Wang Jiexi in the first place?"

"Ah?" Chen Guo was startled and realized that she had been tricked once again.....

"Let's get ready to go onstage!" Ye Xiu called.

Team Happy's away game against Team Tiny Herb had finally reached the deciding tiebreaker round. The participants in the team competition walked onto the stage in succession.

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

Team Tiny Herb: Wang Jiexi, Xu Bin, Gao Yingjie, Liu Xiaobie, Yuan Baiqing, Liang Fang.

"Ah, it seems that the lineup for both teams haven't changed very much, it's still the usual lineup for the team competition," commentator Pan Lin explained after seeing the list of names for both teams.

"Happy did make one change, Tang Rou is part of the original lineup, while Qiao Yifan is the sixth player," Li Yibo replied.

"This should indicate that they want to play a more aggressive style!" Pan Lin replied.

"It does seem to be the case," Li Yibo nodded his head.

"Hahaha, playing an aggressive style in their away game, how bold," Ruan Cheng laughed, but anyone could hear the mockery in his laughter, looking down on Happy for not knowing their own limits.

"On the side of Team Tiny Herb, Yuan Baiqing is playing his Cleric, Aweto, this should also mean that they want to play a more aggressive game!" Pan Lin said. Team Tiny Herb's healer was very unique, their player could play two different characters and could choose to use either the Cleric or the Paladin in different competitions, and from this decision, one could roughly tell what Tiny Herb wanted to do in the team battle.

"Tiny Herb is playing a home game, there's no reason for them to focus on defense." Ruan Cheng replied.

"Yes, it looks like this is going to be a very intense fight. I'm looking forward to it," Pan Lin said.

While the commentators were discussing, the players had already exchanged greetings, entered the player booths, and the timer was ticking down to the start of the team competition.

"Let's see what map Tiny Herb has picked for the team battle," Pan Lin remarked.

"Sky Arena!" Li Yibo was momentarily stunned when he saw the map that the players eventually loaded into.

"Selecting this map during the team battle... is really very rare!" Pan Lin was also shocked.

Sky Arena was a map that could be considered extremely simple for use in the team battle. The only change in terrain in the whole map were the stairs. At the outermost regions of the map were terraces that looked down on the stage from above, in the middle was the stage itself, which in turn was surrounded by steps.

"This map... there shouldn't be too many complex ways to use the map features strategically," Li Yibo said.

"Would Tiny Herb have put any special effort into researching how to use the height difference from the steps?" Pan Lin said.

"This..." Li Yibo searched his mind for the details of Tiny Herb's past matches, but for a while couldn't give a definite answer.

"It seems that Tiny Herb has been very thorough in their aggressive stance!" Ruan Cheng said.

"Let's take a look and see how they're going to play aggressively," Li Yibo said, obviously favouring Ruan Cheng's opinion in this case.

Very quickly, the characters from both sides finished loading in, each standing at opposite ends of the arena. Because of the high stage in the center of the map, the two teams couldn't see each other, but in reality, they were more or less at an equal distance from the stage, a special feature of the team battle.

"Sky Arena, hm, why don't we just go on the stage and determine the winner?" Ye Xiu asked in the global channel, but none of Happy's characters made any immediate moves.

"Or how about you just come up, Old Wang, and the two of us can fight it out, whoever loses will just have their whole team GG?" Seeing that there was no response from the other side, Ye Xiu provoked them once again.

Team Tiny Herb still had no reaction, but the entire stadium was already in uproar because of Ye Xiu's unbridled arrogance.

"I think I'm beginning to understand the hate that Tyranny has for him," Tang Rou said to the others with her. Losing three times in a row to Ye Xiu and Excellent Era was still bearable, but the crux of the issue was that they still lost after all the provocation and ridicule, making it truly unbearable. This kind of unbridled arrogance was something that was usually displayed by the villain, and afterwards, the hero would go and defeat him, slapping his face. But now, the hero couldn't win, instead losing to this kind of villain, how disgusted would the viewers be? And on top of that, this had happened for three years straight, Team Tyranny's hatred was indeed very scientific.

It looked as if the Team Tiny Herb fans in the crowd were already going insane, but the players in the field looked pretty calm, with no one bothering to respond in the global channel. Instead, the characters from Team Tiny Herb all followed their established paths and advanced tactically.

"It can't be that you want me to let you have the first move?" Ye Xiu was still talking.

"That's enough, what's the point of talking so much rubbish?" Wang Jiexi replied at long last, disapproving of Ye Xiu's trash talk.

At this time, Ye Xiu sent a "sigh of relief" emoticon and said, "And here I thought that all of you weren't here!"

"We're here!" Wang Jiexi once again replied and informed him. At this time, Tiny Herb's five players had already appeared at the edge of the stage, looking down from above and meeting Team Happy's five players face-to-face.

"No one move, let them come down here!" Ye Xiu simply issued his orders in the global channel.

Tiny Herb didn't hesitate and immediately charging down the flight of stairs from the stage.

"Damn, they really came, let's retreat!" Ye Xiu once again shouted in the global channel.

As such, Happy's characters started to turn around and ascend the stairs to the viewing terraces behind them, and the team that occupied the high ground abruptly changed again.

"Let's open fire!" As Ye Xiu issued his command, Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain launched the first attack of the match.

The artillery shells spat tongues of flame as they flew, but Tiny Herb's five members all scattered, with none of them being hit by the attack. But by their team composition, Team Tiny Herb didn't have any long-ranged attackers, with no one being able to directly engage in a firefight with a Launcher. Team Happy, who were now occupying the high ground, seemed to be in a superior position at the moment.

"Possessing the high ground means having a definite advantage. If we were to use control of the high ground as the deciding factor in victory, then this map could be considered very complex. Each set of stairs has many layers, and the map is filled with them, so to make use of the high ground requires awareness of the details of the entire map, unlike many other maps where controlling one focal point means establishing an absolute advantage," Li Yibo began discussing the current circumstances in the match.

'That's true, for now, Happy has the height advantage, but looking at the map, Tiny Herb could just change their position and climb to the same height as Happy," Pan Lin replied.

"So in this map, the battles that occur won't be the vertical battles centered around the stairs, but instead horizontal battles," Li Yibo said.

"You're right, Tiny Herb has already made such arrangements. It seems that they aren't too worried about Happy's temporary control of the high ground."

"The lowground is the inner circle of the map, with a smaller circumference, so it's not possible for Happy to occupy a high position and continually suppress Tiny Herb," Li Yibo said.

"That's right, Tiny Herb has moved around the inner circle, and gained horizontal distance from Happy."

"Yes, with this position, they can more or less start their advance."

"Alright! Tiny Herb is advancing! When the two teams face off horizontally on the stairs, the difference in height created by each step will affect many minor details. Tiny Herb must have done some special practice in this area, which is probably why they picked this map. Tiny Herb has charged up! Fuck!" Li Yibo was excitedly explaining, but at the end, he let his mouth run for a moment, uttering a vulgarity during the broadcast and leaving the broadcasting team completely flustered. It was only one word, and it was too late now that it had been said, so Li Yibo had already covered his mouth.

Tiny Herb charged up the stairs, but Happy's members once again descended the stairs.....

And from the directions given out in Happy's team chat, everyone could see what Happy's intention was.

The stage in the center!

"The stage in the center... If we're talking about controlling the high ground, this would be the most appropriate spot. The difference with the viewing terraces on the edge of the map is that here, the inner circle is the high ground, while the outer circle is the low ground, so if they have the high ground here, Tiny Herb can't just pull away horizontally and create a breakthrough point that way," Pan Lin exclaimed.

"Ah! Tiny Herb has also reacted very quickly, they've immediately turned around and come down."

"The two sides have the same intentions! They're both rushing towards the stage now."

"Is this really going to be where the match is decided? The steps here aren't as numerous as at the viewing platforms, but it's still enough for ten people to battle it out."

"Oh! Without reaching the stage, the two sides have already started attacking!"

"This isn't just a race, the two sides are using their attacks to control and restrict their opponent's movements!"

The two teams finally began to fight in earnest.

Chapter 1329: Happy's Primary Target

Boom! Boom!

As always, Dancing Rain struck first with her longest attack range. However, the cannonfire did nothing to stop Tiny Herb's advance.

Xu Bin, Angelica, the Alliance's Number One Knight, with the so-called strongest shield Wall of Sigh, blocked Dancing Rain's line-of-sight cannonfire.

Team Tiny Herb advanced as a whole and soon enough, two star cards rose from behind the Wall of Sigh, one high, one low. Tiny Herb had two Witches in their midst.

Star Ray!

The two star cards cracked, releasing two rays of light right at Happy's formation.

However...

Myriad Manifestations Umbrella shield!

Lord Grim came to the head of the formation and opened up his Myriad Manifestations Umbrella, blocking the attacks like Xu Bin's Angelica.

The two sides were now at mid-range of one another.

Stringer, Sky Piercing Strike!

Happy's Dancing Rain and Boundless Sea launched attacks simultaneously. This was clearly an AoE attack that Xu Bin's Angelica alone didn't have the ability to block. As for Tiny Herb? The two Witches once again struck as one.

Lava Flask, Acid Rain Flask!

The two flasks had only just been tossed when, with two bangs, Lord Grim's Myriad Manifestations had already switched to gun form, smoke rising from the muzzle. The two flasks had barely gone anywhere before they were smashed, lava and acid rain spraying across Tiny Herb's formation. Naturally, it wouldn't harm them, but this skill was clearly useless against Happy too. Instead, Happy's Stinger had arrived above their heads.

Scatter!

Team Tiny Herb's characters scattered in all directions. Just as they dodged the Stinger, Gao Yingjie's Kind Tree was already charging up the stairs towards the arena. Their offensive might've been stopped, but utilizing their need to dodge Happy's offensive, they could gain the higher ground first.

Plus, on these steps, Happy didn't have anyone who could move as swiftly as a Witch, thus they had to attack to prevent this.

Laser Cannon!

A beam of light came roaring out from Dancing Rain's cannon, but it wasn't headed for Kind Tree.

Vaccaria!

Dancing Rain's target was, shockingly, Vaccaria. As they scattered to avoid the Stinger, Tiny Herb's members lost Xu Bin's Angelica's protection. Dancing Rain's attack was surprisingly sent towards Vaccaria.

What sort of decision was this?

Wasn't the crux of the current battle fighting for the high ground? Happy wasn't going to try and stop Kind Tree? Did they have other plans?

The three in the broadcasting room were puzzled. However, the pace of the battle didn't give them time to consider this problem carefully.

Dragon Breaks the Ranks!

Soft Mist charged out from Happy's formation, yet her target was also Vaccaria.

Boundless Sea, Lord Grim, all of Happy's characters had begun to attack, but their targets were all clear as day.

Wang Jiexi, Vaccaria.

Tiny Herb's best player, Tiny Herb's most powerful character. Happy actually decided to charge straight at this wall from the beginning of the match. They ignored Kind Tree who had charged towards the arena to gain the higher ground. Happy didn't seem to have any intentions to fight over this with Tiny Herb.

"No way! Happy's main target is Wang Jiexi?" Pan Lin yelled.

"Heh, what a joke," Ruan Cheng sneered.

"This..." Li Yibo fell silent, not sure what to think of this. He felt that Happy's strategy was irrational, so there must be something else to happy's plans. He'd wait before judging.

So this is your plan?

Wang Jiexi gazed at the attacks headed for him. Vaccaria side stepped the Laser Cannon, jumping on his broom and circling in the air, causing Soft Mist's Dragon Breaks the Ranks to miss and leaving her five body units behind. Wang Jiexi ignored these obvious attacks, attention fixed on the other two who were charging over. Ye Xiu's Lord Grim and Fang Rui's Boundless Sea. What were these two planning to do?

Wang Jiexi had seen through Happy's intentions, but he didn't try to avoid them, instead heading straight at them.

Qi Blade!

Boundless Sea struck first, sending out a knife-hand that escaped almost everyone's notice. However, it didn't escape Wang Jiexi's gaze. Vaccaria once again spun himself as he flew, dodging the wave of qi from the Qi Blade with alarming precision. Lord Grim and Boundless Sea were now right in front of him and he quickly gave them a Disperse Powder. However, there was no chance that these two would be struck so easily. One left and one right, they jumped to the side to avoid it.

Shadow Cloak!

Lord Grim flung a hand forwards, sending a grasping shadow at Vaccaria. Vaccaria swerved at an incredibly strange angle in midair, managing to dart out of the shadow.

Shadow Cloak!

Vaccaria used the exact same skill in response. Lord Grim jumped back, but the Shadow Cloak continued to advance, unwilling to let him go. However, just as it was about to catch him, the shadows seemed to split and a figure darted through.

Dragon Tooth!

Lord Grim had went right through Vaccaria's Shadow Cloak with a Dragon Tooth. What bold judgement and mechanics!

Would countering be possible if they waited for their opponent to make the first move? Too many people were unable to make such a judgement, buty Wang Jiexi could. He could detect these miniscule timings, so he couldn't let Ye Xiu do as he wished. Vaccaria immediately retreated, dodging the attack, but tightly following this, a flash of cold light appeared in his view. Lord Grim had darted to his side with a Shining Cut.

Swerve!

Vaccaria once again swerved through the air, dodging Lord Grim's attack. His swift flight speed allowed him to pull away from Lord Grim by a full two body units. The other members of Tiny Herb didn't just stand and watch their captain get ganged up on. At a time like this, with Wang Jiexi luring in the opponent's offensive, the others did what any core player of a powerhouse team would do and took the chance to find opportunities to attack.

Charge!

As Vaccaria swerved elegantly through the air, Xu Bin's Angelica was already charging over.

Triple Slash!

Liu Xiaobie's Flying Swords had also rapidly approached Fang Rui's Boundless Sea, interrupting the attack he was about to launch at Vaccaria.

It was just that Gao Yingjie's Kind Tree seemed to be a little out of sync with the rest of the team. With Happy's strategic intentions exposed, his position made him seem like he had been lured away. However, was Happy really trying to take out Vaccaria? Were they really going to kick this wall of Tiny Herb's from the get go? Gao Yingjie was suspicious. Should he really give up such a good position?

Shattering the Lands!

Gao Yingjie had yet to make a decision when Soft Mist, after her unsuccessful Dragon Breaks the Ranks, had already charged back. This level 75 skill had been thrown rampantly towards the three Tiny Herb members over there.

Boom!

The magical energy seeped through the cracks into the ground. Liu Xiaobie dodged nimbly. On the other hand, Xu Bin used Angelica's impressive defense to tank the hit and quickly headed towards Soft Mist, who was stuck in her ending lag. Vaccaria was even more elegant. The moment Shattering the Lands struck, he had sped out of range, and the moment the magical energy began to disperse, he was already back, launching an offensive on Soft Mist with Xu Bin's Angelica.

Satellite Beam!

That was when the Launcher's high-level skill descended from the skies, covering Soft Mist. The smaller beams whirled out from the center, aiming to strike at the two. However, Angelica raised his shield, catching the beam that crashed down on him and breaking through with brute force. Vaccaria, on the other hand, gave a display of impressive agility, darting through the gaps between the beams without a scratch.

The broom swung up, but, noticing an attack coming from the side, Wang Jiexi had to have Vaccaria dodge once more. Lord Grim had already arrived in front of him.

"Yingjie, keep an eye on Boundless Sea. Xiaobie go after the healer."

In the Tiny Herb team chat, Wang Jiexi calmly made strategic arrangements. Against Happy's strategy, Tiny Herb was finally making arrangements to counter.

Boundless Sea? After hesitating for a moment, Gao Yingjie, having already decided to give up this vantage point, began to search for the Qi Master's form with orders from his captain.

Because the player was Fang Rui, the Master of Dirty Play, his presence and intentions could become a major threat to Tiny Herb at any time. Tiny Herb did not dare underestimate him, even having someone go to keep an eye on him.

Whoosh!

Kind Tree flew down from the arena, advancing straight towards Boundless Sea. Fang Rui had already noticed, but wasn't willing to give up on the attack he was prepping.

Seismic Throw!

Boundless Sea slammed his palms onto the ground and qi rushed at Angelica and Vaccaria, who were advancing on Soft Mist.

Soft Mist had managed to get out of her ending lag by then and used the opening Boundless Sea's Seismic Throw created, Tyrant's Destruction!

Retreat!

Angelica and Vaccaria had to back away to dodge the sweep attack, and Soft Mist then sent forth a Sky Strike, the angle of it pulling them both in range. But Angelica threw his shield forth and turned, knocking the blow to one side. Vaccaria then advanced, Sweeping Soft Mist into the air.

However, this knockup skill of Witches was the worst of all 24 classes. The knockup height was very limited. Usually, Witches would fly up and use their broom and their other special methods of attack to send the target higher and higher. However, Vaccaria wasn't given that opportunity. Lord Grim's attacks once again came down on him.

Clang!

Vaccaria's Stardust Extermination parried Lord Grim's Myriad Manifestations Umbrella and a figure flashed by behind Vaccaria.

Kind Tree!

Though Wang Jiexi had told him to keep an eye on Boundless Sea, the situation on the battlefield was ever changing. Orders shouldn't be ignored, but often times, players had to judge the situation and make decisions on their own. Seeing that Vaccaria needed a helping hand with continuing his offensive and that Kind Tree was close enough, Gao Yingjie immediately flew over to continue the attack that had been blocked by Lord Grim.

Chapter 1330: Joint Attack

Could Kind Tree hit Soft Mist?

Everyone was nervously watching for this, but then heard, with a shlink, a blade of sword energy unsheath and arc through the air.

"Sword Draw? This close?!" Li Yibo exclaimed in shock.

Yes, Lord Grim and Vaccaria stood so close, and at such a distance, Sword Draw shouldn't have had a chance to be used. Before the sword even came out of the sheathed, it would've probably already been suppressed.

However, right now, Lord Grim's Sword Draw successfully arced through the air in a circle. Not only did Wang Jiexi not block the attack, but he was jumping back to dodge as well, and Kind Tree, behind him, was instantly exposed to the sword energy of this Sword Draw. Gao Yingjie wasn't slow, but it was too late now. Blood splashed into the air, and his advance had been pushed back by Lord Grim's Sword Draw.

How did this Sword Draw find its way out?

Everything had happened too quickly, and no one had been paying attention to that moment. Playback? During such an intense moment, how could they have time to watch a playback? It was unfortunate, but probably only Wang Jiexi was the only other person who understood why Sword Draw was successful. It was because... Lord Grim's weapon was the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella!

The ribs of the umbrella at the top flipped up into spear form had stopped Stardust Extermination's attack. At the same time, the bottom of the shaft was unsheathed into sword form in a Sword Draw, allowing Lord Grim to successfully use this skill at such a distance. For any normal Blade Master, it would be impossible to parry another's attacks and use Sword Draw at the same time. In other words, this was a pace that was unique to unspecialized Lord Grim, the unspecialized blitz that no one had been able to counter yet.

If you didn't experience it personally, then it really was hard to notice!

Wang Jiexi thought to himself, already back on the offensive after dodging Sword Draw's sword energy.

"Xiaobie, behind you!" At the same time, he sent this message.

Shlink!

Sword Draw appeared once more on the field. Liu Xiaobie didn't even look. His Flying Swords turned half way and sent out a wave of sword energy. Behind him, Boundless Sea was charging over. Fang Rui naturally couldn't see Wang Jiexi's warning and this attack came abruptly to him. It was just unfortunate that this wasn't the best distance for such an attack. Wang Jiexi was in an intense battle himself, after all. A warning was already good enough; there was no way he could help Liu Xiaobie calculate the timing, too.

His relatively far distance gave Fang Rui enough time to react. Boundless Sea jumped backwards, avoiding the strike, but Liu Xiaobie couldn't just ignore Boundless Sea and continue attacking Little Cold Hands. He immediately made a decision to advance on Boundless Sea.

That was when Little Cold Hands raised his cross and began to cast, a holy white light shining like a flame on the cross.

"Xiaobie, behind you!" On the field, Tiny Herb's five members had different views of the field, and it was natural for them to warn others of these sneak attacks when they saw it. Right then, it was Tiny Herb's healer, Yuan Baiqing, that saw Little Cold Hands casting. He realized, with a single glance, that Little Cold Hands wasn't aiming to heal, but to attack. This was a Sacred Fire.

Seeing another warning, Liu Xiaobie knew who was behind him. Striking wouldn't be able to interrupt the other this time. He could only dodge!

Move, turn! Flying Swords rapidly dodged to one side. Now, he didn't dare let either Boundless Sea nor Little Cold Hands out of his sight. He was trying to find a good vantage point now. As for Little Cold Hand's attack, he must've dodged it, right?

Indeed, he had dodged it and the Sacred Fire didn't even touch Flying Swords. Just as the holy white flame jumped, Little Cold Hands turned and Yuan Baiqing realized that something was wrong.

"Captain!" He never would've thought that Little Cold Hands' Sacred Fire wasn't directed at Liu Xiaobie's Flying Swords, but at Wang Jiexi's Vaccaria.

His incorrect warning not only interrupted the offensive Flying Swords who was charging at Boundless Sea, but also made Wang Jiexi let his guard down.

Damn it!

Yuan Baiqing was frustrated with himself. However, even if he could go back and redo things, what should he do? Little Cold Hands had such precise control over the timing of skills, able to finishing adjusting his aim at the very last moment of his casting. Even if he had realized that Vaccaria was being targeted and gave such a warning, Little Cold Hands would probably adjust Sacred Fire so that it was aimed at Flying Swords instead.

The other acted in accordance to Tiny Herb's actions. He couldn't not warn, but doing so didn't do them any good. The only way would have been to interrupt the skill. Unfortunately, it was too late now. The holy white Sacred Fire flared, and Wang Jiexi, facing off against the unspecialized blitz, was oblivious to the danger. An Wenyi's judgement was precise, and the Sacred Fire vanished practically the moment it flared, but everyone could see how this holy white flame latched itself onto Vaccaria's form.

Not bad at all!

Vaccaria's view clearly turned towards Little Cold Hands for a moment, seeming to have glanced towards the young player over there.

However, how much use would it be?

Wang Jiexi didn't panic at all and didn't make any extra actions apart from the glance he gave Little Cold Hands. He didn't stop either. Vaccaria was still doing whatever he had been doing before. Sacred Fire's three seconds of silence could be fatal, but for a Witch, they used all sorts of magic tools to strengthen their brooms in close combat. They had little to no skills which were directly used to attack. Using tools to strengthen their broom, in the end, the effects were only displayed through normal attacks.

In the next three seconds, Vaccaria had merely lost the enhancements from his magic tools, weakening his attacks. To a Witch, this wasn't a fatal blow. In fact, he didn't even need to stop his offensive. Normal attacks, Vaccaria had already been using normal attacks originally!

Stardust Extermination continued to sweep forth and Lord Grim swung his Myriad Manifestations Umbrella, parry!

However, in the moment he parried Stardust Extermination, Lord Grim's figure suddenly swayed.

A seemingly useless action, but like that, a bloom of light appeared in front of Wang Jiexi's eyes.

Heat-Seeking Missiles!

Sweep it away? Stardust Extermination had just been knocked to the side by the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella. It was too late.

Dodge it? Heat Seeking Missile's AoE wasn't small, and he was also under the silencing effect of Sacred Fire and was thus unable to fly on his broom.

The other member of his team wouldn't be able to get there in time to help, so Wang Jiexi could only watch as the missile plummeted towards him, boosted by the flames it spat and splitting the air with a piercing howl.

Boom!

The immense mushroom cloud enveloped Vaccaria's form at once and the other members of Tiny Herb could only watch, unable to help. They even had to be careful that they themselves weren't caught up in the shockwave.

The three seconds of Sacred Fire's silence also ended then, but all of Happy's members launched attacks at that swaying, but still present figure in the smoke.

Flash Burst!

Furious Dragon Strikes the Heart!

X-1 Extruder!

Three characters, three directions, in addition to Lord Grim who stuck to Vaccaria's side. Their attacks disregarded all else. Tiny Herb didn't just have Wang Jiexi, after all, they still had Xu Bin, still had Gao Yingjie, still had Liu Xiaobie, but Happy completely ignored these three attackers, even if attacks came towards them.

They might not be able to stop these attacks, but they could disrupt them. So long as there was an opening in the opponent's formation, Wang Jiexi would be able to get Vaccaria out. All of Tiny Herb's members were infinitely confident in that, so they each chose their quickest attacks.

Star Refraction! Gao Yingjie's Kind Tree cast out a star card.

Roar! Xu Bin's Angelica bellowed, releasing the Knight's AoE taunt skill.

Shadow Steps! Liu Xiaobie's Flying Swords immediately split into eight, all swarming forwards to disrupt Happy's offensive.

Even Yuan Baiqing's Aweto, seeing that he was being ignored, silently began to cast a Hypnosis.

Whose skill would be faster?

After Star Refraction's star card cracked open, Star Ray shot out, striking each of Happy's members. However, Dancing Rain's X-1 Extruder had already been released, and attacking the character wouldn't knock the X-1 Extruder off course.

Knocked by the refraction, Soft Mist swayed to the side, but Dancing Fire Flowing Flame in her hand remained on course under her mechanics.

Fang Rui once again displayed his cunning as a Master of Dirty Play. Before the Star Refraction hit, he purposefully turned Boundless Sea slightly, and thus, the attack knocked Boundless Sea back to his original position.

Lord Grim, well, his actions were even more simple. Myriad Manifestations Umbrella opened up and he just ignored everything behind him.

As for Angelica's Roar?

The Knight's aggro-pulling skill was the ultimate counter to this sort of focused attack, but Xu Bin wasn't so optimistic. He had a Knight's Roar, but his opponents weren't bereft of a method to stop it.

Calm and Composed!

Fang Rui's Boundless Sea immediately stopped his Flash Burst when Angelica used Roar, releasing a Calm and Composed instead. All characters in range would be cleared of fear, taunts, and other such statuses.

Knowing that the opponent had a Qi Master, Xu Bin had already expected this, However, this at least interrupted Boundless Sea's Flash Burst, and that would at least give Vaccaria an opening, right?

In the yet to disperse smoke, Vaccaria's form charged in Boundless Sea's direction as expected, but in the next moment, Lord Grim had darted in front of him.

Swerve!

Vaccaria, flicked the handle of his broom, changing direction in midair and flying low with the body bowed.

Shining Cut!

With a flash of cold light, Lord Grim once again flashed in front of Vaccaria.

Swerve again!

Vaccaria turned a full right angle.

Charge, Lord Grim skidding in front of him.

Swerve again!

This time, Vaccaria shot upwards towards the sky.

There was a humming sound, and Wang Jiexi recognized it as the sound of Rotor Wings. Lord Grim had flown up as well.

Too slow! Watching Lord Grim use that skill in an attempt to fly up and block him, Wang Jiexi felt rather incredulous.

"Captain, behind you!" However, he soon saw such a warning in the team chat, four such warnings, one from each player.

Too late.

Furious Dragon Strikes the Heart pierced through his chest.