

## Avatar 1411

### Chapter 1411: Exploring The Map

The match began.

Pan Lin and Li Yibo went back to their usual program. After finding out what map the home team had chosen, they immediately searched up the relevant information and presented it to the viewers during the loading screen. For the unknowing audience members, the two commentators probably seemed omniscient, knowing the ins and outs of every map.

#### Map – Empty Sand Sea

The map was shaped like a rhombus. The two teams started on opposite sides of each other on the north and south ends of the map. The center of the map was an oasis. To the east of the oasis were ancient ruins, and a landscape of sand dunes were to the west of the oasis. The map had a variety of terrains, allowing for numerous viable tactics. It was a map that required adaptability.

While Pan Lin and Li Yibo hurried to finish their introductions, the two sides finished loading in. Each team had five players for a total of ten players on the north and south ends of the map.

The camera focused in on Team Happy. According to their experience in the regular season, Happy frequently played the sixth player switcharoo as soon as the match began to catch their opponents off guard. Happy had intentionally put Blue Rain's old captain, Wei Chen, as their sixth player, as if he were their secret weapon. Even the program director wanted to know whether Wei Chen would be switched in immediately.

But Happy didn't make any switches. After the five characters loaded into map, they immediately rushed out of the spawn point.

"Happy is looking very decisive. It seems like they already have a plan in mind! Blue Rain, on the other hand, appears to be a bit more hesitant," Pan Lin said.

"Haha, it can't really be said that they're hesitant. Blue Rain has always been more reactive than proactive! This is their away game too," Li Yibo said.

"Okay, Blue Rain is also on the move. They're not charging straight towards the center, instead taking the left path. They should be heading towards the ancient ruins," Pan Lin introduced.

The two teams played different openings. The home team went straight towards the center, while the away team took a more roundabout route. It's almost like the roles have been reversed. The away team was usually unfamiliar with the map, so rashly trying to take advantage of the map can very easily go wrong. The away team often prefers a direct confrontation. Fighting in an open area was equivalent to erasing the opponent's map advantage. How could the home team allow their opponents to do as they wished? In the individual competition and the group arena, perhaps there were people like Ye Xiu who picked simple maps and chose to fight it out in the open, but practically no home team did this during the team competition. It was easier to win if the map advantage was utilized well.

“Blue Rain isn’t moving very fast!” Pan Lin noticed that Blue Rain was moving towards the east quite slowly.

“They seem to be studying the map,” Pan Lin commented on Blue Rain’s movements.

The match had just begun. It wasn’t like Happy could just suddenly descend upon them like gods, so Blue Rain’s formation was rather loose. There didn’t seem to be any strict tactical intent to it. Everyone looked to be moving freely. The camera cycled through the perspectives of each of Blue Rain’s players. It could clearly be seen that everyone was observing their surroundings. They were all moving in the same general direction, but the team was split into different zones. It was like they were in a race, each person in their own lane focused on their own task.

There was quite a bit of communication going on in Team Blue Rain’s chat, letting the viewers directly observe how Blue Rain was exploring the map.

“Blue Rain probably wants to establish an area that they’re familiar with and then lure Happy into fighting there to reduce Happy’s home field advantage,” Pan Lin said.

“Oh, isn’t this... what that team often does?” Pan Lin thought of something.

“Correct. Team Thunderclap frequently does this in their away games,” Li Yibo said.

“But it can’t be a random area, can it?” Pan Lin asked.

“Of course not, the home team obviously doesn’t want you to establish your own area, so figuring out which area to choose is a difficult decision!” Li Yibo said.

“Team Blue Rain seems to be speeding up,” Pan Lin suddenly discovered.

“It looks like they’re not satisfied with that area!” Li Yibo said.

There were messages in Team Blue Rain’s chat that stated this information, which was why Li Yibo was so confident in his judgement.

Dissatisfied with an area close to the spawn point, Team Blue Rain continued to push forward. And as time went on, the two sides were on the verge of encountering each other. As Blue Rain explored, they unknowingly went into a formation. It was only now did the viewers suddenly realize that the Team Blue Rain members were no longer as loosely scattered as before.

The change had gone unnoticed. From this, it could be seen just how fluid Team Blue Rain’s teamwork was.

The team continued along the northeast edge. The central oasis and the eastern ancient city ruins gradually came into view. Team Happy’s characters appeared in the oasis area.

“Try to stay under cover,” Yu Wenzhou said in the chat. Team Blue Rain quickly started moving stealthily. Flipping, turning, and climbing were frequently used. As they moved while staying hidden, they were still looking for opportunities to observe their opponents.

Blue Rain didn’t chase after Happy. Instead, they continued with their strategy and entered the ancient ruins.

Dilapidated walls covered the ancient ruins. There were all sorts of hiding places here.

"This will do," Huang Shaotian looked around and then made a suggestion.

"Everyone, scan the area. Shaotian, watch that side," Yu Wenzhou said.

"I might as well just say hi," Huang Shaotian said.

"You've got a way to get close? If you're going to go, Zheng Xuan, go with him!" Yu Wenzhou said.

"Fuck, that troublesome? Forget it!" Li Xuan immediately expressed that he didn't feel like fighting.

"You can't do it?" Yu Wenzhou said.

"Too stressful! But if you want me to go, I'll go," Zheng Xuan said.

Yu Wenzhou laughed. He knew Zheng Xuan was indicating that he had unconditional confidence in his captain. This guy was always like that. His fighting spirit was lacking, so he rarely took initiative. He basically needed someone to push him forward. For example, right now, he definitely wouldn't volunteer like Huang Shaotian did, but if Yu Wenzhou gave him an order, he would try his hardest to complete it.

"Forget it, keep checking up on the terrain. Shaotian, watch that side. Try not to get discovered," Yu Wenzhou said.

"I'm just afraid that they'll give away a big opening, and I won't be able to hold back," Huang Shaotian rubbed his palms together as if it were some huge matter, when all he was doing was being on the lookout.

Happy's chat didn't have much content, while Blue Rain had quite a bit going on. The viewers had good understanding of their intentions. It was hard for the Happy fans not to worry. However, there was no way for them to tell this information to their players. They could only boo at the away game Blue Rain fans to vent.

Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain temporarily separated from the team, leaving the ancient ruins. He continued the "flip, climb, roll" movements to approach Happy's position, but before long, he saw Team Happy moving towards their location.

"They're coming," Huang Shaotian immediately typed, "I'll stall them. You guys hurry up."

"Got it," the team replied.

Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain stopped hiding and stood out in the open.

Boom boom boom!

Gunfire immediately headed his way.

"Fuck, Su Mucheng. You're not even going to say hi?" Huang Shaotian called out.

He was on the edge of a Launcher's range though, so the attacks didn't pose any threat to him. Troubling Rain dodged the attacks easily.

“We didn’t even say hi and you’re already talking. If we said hi, wouldn’t you talk non-stop?” Ye Xiu replied. Team Happy suddenly sped up. Their slow Cleric was left behind as the others pounced towards him.

Huh?

Huang Shaotian’s eyes lit up. What a great opportunity! Those guys actually left their Cleric behind. Wouldn’t it be beautiful if he slipped past them and ambushed their Cleric?

Team Blue Rain had gone through this area, so Huang Shaotian had a grasp of it. He immediately had Troubling Rain dodge to the side and hide. To delay them, he could obviously just start fighting with Happy, but he would be stuck there too. The price for delaying them would be too high.

Delaying them had to be done from a strategic standpoint. He couldn’t let the opponents get a grasp on his intentions.

For example, like how Huang Shaotian’s Troubling Rain suddenly disappeared. Could Happy ignore him? Of course not. This opportunist might just suddenly bite at them when they let out an opening, and that little bite could be fatal too.

Huang Shaotian’s style was no secret. The opponents knew about it, so he would take advantage of it and have Happy divert more of their attention to his disappearance.

“Huang Shaotian, why’d you leave? Then, I won’t send you off!” Ye Xiu said in the public chat.

“Wait, I haven’t left yet! I’m following you guys!” Huang Shaotian said. He indeed wasn’t just having Troubling Rain sit there. Ye Xiu wasn’t so easy to deal with. If he didn’t pose a substantial threat, he wouldn’t be able to get his attention.

“Is that so? Then, you’d better follow us closely. It’d be bad if you got lost and then by the time you found us, your teammates were all dead!” Ye Xiu said.

“No way no way. I’ve played this map eight hundred times! I’m super familiar with it. I can close my eyes and still know the way. Do you know where I am right now? Hahaha!”

“Aren’t you right here?” Ye Xiu said as Lord Grim appeared in front of Troubling Rain.

“Eight hundred times? Super familiar?” Ye Xiu sent a sneering emoji.

Huang Shaotian knew the situation wasn’t looking good. The other side had seen through his intentions and even deduced his path. In that case, Ye Xiu definitely wasn’t here for a 1v1. He was planning on trapping him here!

But then again, that’s what I want!

If he didn’t leave such an opening, how could he lure Happy away? Huang Shaotian laughed coldly in his mind.

## **Chapter 1412: Reverse Stalling**

Blue Rain had just walked past this area, so Huang Shaotian had an understanding of it. This was why he intentionally had Troubling Rain make a sneak attack from this position. Happy could surround and attack him, but that would be exactly what he wanted. Huang Shaotian had chosen this location because he was confident that they could not hold him here.

However, he didn't dare force his way through Ye Xiu's Lord Grim. If he got entangled by his unspecialized, he might truly be stuck.

As a result, when he saw Lord Grim appear in front of him and send a sneering emoji in the chat, Huang Shaotian quickly replied: "Oh no! I've been cut off by you!"

After saying these words, Troubling Rain turned around and ran away

"You think you can run?" Ye Xiu yelled. Lord Grim chased after him.

Everything was going according to plan. He just wasn't sure what Happy's other members would do though. This was a part of Huang Shaotian's plans though. He needed to be in a truly dangerous situation. If his situation was too relaxed, it meant that trying to trap him would be without value. Why would the other side waste their time on him in that case?

Opportunity came hand in hand with danger. The greater the opportunity, the greater the danger. As the most famous opportunist in Glory, how could Huang Shaotian not know this?

Boom boom boom!

Artillery barrage suddenly came his way.

As soon as Huang Shaotian heard the noise, he dodged. He didn't bother to see which direction the gunfire was coming from and had Troubling Rain roll twice. The explosions nearly scorched his back. The Void Sand Sea was covered in fine sand. When the missiles exploded, the fine sand splashed in all directions like water.

He dodged the attack with two rolls and also found Dancing Rain's position.

Another one!

Huang Shaotian quietly imagined the positions of the two Happy characters and then made a decision.

Over here!

Troubling Rain switched directions and rushed towards the other end. From the time and the opposing character's movement speed, he determined that this area should be an opening.

Huang Shaotian was experienced. At this moment, he was no longer bait. He truly needed to escape. If he made a mistake, he might really get caught by Happy and killed.

What he needed to respond to was the long-ranged pursuit from Su Mucheng and Ye Xiu's highly mobile unspecialized. Huang Shaotian calculated in his head. But then at this moment, a message from Ye Xiu suddenly popped up: "You're leaving? Then, I won't send you off!"

What?

Huang Shaotian was surprised, but the sounds of gunfire could still be heard behind him. He could not stop. He could only keep moving as he turned.

From afar, Dancing Rain stood there with a cannon on her shoulders, her hair fluttering in the wind. Ye Xiu's Lord Grim didn't give chase, but simply walked to Dancing Rain's side.

Where was Fang Rui's Boundless Sea?

Where was Qiao Yifan's One Inch Ash?

Where was An Wenyi's Little Cold Hands?

Huang Shaotian checked where the locations from which they could surround him, but he didn't see any signs of them.

Behind?

Impossible. The other side didn't have the speed to intercept him from this direction.

So surrounding him was just a facade?

Then, where were Happy's other three players? They couldn't be fighting with their Blue Rain's four players, could they? 3v4? Where'd they get that sort of confidence from? If that were his intention, then wouldn't Ye Xiu have been saying too much? It would have given away his position?

Ye Xiu wouldn't do that! This came from Huang Shaotian's deep-rooted understanding of Ye Xiu. He had no time to slowly ponder over it. Huang Shaotian immediately made a decision from his intuition. So he's letting me go freely? Fine, then I'll go!

Huang Shaotian didn't change Troubling Rain's route and continued to rush out in this direction until he couldn't see Lord Grim and Dancing Rain behind him. Then, he changed directions and picked a different route to come back.

"I knew you'd come back." Not long afterwards, Lord Grim once again appeared, cutting in front of him.

A trap?

Huang Shaotian was extremely perceptive. He had been prepared for a trap. When he saw Lord Grim in front of him, he wasn't thinking about facing just one opponent, but rather five!

When Troubling Rain made his first step, he had carefully considered his surroundings. He didn't even blabber. He immediately had Troubling Rain choose a direction to rush out from.

This was the best direction to make a sudden break out from an encirclement from Happy.

"Don't run! 1v1 me!" Ye Xiu called out.

"Who would believe you?" Huang Shaotian said, and had Troubling Rain run away.

But then, he didn't come across any obstacles.

This isn't right!

Even if this was the best direction to escape from, that didn't mean he should be able to escape this easily. This meant one thing: there were no ambushes set up here. It really was just Ye Xiu's Lord Grim.

Or could it be... that they intentionally didn't ambush him to lure him back?

Huang Shaotian never tired of making these sort of guesses. Glory was never just about mechanics. Using your brain was also important. Someone who could instantly make these sorts of clear judgements was no less terrifying than someone with a crazy 500APM hand speed. Why was Blue Rain's Yu Wenzhou a top Glory player despite his abysmal hand speed? Because despite his hand speed shortcoming, he was extremely intelligent and could instantly make correct and careful decisions.

If he went back, he might fall into their trap, but if he continued forward, he would achieve nothing.

So he went back. Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain once again circled back, and tried to find another way to approach Happy and figure out their strategy.

"How's it going?" At this moment, Yu Wenzhou asked about Huang Shaotian's situation.

"There are three people who I haven't seen any signs of," Huang Shaotian knew that this match wasn't just a game. It wasn't the time to care about his reputation. He had yet to see Fang Rui, Qiao Yifan, and An Wenyi. A 3v4 didn't seem possible, but he should still remind the team to be careful. Blue Rain had no information on their whereabouts.

"Then, what's the current situation?" Yu Wenzhou asked.

"I'm trying to find a way to investigate," Huang Shaotian replied.

This area could already be considered as the border between Blue Rain's spawn location in the north region and the ancient city ruins in the eastern region. The terrain of both sides could be seen. Traces of the ancient ruins were scattered around in a fairly sparse little forest. From Ye Xiu's previous position, Huang Shaotian was able to guess his current movement direction. Troubling Rain traveled through the forest, checking his surroundings from time to time.

It looks like this time I need to have some actual contact with them.

Huang Shaotian thought to himself. His previous two actions had been on the cautious side because he hadn't dared to be rash. As soon as he saw Ye Xiu, he ran away. As a result, he wasn't able to figure out the opponent's actual situation. After those two times, Huang Shaotian was starting to suspect that the other side was planning on surrounding him. He needed to verify this point. The most direct method was to place himself in an even more dangerous situation and trigger the opponent's trap.

Huang Shaotian did his best to remember the details of his surroundings. These might be places which he could use to escape from a thorny situation.

Alright, that should be enough! Time to run into them!

Huang Shaotian had been visualizing the movements of Ye Xiu's Lord Grim the entire time. He guessed that he should meet him around here unless Lord Grim had been chasing after Troubling Rain, which clearly wasn't the case.

Over there!

A figure flashed. Huang Shaotian could tell that it was Lord Grim. He checked his surroundings and then had Troubling Rain quickly rush forward.

Triple Slash!

Troubling Rain moved diagonally, blue light flickering. With a flash, he reached Lord Grim.

Earthquake Sword!

Lord Grim immediately drew his sword from the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella and attacks back. The two swords clashed, spinning wind around them. The ground of this little forest still had fine sand scattered about. The Earthquake Sword swept the sand up, forming exquisite ripples.

Huang Shaotian didn't have the time to appreciate the beauty. He had forcefully cancelled his Triple Slash. With a stride, he blocked Lord Grim's path and swung his sword with a Sword Draw.

Dong!

Lord Grim lifted his sword in front of him and blocked the attack using Guard.

Huang Shaotian didn't hastily follow up.

He wasn't here to win. His goal was to figure out Happy's strategy. When he had blocked Lord Grim, he had been paying attention to his surroundings. Were Happy's other characters rushing out to surround him?

No!

Even Su Mucheng, who had been with Ye Xiu, was nowhere to be seen.

4v4?

Were they planning on attacking the rest of Blue Rain in the ancient ruins?

Ignoring how Happy had figured out Blue Rain's location, Huang Shaotian was about to remind his team, when Ye Xiu said: "You're not running away this time?"

Have they surrounded me?

Huang Shaotian subconsciously looked to the left and right.

Bastard! Another bluff!

Huang Shaotian cursed inwardly and immediately messaged his teammates: "Happy might be coming over. Careful."

On this side, Ye Xiu continued: "What are you looking around for? Did you think you've been surrounded? You're too arrogant. You think we need to surround you to finish you off? Aren't I alone enough?"

BOX-1?

Huang Shaotian thought to himself, but immediately disregarded it.



BOX-1 wasn't suitable against Blue Rain because their Blue Rain's ace player, Huang Shaotian, was different from other core players.

BOX-1's intentions was to drag an important opponent away from the rest of the team. However, Huang Shaotian was already away from his team. Wasn't trying to drag him away pointless?

On the contrary, if Ye Xiu was held onto by Huang Shaotian, that would be more harmful to Happy, no?

In a 4v4, Blue Rain wouldn't lose to just anyone because they were too used to having one less Huang Shaotian in a fight. They would often be defending against five as four. A pure 4v4 would be even easier.

But how could Ye Xiu not understood such obvious logic?

What was Happy trying to do? Huang Shaotian discovered that his investigation was a complete failure.

Wait?

Complete failure?

Huang Shaotian suddenly noticed. Happy is stalling us! By stalling me, they're giving away their movements.

Yes, that's it! Huang Shaotian felt gloomy. He had been trying to stall the enemy, but in the end, it was the enemy who had stalled him.

### **Chapter 1413: Pursuit**

Huang Shaotian didn't know whether to laugh or cry when he discovered the truth.

As it turned out, the whole situation had been very straightforward. He tried to stall Happy, but Happy obviously wasn't going to let him. Happy ended up stalling him and prevented him from scouting.

This was just a regular action-reaction. Maybe there was an encirclement before, but not now. Happy definitely had their own strategy, but this strategy wasn't tailored against Huang Shaotian; rather, they needed to hide it from him. Now, Happy has succeeded. Huang Shaotian did not manage to gain a single shred of information on Happy's movement. His scouting resulted in complete failure.

"Keep your eyes peeled for Happy's movements," Huang Shaotian could only remind his teammates like this. Even though Happy's Ye Xiu didn't seem like a big threat now, if they dared to make this kind of arrangement, there must be a reason behind it.

"How about you?" The other side asked.

"I'm being annoyed by a fly," replied Huang Shaotian.

Bang!

In the time it took him to send that message, Lord Grim's attack arrived yet again. The Battle Mage's Sky Strike came flying; the spear travelled in a graceful diagonal arc. If this was in the PvE portions of the game, Ye Xiu would never miss this strike. But Huang Shaotian wasn't at the same level as a mob's AI. The sword Ice Rain was propped accurately in the path of the Myriad Manifestation Umbrella, and the

two weapons clashed. The two both carried the air of elite pro players and smoothly transitioned into a backwards leap.

The distance between them widened. Again!

Collapsing Mountain!

Troubling Rain had only taken a small, half-step backwards when he immediately struck again with his sword.

However, Ye Xiu's awareness and control didn't lose out to Huang Shaotian's. Lord Grim's backward leap also consisted of a small half-step. As the Collapsing Mountain bore down on him, Lord Grim rolled to the side. Huang Shaotian wanted to forcefully change the sword's attack angle, but he saw that Lord Grim has directly rolled out of range of what he could reach even if he altered his attack direction.

Ye Xiu wasn't Mo Fan, after all. The two had an understanding of each other. Ye Xiu's dodge even accounted for any variations that Huang Shaotian could produce.

Mid-roll and at half-crouch, Lord Grim pointed his Myriad Manifestations Umbrella, which was already raised with the tip pointed outwards. The dark, hollow muzzle of the gun flashed with light, accompanied by the sound of a gunshot and a flying bullet.

Bang!

The bullet had hit a hard object, and sparks flew everywhere

Ice Rain was vibrating and ringing from the impact.

The whole stadium was in uproar. He blocked a shot from that distance? What kind of insane reaction and control was that?

"Not bad with your luck!" Ye Xiu said.

"It's called skill!" Huang Shaotian retorted. Truthfully, he knew that previous block was quite fortuitous.

"Then what about this?"

Boom boom boom!

Anti-Tank Missiles. Three artillery shells shot out, one after the other.

The explosions dealt damage in an area. You would receive a faceful of ashes even if you blocked it. Thus, Huang Shaotian chose not to block, but instead had Troubling Rain directly use Formless Phantom Blade.

Intertwining swordlight instantly flickered out, followed by three flaming flashes. The Anti-Tank Missiles were unexpectedly hacked to pieces by Huang Shaotian's use of a high-level skill. Even though there would be some splash damage, it would not hinder his advance. The swordlight was not impeded in the slightest by the explosions and had already criss-crossed towards Lord Grim.

Swish!

The Myriad Manifestations Umbrella instantly opened up. Ye Xiu had no way to dodge the countless strikes of this high-level skill, so he could only defend. The Umbrella's shield form was light and had low resistance to knockback. Under the hurricane-like effects of Formless Phantom Blade, Lord Grim slid backwards, carving out two grooves in the sand with his feet.

For the final strike of Formless Phantom Blade, all the swordlight gathered into a bundle and struck out. Myriad Manifestation Umbrella's canopy looked like it was about to fold in on itself. This hit that had a powerful knock-up effect was transformed into backwards momentum by the shield's resistance. Lord Grim looked like he was surfing on the sand. His two feet continued to send sand flying, as he rapidly slid backwards.

Formless Phantom Blade had long ending lag, so unfortunately Huang Shaotian couldn't follow up and immediately pursue his target. By the time Troubling Rain could perform an action again, Lord Grim was also pretty much done sliding. The Umbrella's canopy closed and bullets swept out from Gatling Gun.

Huang Shaotian spotted a half-wall next to him and immediately rolled behind it to take cover. The bullets sent rocky fragments flying wildly as they struck the wall. Huang Shaotian listened carefully to the rhythm of the bullets hitting the wall. If it sped up, that meant Lord Grim was getting closer. But right now, it sounded like the time between each shot hitting the wall was increasing. That meant Ye Xiu was probably controlling Lord Grim to retreat.

Charge!

Troubling Rain immediately jumped out from behind the wall. As expected, he saw Lord Grim retreating while shooting. When he saw Troubling Rain shoot out from his cover, he hastily adjusted his muzzle towards him. But Huang Shaotian didn't stop controlling his character, who swiftly rushed forth, and left a string of bullets behind him.

Triple Slash!

BladeMasters' most commonly used movement skill was used once again.

One, two, three slashes!

Three slashes, three changes in direction. Troubling Rain cut a beautiful arc and managed to arrive next to Lord Grim while dodging all his shots.

"Beautiful!" Even Ye Xiu praised him. Then, Lord Grim threw out a grenade while Troubling Rain performed the third slash of Triple Slash. The grenade grazed past the sword light, while Huang Shaotian rushed forward...

Boom!

The explosion completely engulfed the top half of Troubling Rain's body.

However, grenades were a low-level Spitfire skill, and the knockback was mediocre. The explosion could only slow Troubling Rain down by a fraction as he moved forward with three sword slashes. Even though half of Troubling Rain's body was still covered in dying flames and ashes, he still smartly completed the beautiful arced trajectory of his Triple Slash.

Just looking at damage alone, this grenade couldn't even come close to the damage that Troubling Rain dealt by piling slashes onto the Myriad Manifestation Umbrella's shield from Formless Phantom Blade. But comparing the visual effects of both attacks, Troubling Rain looked much worse. Anyone would say that Huang Shaotian would be feeling more frustrated in this situation.

However, Huang Shaotian did not have this third person view, so he was still upbeat. He was content when he saw that he had not received much damage and that his Triple Slash had not been interrupted. He didn't care that the top half of his body might still be on fire, while Ice Rain slashed out again.

Lunge!

Troubling Rain slid forward one step, and two sword lights rapidly shot out.

Pop pop!

Their two swords crossed again, but Huang Shaotian immediately knew that something was wrong. Lord Grim was far too stiff, and the health drop after taking the hit was also off.

It was a shadow clone.

Huang Shaotian realized instantly. He quickly scanned around, and saw that Lord Grim was already a few units away. He was moving, while periodically looking back to check on Troubling Rain.

He really wanted to get away!

Huang Shaotian had Troubling Rain follow, while contemplating calculatively.

Lord Grim was charging towards the ancient ruins. Was he preparing to rendezvous with his team? Did that mean that whatever set up Happy had prepared was already in place?

"Found anything odd?" Huang Shaotian quickly asked.

"Nothing," Yu Wenzhou replied.

"Ye Xiu is coming from my direction," Huang Shaotian said.

"Oh? How'd the fight go?" Yu Wenzhou continued to reply. It seemed that side didn't see any action, otherwise Yu Wenzhou would not have time to spare for typing.

"Unfortunately, I couldn't discover what high-level skills he's attached to his umbrella," Huang Shaotian said.

His fight with Ye Xiu still had this kind of intention. In the group arena, Yu Xiu's Lord Grim had only displayed gun form non-basic skills such as Laser Cannon. Blue Rain had no idea what else he was hiding, which was disadvantageous to them in the team competition. Huang Shaotian wanted to bait some high level skills out from the Umbrella if he could, given the rare opportunity of meeting one on one in the team competition. In the end, he didn't know whether Ye Xiu held the skills back on purpose, but what mattered was that this exchange was worthless.

"Which area are you in now?" Huang Shaotian asked.

"The region at 89, 157," Yu Wenzhou replied.

“Roger. I’ll try and herd Ye Xiu over. You guys get ready,” Huang Shaotian said.

“Be careful of the rest of Happy.”

“Will do.”

After completing this conversation, Huang Shaotian quickly switched to the global chat.

“Where do you think you’re going!” he yelled out. However, Huang Shaotian would not have an advantage if he really wanted to chase like this. Huang Shaotian talked big, but Ye Xiu had seemingly decided not to fight with him any longer. After some movement skills such as Shining Cut and Colliding Stab had been used, he turned a corner and vanished without a trace.

Fuck me! So direct?

Huang Shaotian was a bit confused.

He knew that no class could compete with the unspecialized Lord Grim in movement options. But he also said he would herd Ye Xiu towards Yu Wenzhou, precisely because he didn’t expect Ye Xiu to escape from him so directly. Ye Xiu’s dirty playstyle was in his mind, and he was obviously trying to lure him into some kind of trap or ambush. Huang Shaotian planned to observe carefully while chasing, in an attempt to lure his opponent in instead.

Ye Xiu ended up simply ignoring him and running away.

“Target lost temporarily,” Huang Shaotian could only report the truth to his team.

“What?”

“That guy ran away. You guys be careful, maybe they’re preparing to attack now,” Huang Shaotian said.

“You too, maybe they’ll use you as an opening,” Yu Wenzhou said.

“If only!” Huang Shaotian came to scout and did not get the attention he wanted. Ye Xiu and Su Mucheng scared him together, and then only Ye Xiu stayed. He wished that Happy would treat him to a more grand welcome!

Huang Shaotian moved towards the wall that Lord Grim had disappeared behind. Huang Shaotian quickly approached and then slowed down when he got closer, keeping a safe distance. Then, he darted forward while slashing out.

The sword slashed empty air. There was no one behind the wall. Ye Xiu only used the wall as cover, and was now nowhere to be seen.

But he couldn’t have gotten too far.

Huang Shaotian looked around and observed possible locations that Ye Xiu could have run off to. To avoid being discovered by a pursuer, Lord Grim could only have gone in one direction.

Charge forward, leave a safe gap. Change direction, dash forth, slash.

He still slashed air, but this time, he got a grand welcome!

Qi Bullet!

The attack came from Fang Rui's Boundless Sea. That slash hit nothing because Boundless Sea had dodged out of the way and immediately counter-attacked. No one was better than this kind of dirty play than Fang Rui.

#### **Chapter 1414: Double-Edged Bait**

Roll!

Troubling Rain rolled towards the left, dodging the sneaky Qi Bullet from Boundless Sea. In the split second that he rolled, the front, back, left, and right were all quickly swept over by Huang Shaotian as he quickly adjusted his camera angle.

He'd already traversed the terrain before, so he had already visualized possible locations for an ambush, so now, Huang Shaotian only needed to confirm where the enemy was, and where he could break through from.

Of course, informing his teammates of his circumstances was also of utmost importance.

"Encounter!"

In the short time it took to complete one roll, Huang Shaotian had accomplished many objectives. However, his opponent, Fang Rui, didn't drop the matter so quickly. Spiral Qi Kill!

Fang Rui's Qi Master was always in a vulgar-looking half-squat posture, so the angle of his attacks was very different from traditional Qi Masters. Many of his skills were used in an underhanded manner, or from low angles. This time, before Troubling Rain had the chance to get up from his roll, he saw Boundless Sea brandish his fists, surrounded by clouds of twisting Qi, and directly began to attack him.

Roll again!

Huang Shaotian didn't have any other option, and could only have Troubling Rain roll once more to dodge the attack. At the same moment, he launched his own counterattack.

Sword Draw!

The sword light flew out in the middle of Troubling Rain's roll. This technique was easy to perform in theory, but if a normal player were to try, the attack would probably end up slashing into the ground eight times out of ten.

The sword light chopped out.

In the end, what everyone saw was Boundless Sea suddenly flat on the floor, resulting in the sword light harmlessly flying over his head. Afterwards, he raised his butt and thrust his hands forwards. Surprisingly, resplendent Qi suddenly gathered on his palms, and in this way, a Flash Burst was sent out.

It was truly unsightly!

Team Blue Rain was very inclusive, and as such, had many bizarre players. Huang Shaotian was calm in the face of such bizarre sights, especially since he wasn't a particularly tasteful character either. But when it came to this fighting posture of Fang Rui's Qi Master, he still had some difficulty looking straight at it.

This kind of a posture appearing from a Qi Master was truly too unfitting. It was no wonder that Fang Rui had been quickly tossed aside in this season's All-Star voting.

The transfer of Boundless Sea was already a painful scar, but to top it off, the transformation of the character was so hideous, making it even more painful to look at!

Whether it was those who enjoyed Fang Rui's dirty playstyle, or those who had some attachment to the Qi Master Boundless Sea, when they saw this kind of a fighting style, they would tremble uncontrollably, unable to cast such a vote!

But still, no matter how unsightly it was, dealing with it was still extremely troublesome!

Because this fighting style violated all common sense, gauging Fang Rui's attacks proved to be more difficult. For instance, when he had suddenly went prone on the floor and then suddenly cast a Flash Burst just now, such a move had never been used before by any Qi Master in the ten years of Glory's history. How could one guard against such a move? Huang Shaotian completely relied on his extraordinary reaction speed and inputs, forcing Troubling Rain to roll one more time to dodge the attack.

In the few moments that these characters had exchanged blows, after the first time that Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain rolled to dodge an attack, he unexpectedly not had another chance to stand up, and was stuck rolling on the floor. This kind of rolling left and right was something that Fang Rui was very familiar with, but other people weren't! Huang Shaotian was suddenly forced into a passive position, and on top of that, Fang Rui wasn't the only person in the area. What about Ye Xiu? Su Mucheng? Qiao Yifan? Just now, he hadn't seen a single one of them, but that didn't mean that they weren't hiding in one corner or another!

What about behind this rock?

As he frantically rolled to dodge Boundless Sea's attack, Huang Shaotian spotted a huge rock that Troubling Rain had brushed past, and his heart tightened. With their omniscient point of view, the spectators had an even better understanding of what was going on. In the stadium, Happy's fans were already brimming with anticipation for the next scene, and their cheers had already been prepared, but...

Sword's Divine Judgement!

Unexpectedly, in the same instant that Troubling Rain brushed past the rock, Huang Shaotian used the Blade Master's Awakening skill.

Schwing!

A sound like a sword leaving its sheath rang out, and sword qi flew out in a circle around him.

Ye Xiu's Lord Grim was indeed hiding behind the rock, but Huang Shaotian's willingness to burn a powerful Awakening skill to protect against a counterattack was beyond most people's expectations. Any attack would be interrupted by the stun from the sword qi of Sword's Divine Judgement, so Ye Xiu had no choice but to raise the Myriad Manifestation Umbrella, using the shield form to receive the stun effect from the skill.

Immediately afterwards, Troubling Rain rolled again, unexpectedly heading towards Lord Grim, who was behind the rock. With this change of direction, he had actually managed to temporarily shake off Boundless Sea, who had been chasing and attacking him the whole way. Huang Shaotian finally had Troubling Rain stand up and straighten himself, but the mountain pass that stood in his way was not easy to get past.

Falling Flower Palm!

In the same instant that the umbrella was closed, Lord Grim sent a Falling Flower Palm towards his opponent.

In front was Lord Grim, behind was Boundless Sea.

Falling Flower Palm had a long range and significant knockback. If he wanted to dodge, there was no time, and whether he parried or blocked, he couldn't prevent being knocked back. In this moment, almost everyone felt that Huang Shaotian really had no options left, and in the end.....

Immortal Guides the Way!

The Blade Master skill, Immortal Guides the Way, had a strong knockback effect, and if one were to compare, it was significantly stronger than Falling Flower Palm's effect. But with the distance between the two characters now, and with Falling Flower Palm already being used, could Immortal Guides the Way be fast enough?

It could!

In that tiny window of opportunity, Troubling Rain unexpectedly succeeded in performing Immortal Guides the Way, something that was inconceivable to many people. Even if Huang Shaotian's hand speed had exploded, there was still the restriction of the character's attributes and the skill's properties. At this moment, this move shouldn't have been completed on time, right?

"Sword's Divine Judgement."

At the end of the day, Li Yibo's insight was still much stronger than that of the majority of people.

The reason why Immortal Guides the Way was completed in time, was because of the Sword's Divine Judgement before it.

Sword's Divine Judgement didn't actually rely on that circle of sword qi to deal damage. Instead, it was a transformation skill, enhancing the state of the Blade Master's sword skills.

Under normal circumstances, no matter how fast the hand speed, Immortal Guides the Way wouldn't have completed in time, but with the support of the state from Sword's Divine Judgement, everything had changed.



“So that’s what it is!” Pan Lin’s response was a little slower, only reacting after Li Yibo had finished his explanation, and in that moment, he felt heartfelt admiration. Admiration for Li Yibo realizing what had happened before him, and even greater admiration for Huang Shaotian, who had made such a precise judgement in that instant.

But no matter how precise the judgement, it was no match for sheer numbers.

Immortal Guides the Way had broken Lord Grim’s Falling Flower Palm, but immediately afterwards, Huang Shaotian found that the position Troubling Rain was in unexpectedly had Phantom Ghost power pulsing, with faint blue snowflakes falling, it was an Ice Boundary!

Triple Slash!

There wasn’t time to consider the situation more, so Huang Shaotian immediately had Troubling Rain use Triple Slash. The enhancement from Sword’s Divine Judgement also had an effect on Triple Slash, making the sword light sharper and faster than normal. Troubling Rain immediately withdrew from that spot, and as expected, an Ice Boundary took form, creating falling snow within its range. It looked beautiful, but Huang Shaotian had absolutely no intentions of letting Troubling Rain get anywhere close to it.

The Phantom Demon had already made his move, but what about the others?

His camera angle spun quickly, and he saw Ye Xiu’s Lord Grim and Fang Rui’s Boundless Sea already charging towards him again, but he couldn’t see where Qiao Yifan’s One Inch Ash was.

What a pain.

Huang Shaotian hesitated a little, wondering whether or not to ask his teammates to rescue him.

Those four had painstakingly surveyed the battlefield, picked an area, and then finished deploying over there. According to Huang Shaotian’s original plan, he wanted to make himself the bait, and lure Happy over to that area, engaging in a decisive battle there. But now, as the bait, it seemed as if he might not be able to escape the net that Happy had prepared for him.

Not being able to find Qiao Yifan’s One Inch Ash meant that Happy could hide away and keep placing Ghost Boundaries, and eventually, Troubling Rain would be tied down by one of them, trapping him in the area. At that time, if he were to call for help, it would be even more troublesome. In order to help him escape, his team would definitely suffer great losses.

But even if he were to call for help now, what good would it do?

If they were to leave the area where they had set up, Blue Rain’s earlier deployment would have been wasted. On top of that, Happy also had the appropriate arrangements in their area. Trapping Troubling Rain was likely meant to force Blue Rain to show themselves, engaging in a decisive battle on Happy’s terms.

The crux of this game was to see who could lead the other team into their own territory.

Huang Shaotian was the bait, but he was the bait for both teams.

Happy wanted to trap him, thus forcing Blue Rain to move to them to engage in a decisive battle, while Blue Rain was counting on Huang Shaotian to be able to escape, instead leading Happy towards the area in which they had set up.

He couldn't call for help, if he did, they'd be walking right into Happy's trap!

But even if Huang Shaotian didn't call for help, someone else had already done it for him.

"Everyone come and help! Huang Shaotian is going to get killed!!!"

Windward Formation? Wei Chen!

Huang Shaotian saw the name of the person who had sent the message, and could only stare blankly.

Was Happy using this tactic again? Swapping out their sixth player when no one was looking, without any way for the opponents to figure out who their last player was.

Lord Grim, Boundless Sea, One Inch Ash, Windward Formation.

They knew for a fact that Happy had these four characters in the battlefield.

Who was the last one? Was it Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain, or An Wenyi's Little Cold Hands?

Common sense dictated that it couldn't be the Cleric that was switched out, especially in the playoffs, where cautiousness was of the utmost importance.

But still, Happy couldn't be predicted using common sense. What tactics did they not dare to use? On top of that, Happy's Cleric had always been viewed as their weakest link, and they often used him as bait, designing traps to protect their Cleric while killing off their opponents.

Swapping out their Cleric was a tactic that they were well-accustomed to using. What protection could be better than throwing their Cleric to the safety of the sixth player's seat?

What on earth was their lineup?

He couldn't tell just by looking, so Huang Shaotian could only charge forth, using this to determine Happy's true team composition.

As for the support zone, it wasn't close by, meaning that they couldn't change their lineup whenever they wanted. If he could determine that Happy didn't have a healer, disrupting their formation and having the whole team engage in a decisive battle there was certainly an option.

"What's the situation like?" At this time, Yu Wenzhou sent a message in Blue Rain's team chat, probably in response to Wei Chen's cry for help on his behalf.

"Get ready to attack," Huang Shaotian said, relaying his coordinates. "They may not have a healer in their current lineup."

"No healer, they really have guts!" Yu Wenzhou sighed emotionally. As he had anticipated, if Happy wanted to have any real achievements in the playoffs, they couldn't play by the book. If they really had to face against a team head-on in an open field, Yu Wenzhou believed that Happy might not be able to win against any team that had made it into the playoffs.

Any of these team's tactics and coordination would be far more mature than that of Team Happy.

So Happy had to be extraordinary, and only then could they achieve victory.

So, what's your extraordinary move? Yu Wenzhou had constantly been thinking about this question.

### **Chapter 1415: One Step, One Blade, One Kill**

Huang Shaotian, without a doubt, was the busiest person on the field right now.

Ye Xiu and Fang Rui's combined offensive wasn't something that anyone in the entire Glory scene could deal with without struggle, and Huang Shaotian also had to guard against possible attacks from other characters.

Happy's Ghostblade One Inch Ash hadn't made any moves since unleashing that Ice Boundary. However, this just made things more scary. With Huang Shaotian on guard, if he struck once more, then Huang Shaotian would definitely be able to lock onto his position and deal with him. However, if he refused to strike, then he could be anywhere. No matter where Huang Shaotian had his character go, he had to carefully be on guard for a ghost boundary.

There was also Wei Chen's Windward Formation.

Where were they? Huang Shaotian had no idea. A message sent into the chat wouldn't reveal anything about a character's position. Warlocks were talented at CCing. In the current situation, if Troubling Rain was hit by a Warlock's CC, then he would certainly be wiped out. Thus, these characters that weren't in sight were also the ones that Huang Shaotian had to watch out for the most.

Two in hot pursuit, two hidden away, and they didn't even know if the fifth character was a Launcher or a Cleric. It seemed like Happy was set on making sure Huang Shaotian failed in his reconnaissance on them, patiently stalling with him.

Twenty percent of Troubling Rain's health had already been chipped away. Against the team of Ye Xiu and Fang Rui, no one in the Alliance could deal with them without taking any damage. Huang Shaotian ran even as he fought, but he didn't find any sign of Happy's three other members. Instead, he gained a far better understanding of the surrounding terrain.

Playing hide and seek with me, huh?

Huang Shaotian was certain that Happy's other members were around here, just hidden. These ambushers would only shine when the rest of Blue Rain arrived. Huang Shaotian purposefully exposed an opening under the Ye Xiu and Fang Rui's joint assault, taking a huge risk to try and tempt the other three into acting. However, Happy's members managed to resist this temptation.

There was no point in continuing like this! If his attention slipped even just for a moment, he might be wiped out by these two. To stall them, Huang Shaotian had broken through the limits of his focus and was already beginning to feel himself on the verge of slipping. No one had infinite focus. Having to deal with a joint assault from two All-Star players while also keeping an eye out for attacks from hidden assailants... the fact that Troubling Rain was still alive, was already pushing past the limits of Huang Shaotian's ability!

Unfortunately, even now, Huang Shaotian still hadn't managed to figure out anything. He was being overwhelmed, and Happy was too well prepared.

It seemed like they wouldn't be able to use Happy's tactics against them anymore. It was quite a shame. However, if he tried to lure them to where Blue Rain was waiting, would they fall for it? Just these two were extremely sharp players!

Huang Shaotian kept his eyes locked on the two characters in front of him. If this continued, he would be wiped out. He had maintained a defensive stance, struggling even as he made it seem like he was trying to run. Putting on airs like this wouldn't get him any information about how decisively these two had locked onto him. However, if he really tried to run now, would he succeed?

Huang Shaotian had been feeling rather exhausted, but now excitement once again burned within him.

He enjoyed finding those infinitesimal opportunities in the most dangerous of situations and then personally expanding on such a possibility. That sort of rush was the best kind of rush.

Then...

Formless Phantom Blade!

Troubling Rain's wrist flicked, suddenly activating a powerful skill.

Stalling, testing, reconnaissance, but at the same time, Huang Shaotian was also making preparations. He was creating the illusion of having no way to fight back, hiding the opportunities he had in order to secure an escape route for himself. Yet, he was up against two old opponents who were very familiar with his style. It wouldn't be easy to keep his intentions hidden from both of them at once.

Then, could he do it?

It was time for him to see.

Huang Shaotian was practically vibrating with his excitement, you could even say that this was exactly what he had been eagerly anticipating, the moment where he would break through the barrier the two had created and successfully escape.

Sword light flashed.

And this powerful skill was, in fact, activated while Troubling Rain was sprinting forwards.

This was like shooting a target while on the move, and it made the mechanics and control of the blade even more complex. Ye Xiu and Fang Rui were both experienced veterans; they wouldn't retreat in fear of the power of a high leveled skill. They would look for openings, waiting for an opportunity to strike. So no matter how challenging the situation, their mechanics wouldn't waver.

Wavering meant defeat.

Swoosh swoosh swoosh swoosh!

Arc after arc of elegant sword light flashed through the air, crisscrossing and descending upon Lord Grim and Boundless Sea.

One step and how many blades?

Many were focused on this.

Executing Formless Phantom Blade while on the move wasn't a technique unique to Huang Shaotian, and the way people judged skill with this technique was by how many blades per step.

Some people could execute three blades per step, some four and a few five, or somewhere between these numbers.

In reality, a higher number didn't necessarily mean more skilled, because this wasn't a competition of hand speed, but efficiency. The ideal effect of a mobile Formless Phantom Blade was one step, one kill.

That's right.

One step, one kill, that was the true goal of this technique. The executed number of blades per step was just a way to accomplish that. If a single blade could complete this kill, then that would be the best. The less blades used, the more blades there were to continue the next step, the next kill.

That was the highest realm one could reach for this technique.

Then with one of Troubling Rain's steps, how many blades did he need to accomplish one kill? That was what everyone was focused on.

Six blades!

Troubling Rain had executed six blades on the first step! His hand speed was admirable, but using six blades wasn't all that impressive.

It wasn't impressive, but it was understandable.

He was fighting one against two, and against Ye Xiu and Fang Rui as well. In reality, being able to accomplish this one kill was already impressive enough.

One kill naturally didn't mean a one-hit-KO. It simply meant to strike and successfully deal damage to an opponent with this step, or force them back. Either would count as a kill.

There was no way Ye Xiu and Fang Rui would so easily sustain damage in a two on one. Lord Grim and Boundless Sea both chose to retreat, but it was a feigned retreat!

These two tricky bastards.

Huang Shaotian saw through it immediately, so when everyone had thought Troubling Rain was executing six blades in this one step, he added another two.

One step, eight blades!

This record was rather appalling. Formless Phantom Blade was usually ten blades max for each execution of the skill, and now Troubling Rain had already executed eight blades. How could this even count as the One Step, One Blade, One Kill technique? He was just standing there and spamming DPS!

Normal players wouldn't understand the importance of these two blades. Ye Xiu and Fang Rui were both purposefully exposing openings, trying to bait him. Yet it was with these two blades that Huang Shaotian managed to cover up his openings and fully complete his one step, eight blades.

Continue!

Troubling Rain advanced again!

One step out and two more blades after the previous two.

One step, two blades, one kill!

That step was truly impressive. Though it was two blades, there was no point nitpicking at that. Huang Shaotian was against two opponents after all! Maybe for others one step, one blade was enough, but he needed two blades. It was far too unfair to ask him to fight off two opponents with one blade.

After one step came another.

After two blades, came another two.

Twelve blades!

Many people were keeping careful count.

Currently, for Formless Phantom Blade, Liu Xiaobie held the record at fifteen blades. Normal pros could usually reach thirteen blades, which meant that after the twelve blades should come the finishing blow. However, Huang Shaotian's situation wouldn't give him the opportunity to execute this finishing blow.

The last blade was the strongest, but after this blade, there was a long ending lag, too long for him. Huang Shaotian wasn't in a good position right now, so he didn't dare do something with such a long ending lag. This final blade of Formless Phantom Blade was something he couldn't afford to execute in his One Step, One Blade, One Kill. So that would mean that the path Troubling Rain had cut out for himself with each blade ended here. However, it didn't seem like the two characters he was facing had retreated enough!

So, it wasn't finished yet!

One step, two blades, one kill!

Fourteen blades!

It was only one blade away from Liu Xiaobie's record of fifteen, but this was during movement, during One Step, One Blade, One Kill. It needed sharper judgement and more mechanics, yet Huang Shaotian had completed fourteen blades under these circumstances.

Even though it was Happy's stadium and Happy's fans, they couldn't help but admire Huang Shaotian. Getting half his health smashed by a tree wasn't enough to erase the fact that he was still a top God!

Break through!

With Formless Phantom Blade's One Step, One Blade, One Kill technique, Huang Shaotian had managed to break through Ye Xiu and Fang Rui's harassment. Since he didn't execute the finishing blade, there

wasn't an ending lag. Troubling Rain's Ice Rain swung, about to execute a Triple Slash and escape, yet that was when a message popped up in the global chat.

"You guys are worthless! You got shook off like that?"

Windward Formation, Wei Chen!

Was he going to strike?

Huang Shaotian's heart thudded. Wei Chen's message was timed too well; it was clear that he had been attentively watching the situation over here. That meant that Windward Formation's attack was probably already on its way over by now, right? This Triple Slash might just be slashing right into their trap!

Huang Shaotian made this immediate judgement when the message appeared and this Triple Slash's path was forcibly turned away from the perfect arc he had planned out, swerving and making a Z shape.

Woosh!

A dark purple light flashed by out of nowhere, curling around the air – the head of the light merging with the tail – and then vanishing.

Huang Shaotian's heart pounded from the close call. That was the Warlock's Binding Curse. If it wasn't for his quick reaction, Troubling Rain would've been tied up by that.

"What do you mean? We purposefully gave you a shot at him, y'know?" In the chat, Fang Rui replied to Wei Chen.

"Look at what wonderful people we are, giving you a chance to show off in front of your disciple. Where's your gratitude?" Ye Xiu added.

"Fine, thank you, you dumbasses," Wei Chen retorted.

The audience watched on, dumbstruck. Happy's in-team atmosphere... was quite something.

## **Chapter 1416: Aid**

So in the end, did Ye Xiu and Fang Rui fail to stop Huang Shaotian, or did they purposefully lead Huang Shaotian into Wei Chen's attack range?

Pan Lin looked at Li Yibo; Li Yibo looked at the sky.

Ye Xiu, Fang Rui, and Wei Chen's trash talking had completely disrupted his judgement. He rarely dared to make comments on Happy's actions, and now he was even more afraid to speak up.

It wasn't just the commentator and guest whose judgements were disrupted, but also Huang Shaotian himself.

Was it a trap?

No matter how confident someone was, they would inevitably have such uncertainties at times like this. The path he had planned out for Triple Slash immediately became foggy. If Windward Formation was hiding there, then Qiao Yifan's One Inch Ash or Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain might be ready to ambush him too.

Would a ghost boundary suddenly appear in front, or would cannonfire envelop the area?

Huang Shaotian, the expert opportunist, conducted himself resolutely, but in this moment, he began to hesitate.

However, there was no other way out.

Ye Xiu and Fang Rui were closing in from behind, so no matter what was waiting for him ahead, he had to try.

In that moment, Huang Shaotian understood that he had probably really fallen into their trap, or perhaps he had made a move that forced his opponents to move their pieces. Either way, he wasn't in a good situation at all.

It seemed like he'd have to wait and see if there was an opportunity to act!

Triple Slash continued forth, Troubling Rain's form merging with the sword light around him. However, Huang Shaotian couldn't solely focus on the path ahead, because the two behind him both had ranged skills, so Huang Shaotian had to make sure to guard his own back as well.

He turned around. Speak of the devil!

Boundless Sea raised his hands, forming a loose grab. This was the position for Cloud-Grasping Fist.

As a Blade Master, Huang Shaotian had no way of interrupting it, and it wasn't going to be easy dodging Cloud-Grasping Fist at this range. The Cloud-Grasping Fist's qi energy had yet to fully form. Everything could only be determined from the moment the skill was fired. In that moment, the Qi Master would have to use their hands to form the skill, and that was also when the direction of the Cloud-Grasping Fist would be locked.

As for Lord Grim? The Myriad Manifestations Umbrella was held parallel to the ground, the umbrella tip drawn back and energy gathered at the mouth of gun that was exposed. He was using the Launcher skill set into the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella's gun form, Laser Rifle. It was a charged shot too.

That was when Huang Shaotian noticed a change in lighting. He spared a moment to look upwards, seeing dark purple clouds gathering overhead, getting thicker and thicker. Warlock skill Chaotic Rain was prepared to fall.

Even as skilled as Huang Shaotian was, he was at a bit of a loss as to what to do in this situation.

Ye Xiu, Fang Rui, Wei Chen.

The three characters simultaneously attacked, and none of these skills were instant. One was charged, the other two cast, and they were all placed clearly in front of him.

Three skills. Which would activate first, and which would activate later?



Not even Huang Shaotian could figure that out! Preparing their attacks so openly like that... It didn't have the abruptness of instant attacks, but it created huge psychological pressure. Even with his incredible reaction speed, their little trick had Huang Shaotian struggling.

It's coming!

Boundless Sea's hands suddenly slammed closed and Cloud Grasping Fist's invisible qi energy flew out. But at the same time, the muzzle of Lord Grim's Myriad Manifestations Umbrella flashed, Laser Rifle roaring out. However, the moment the laser shot forth, Lord Grim shook the muzzle a little. This small detail had Huang Shaotian unable to figure out where the Laser Rifle was actually aimed.

What a bastard!!!

Huang Shaotian was so harried that he could only trash talk to himself.

Roll!

Troubling Rain rolled across the ground, but Huang Shaotian had no idea if he could really dodge all of these attacks. By now, he was acting entirely according to his instinct.

Boom!

Laser Rifle brushed by, a miss!

As for Boundless Sea's Cloud Grasping Fist, it had been fully completed by now, and Troubling Rain's form was still within range. Cloud Grasping Fist... missed as well!

Huang Shaotian felt his spirits soar, but then suddenly, there was a light "splash" sound that came from Troubling Rain's shoulder. Like an omen, it was followed by a relentless downpour of rain. Cursed purple droplets of Chaotic Rain splashed onto the ground and Troubling Rain.

In the end he failed to dodge them all completely!

Huang Shaotian sighed, not bothering to rush to act.

Chaotic Rain did very little damage. The crux of the skill was the Confusion that it could inflict.

Under Confusion, the character wouldn't go crazy under the system's control, but the orders that the player inputted would be messed up.

Trying to make the character go left might would make it go right; trying to make it go forwards might instead have it backing up.

If it was just that, then things would be easy to deal with. With training, it wouldn't be hard to learn how to play with reversed controls, but the problem was that it wasn't so easy to deal with Glory's Confusion. The reversed controls came and went at random; that was truly called confusing, and there was no way to truly master it. With the same reason, it was impossible to execute skills with precision either.

The only thing you count count on to counter a Confusion was luck.

However, was luck enough to deal with his current opponents?

In that moment, Huang Shaotian fell into despair. His plan had been completely ruined. Not only had his reconnaissance mission failed, he hadn't been able to lure Happy into Blue Rain's ambush either.

And he had no choice but to ask for aid from his teammates. This wasn't a time to let pride and dignity get in the way. If he died like this, then it would be a huge and direct blow to his team. Meanwhile, there was a far better, though uncertain, chance with letting Blue Rain charge in.

Huang Shaotian chaotically controlled his character, but no matter confused or not, he had to keep his character moving. He couldn't just stay there like a sitting duck. At the same time, he was already composing a message in the team chat. He had to explain the situation in as much detail as possible while requesting aid.

Providing aid didn't mean that as soon as Blue Rain's members arrived, Troubling Rain would be able to escape danger. Happy would naturally do their best to prevent him from being saved. This was a kind of pin, and Blue Rain would need a plan to counter this pin.

Hopefully they'll get here on time...

Huang Shaotian sent the message. Uncharacteristically, there wasn't a single unnecessary word. He briefly and clearly explained his situation.

"Isn't it a bit late to have only just sent a message?"

Who would've thought that someone would reply as soon as his message appeared?

Then, a white light swirled around Troubling Rain and cleansed his Confusion.

This was the Paladin skill, Purify, and there was only one Paladin in today's match: Soul Speaker, played by Blue Rain's Xu Jingxi.

"I found the old captain!" Lu Hanwen's message popped up in Blue Rain's chat, just the sight of it eliciting joy in them.

"Kill" Yu Wenzhou's order was curt and direct, seeming cruel and emotionless. In reality, with his hand speed, he would naturally make sure to use as few words as possible when giving orders in battle. Cruel and emotionless... that was called thinking too much.

The sound of a blade piercing the air rang out at once.

A Blade Master's swordplay was generally very swift, but Lu Hanwen was using a greatsword. This attack of his was imposing, comparable to Berserker.

Is everyone here already? Huang Shaotian didn't stop his controls. He knew that his teammates had probably already been preparing to give support, otherwise they wouldn't be able to arrive so timely. However, he didn't have the time or energy to be moved about it now. Blue Rain's aid was probably within Happy's expectations. If so, then what tricks had Happy prepared against Blue Rain's full team?

"Careful, Hanwen!" Huang Shaotian could only hear the sound of sword swings; he couldn't see what was happening over there. However, considering his understanding of his old captain Wei Chen, there was no way that cunny, slippery old fox would make dealing with him easy. It wasn't a trap or anything, was it?

"I'm keeping watch!" That was when a single reply from Yu Wenzhou dispersed Huang Shaotian's worries. With him keeping watch, then everything was under control, right?

"Over here, Huang Shao!" Zheng Xuan's Spitfire Bullet Rain appeared in Huang Shaotian's field of vision, throwing skills in the opposite direction of where Huang Shaotian was facing to help provide cover for his escape.

Blue Rain was displaying their teamwork, so what about Happy? How would they deal with this situation that they should've been prepared for?

All the spectators looked on awkwardly.

At such a crucial moment of time, Happy's team members were still relentlessly trash talking Wei Chen, reminding him that it wouldn't look good if his junior to defeated him.

"You're twice his age!" Ye Xiu reminded.

"More than," Fang Rui corrected.

"If you get cut down so easily then that would be quite the embarrassment," Ye Xiu said.

"Indeed."

This time, Wei Chen didn't reply. Naturally, this wasn't because he was alright with being mocked like this, but it was because he couldn't spare any effort into arguing with these two while Lu Hanwen's greatsword Blade Master was harassing him. Plus, he could clearly see another character standing not too far off, watching on predatorily.

Swoksaar.

The memories of his past resurfaced.

That winter over ten years ago, Glory launched. The mass promotion of the game had all those online gamers on the edges of their seats. Wei Chen, even now, could still see that winding line of people, all waiting to buy their first Glory account card.

It was on that day, standing in that line, after waiting for a full four hours, that Wei Chen successfully obtained an account card. Then, this card was given an identity: Warlock Swoksaar.

That was the very same Swoksaar in front of him.

Standing not too far, but not too close, as if watching the world below from the heavens, like a general on the field, always keeping track of everything that was happening.

The change in player seemed to have changed the character as well.

This was Swoksaar, yet it was no longer his Swoksaar. He had a marvelous successor, who had managed to gain glory far beyond what Wei Chen had accomplished.

All those years ago, he was the captain, the ace player, but against this boy who could count as his student, he had lost.

As for today? The position of captain, the ace, had all been taken by the other, while he had fallen from grace. He was late to the game, so late that he broke the record for the oldest player in the scene. However, this time, he was the challenger. From that day onwards, he knew that there would come such a day. Like an usurper, he rose to the challenge against this man who stood at the top, who was no longer a boy.

## **Chapter 1417: Comeback**

Windward Formation, Swoksaar.

The two Warlocks hadn't even exchanged blows, yet there already seemed to be sparks in the air.

As for Lu Hanwen? He was the most active player in this battle. But in comparison to Wei Chen and Yu Wenzhou, this young player was lacking a storyplayer. Pan Lin and Li Yibo were currently ignoring his plays, instead focusing on the two Warlocks.

In fact, because of their access to spectator controls, the audience had a far better understanding of the adjustments being done made by both teams than anyone on the field. Even so, they didn't know what the result of these changes would result in. The fans of both teams were filled with anxiety.

When the battle was intense, the audience didn't know where to look.

On the other hand, the viewers tuning into the broadcast had an much easier time. Wherever the broadcast picked was what they got to see. The difficult decision-making was made by to the cameraman.

Right now, in order to coordinate with Pan Lin and Li Yibo, the camera focused on those three players.

But no matter how much hype was given to the two Warlocks of different generations, the fact that Lu Hanwen was the most active player at the moment could not be changed.

The greatsword-wielding Flowing Sword displayed a frightening aggression. How would Wei Chen respond?

"Uh... Wei Chen's Windward Formation is... running around the rock in circles," Pan Lin tried hard to make Wei Chen's response seem like a brilliant play, but reality was cruel. His attempt only made his description seem flimsy.

"Very effective pathing..." Pan Lin added in a comment and then looked at Li Yibo in desperation.

Help me, senior!

Pan Lin hinted. He truly had no idea how to glamorize the situation.

"Haha," Li Yibo laughed, "It's very crude, but he's dodging Lu Hanwen's offense efficiently, no?"

"The viewers, who haven't been playing Glory for long, might not be familiar with Wei Chen's style. How can I describe it? His desire for victory is extremely strong. He doesn't care about how he looks on stage. In order to win, he'll always choose the most appropriate option," Li Yibo said.

Pan Lin gasped with admiration.

To put it briefly, isn't he just saying "he'll do anything to win"? But from the way Li Yibo described it, this sort of unpleasant remark was transformed into high praise.

"Lu Hanwen is playing adorably too, haha!" Pan Lin quickly went along with Li Yibo. It was a playoffs match that could end a team's season, yet he unexpectedly threw out the word "adorable" as a description. That was the reality of things though. Wei Chen and Lu Hanwen, one old and one young, were running around a rock as if it were a children's game. The word "adorable" was quite a fitting adjective, no?

"Yu Wenzhou is very calm. It looks like he has no intentions of getting involved," Li Yibo said.

"Uh, I think he's probably considering the overall situation. Not all of Happy's members have acted yet!" Pan Lin said.

"Let's take a look at the situation over there..." Li Yibo said.

Watching two people run around in circles wasn't very exciting. The hyped showdown between Blue Rain's two Warlocks of different generations never occurred. As the scene switched to the other end of the battlefield, Pan Lin and Li Yibo were starting to lose interest in it.

"Zheng Xuan is providing cover for Huang Shaotian's retreat," Pan Lin started with the central theme of the battle taking place here.

Boom boom boom boom!

Although Zheng Xuan's Spitfire wasn't as colorful as Zhang Jiale's Hundred Blossoms style, every Spitfire drew on it to a certain extent. Zheng Xuan provided a cover of bright light for Troubling Rain, while attacking Ye Xiu and Fang Rui to slow down their pursuit.

"You bastard, you're so enthusiastic today!" The pressure on Huang Shaotian had lessened significantly. The usually washed out Zheng Xuan was currently very focused, which made him feel even more gratified. Sure enough, every member of Team Blue Rain was someone who could be counted on!

"HS" Zheng Xuan replied with just two letters, but those familiar with him immediately recognized it as his favorite two words.

"How stressful? Is that it? No need to be so stressed!" Xu Jingxi's Soul Speaker was nearby. Troubling Rain and Bullet Rain were both inside his healing range. He had confidence that as long as he wasn't disturbed, he could preserve their lives. If it wasn't for them not having a full picture of Happy's arrangements, Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain could turn around and counterattack with the support from Zheng Xuan's Bullet Rain and his Soul Speaker.

But without enough information, fighting a battle that could determine the winner would not be a wise decision. As a result, Blue Rain did their usual tactic: defend first and then counterattack.

Thus, with help from Zheng Xuan and Xu Jingxi, Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain steadily retreated. Just when it looked like he would join up with Bullet Rain, a powerful beam of light descended from the sky.

Satellite Beam!

This attack had come out of nowhere. However, Huang Shaotian and Zheng Xian reacted quickly, promptly dodging to the side. The Satellite Beam crashed to the surface of the ground, sending up billows of sand. Four smaller beams split off and rotated, sweeping up even more sand. The sand unexpectedly gave the Satellite Beam an additional effect, sending clouds of sand into the air. Traces of the Satellite Beam's path could be seen. The rhythm between Huang Shaotian and Zheng Xuan had been sent into disarray.

Satellite Beam? Launcher? Su Mucheng?

So Happy is without a healer?

That was the first thought that flashed into Huang Shaotian's mind. Afterwards, he looked at the rooftop of a dilapidated building. Because of the attack, Dancing Rain had exposed her position.

Then, only Qiao Yifan's One Inch Ash remained.

Where was he?

After the Ice Boundary, he disappeared. Was he waiting for an opportunity to mount a sneak attack, or had he run off to trade places with the healer?

No matter the case, this was a golden opportunity! The other side didn't have a healer. Blue Rain could go on the offensive and force trades with Happy to lower their health!

Opportunity!

This was an opportunity!

Glory's greatest opportunist began to fire up facing this opportunity. He forgot about the exhaustion from facing Happy alone, replacing it with a burning passion.

"Counterattack!" Huang Shaotian roared in the chat, directly using the word counterattack to show just how great his determination was. After typing out these words, his Troubling Rain turned around and headed towards Lord Grim and Boundless Sea.

"Zheng Xuan, follow me! Healer, provide cover!" Huang Shaotian quickly gave out orders.

On the battlefield, the captain had the highest authority, but the shotcaller couldn't micromanage every player down to the details like marionettes. In particular, Team Blue Rain's captain was limited by his hand speed. They had never witnessed their screens being flooded from commands given by their shotcaller like Thunderclap's Xiao Shiqin did. What they most often saw instead was Huang Shaotian flooding the screen with trash talk.

Because of this reason, Team Blue Rain required each member to have strong tactical awareness. In situations without many orders from their captain, the team members had to coordinate and make decisions on their own to achieve Yu Wenzhou's strategic goal.

And this time, Yu Wenzhou's strategic goal was to provide cover for Huang Shaotian's retreat and then reconvene with the rest of the team. But now, Huang Shaotian made a change to it and blew the horn for a counterattack.

There was no time for a discussion. Seeing that Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain had already turned around, even if Zheng Xuan and Xu Jingxi had different thoughts, they had no choice but to coordinate with Huang Shaotian. Team Blue Rain was just like this. They would always choose to advance or retreat together.

The two sides crossed fire.

Zheng Xuan and Xu Jingxi immediately understood Huang Shaotian's intentions. Happy didn't seem to have a healer, so the two instantly became bolder. But where was Happy's fifth player? Had he gone to switch with their healer? Or was he waiting somewhere for them to fall for a trap?

The two became aware of this issue. They paid attention to the terrain and the movements of Ye Xiu and Fang Rui.

2v2.

Ye Xiu and Fang Rui had support from Su Mucheng's Launcher. Huang Shaotian and Zhueng Xuan had support from Xu Jingxi's Paladin.

Happy had the stronger offense, but the defense provided by Blue Rain's healer made up for it. In the end, the one who would deal more damage would be Blue Rain.

Yu Wenzhou still didn't make a move. When Huang Shaotian made the call to counterattack, he continued to calmly observe the situation.

Where was Happy's fifth player?

He was still concerned about this issue. He went over the terrain again and again in his mind, but he couldn't think of a place where a Phantom Demon could launch an explosive ambush. This place was an ancient city, but because it was in ruins, it was all out in the open. In this environment, there wasn't a location where a Phantom Demon could instantly lock up the place with ghost boundaries.

As a result, if a Phantom Demon were to make a move, it should have happened long ago. An ambush was not a smart decision. In this situation, a Phantom Demon wasn't enough to make up for the loss of a healer.

The Phantom Demon should have gone to trade places with the healer. In that case, this really is a great opportunity.

Yu Wenzhou finally made his mind. He wouldn't stay on the defense and be their final path of retreat. However, who would have thought that at this moment, Wei Chen's Windward Formation would suddenly make his move.

Windward Formation hadn't broken away from Lu Hanwen's Flowing Cloud. He had someone at his heels already, yet now he wanted to add in Yu Wenzhou's Swoksaar to the fight? 1v2?

The spectators were stunned.

Was Wei Chen really that incredible? A player who could 1v2 two All-Star players?

But soon afterwards, because he had been busy attacking Swoksaar, he didn't have time to dodge Flowing Cloud's attack. Windward Formation crashed to the ground, tumbling away.

What's going on?

Everyone frowned. This Wei Chen didn't seem to have the ability to 1v2? What was he thinking?

But then, they saw Windward Formation continue rolling as if he couldn't stop rolling, all the way until he vanished.

Lu Hanwen had been surprised because the attack had connected too easily. When he came back to his senses, he hastily gave chase.

"Watch out!!" Seeing Windward Formation roll out of sight, Yu Wenzhou immediately gave a warning.

But in the end, he was still a half beat too late.

Hexagram Prison.

### **Chapter 1418: The Familiar Swoksaar**

The curse runes shimmered in the air, swiftly forming a prison. Lu Hanwen had been too hasty in his chase, and by the time he saw Yu Wenzhou's warning, it was already too late. Flowing Cloud was instantly trapped by the Hexagram Prison.

Seeing that the attack landed successfully, Wei Chen let out a sigh of relief. After all, there was a reason this player had made it to the All-Stars even at such a young age. If Wei Chen hadn't fully taken advantage of the map surroundings, he really wouldn't have been able to get rid of this kid.

Hexagram Prison, the number one Root skill. When maxed at Level 75, the effect lasted nine seconds, and even more frightening, there was no way to dispel this curse. It wasn't considered a status skill, so skills like Purify, Expel, Focus, and so on all had no effect. Similarly, no matter how high a character's Spirit stat was, no matter how good their Resistance, they had no way of breaking out of the Hexagram Prison early.

There was only one way to get out of a Hexagram Prison early: kill the caster. But right now, that didn't look to be possible. Lu Hanwen's Flowing Cloud would be spending the full nine seconds sitting in the Hexagram Prison.

For Wei Chen, these nine seconds were extremely precious. At last, he had nine seconds free from the youth who'd been furiously chasing and killing him all this way. But it didn't look like he'd be able to take it easy, because Yu Wenzhou's Swoksaar was already beginning to move.

Eight years.

It had already been a full eight years since the last time Wei Chen used Swoksaar.

In eight years, Swoksaar had risen from Level 55 to Level 75. New equipment, new skills. Wei Chen shouldn't be familiar with this current Swoksaar – and yet, he was very familiar.



Because, in the end, this character was the part of Glory he cared about the most. Even though he hadn't touched him since then, he still paid attention to Swoksaar's growth. In every match, Wei Chen could always pick out any adjustments that had been made, no matter how small. Just like this, Wei Chen watched as the character's new controller slowly erased the traces that he'd left behind, and replaced them with his own stamps.

"Idiot!"

Every change that Swoksaar went through would provoke another round of disdainful cursing from Wei Chen. He would often turn to the guys next to him and look down on these changes for being so noobish, for not understanding Warlocks at all.

His little followers all revolved around him, so of course they believed whatever he said.

But what about himself?

When there were many people around him, Wei Chen would curse like this. But when he was alone? He could only smile bitterly.

In his heart, he knew all too well that he was simply unhappy to watch the traces he'd left on Swoksaar slowly get wiped away.

And in the end, even the weapon in Swoksaar's hand had been changed.

Curse of Destruction?

The name of the new scepter sounded both arrogant and cultured. With this, the final trace that Wei Chen had left on Swoksaar was erased, and he could sit still no longer. After that, Windward Formation gained the weapon Death's Hand.

Death's Hand. This was the Silver weapon that Swoksaar had used in the very beginning. And now, Wei Chen had revived it.

He picked up the weapon that Swoksaar had abandoned. To many people, this made his Windward Formation seem like a cheap knockoff of Swoksaar.

But Wei Chen did not care. If the character ID "Swoksaar" hadn't been locked to the original character, he would have called his new Warlock "Swoksaar" as well.

Wei Chen didn't completely understand why he felt the need to compete like this. He probably still just felt unfulfilled!

And now, it was time for all this to come to a close.

Wei Chen knew very well that with his current condition and skill, there was no way he could appear in all of the intense playoff matches.

Facing Blue Rain, this might be his final performance on this stage. And this battle was one in which he could show his strength to the fullest.

Because he understood Swoksaar.

Even if it wasn't the one that had been built for him, he still understood this character, better than anyone else.

Swoksaar was casting.

It was Curse Arrows.

This low-level skill, given to Swoksaar, whose cast speed was +34, was so fast that it was practically an instant-cast.

So fast!

But this wasn't all.

If it was just a cast, then Swoksaar's Curse Arrows should be even faster than this.

The slight delay was because he let the skill charge for just a moment. Curse Arrows was a skill that could be charged, and the longer it charged, the balls of light would multiply, and more arrows would be fired in the end.

If the skill was used immediately, there would be thirteen arrows; if charged to the fullest, the number of arrows could reach twenty-six. And Swoksaar's pause just now to let the skill charge would push the number of arrows to fifteen.

Wei Chen knew all of this too well. Windward Formation calmly dodged this attack from Swoksaar, and even the controller now behind Swoksaar, Yu Wenzhou, was slightly surprised.

Because the opponent had dodged too calmly.

Such a slight charge, producing two extra arrows, was normally very easily overlooked. To wait until noticing the extra arrows and then dodging would be an on-the-spot reaction and movement, whether or not they actually managed to dodge. But Windward Formation's calm movement clearly revealed that he knew the attack would be like this from the very beginning.

He saw through it!

Just from the way in which Windward Formation had dodged the attack, Yu Wenzhou could make judgments to this extent. And at this moment, all of the members of the audience, including commentators Pan Lin and Li Yibo, hadn't even noticed that this Curse Arrows had hidden such a trap. The two of them only praised how fast Swoksaar's cast was, without even realizing that slight charging delay.

The attack had been unsuccessful, but Swoksaar stopped moving.

Yu Wenzhou still had doubt in his heart. He couldn't tell what Happy's plan was, nor could he guess Wei Chen's intention. Was he really trying to stall two players by himself? It wasn't that Yu Wenzhou didn't respect Wei Chen, but the fact simply was that Wei Chen couldn't manage that.

The Hexagram Prison trapped Lu Hanwen for nine seconds, but what did that accomplish? Without the firepower of other players to support, these precious nine seconds were slipping by without Lu

Hanwen's Flowing Cloud suffering any damage. After these nine seconds, how would the situation change?

Yu Wenzhou decided to watch a little longer.

As expected, still so calm.

Over these eight years, Wei Chen had never stopped paying attention to Swoksaar, and so at the same time, he gained an extremely clear understanding of the player behind Swoksaar. Furthermore, he had interacted with this new controller early on. He would never forget that laughable presence in the training camp, who had, during one ordinary day of training, defeated him.

This calm youth would become the foundation of Blue Rain's future.

From that day on, Wei Chen acknowledged this, and reality proved that he hadn't been wrong. Even though Huang Shaotian was the top attacker of present-day Blue Rain, Blue Rain's strategy, Blue Rain's style and rhythm, were all decided because of Yu Wenzhou's presence.

Perhaps it was precisely because he could maintain calm and clarity at every moment that Huang Shaotian's opportunistic style could become so refined and exciting. Because of this foundation, Huang Shaotian could walk on the blade's edge with complete confidence.

At this time, Huang Shaotian was already leading an assault, Lu Hanwen's Flowing Cloud was trapped in Hexagram Prison, but Yu Wenzhou was still unhurried as he continued to analyze the situation. If he couldn't understand, then he wouldn't make any rash movements.

Curse Arrows!

Wei Chen fired back with the same skill. His Windward Formation couldn't cast as quickly as Swoksaar, but a low-level skill like Curse Arrows couldn't take too much time. He didn't let it charge, instead releasing it immediately. Death's Hand swung outward, the purple spheres of light spun and traced an arc in the air, and just like that the Curse Arrows fanned outward.

"Wei Chen's technique really shows off his experience!" Li Yibo exclaimed. Maybe the old generals couldn't compete with the youths in terms of hand speed, but in terms of technical control, that was something that was truly refined over time.

Actually, reasonably speaking, Wei Chen wasn't an old general in the typical sense, having retired for N years before returning. To return after having a large blank space in his career, calling him an old general was less accurate than calling him a rookie.

Wei Chen had to readjust to the rhythm of the Pro League matches like a rookie. But everyone knew that in the regular season, he'd appeared pathetically few times. Only until the end of the season did he appear in consecutive matches. Even though he hadn't had many appearances, it had been enough.

Because an old general didn't need to adjust to the rhythm. They simply needed to rediscover it.

Rediscover the rhythm, rediscover victory!

"Beautiful!" Pan Lin offered his own praise after Li Yibo's exclamation. The Curse Arrows spread out evenly in a fan shape, like a peacock opening its tail. No Warlock player could do this any more perfectly.

But was that really the case?

In the eyes of the audience, it seemed so.

But in Yu Wenzhou's eyes...

There's an opening!

In practically the very instant that the orbs fired the Curse Arrows, Yu Wenzhou already saw an opening.

The Curse Arrows were evenly distributed, but the rhythm wasn't entirely even. They were spaced evenly on the left and right, but what about in front and behind?

In front and behind, that meant before and after.

There was a difference before and after, leaving an opening that could be traveled through.

Turn, move horizontally!

Yu Wenzhou's controls couldn't be fast, but they would always be that accurate.

It clearly looked like he was about to be struck by the Curse Arrows, but in the end, he seemed to pass right through them. Swoksaar remained standing, and that fan arrangement of arrows maintained its shape without a single arrow going missing. Not a single one had hit.

"He dodged them?" Even Li Yibo was dumbfounded.

Yes, he dodged it, but he only dodged the Curse Arrows.

Windward Formation's new cast was already beginning, magic energy swirling around his Death's Hand.

Death's Door?

Yu Wenzhou was stunned. He wanted to use Death's Door, facing an opponent head-on like this?

Even if he had the cast speed of his Swoksaar, this bit of time wasn't enough!

He had to interrupt it. Swoksaar tossed a Soul Slice in that direction. But Yu Wenzhou wasn't about to sit back and relax. Wei Chen, no matter what, shouldn't be playing like this.

Yu Wenzhou turned his camera view, and quickly discovered another Windward Formation, casting a spell.

It was Shadow Clone Technique!

Yu Wenzhou instantly understood. The one that was right in front of him was obviously a clone. Just when Swoksaar had turned his body to duck through the Curse Arrows, Windward Formation had used this Ninja skill.

The Windward Formation over there was the one he truly needed to interrupt.

But, not enough...

The range wasn't enough!

Windward Formation's cast range was extremely large, even larger than that of Swoksaar's. If he wanted to interrupt it, Swoksaar would have to walk forward a bit.

But it was too late.

The distance of two body-lengths decided the success of a skill.

### **Chapter 1419: Every Means Possible**

Yu Wenzhou's hands weren't fast, but his mind was extremely so. In an instant, he analyzed many situations with great clarity.

Like Wei Chen, he couldn't be more familiar with the Warlock class. There wasn't much match data on Windward Formation, so reports on this character weren't incredibly comprehensive, but things like cast speed and cast range could be judged just from one a single match. After that, even if the character improved, these stats would only increase, not decrease.

According to all these known reports, Yu Wenzhou now made an instantaneous judgment: he was too late.

He even went a step further and recognized that this was a playstyle specifically meant to counter himself and Swoksaar. If another Warlock player had been standing here, Wei Chen might not have succeeded this time. But it was him, and it was Swoksaar.

The player's traits, the character's stats, they had all been thoroughly studied. These few moments had been tailored to deal with Yu Wenzhou and Swoksaar. Nothing had been wasted, and just like this, the powerful attack Death's Door was cast.

How would the situation change after nine seconds?

Yu Wenzhou had wondered this question earlier.

Now he knew, they didn't need to wait nine seconds. Right now, with this Death's Door, he was about to fall into a fairly disastrous position.

Far away, Windward Formation now finished casting, and curse energy gathered around his Death's Hand. Behind the flashing light, Yu Wenzhou could see Windward Formation's face.

This was exactly the face in his memories: still young, their first captain, Wei Chen. The Wei Chen of today, already over thirty years old, now had more than a few lines on his face from the passing years.

Yu Wenzhou watched silently, unmoving, looking as though he had given up.

Wei Chen jolted, but he had already finished summoning Death's Door. Tendrils of darkness shot out from within the door, immediately wrapping around Swoksaar, but even now, Yu Wenzhou didn't make any movements.

Correct. None at all.

The darkness caught Swoksaar, dragging him inside the Death's Door, but Swoksaar didn't resist this process at all.

And after that, the attack of Death's Door on Swoksaar ended.

"Fuck!" Wei Chen couldn't help but curse.

This was Yu Wenzhou's calm, his ability to clearly anticipate all that would happen. He understood that his own hand speed wasn't enough to deal with the Death's Door and Wei Chen standing intently next to it. So, he didn't try to circle around, simply allowing this powerful attack to land. He traded 15% of his health to end Wei Chen's offensive.

Yes, it ended.

Wei Chen boasted of how well he understood Yu Wenzhou's style, but he didn't anticipate that this steady player would actually use this kind of sacrificial strategy. None of the follow-up attacks that he'd prepared were fit to deal with this kind of situation. Death's Door was successfully cast, but it ended too quickly, leaving Wei Chen grasping for a next move.

Soul Slice!

Wei Chen could only use an instant-cast skill on instinct to try and continue his offensive. But the fact that Death's Door vanished so quickly made his heart feel empty.

Soul Slice, was it?

Yu Wenzhou was watching Windward Formation's movement, and he easily dodged this attack. He knew that Wei Chen was surprised at this moment, because he had purposely created this surprise.

He saw how well Wei Chen understood himself and Swoksaar, so in this kind of situation, any judgment and decision based on his style would definitely be within the opponent's calculations. At a time like this, he had to take a path that he normally wouldn't.

And so, Yu Wenzhou did this. He took an unusual action to instantly break the judgments that Wei Chen had made based on his deep understanding.

Even the highest-level experts might not have been able to notice this battle of wits.

Only Yu Wenzhou himself could deeply feel the familiarity that Wei Chen had toward himself and Swoksaar. That Death's Door just now had truly forced him into a position where he had no other option.

But even though he managed to do something outside of Wei Chen's predictions, he had still ultimately been unable to escape from this Death's Door, and Swoksaar did take 15% in damage. This Death's Door had pushed him to desperation, even if he'd used a surprising move to swiftly climb out of this desperation.

He'd disrupted Wei Chen's rhythm. But what next?

Looking at this opponent that completely understood him, Yu Wenzhou felt a great pressure upon him.

Flaming Arrow?

Yu Wenzhou saw Windward Formation begin to use this skill.

This was another low-level Warlock skill. Even though it required a cast, for these high-end professional characters, the cast time was practically instantaneous. Windward Formation's staff gave a slight wave, and this Flaming Arrow already formed. Black smoke burned into the shape of an arrow, and with a shake of Windward Formation's staff, the arrow flew forward.

But, wasn't this distance still a bit too far?

It wasn't difficult for Yu Wenzhou to dodge. The range of the magic attacks from Elementalists or Warlocks was always be inferior to the range of a bullet. Magic attacks with only this much range weren't suppressive enough at the pro level.

But after waving out this skill, Wei Chen didn't pay any more attention to Yu Wenzhou and Swoksaar. Windward Formation suddenly turned, and Death's Hand pointed toward Flowing Cloud.

Lu Hanwen's Flowing Cloud had already escaped from the Hexagram Prison, and he immediately came charging toward Windward Formation.

He didn't expect that Windward Formation would suddenly turn to face him.

Death's Hand swirled with the light of a curse.

Lu Hanwen frantically controlled his Flowing Cloud to dodge to the side, but that black light flew right toward the direction toward which he had tried to dodge.

But Lu Hanwen was good. Even though he was walking straight into the attack, his reaction speed and control were top-tier. Flowing Cloud ducked to the side once again, and that mass of black light hit only air.

Wei Chen was helpless.

Dealing with this youngster was entirely different from dealing with Yu Wenzhou. Right now, he regretted that Death's Door had already ended, because if Yu Wenzhou had prolonged its duration, then it would have served as a threat toward Lu Hanwen's Flowing Cloud as well.

Yu Wenzhou bold choice had completely disrupted Wei Chen's original plan. 1v2, control Lu Hanwen for nine seconds, and then force Yu Wenzhou to suffer a powerful attack. To be honest, this was already an impressive performance. Most other players, if put in this position, probably would not have been able to play a more beautiful nine seconds.

But he wasn't satisfied.

His original plan wasn't just nine seconds.

"Hanwen, go over there." Seeing that Lu Hanwen had escaped, he immediately sent this message in the chat.

The showdown between the old and new generation of Warlocks, this was a topic that the audience greatly enjoyed seeing, but the players weren't obliged to cooperate. They were playing a match, not putting on a show. Yu Wenzhou directly sending Lu Hanwen away right now certainly wasn't to

cooperate with the hot topic. He simply did this because it seemed that Wei Chen's plan had been to stall both of them by himself. Even though Yu Wenzhou still didn't know what his end goal was, but preventing this from happening would at least hinder Happy's plans.

Huang Shaotian's side was relying on their healer to put pressure on Happy, and they needed a powerful attacker. Lu Hanwen fit this responsibility better than Yu Wenzhou. So, he had Lu Hanwen go and help them. His faceoff with Wei Chen was therefore only a typical, logical, strategic decision.

Wei Chen, of course, couldn't accept this.

"Little brat where are you running!" Seeing that Flowing Cloud wanted to escape, Wei Chen refused to give up.

But he could only yell. Yu Wenzhou, of course, was covering Lu Hanwen's retreat. Yu Wenzhou used a Flaming Arrow, returning the skill that Wei Chen had just tried to use against him.

Wei Chen wanted to stop Flowing Cloud from leaving, but he wasn't going to have Windward Formation go and brawl it out! Of course, he would be relying on casting spells. But Swoksaar's Flaming Arrow flew over, preventing Windward Formation from casting.

But Windward Formation actually began to rush forward, and as he dodged this Flaming Arrow, he swung his hand and tossed out an object.

Puff!

Purple smoke filled the air.

After the Shadow Clone Technique, Windward Formation demonstrated yet another low-level Ninja skill – Ninja Tool: Smoke Bomb.

The silhouettes of Windward Formation and Flowing Cloud were swiftly swallowed by the smoke. Lu Hanwen's reaction was intelligent, with swordlight illuminating the smoke. Even as he protected himself, it allowed Flowing Cloud to continue to advance.

Chaotic Rain!

Yu Wenzhou also controlled Swoksaar to begin a high-level cast. He couldn't lock onto Windward Formation's position right now, but if Windward Formation didn't come to stop him and insisted on casting a curse on Flowing Cloud, then he wouldn't have time to jump out of range of a Chaotic Rain.

In the smoke, Flowing Cloud's greatsword swung every which way, seeming invincible.

Puff!

Amidst the fog, drops of blood scattered. Finally, it seemed that Windward Formation was hit. But quickly after, with a "pa" sound, the swordlight stilled. It was still present, but it was no longer moving forward.

This was... Spike Trap?

Even though Yu Wenzhou hadn't seen it, he could make a good guess.



Wei Chen had suffered a slash, but he managed to have Windward Formation use the Thief skill Spike Trap and halt Flowing Cloud's offense.

But by this time, the Chaotic Rain was already pattering down. It didn't look like Windward Formation, who had just suffered a slashing attack, had time to escape from the smoke.

"Wei Chen is really working hard!!" Pan Lin exclaimed, feeling moved and saddened.

Wei Chen wasn't playing a pretty match. He seemed desperate as he did everything possible to contain Flowing Cloud.

Running circles around the boulder. Sent rolling to the side with a slash. And now he barely stole the chance to place this Spike Trap, under the cover of a Smoke Bomb, still hurting from a sword injury.

Wei Chen wasn't fighting an easy battle. Everyone could see how he was struggling to maintain the situation.

In a direct battle against Lu Hanwen, he would almost certainly lose, but by using these endless little tricks, he worked hard to try and stall both Lu Hanwen and Yu Wenzhou here.

But his hard work would come to an end with the fall of this Chaotic Rain.

Flowing Cloud was still stuck, but Yu Wenzhou was already prepared to have Swoksaar come over to maintain control of Windward Formation.

He had Swoksaar to move forward. But then, Swoksaar rolled to the left.

"What is Yu Wenzhou doing?" Everyone was stunned. This roll seemed to be completely pointless. Had he noticed some unrecognized danger? Even the audience, with their omniscient view, hadn't seen anything.

But Yu Wenzhou's reaction was faster and more accurate than the audience members with omniscient view.

Confused?

Yu Wenzhou looked at Swoksaar's status in shock.

A moment later, he already realized what had happened.

Magic Mirror. It was Magic Mirror.

The Warlock skill Magic Mirror reflected all side effects of a magic attack. Amidst the smoke, not only had Windward Formation laid down a Spike Trap for Flowing Cloud, he had also hidden a Magic Mirror, waiting for Swoksaar's Chaotic Rain to fall upon it.

## **Chapter 1420: The Value of Desperation**

Swoksaar was Confused?

It had already happened, yet not a single person had noticed.

Even though the audience had their omniscient view, when zoomed out, it couldn't clearly show every single detail. Everyone basically understood the overall rhythm of Wei Chen's actions, but no one had detected that Windward Formation's dirty trick just now was to hide his cast of Magic Mirror.

The Magic Mirror was controlled by the caster, and could be suspended in the air.

For a few single-target skills, if the Magic Mirror was precisely positioned, then when reflecting the skill, it could also protect the caster from taking damage. For a wide-range attack like Chaotic Rain, the Magic Mirror couldn't completely protect the caster, but it would still serve the purpose of reflecting the skill's side effects. So, in the end, both Swoksaar and Windward Formation entered the Confused state together.

The careful Yu Wenzhou had actually fallen to another one of Wei Chen's tricks. Everyone was shocked, but they were still wondering about the value of this plot having succeeded.

Under the Chaotic Rain, both Windward Formation and Swoksaar became useless.

But what about Lu Hanwen's Flowing Cloud?

He wouldn't be affected by a teammate's attack, and the thing that was currently preventing him from moving, the Spike Trap, was a mere low-level Thief skill. He would definitely be the first person to escape from the control of a skill.

But after that, Windward Formation would still be Confused. Wasn't that just asking for a beating? At a time like this, Lu Hanwen would probably hold off on going over to help Huang Shaotian, and instead take advantage of this opportunity to furiously attack Windward Formation.

Wei Chen's response had been outside of everyone's expectations, but that didn't necessarily mean it was a perfect solution.

"He doesn't have any better choice," Li Yibo sighed. "He can only do his best and use whatever ideas he has to tie up Blue Rain's two players."

Pan Lin was silent. This old general was working so hard; who would be heartless enough to criticize his judgement for being this or that?

If he had faster reactions or faster hand speed, perhaps there would be other, better options.

Both Pan Lin and Li Yibo understood this clearly, but the two of them reached an unspoken agreement not to discuss this.

This hypothetical was simply too cruel, especially for an old general. He'd once had these things, only to gradually lose them. The tragedy was that he would never be able to recover them again.

These scars left by the passage of time shouldn't be considered a form of failure.

Wei Chen was already doing the absolute best he could with what he had.

As a Warlock specialist just like Yu Wenzhou, he'd managed to ensnare Yu Wenzhou twice. This was something that no Warlock player had ever accomplished before. Not once since Yu Wenzhou's debut. And now, this old general past his prime had actually managed to do it!

Just based on this, he had the right to stand on this stage.

Just based on this, everyone should understand why Happy sent him onstage.

The smoke quickly dissipated.

Flowing Cloud was still stuck in the trap. Windward Formation and Swoksaar were unable to control their characters properly in their confusion. The three characters still displayed the symptoms of their statuses, as though they were performing a play.

But this play would eventually reach its curtain call.

Just like everyone expected, Lu Hanwen's Flowing Cloud was the first to escape from his status condition, and he immediately charged toward Windward Formation.

The greatsword Flame Shadow lifted up and then plummeted, tracing a burning scar in the air.

Windward Formation was still moving around chaotically. Compared to Swoksaar, who had just been standing quietly after discovering he was Confused, Windward Formation seemed as laughable as a monkey.

But, no one could laugh.

Even in this condition, was he still trying to pull something off?

Seeing this, many audience members felt choked up. They knew that Wei Chen couldn't do anything, that Windward Formation would be slashed by Flowing Cloud's greatsword. After that, with Yu Wenzhou coming into the picture, if Wei Chen didn't receive any help, then he might meet his end right here.

The old general had only returned to this stage with much difficulty. Was he about to complete his curtain call just like this?

As the greatsword Flame Shadow descended, quite a few people couldn't bear to watch. But at this moment, a pocket suddenly split open in the air, and from the shifting void, a black claw shot outward. Just this one extended claw snagged Flowing Cloud, who was using Collapsing Mountain, in midair.

This was...

Warlock skill: Claw of Darkness!

Everyone was stunned.

Even under Confusion, he was still able to use a skill?

And the first one to react was once again Yu Wenzhou. He suddenly understood why Windward Formation, after suffering the Chaotic Rain, had continued to move around randomly. Because Wei Chen had been constantly trying a set series of inputs, hoping he could activate this skill through sheer luck.

Claw of Darkness...

Yu Wenzhou thought about the inputs necessary for this skill. Indeed, when Confused, this skill had a higher probability than others of being successfully used.

But “higher” was only relative. Yu Wenzhou couldn’t do the calculations immediately, but he knew that it was still a very low probability.

Yet even so, Wei Chen hadn’t given up. As soon as he was hit by the status, he began tapping out the inputs. If the Confusion disrupted his movements, then he would just start over again. In this short amount of time, no one knew just how many times he had repeated these inputs. Everyone only knew that, in the end, he had succeeded. In this crucial moment, Windward Formation’s cast was successful, and he summoned forth the Claw of Darkness.

Claw of Darkness was a powerful grab skill. Even Collapsing Mountain did not out prioritize it. Just like that, Flowing Cloud was snatched in the air by the Claw of Darkness.

When viewers realized that Wei Chen had this kind of determination, to stubbornly pull off this skill even when Confused – they felt tears gathering in their eyes.

Happy’s fans all knew Wei Chen’s past. But to be honest, no one felt that this guy had the air of a powerhouse team’s captain. In their eyes, this guy was more like a boss of a casual little group in-game.

The two years that Wei Chen had spent in the Alliance were its grassroots days. After that, he’d never let go of the game. To be honest, Wei Chen didn’t have much of the air that was associated with any present-day pro player, let alone the sort of distant, lofty air shared by the powerhouse players.

Even though he was an old player that hadn’t appeared very often, Happy’s fans still loved him very much, exactly because he was so down-to-earth. It was like he had popped up in the game, casually taken down some dungeons, grabbed some equipment, and then cheerfully ran back to the professional scene to cause some chaos.

And everyone felt that Happy had invited Wei Chen because they wanted someone old in their ranks to help pass on experience and knowledge to the younger members. No one thought that he would make any significant contributions in matches. They felt that his few appearances were Happy’s way of paying respect to him. He would play around a bit, and everyone would watch and laugh, and that would be it.

But now, everyone understood.

No matter how old Wei Chen was, no matter how he lacked the air of a pro player, he still had a pro player’s heart.

A heart striving for victory. A heart of a champion.

Using his own methods, he proved this point to everyone.

Yu Wenzhou, Lu Hanwen.

Did they really think that two All-Star players could stomp him down so easily?

No!

Up to this point, Windward Formation indeed seemed very pathetic, and he had lost more health than his opponents. Every new moment made people feel that this was it, that he was done for.

But again and again, he stabilized the situation, he remained on the battlefield.

This old guy, how long would it take until he gave in?

Even Blue Rain's players, Blue Rain's fans, couldn't help but feel moved.

So this was their old captain?

So this was the senior they told stories about, their extremely dirty, extremely shameless senior?

Even though he was their opponent now, in the hearts of the Blue Rain players and fans, they quietly felt a burst of pride.

Yes, Wei Chen now represented Happy. But the deepest markings on his skin were those from his time as Blue Rain's first captain, the person who had laid down the foundation for Blue Rain!

Applause.

The entire stadium burst into applause.

From every corner of the stadium, from every corner of everyone's hearts, came forth applause.

Flowing Cloud fell to the side as a result of the Claw of Darkness, and the Confusion on Windward Formation and Swoksaar ended at the same time. And Wei Chen continued his tenacious struggle.

Not good. Something was wrong.

Yu Wenzhou wasn't someone who relied on his intuition. He made all of his judgments based on the opponent's movements and behavior.

Wei Chen was desperately keeping the two of them tied down here, but there was no way that victory would be decided here. What would determine the final victory would still be that 3v3 battle!

3v3. Blue Rain had made such a confident assault, and their confidence had stemmed from the fact that Happy didn't have their healer. They could attack unrestrained, trading blood for blood, until they defeated the opponent with the greatest speed possible. But because he and Lu Hanwen had been delayed all this time, the two of them hadn't been able to enter the battle over there. So, this offensive of theirs became somewhat inefficient.

And over there, Happy had three attackers. In terms of damage output, they had the advantage over Blue Rain. 3v2, blood for blood, Blue Rain was bound to take more damage. Even if they had a healer to support them, because there were only two attackers, the explosiveness of their attacks was underwhelming, which would only drag on the battle longer.

The longer this dragged on, the more health they would lose and need the healer to restore. Then, that turned this into a trade of health for mana, the healer's mana.

If Happy's healer successfully joined the battle at this time, and the two sides entered a prolonged conflict...

Not good. It would be extremely unfavorable toward Blue Rain.

The healer didn't have enough mana, so they needed to fight and end this battle quickly. But Blue Rain wasn't a team that was good at a speedy attack. They were good at defensive counterattacks, waiting for the opponent to move first before striking. For this, the importance of defending the healer was obvious. Happy's goal truly was to target Blue Rain's healer. Trade their own health for the healer's mana, wear down Blue Rain's healer until he was useless, so that Blue Rain had no way of fighting at their usual rhythm.

Target the healer.

From the professional circle to the in-game Arena, the most common strategy in team battles.

It was no surprise at all. And yet, it was always effective.