

Avatar 1421

Chapter 1421: Understood by Everyone

We can't keep it up!

Right when Yu Wenzhou realized what Happy's true strategy was, Huang Shaotian also started to feel pressured.

3v3. Team Blue Rain's side had a healer. If it was a direct confrontation, their side should have the advantage. The problem was that this 3v3 wasn't the only fight taking place. From an overall perspective, their slight advantage was not nearly enough. They needed speed, explosiveness, DPS, and time to eliminate their opponents.

Happy's fifth player still hadn't appeared, and it wasn't just out of patience. Huang Shaotian had deduced a certain possibility: Qiao Yifan's Phantom Demon had gone to switch with Happy's healer.

Blue Rain held the advantage during this period of time. However, lowering Happy's health bars wasn't enough. They needed to kill a player from Happy before their Cleric arrived.

Huang Shaotian and Zheng Xuan were clearly far from achieving this goal. From time to time, the two would look towards the other battle, hoping Yu Wenzhou and Lu Hanwen would hurry and come. However, help never arrived.

The two didn't try to urge their teammates to hurry up. None of them, including their healer Xu Jingxi, typed a single word.

There was no need to say anything. When Huang Shaotian had called out to Zheng Xuan and Xu Jingxi to counterattack, the other side should have gotten the message and made the appropriate decision. If they hadn't come yet, it could only mean that their situation didn't permit them to.

Huang Shaotian's side could not see the other battle. How could they know that their old captain Wei Chen was struggling with all his might to keep Yu Wenzhou and Lu Hanwen from leaving?

As a famed opportunist, Huang Shaotian had an excellent read of the match.

Even though he didn't know the reason, without either Yu Wenzhou or Lu Hanwen, he understood that just his and Zheng Xuan's attacks weren't enough. They had dealt quite a bit of damage to Lord Grim and Boundless Sea, but they had taken even more damage. Happy's side had three attackers, after all.

Boom boom boom!

Artillery fire came from both Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain and Zheng Xuan's Bullet Rain. Ye Xiu and Fang Rui were dodging, but Huang Shaotian and Zheng Xuan? They had their characters rush through the gunfire to attack.

This was because of the difference in team compositions. Team Blue Rain had a healer, and that enabled them to be recklessly aggressive.

Their health was guaranteed to be above a safe level at the cost of the mana from Xu Jingxi's Soul Speaker. White light constantly flashed, protecting Troubling Rain's and Bullet Rain's health.

Huang Shaotian felt that the situation wasn't good, so he constantly checked on Soul Speaker's situation.

The constant flashes of white light were somewhat glaring to look at. During intense team fights, the healers would often look like this. However, it was only a 3v3, yet Soul Speaker was already this busy.

It was because of their current tactics.

But strangely, Happy made no attempts to stop them.

How could Ye Xiu and others in Happy not understand their intentions? Of course they would, but they seemed to be fine with it. Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain stood farther away, so Huang Shaotian and Zheng Xuan didn't target her. Xu Jingxi had his Soul Speaker stand in a position, where Su Mucheng couldn't reach him, so that his spells would not be interrupted. With him dodging around, Su Mucheng simply gave up and stopped targeting him.

Happy was going along with Blue Rain's plans. They were practically setting up the conditions for Blue Rain's plans to work, as if they were luring Blue Rain to do it.

Yu Wenzhou and Lu Hanwen still hadn't arrived. Was this all part of Happy's plans?

Huang Shaotian felt like something wasn't right. Troubling Rain began attacking more carefully, no longer as reliant on their healer.

Zheng Xuan felt a change from Huang Shaotian. Without asking about it, he immediately matched his Bullet Rain with Huang Shaotian's rhythm. It wasn't that this guy couldn't figure out the problem, rather, he was just too lazy to think. As a result, he rarely thought deeply during a match. He always played lazily, for example, like how he was just going along with what his teammate did.

Boom!

Huang Shaotian was hesitating, when he suddenly heard a muffled sound.

To their side, on top of a long wall of medium height, a head suddenly poked out from a crack. The head was covered with ash and blood and in a utterly pathetic state.

Who?

For a moment, Huang Shaotian wasn't sure who the character was, and had to check the name by sliding his cursor over him.

Windward Formation.

It was Wei Chen's Windward Formation?

Has it finally been settled?

Just when Huang Shaotian thought this, that bloody head suddenly retracted.

It looks like it's about over.

Huang Shaotian continued to think. If Windward Formation was eliminated, the two on that side could come over and help them. Then, they could strengthen their offense. Even if Happy's healer arrived, it would still be a 5v4. Huang Shaotian and Zheng Xuan had already lowered Happy's health significantly, thus the match would certainly end in Blue Rain's victory.

Continue to attack!

Huang Shaotian was about to shift gears back, when an order came from their captain Yu Wenzhou: slow.

It was just one word. It wasn't clear who Yu Wenzhou was referring to, but Huang Shaotian immediately slowed down.

Zheng Xuan and Xu Jingxi also saw the order, and made the same decision. Their offense suddenly slowed.

"Woah, have they figured it out already?" There was no way Ye Xiu wouldn't notice such a change.

"Old Wei, you dead yet?" Ye Xiu said.

There was no reply. Wei Chen saw it, but he could only curse inwardly. How could he have any time to chat?

"Keep them nervous!" Ye Xiu also sent out an order. His Lord Grim and Fang Rui's Boundless Sea suddenly went aggressive.

What?

Huang Shaotian and Zheng Xuan were startled.

Ye Xiu and Fang Rui had tried their hardest to stay on the defensive. Happy had no healer, so they needed to carefully preserve their health. They could not afford to be as reckless as Huang Shaotian and Zheng Xuan. Ye Xiu's Lord Grim had some healing capabilities, but in such an intense battle, his healing was like trying to put out a burning cart with a cup of water.

Now, the two suddenly bared their fangs. That was a fierceness only Troubling Rain and Bullet Rain previously had!

Happy's healer has arrived?

That was the first thought from Blue Rain's team members. Sure enough, An Wenyi's Little Cold Hands appeared from behind a stone pillar. His cross, Holy Contract, glowed with white light, a spell ready to cast.

Shua!

Holy light surrounded Lord Grim. In that instant, the holy light seemed to converge and then blossom into a wave of resplendence.

Critical heal!

It was similar to a critical hit from an attack. A critical heal would heal 50% more, just like a how a critical hit dealt 50% more damage.

Lord Grim's health instantly shot up a chunk. Little Cold Hands had cast the Cleric's strongest heal, Holy Words. Lord Grim's sudden increase in health made Huang Shaotian's heart hurt.

"Fuck, you bastard. You're not afraid of overhealing?" Huang Shaotian started his trash talking again.

"I'm not afraid at all!" Ye Xiu replied. Lord Grim's Myriad Manifestations Umbrella shined with white light as well. He had healed himself. The amount healed was tiny, but nevertheless, he would always heal himself from time to time.

"Because we have more than enough mana!" Ye Xiu said. There was no need to hide it at this point. He believed that Blue Rain had certainly figured out their intentions by now, but what could they do? They had already accomplished their goal. Xu Jingxi's Soul Speaker had consumed a substantial amount of mana. Even if they knew, they had no way of changing it. And soon, he would still need to consume more mana, because it was no Happy's turn to attack.

Rush them!

Lord Grim, Boundless Sea, and Dancing Rain attacked together. An Wenyi's Little Cold Hands also went into the open, becoming their pillar. Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain no longer let Blue Rain do as they pleased. Dancing Rain leaped into the air, and found her target, Xu Jingxi's Soul Speaker.

She knew that Soul Speaker was here, and had thought about how to quickly reach him. However, she hadn't attacked. Happy's intentions were truly too obvious.

And this was only for Blue Rain.

The viewers had figured it out far earlier than Blue Rain.

Because when Blue Rain had guessed that Happy's Cleric was on his way there and had seized that opportunity to attack, they had seen that An Wenyi's Little Cold Hands had gone into position even earlier. But because of Ye Xiu's orders, he had carefully stayed hidden and waited.

The unskilled players might not understand why, but if Pan Lin and Li Yibo couldn't understand why given these circumstances, then they would simply be too clueless.

Happy's plans were obvious, and they watched as Blue Rain fell for it. When Pan Lin and Li Yibo discussed it, they believed that Yu Wenzhou, Lu Hanwen, and Wei Chen's battle would be key.

As it turned out, Wei Chen was miraculously able to hold on. He stalled two players simultaneously, even if it was such an embarrassing manner...

"Wei Chen is this match's MVP!" Li Yibo said, "I've never seen anyone that could make Yu Wenzhou look so helpless."

"But it looks like he's reached his limit!" Pan Lin said. He gave his respects to the old general. Windward Formation had fallen. Wei Chen had done his all, exhausting the entirety of his character's life.

"Happy's healer is almost there! Perhaps this will be a new turning point!" Pan Lin said.

“There seems to be a trap!” Li Yibo saw Yu Wenzhou’s and Lu Hanwen’s movements, and suddenly sniffed something out.

Chapter 1422: Reversal

Hurry up and heal him!

The health on Wei Chen’s Windward Formation was about to hit zero. The viewers focused their eyes onto An Wenyi’s Little Cold Hands, hoping he would go over and rescue Windward Formation.

Many of the viewers had felt touched, seeing Wei Chen’s tenacity. They hadn’t cared before, but now, they held their hopes for Happy. They didn’t want to see Wei Chen, who worked so hard and ended up in such a sorry state, to fall just like that.

If Windward Formation died here, wouldn’t all of the preparation that Happy had laid out be pointless?

Hurry!

Everyone stared at Little Cold Hands attentively. Among them was Blue Rain’s Yu Wenzhou.

Hurry and come!

He had the same thoughts. Swoksaar continued to attack Windward Formation, but his gaze was in a different direction. Lu Hanwen’s Flowing Cloud followed suit.

He isn’t able to get there!

With the help from an omniscient view, the more skilled spectators could feel it.

“It’s a trap!” Li Yibo saw through it.

“He truly is Yu Wenzhou. To think he could still come up with a scheme in this situation. He’s using Windward Formation as bait to lure Happy’s Little Cold Hands over. He wanted to pick him off!” Li Yibo said.

The camera quickly pulled out a bird’s eye view of the battle. The indicators on Little Cold Hands, Swoksaar, Flowing Cloud, and Windward Formation suddenly became brighter. Swoksaar and Flowing Cloud looked to be readying for the final killing blow on Windward Formation through a pincer attack, but at the same time, their pincer attack had locked onto Little Cold Hands. If Little Cold Hands went over to heal Windward Formation, he would be intercepted midway and trapped.

With the enemy healer under their control, killing off Windward Formation would only take an instant. Afterwards, Happy would not only be down one person, but their healer would be in the enemy’s hands as well. Happy would fall into a disadvantageous situation.

All of this happened in a flash. Happy did not have a single second to spare, if they wanted to rescue Wei Chen’s Windward Formation,

The battle seemed to have frozen in this instant. What Blue Rain had predicted would happen, didn’t happen.

As a result, the slight pause from intentionally slowing their attacks became extremely obvious.

Wei Chen was surprised at first, but after carefully paying attention to Swoksaar's and Flowing Cloud's movements, he quickly figured it out.

"Haha," He laughed in the chat.

Yu Wenzhou knew that once this moment had passed, his plan would be ruined. Their cunning old captain would certainly realize it. A warning's probably been sent out already?

Who was to blame?

Yu Wenzhou looked at Happy's motionless Cleric. He knew that Happy's Cleric was a rookie, and not a particularly talented one like Happy's other rookies. An Wenyi was oftentimes viewed as Happy's weak point.

But then again, Happy used their weak point as bait, and came up with several traps. This was Ye Xiu's speciality. Using one's own weakness and turning it around to become the opponent's downfall.

What about now?

Could it be because this rookie Cleric was too slow to react and failed to notice Windward Formation's situation, ruining Yu Wenzhou's carefully thought out plan?

If that was truly the reason, Yu Wenzhou could only sigh at his bad luck. A hole had appeared in his plans because his opponent's skill was too poor. What could he do?

Knowing that this plan had failed, Yu Wenzhou had Swoksaar attack. Lu Hanwen's Flowing Cloud also rushed forward and swung down, taking down the last bit of Windward Formation's health. Windward Formation became the first player to be eliminated from the team competition. While stalling Blue Rain's two players, he had truly exhausted everything, including his character's life.

Even now, there were still no signs of any sort of response from Happy's side.

"How could a healer be this bad??" Countless viewers slammed their tables in anger and cursed. Many of the crowd members were extremely dissatisfied with An Wenyi as well. They had forgiven this rookie healer the whole way through and believed in him just like the rest of Team Happy. But now, he just did nothing as Wei Chen's efforts were wasted. Who could endure such an injustice?

"Is he stupid?"

"Get down!"

"Quit!"

An Wenyi clearly didn't have any braindead fans who defended him no matter what. The fans loved or hated him depending on his performance.

It was fine if you weren't skilled enough. No one disregarded the fact that he was a rookie. What they cared about more was his attitude, a proactive attitude.

It wasn't even important if An Wenyi could save Windward Formation or not. They were angry that he just sat there staring into space, as if he didn't know what was happening on the other side of the battle.

It was okay if you failed, but you can't just do nothing.

To the spectators, An Wenyi was a person who did nothing. Curses instantly filled the stadium. However, the match still went on.

After killing Windward Formation, Swoksaar and Flowing Cloud quickly rushed to join with the rest of the team. The two hadn't taken much damage.

On the other side of the battle, it was now Happy's turn to be reckless.

Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain took the high grounds and tunneled onto Soul Speaker. Zheng Xuan wanted to protect his healer, so he started firing at Su Mucheng. At this distance, his Spitfire Bullet Rain could reach her. The force from a Burst Grenade threw Dancing Rain off from the high grounds. However, Su Mucheng quickly adjusted, landing Dancing Rain at another attack point.

The home game advantage!

In this exchange against Zheng Xuan, Su Mucheng fully displayed her familiarity with this region. She didn't even need to look around to find a suitable attacking position.

In the group arena, Zheng Xuan had beaten Su Mucheng in the 1v1. He didn't lack the confidence in contesting against Su Mucheng. However, in this team competition, while his target was Dancing Rain, Su Mucheng's target was Soul Speaker. As a result, Zheng Xuan needed to consider both sides. It was just too much to think about. For a lazy person like Zheng Xuan, it was truly torture.

He couldn't hold down Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain. In the end, all of the misfortune fell onto Xu Jingxi.

Soul Speaker ran around, but Su Mucheng was always able to quickly catch him. If it was as simple as you-chase-I-run, then Xu Jingxi could lure the opponents into the area, where Blue Rain had originally planned on fighting Happy in. But the problem was that he could not leave because he had to heal his allies on Blue Rain.

Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain was being pincerred by Ye Xiu and Fang Rui. While Xu Jingxi's Soul Speaker dodged Dancing Rain's attacks, he had to think of every possible way to keep Troubling Rain healthy.

If this situation continued, Blue Rain's three players had no chances of winning. But now, this period had passed. Yu Wenzhou and Lu Hanwen joined the battle. The tides shifted once again. A Curse Arrow shot towards the high-up Dancing Rain. The greatsword, Flame Shadow, cut into battle and danced alongside Ice Rain.

"You guys are finally here!" Huang Shaotian let out a sigh of relief. Xu Jingxi's Soul Speaker had been baited and then forced to heal afterwards, causing him to constantly consume mana. Now, Blue Rain had the 5v4, relieving him of some pressure! They could not let this opportunity go.

"Attack!" Yu Wenzhou ordered. All of Blue Rain went on the offensive.

“Focus on restraining, avoid trading, increase their mana consumption,” Yu Wenzhou pointed out the overall strategic direction. They had the numbers advantage, but Happy had used up much of their healer’s mana. They needed to fight carefully. If their healer went out of mana too early, their advantage would instantly crumble.

Usually, teams would utilize their numbers advantage to launch an all-out attack and hopefully kill a target to widen the advantage, before the other side’s sixth player arrived. In the Glory team competition, most victories were obtained in this way.

However, it wasn’t suitable for the current Blue Rain to launch an all-out attack because their healer did not have the mana to support such an endeavor. As a result, Yu Wenzhou emphasized that they wouldn’t be going all out to kill an enemy player. They couldn’t waste their numbers advantage though, so they needed to carefully go about it. While killing an enemy player was the main objective, it could not be forced.

Calm.

Besides calmness, there was only calmness.

Yu Wenzhou was always calm. Whether Team Blue Rain had the lead, was falling behind, or was in a difficult spot, he would never lose his cool. He would always search for the most reliable method to deal with the situation. It was through this foundation that allowed Huang Shaotian to find an opportunity to wreck havoc on the battlefield.

But soon afterwards, when Blue Rain attacked, they encountered an unexpected response.

Attack!

Yes, they went on the offensive, but Happy also went on the offensive.

It was a 4v5, yet Happy was still attacking.

It was a standard team competition situation, yet both teams responded in unconventional ways.

The side with the numbers advantage played conservatively. The side with the numbers disadvantaged played aggressively.

The viewers were all dumbstruck. They had no idea how such a strange situation had come about.

Only the pro-level players who were watching the match could feel the balance shifting, when they saw this scene.

“Happy is the one in control!”

Wang Jiexi, Xiao Shiqin, Zhang Xinjie... all of the top experts had the same thought.

Because this reversed situation had resulted from Blue Rain’s healer using up too much mana.

And everything had been set up by Happy.

This current situation should be within Happy’s plans.

Wei Chen's Windward Formation hadn't been ignored by Happy's healer. Happy hadn't planned on saving Windward Formation in the first place.

Wei Chen obtaining victory no matter the means included coldly sacrificing himself.

Blue Rain's two generations of captains, a confrontation between the original owner and the successor of Swoksaar?

In the end, it was just a topic to talk about.

This was a team competition, and what Wei Chen pursued was the team's victory and nothing more.

Chapter 1423: Competing for First

Attack!

Both teams attacked.

Blue Rain, with the numbers advantage, played defensively. Happy, with the numbers disadvantage, played aggressively.

Is that fine? Is Happy looking to kill themselves?

Quite a few people had their doubts. But when they looked at the situation more closely, they discovered that it might not be the case.

Because of Blue Rain's tactical goal, Blue Rain looked increasingly uncomfortable facing Happy's aggression. Even if they had an extra player, Happy's reckless fighting negated the advantage. An extra player simply meant another target to attack, and wouldn't that mean more overall damage? In the meantime, Happy was relying on their healer to hold on!

Trying to suppress Happy's offense through attacks would be even more difficult. Happy's team composition needed to be taken into consideration.

Fang Rui, the master of playing dirty.

Su Mucheng, the long ranged Launcher.

Ye Xiu, the all-class expert. He wasn't famous for his dirtiness, but his dirtiness wasn't to be underestimated. Did you think he didn't have a part in creating the dirty playstyle?

Suppressing these three truly wouldn't an easy task.

Their reckless fighting was a huge a burden on their healer. It required excellent judgement, fast reactions, and exceptional timing to keep up with them.

An Wenyi had talents but also weaknesses in these areas. Little Cold Hand's new equipment helped make up for it to a certain extent, but having him take control of such a chaotic battlefield would be worrying for Happy.

However, the current situation was rather favorable for him.

Happy had a total of four players.

Su Mucheng's Launcher was a long-ranged Launcher. She wandered around the edges of the battlefield and didn't come into contact with the center of it, so she received very little damage.

As a result, An Wenyi only needed to take care of Lord Grim and Boundless Sea. Those two may be fighting recklessly, but since he didn't need to take care of the usual four players like in a typical team fight, the burden on him was drastically reduced. For An Wenyi, looking after four players was worrying, but he was plenty confident in taking care of just two players.

"What a wonderful detail!" Li Yibo discovered this point and immediately gave praise.

A team like Happy's was a blessing to the players. Even if you had weaknesses, the team could still make up for it and create a stage for you to perform brilliantly.

"Speaking of which, this was originally Team Blue Rain's specialty!" Li Yibo thought of this point.

Yes, Team Blue Rain was a very player-inclusive team, a trait that gave them great flexibility. For most teams, when their important player left, they hoped to find a similar player with the same class and playstyle to fill in the gap, as to prevent the team's tactical system from breaking apart. But Blue Rain? Blue Rain didn't cling onto this idea.

After Yu Feng left, everyone was wondering what Berserker player Blue Rain would find as a replacement. Instead, Blue Rain picked out a little Blade Master demon and announced that this kid was their most important transfer of the season. In the following seasons, Blue Rain remained as the mighty Blue Rain.

Many players performed well in Blue Rain, but after leaving the team, they appeared mediocre. Lin Feng, who left Blue Rain for Wind Howl, was one such example.

As a rather peculiar battle Thief, Lin Feng was a unique existence with quite a bit of fame in the Glory community. When discussing Thieves, after Fang Rui was Lin Feng.

Fang Rui had boldly chosen to change classes this season. Then, Lin Feng took his place in Wind Howl, inheriting the number one Thief character, Doubtful Demon. Many people thought that he would reach new heights, and the title of Number One Thief would easily be his. They believed that interest in the battle Thief playstyle would soar due to Lin Feng's new status.

And the result?

Despite having an All-Star level character, Lin Feng's days in Wind Howl weren't as prosperous as many had expected.

Let alone his performance on stage, just the numbers showed a considerable decrease compared to his time in Team Blue Rain, despite having a more powerful character. In the past, Lin Feng had drawn quite a bit of attention. After leaving Team Blue Rain, he took control of a more powerful character, yet instead of a meteoric rise, he sunk into mediocrity.

Team Blue Rain was a team that could give each player a stage to shine on. But from the looks of it, Happy could do the same. Even a lesser skilled player like An Wenyi could become Happy's pillar of support.

Perhaps in the beginning, Happy had been a newly formed grassroots team, so they had no other choice.

But in the winter transfer season, Happy had the opportunity to find a better healer. At that time, Happy had an extraordinary win record, better than many teams not just by a little bit. Happy had such a glaring weakness too. Numerous healers from mid-tier and low-tier teams raised their heads, hoping Happy would recruit them and let them join this rising dark horse.

But Happy chose not to!

From the start of the winter transfer window to the end, Happy showed no intentions of doing so. After the winter break, Happy presented a full set of new equipment for Little Cold Hands, showing their trust in their rookie healer. Afterwards, this rookie healer proved that Happy's trust in him was not unfounded. His performances gradually became steadier, and his role in the team gradually became clearer. The doubt towards him lessened day by day.

In today's match, when Windward Formation fell without any sort of help from his healer, even the home team fans felt dissatisfied with him. But soon afterwards, as the battle progressed, everyone realized that all of this had been part of Happy's plan.

When they saw An Wenyi, whose ability was often called into question, perfectly support Ye Xiu and Fang Rui, they began to understand the reasoning behind Happy's arrangements.

Perhaps it was somewhat cruel.

If Windward Formation was still here, An Wenyi would have to split more of his attention to take care of him, and things might not go as smoothly for Happy.

If the healer couldn't keep up, the healer's team would definitely be suppressed in a chaotic battle.

This was an important note in this match.

Blue Rain clearly had the numbers advantage, yet why were they feeling constrained? It was simple. It was because their healer could not keep up. Blue Rain's Paladin, Soul Speaker, needed to conserve mana and could not support a full-on aggression.

But under Happy's threat, it would not be good if Soul Speaker didn't take up more of a burden.

"Attack their healer!" Yu Wenzhou finally ordered, adjusting Blue Rain's strategy.

Happy's healer might not be the best, but he was more than good enough to support two characters. An Wenyi's mastery of timing and Little Cold Hand's critical heals were a big blow to Blue Rain's strategy.

Zheng Xuan wasn't a spirited player in the first place. After shooting a few bullets, a holy light would shine and his target's health would go up instead of down. It was truly disheartening.

This sort of trade isn't favorable for us!

Because of Su Mucheng's long range and the craftiness of Ye Xiu and Fang Rui, Blue Rain's numbers advantage was stifled. At this moment, their only point of breakthrough was Happy's healer. He was the

one supporting Happy. Directly attacking him would be more effective usage of Blue Rain's numbers advantage.

Triple Slash!

Huang Shaotian, the opportunist, had been ready to attack Happy's healer. When Yu Wenzhou gave the order, he just happened to have found a good opportunity. He Triple Slashed to open up a path, and Troubling Rain immediately made his way over.

Crash!

Lord Grim's Myriad Manifestations Umbrella instantly opened up in front of him, blocking his way.

Troubling Rain's sword did not fall. The second slash flashed out, moving horizontally across the umbrella. The half step gave him a new angle, and he went for it with the Triple Slash!

Dong!

Lord Grim's Myriad Manifestations Umbrella moved across again, ready to block the Triple Slash. But Troubling Rain had already switched moves to guard against it. Wasn't that also an attack? Troubling Rain used Guard, blocking the attack. The self-knockback from Guard sent Troubling Rain outwards.

Turn around, Colliding Stab!

It was a Berserker low-level skill, so Troubling Rain could obviously learn it. The damage wasn't important. It was a movement skill, so every player regarded it as an important skill to learn. Ye Xiu's Lord Grim had also learned this skill. It was a frequently used movement skill in his arsenal.

In a trail of smoke, Troubling Rain dashed towards Little Cold Hands. The other members of Blue Rain had also seen Yu Wenzhou's order and coordinated with Huang Shaotian. Lu Hanwen's Flowing Cloud moved in front of Lord Grim, stopping Lord Grim from pursuing Troubling Rain.

However, Ye Xiu ignored the intercept. Lord Grim leaped backwards and instantly rushed out with three movement skills. His target, Soul Speaker!

Trade?

Ye Xiu's intentions once again surprised everyone.

"Is Happy planning on trading their healer for Blue Rain's?" Pan Lin cried out.

"This... I really don't understand!" A rare moment from Li Yibo, who hadn't made any mistakes yet for this match. He directly acknowledged that he didn't understand Happy's intentions.

Yes, who could understand it?

Happy held the advantage despite the numbers disadvantage, and it was all because of their healer.

Their healer had an abundance of mana, while their opponent's healer had used up a lot of mana. This difference had come from Happy's many set-ups, obtained from sacrificing Wei Chen's Windward Formation. This should have been their key to victory

On the other hand, Blue Rain had their hands tied because of their healer. But with Happy having their healer as well, Blue Rain could not abandon their own healer. This situation was good for them though. Happy was unexpectedly not going to rescue their healer and instead attacking Blue Rain's. Wasn't this trade beneficial to Blue Rain?

By sacrificing Wei Chen, Happy gained the upper hand. It was a beautiful play from Happy.

But this time, supposing that Happy completed this trade, it would be a beautiful win for Blue Rain.

And this beautiful win for Blue Rain would come from Happy's own hands.

Li Yibo wasn't the only one who couldn't understand it. Blue Rain didn't either.

Chapter 1424: The Healers of the Two Sides

Wipe out Little Cold Hands. How would Happy respond to that? Yu Wenzhou had considered all sorts of possibilities, but the decision to give up on the healer had only surfaced for a mere moment.

Under these circumstances, how could Happy abandon their healer?

But that was exactly what happened; Happy didn't bother making any moves to protect Little Cold Hands. Ye Xiu started it and Fang Rui followed suit, then, Su Mucheng who had been continuously harassing Soul Speaker, began to focus her cannonfire as well.

Blue Rain's members were all rather stunned. For a moment, they didn't know what to do.

In the current situation, Happy shouldn't choose to abandon their healer. Everyone knew that, so how would Blue Rain not? They were the ones who could feel the pressure brought by the difference between the two healers.

So when their captain told them to wipe out Happy's healer, they knew all too well the reasoning behind this.

However, Happy instead chose to focus on Blue Rain's healer. They couldn't understand this decision at all.

What was Happy scheming?

Not just Blue Rain, but all the spectators couldn't help but think that way.

After all, everyone was like as Li Yibo had said; they couldn't figure out what Happy was up to.

There must be a deeper reason, right? If it was just a trade, then that was unreasonable.

The spectators didn't understand; they could just joke around about it. Li Yibo didn't understand; he could yell about it in the broadcast. However, what about Yu Wenzhou? As Blue Rain's captain and their commander on the field, he couldn't make a decision blindly.

However, right now, he had to, because there was no time for him to consider the situation slowly. Hesitation was already surfacing amongst Blue Rain's ranks. Without a clear command to direct them, if they wanted to save their Soul Speaker, but also wanted to take down Little Cold Hands, they might end

up with nothing accomplished and their efforts wasted. Then, they really would be on the track to losing.

Was this hesitation something Happy purposefully tried to elicit?

That was all Yu Wenzhou could come up with in the time he was given. His mind moved fast, but at a time like this he wanted nothing more than a skill that could stop time, pause the entire battlefield and let him contemplate their situation properly.

But now, he had to take decisive action.

Thus, Yu Wenzhou used his actions to direct his teammates. Swoksaar raised his arm and pointed Curse of Destruction at Little Cold Hands, unleashing a curse.

Understood!

Blue Rain's members immediately understood, so no matter how hesitant they felt, they all went directly after Little Cold Hands. If they killed the Cleric quick enough, then they might even be able to go back and rescue their Soul Speaker. Considering endurance, Paladins had the advantage over Clerics. After all, this was a class that could act as an MT. With their plate armor, plus their Holy Shield Technique, Halo Smash, Life Activation, Extreme Survival, etc, or defensive skills, or skills that could help them endure. Otherwise, why would people say that Paladins were more defensive?

Xu Jingxi was also keeping watch for Yu Wenzhou's decision.

Their opponents were probably aiming for a trade, and what they wanted, naturally, was to see their opponent's healer wiped out while theirs was fine.

So, this decision wasn't abandoning him, and Xu Jingxi naturally couldn't just sit and watch. He had to be the most focused member on the field, because he would be facing off against three of Happy's members, and his goal was to survive through this attack, as long as he could.

A Holy Shield Technique first!

Xu Jingxi decided. Since healers weren't very good at movement, he didn't bother trying to avoid Happy's members and play hide and seek with them. He planned to play to the Paladin's talents and take every chance he could get to survive.

However, after he made the actions to activate the technique, but Holy Shield Technique didn't appear!

He was silenced?

Xu Jingxi startled. This silence came from... Little Cold Hand's Sacred Fire...

An Wenyi, against an assault even more intense than the one Xu Jingxi was facing was still supporting Happy's offensive at a time like this?

This time, it was a Sacred Fire. Next, was he going to send over a Holy Commandment or something?

Blue Rain naturally wouldn't let An Wenyi have it so easy. Letting a Sacred Fire through was careless. No matter what the next skill was, they would interrupt it at once.

Just this Sacred Fire was enough to prove Happy's determination. They didn't seem to be trying to play a trick or anything. They seemed to be completely focused on this trade between healers.

At this point, even if they had made a mistake, even if they had missed something, they could only continue charging down the path they had chosen!

Seeing Happy's determination, Yu Wenzhou didn't waver, instead hardening his resolve.

All out offense. Both sides were putting everything they had into DPS.

Neither team's healer bothered with trying to dodge, both doing their best to endure the assault head on.

Happy's Little Cold Hands had low defense, but An Wenyi was a master at grabbing opportunities. Even under this siege, he still managed to time a few instant cast heals for himself. Powerful, high crit rate heals instantly restored Little Cold Hands' health, almost like bringing himself back from the brink of death.

As for Blue Rain's Soul Speaker, he had high defense and more health than Little Cold Hands. Though his self protection methods had been interrupted by Little Cold Hands' Sacred Fire at first, messing up his rhythm, he still seemed more likely to survive than Little Cold Hands.

But reality proved otherwise.

Though Soul Speaker had more health than Little Cold Hands, he wasn't at 100 percent, only 71.

This was the effect of Su Mucheng's harassment just now.

In an all out battle, no character would stay at 100 percent. For a good healer, keeping each character's health at a safe level within their control, that was enough. In addition, Xu Jingxi has fell into an awkward position where his mana might not be enough, so he spent as little of it as possible. Thus, Blue Rain's entire team was at a slightly lower health, including himself.

However, in the blink of an eye, he had fallen into a situation where he had to use his health to endure. Xu Jingxi regretted not casting a few more skills on himself.

Who would win in this trade?

Right now, no one was sure. Little Cold Hands had a weaker defense, and Blue Rain had a strong offense. Soul Speaker had less health, and while Happy might be down one player, they had more ways to provide buffs and debuffs.

Lord Grim's Sword Boundary increased all of Happy's Strength and Intelligence.

Boundless Sea's Pulse Break lowered Soul Speaker's Strength and Intelligence.

Dancing Rain's Armor Piercing Missile could destroy Soul Speaker's Defense.

What made things even more depressing for Xu Jingxi was that just when he had found an opportunity to use Life Activation, Lord Grim waved his hands and sprinkled some Disperse Powder onto him, removing the healing.

"It looks like the two sides are evenly matched," After a certain point, Li Yibo got a rough idea and carefully made a note.

"Yes, but I feel like Happy's attacks are more complete. Blue Rain's offense isn't perfect," Pan Lin said.

"They have some doubts in their heart! If it wasn't for these doubts, they wouldn't have let Little Cold Hands send out that Sacred Fire," Li Yibo said.

"They're still wondering why Happy did what they did!" Pan Lin said.

"Yes, even though they slowly strengthened their resolve, it still delayed them," Li Yibo said.

"Which side will be faster?" Pan Lin raised the most concerning issue.

"No one will know until the end," Li Yibo said. This time, it wasn't that he didn't dare to guess, it was that he was certain this race wouldn't be as simple as just a contest of DPS. At the end, just before the final blow, the two sides would certainly try to stop the other.

A trade was just something said.

Any team would hope to kill the other side, while preserving their own. As a result, in the final moment, the two sides would definitely make one last ditch effort to protect their side's healer. Li Yibo believed this with absolute certainty.

"It's almost time!" Seeing that Little Cold Hands and Soul Speaker were about to hit 10% health, Li Yibo suddenly spoke out.

"Almost time?" Pan Lin was confused.

"Pay attention to the final moments," Li Yibo said.

"The deciding moment!" Pan Lin raised his voice to hype up the crowd.

Sure enough, as Li Yibo predicted, a change occurred in the final moments.

A grenade was suddenly thrown from Bullet Rain towards Happy's space.

Boom!

However, the grenade only flew halfway before exploding. There was no light, only a powerful pressure that appeared even stronger because of the sand. In an instant, a sandstorm formed.

"Burst Grenade!" Pan Lin shouted.

If Zheng Xuan's sneaky Burst Grenade had landed in Happy's space, the entirety of Team Happy would be sent flying away, collapsing their encirclement on Soul Speaker.

But Happy had been wary. Lord Grim shot the grenade out of the air, successfully blocking it.

"He truly is Ye Xiu!" Li Yibo praised from the bottom of his heart. Whether it was technique or situational awareness, he deserved praised for all of them.

At this moment, Yu Wenzhou's Swoksaar was chanting a curse. Suddenly, a star seemed to twinkle in the cloud of sand stirred up by the Burst Grenade.

It really was a star!

Star Refraction!

A ray of light shot out. No one in Blue Rain had any methods to block it. The bonus skills attached to Lord Grim's Myriad Manifestations Umbrella seemed endless. He had never used this Star Refraction before.

Star Refraction hit all four members of Blue Rain. Although the level one Star Refraction dealt little damage and had no attack effects, Swoksaar's casting had been interrupted. At the same time, a grenade rolled over.

Star Refraction was just to use up Blue Rain's methods. The true killing blow was this grenade.

"Burst Grenade!!" Zheng Xuan instantly recognized the grenade, but it was too late for him to block it.

Boom!

Happy returned the favor with a Burst Grenade of their own. But because of this skill's low level, it wasn't as powerful as Bullet Rain's Burst Grenade. Even so, everyone in Blue Rain had been forced flying.

Immortal Guides the Way!

Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain was able to squeeze out this skill.

Little Cold Hands was suddenly blown back together with Lu Hanwen's Flowing Cloud.

Chapter 1425: Time Difference

"Beautiful!" Pan Lin shouted.

Burst Grenade was undoubtedly a tool to forcefully break encirclements. Blue Rain had intended on using this skill to do so, but before they could act, Happy threw out their own Burst Grenade.

Lord Grim's Myriad Manifestations Umbrella only had one gunner form, and in this match, it had been shown that Laser Beam had been added on as the bonus skill. It was not possible for him to have access to any other high-leveled gunner skill. This Burst Grenade must have come from Dancing Rain's Devouring Sun.

This grenade successfully invaded Blue Rain's space and exploded. Everyone thought Blue Rain's control over the situation had been destroyed, and Happy would be able to rescue their healer. However, in that instant, Huang Shaotian was able to complete an Immortal Guides the Way and borrow the blow-away effect of the skill to send Little Cold Hands flying.

This move was like a gift from the heavens. The fans of Team Blue Rain had experienced several ups and downs in just a split second. Just as they thought that they had lost, Huang Shaotian pulled them back.

Lu Hanwen was careful. He didn't dare waste Huang Shaotian's save. The airborne Flowing Cloud swung his greatsword towards Little Cold Hands. On the other end, Zheng Xuan's Bullet Rain fired a Stun Bullet and an Ice Bullet towards this side while in the air. They would not let Little Cold Hands escape so easily.

The knockback from a level one Burst Grenade was limited. Compared to the Burst Grenade from Zheng Xuan's Bullet Rain, the sand and dust lifted from the explosion only covered a small area. Blue Rain's unity of will was an impregnable stronghold, forcefully keeping the situation under control. Lu Hanwen's Flowing Cloud stuck close to Little Cold Hands, and Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain immediately dashed over as soon as he landed back onto the ground.

But inside this small-scale cloud of dust, Huang Shaotian noticed a bright flame swaying down.

"Fuck!"

Huang Shaotian immediately realized what it was.

Heat-Seeking Missile!

This skill possessed both a large AoE and strong knockback. It had to be blocked no matter what.

But was there enough time?

Troubling Rain swung his sword with a Sword Draw, the sword light splitting the yellow sand in half. But it wasn't enough!

It was just off by a bit, but the sword light wasn't able to reach the Heat-Seeking Missile's signal in time.

It's over!

Huang Shaotian felt helpless. This time, there was nothing he could do. But the instant his sword light missed, a black light suddenly flew out. With a shua, the signal was cut out of the air.

Soul Slice!

Huang Shaotian was delighted. He turned his head and saw Yu Wenzhou's Swoksaar. Swoksaar had sent out a precise attack at a crucial moment, bringing Blue Rain back once again.

"Steady!" Yu Wenzhou reminded everyone in the chat. The signal, knocked away by the Soul Slice, did not land in Team Blue Rain's space, but the Heat-Seeking Missile that followed soon afterwards dropped down in a column of flames. An enormous explosion erupted, sending yellow sand everywhere like a volcano. The sand flew into the air and then dropped down like heavy rain. Blue Rain felt a lingering fear, seeing this scene. This attack was far more terrifying than Burst Grenade.

Bang bang bang bang.

Amidst the turbid cloud of yellow sand, sounds of gunfire could be heard. Several black shadows dropped down towards where Blue Rain had trapped Little Cold Hands.

FIM-92 Stinger!

Using the yellow sand as cover, the Stinger had burst apart into multiple missiles before falling down. With the number of missiles there, Blue Rain could not deal with them one by one. Their only choice

was to do their best and avoid them. But right at this moment, An Wenyi's Little Cold Hands had struggled out and was heading towards the center of Stinger's AoE. Seeing that there was no hopes of him being rescued, An Wenyi decided that he would drag them down and make both sides suffer.

But what could Blue Rain do? If they didn't give chase, An Wenyi might actually be able to escape. Fortunately, Stinger didn't have a strong knockback like the previous two skills. It wouldn't be able to break apart the situation, but it would still deal some damage.

In this final exchange, Happy had the upper hand. They were fully utilizing their home game advantage. Taking advantage of the yellow sand as cover, Happy was able to sneak in attack after attack. Blue Rain had just narrowly escaped twice, but there was nothing they could do about the final Stinger.

Happy wasn't done yet with their harassment. After the Stinger and yellow sand baptism, a crack suddenly appeared in the air. With a rumbling sound, a Death's Door opened wide.

Everyone in Blue Rain went white.

Wei Chen was no longer there, which meant only Lord Grim could have used this skill.

A level one Death's Door had lower range and dealt less damage. Even so, its main threat laid in its ability to disrupt the situation. As a result, quite a few Warlocks wouldn't bother leveling Death's Door too much. A few points in it was good enough.

A level one Death's Door had a short range, but Ye Xiu had timed it perfectly. An Wenyi seemed to have received a signal. His Little Cold Hands was running for his life towards there. It looked as if he wanted to jump through the door.

"Go away!"

Immortal Guides the Way!

Huang Shaotian shouted. This time, it was Lu Hanwen that used the skill, forcefully blowing Little Cold Hands away. Blue Rain gave chase as the black tendrils from Death's Door reached out for them.

Luckily, it's only level one!

After escaping from Death's Door's range, Blue Rain felt incredibly relieved. But soon afterwards, the worst thing that could happen happened. Happy's three attackers were rushing over, behind them was the corpse of Blue Rain's healer, Soul Speaker.

In the end, Happy was able to eliminate Blue Rain's healer first, while Little Cold Hands still had 5% of his health left. The harassment from Happy had completely disrupted Blue Rain's attacks.

However, one combo was enough to take out 5%.

Blue Rain's four characters quickly chased after Little Cold Hands, ready to kill him regardless of anything else.

An attack fell!

A holy light suddenly surrounded Little Cold Hands.

Holy Cure! A powerful instant heal. It had a very long cooldown, and Little Cold Hands had already used it not too long ago, so it couldn't have been ready yet. It was undoubtedly another annoyance by Lord Grim. This time, he had added a heal to his Myriad Manifestations Umbrella. It was only level one, but it could not be ignored.

Boom!

Lord Grim was healing, but Dancing Rain and Boundless Sea were attacking. Launchers and Qi Masters did not lack AoE, and the AoEs were coming. Yu Wenzhou and Zheng Xuan were fine. As long-ranged classes, they didn't need to stick close to Little Cold Hands. But Huang Shaotian and Lu Hanwen needed to stay close to Little Cold Hands to do anything. Su Mucheng and Fang Rui knew this and took advantage of it, forcing the two to take damage.

Even so, Little Cold Hands didn't have much health left. Ye Xiu's heal wasn't enough for one combo from Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain. All it did was delay the inevitable. Finally, Little Cold Hands fell, and Blue Rain's players let out a sigh of relief.

4v3 without healers.

It looked to be time for Blue Rain to launch a counterattack, but Qiao Yifan's One Inch Ash had quietly appeared from behind Blue Rain. With a chant, a ghost boundary was laid down, and without any pause or hesitation, One Inch Ash was like a phantom demon as he ferociously tore into Blue Rain. Ye Xiu, Fang Rui, and Su Mucheng immediately followed suit.

4v3?

The 4v3 never happened.

"What perfect timing!" Pan Lin exclaimed.

Li Yibo was silent. Was it really a coincidence? Li Yibo was hesitant, but Yu Wenzhou was certain that it was.

This was Happy's map. They had a clear understanding of the distance between this location and the support zone. They knew exactly how long it would take to complete a character trade, or for the sixth player to sub in after a death.

It was a difference in timing. By the time Happy's sixth player arrived, Blue Rain's sixth player would have only just started. Blue Rain may have the numbers advantage, but if one of their characters wasn't there yet, the advantage was negated until he arrived.

4v4. It was a 4v4. And Happy had a fierce warrior in their midsts. He seemed to have no regard for his own character's health. He rushed straight into the enemy lines and cut off Blue Rain's retreat.

Then, a pincer!

Ye Xiu, Su Mucheng, and Fang Rui fought crazily too, completely disregarding their own characters, trading blow for blow.

Blue Rain didn't want this sort of fight, but Happy had cut off their retreat and then focused them, giving Blue Rain no chance to maneuver around. If I'm going to die, then you might as well die with me.

Steady?

We can't!

Defending required a healer to rely upon. If not, if one player met the focus of four enemies, run? Block? None of those could completely deal with the situation. To do so required support from other players, which was the current situation. Blue Rain was now deeply entangled with Happy.

If this continued, Happy might not have the upper hand though. A team competition wasn't like an individual competition, where whoever was attacking had the upper hand. In 4v4s, who was attacking and who was defending constantly fluctuated. Right now, it was a chaotic mess. No one was able to easily escape. But Happy had nothing after this, while Blue Rain had their sixth player coming. Happy had the step up the entire time, but was this going to be the end result? Both sides were suffering, but once Blue Rain's sixth player came, it would be a 5v4. He would just need to wave his hands, and wouldn't this match be over?

No, this wasn't the case.

At the final moment, Yu Wenzhou finally understood.

Happy's plan for the team competition relied on their two point advantage from the group arena!

Chapter 1426: Giving Out Candy

Yu Wenzhou didn't neglect their loss in group arena. It was just that from the start, Happy's arrangements never seemed to take advantage of this point. Even now, Yu Wenzhou wasn't sure whether Happy had planned this from the beginning, or if it had been an adjustment based on the flow the team competition.

Throughout the course of team competition, he had been trying to guess what Happy's goals were, but whenever he made a realization, he was always a half beat too slow.

This delay was fatal for him and Blue Rain.

Blue Rain played reactively. A reactive playstyle required one to pinpoint the opponent's lifeline and then target it. It was through this style that Yu Wenzhou became a Master Tactician. He reacted quickly and thought through issues meticulously, allowing him to swiftly read the situation. Then, he would grasp the opponent's goals and search out a way to destroy the opponent's strategy.

However, Happy had carefully concealed their goals from the start. For a period of time, Blue Rain didn't even have knowledge of Happy's team composition.

Huang Shaotian had been sent out to investigate, but he ended up trapped by Happy. The rest of Team Blue Rain was forced to be drawn out. This was their first mistake.

However, Blue Rain had no choice but to make the mistake. At the time, the enemy plans weren't clear, and Yu Wenzhou had no plans to launch a counterattack. As a result, Blue Rain prepared to rescue Huang Shaotian and would make adjustments after doing so.

But then, Happy started giving out candy.

Wei Chen went in for a 1v2. This sort of ace player reliant strategy was commonly used to create a balance on the ace player's end, while the other side of the battle established a numbers advantage. However, in this match, Wei Chen was at an absolute disadvantage in the 1v2, while the other side of the battle was still just a 3v3. Moreover, for Happy, it was a 3v3 without a healer.

Happy was at a disadvantage in both sides of the battle. If Blue Rain couldn't grasp this opportunity, they would not be Blue Rain.

Wei Chen's tenacity was unexpected though. He had successfully stalled two players, causing Blue Rain's healer to overuse his mana to support Blue Rain's offense.

In the end, Wei Chen's Windward Formation died. From this point, Blue Rain seemed to have grasped onto another opportunity, happily gaining a numbers advantage.

They had also used this advantage. When Happy started relying on their healer in the 4v5, Blue Rain decisively targeted Happy's healer.

At this moment, Happy gave Blue Rain another piece of candy.

They actually abandoned their main pillar of support in the 4v5: their healer.

Happy made a trade with Blue Rain. Both healers ended up as sacrifices. Although Happy had taken out Blue Rain's healer first, making it more difficult for Blue Rain to finish off their healer, no one would say that Happy had the upper hand.

Up until Qiao Yifan's One Inch Ash arrived at the perfect time.

It was beautiful usage of the difference in distance between the two team's support zones. Blue Rain had less health overall too. If that was all, Happy still wouldn't have the advantage. However, once their group arena two point lead was taken into account, everything made sense.

Why did Happy work so hard to establish an advantage for their healer and then abandon it all so quickly?

Because their advantage didn't come from having more mana or having more players on their side.

Yu Wenzhou understood everything now. Happy didn't want a direct confrontation, especially a 5v5 battle.

The reason?

Just like many of their matches in the regular season, they protected their healer.

Yes, abandoning their healer was a form of protection. An Wenyi may have improved considerably, and his character may have been built just for him, but his capabilities still couldn't match the capabilities of the healers from powerhouse teams.

The more complex the battle, the more unfavorable it was for An Wenyi and Team Happy. As a result, they simply avoided it. They had no intentions of relying on their healer to win because their healer had never been their strength.

They utilized this so-called advantage, constructing their plans around it. All of these plans came together to take advantage of their true strengths.

No healer.

Team Happy: Ye Xiu, Su Mucheng, Fang Rui, Qiao Yifan.

Team Blue Rain: Yu Wenzhou, Huang Shaotian, Lu Hanwen, Zheng Xuan.

From the names, Happy's player roster stood shoulder to shoulder with Blue Rain's.

As for characters, Lord Grim's class itself was an advantage, let alone his full set of Level 80 Silver equipment.

Dancing Rain and Boundless Sea were All-Star characters. Their foundation was there. In terms of upgrading Level 70 Silver equipment to Level 75, the powerhouse teams were no better than Happy. Happy took an even higher-end route. The amount of Level 75 materials in their possession was no fewer than the amount of Level 75 materials that the other teams had. In addition, these two also had Level 80 Silver equipment.

Blue Rain's biggest advantage was their extra player.

But Song Xiao's Receding Tides was still heading over, so this advantage didn't exist right now!

Hurry! Hurry!

The cameraman would focus on Receding Tides from time to time. He wasn't in the fight at the moment, but everyone knew that he was this match's deciding factor, especially for Blue Rain.

Blue Rain was trying to stall until Song Xiao arrived.

But Happy understood their intentions. Happy wasn't going to play tactics with them. Their only goal was to attack regardless of anything else.

Holy light would flash from time to time in this chaotic battle. Ye Xiu was still having his Lord Grim heal. But in this battle without healers, his bit of healing became all the more precious. It was especially loathsome to Blue Rain.

The health on both sides could be depicted as downward slopes.

Who would be the first to fall?

Seeing where Receding Tides was located, everyone was certain of this point. Before he arrived, someone would certainly die. But who?

From the remaining health on each character, Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain had the lowest. Ever since he started his investigation at the beginning of the match, Huang Shaotian had never rested. He had constantly been in high-intensity fights. His Troubling Rain's health had never gone up. When Soul Speaker died, he had the lowest health on the team. And he was someone who needed to fight in close range, which naturally made him a target for Happy.

No way to retreat.

If Blue Rain could retreat, they would have certainly done so. Then, they would convene with Song Xiao.

But Happy bit at them too tightly. If they tried to force a retreat and let Happy chase, they would only lose health needlessly. If things went poorly, their corpses might all that be left.

All they could do was try to move the battle towards Song Xiao.

Persist!

Everyone understood. They grit their teeth and bore the pain. The countless people in the crowd stood up anxiously. Happy looked to have the advantage in health, but it wasn't to the point of having no worries. A single mistake could turn everything around.

Come on!

None of the players on either team could sit still as they stood up and stared at the match screen.

Troubling Rain, 6%!

Who would be the first to fall?

Huang Shaotian had pulled off several miracles this round. Could we see another one with just 6% of his health left?

No one regarded Huang Shaotian as a dead man. As long as he stood on the field, he would always be the greatest threat.

Sword's Divine Judgement!

Troubling Rain suddenly activated his awakening skill. Huang Shaotian had waited a long time before using this skill. It was a skill that could open up the current situation. As long as there was an opportunity, Blue Rain would still choose to retreat to get closer to Song Xiao.

But..

Qi Guard!

Fang Rui's Boundless Sea raised both arms, forming a Qi Guard, shielding Lord Grim, Boundless Sea, and One Inch Ash all at once. Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain was outside of the attack's range and wouldn't be affected by the wave of sword qi.

Ye Xiu's Lord Grim took advantage of the Qi Guard to complete a cast.

Devil World Flower!

A Summoner skill was used, a level one Devil World Flower. It had low health and light attacks, but its functionality was comprehensive.

Zheng Xuan's Bullet Rain immediately fired a Blazing Bullet.

Lord Grim's Myriad Manifestations Umbrella suddenly opened.

Bang!

The flames spread out from the impact between Blazing Bullet and the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella. The Devil World Flower was unaffected, its vines extending out.

Blue Rain was annoyed! It was such a critical moment, and now they had another target to worry about.

Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain leaped into the air, dodging the curling vines. His sword fell. With the buff from Sword's Divine Judgement, the swing was faster and more ferocious. Before he even landed, the Devil World Flower was cut into pieces.

But Ye Xiu's Lord Grim was waiting for him!

Circle Swing!

The Myriad Manifestations Umbrella transformed into a spear and struck towards the sky. Troubling Rain hastily swung his sword to try and block it, but he was too late. The spear stabbed into Troubling Rain and instantly flung him down.

Blue Rain's other team members immediately tried to save him, but Troubling Rain only had so much health left. How could Happy let him go? Kill!

Troubling Rain became the first to fall. Happy's fans cheered, while Blue Rain's fans grit their teeth.

"Sigh... what a pity..." Pan Lin sighed. He had high hopes for Huang Shaotian. He had expected him to perform one final explosive display, but in the end, all he ended up doing was trading his life for a Devil World Flower.

"From the numbers, Huang Shaotian's hand speed seemed to have fallen," Li Yibo looked at player hand speed stats and said.

"Ah?"

"He was in a very tense situation throughout the entire match!" Li Yibo said.

Pan Lin let out a sigh. Although it was somewhat unfortunate, no one was a machine. Huang Shaotian hadn't had a single moment of rest. He had exhausted the most energy out of anyone else in the match.

"But Blue Rain seized this opportunity and took out quite a bit of Boundless Sea's health," Li Yibo said.

"Boundless Sea still has 11% health left. Happy has the 4v3 for a short period of time! Ah! Boundless Sea doesn't care about himself at all. Happy's focusing on Flowing Cloud!" Pan Lin said.

Chapter 1427: Countdown

Dazzling light engulfed the battlefield, but soon afterwards, a shadow flashed out.

Lord Grim! Target, Bullet Rain.

"A change in target?" Pan Lin asked.

"No, it's over," Li Yibo could see it clearer.

Under the intensive focus fire from the enemies, a character without a retreat path and a healer had no way to survive too long. Life and death was only a matter of seconds. Fan Rui's Boundless Sea became the next player after Troubling Rain to depart from the battlefield. But Flowing Cloud was also on the verge of death. Ye Xiu didn't bother with this final blow, instead rushing out into the yellow sand towards Bullet Rain.

Zheng Xuan's Bullet Rain and Yu Wenzhou's Swoksaar were long ranged. Stalling for time was much easier for them. Team Blue Rain clearly planned on taking advantage of this point. After Troubling Rain and Flowing Cloud fell, the two had no reason to continue fighting. With a turn, they went to convene with Song Xiao.

But Ye Xiu's pursuit was extremely fast. He had predicted ahead of time that the two would have an easier time running away once their close-ranged allies fell, so he chased after them before the time came.

In the blink of an eye, a considerable distance between the two sides was erased. Zheng Xuan knew he had no chances of winning a footrace against Ye Xiu. His only choice was to kite. Bullet Rain fired a Flash Bullet, but Lord Grim responded with an open of his umbrella and dashed forward with a Charge. Neither his movement speed nor his eyesight was affected.

Zheng Xuan wanted to cry. That bastard was too annoying. He always made people feel helpless.

Boom boom boom, Bullet Rain fired all sorts of bullets. At this point, conserving his mana was pointless. The final outcome would be decided here. Ye Xiu's Lord Grim was more of a close-ranged fighter. After Troubling Rain, Boundless Sea, and Flowing Cloud fell, he had the lowest amount of health.

19%.

Fuck, 20%!

Lord Grim healed himself. With a blink, his health jumped to 20%.

So fucking annoying!

For someone like Zheng Xuan who had no fighting spirit, this was no better than torture.

After Boundless Sea, Flowing Cloud finally fell at the hands of Qiao Yifan's One Inch Ash. He and Su Mucheng did not immediately follow Ye Xiu's Lord Grim. Dancing Rain instead fired at Yu Wenzhou's Swoksaar.

In reality, Su Mucheng had paid particularly close attention to Yu Wenzhou. A Warlock's set of skills such as Chaotic Rain, Death's Door, Hexagram Prison, Binding Curse were all control skills that could bring about destruction to this delicate situation. Su Mucheng gave up on a few opportunities to deal damage so that she could keep Yu Wenzhou's Swoksaar under control.

Yu Wenzhou played intelligently too. Even if he could not find opportunities to use these disruptive skills, he used his very existence to attract a considerable amount of attention from Happy. Were it not for the threat of a Warlock's control skills, the pace of the battle would have gone much faster.

Right now, Su Mucheng was entirely focused on Swoksaar. Qiao Yifan's One Inch Ash also rushed towards him. In this 3v2, Happy no longer focused on a single target, instead splitting up.

But there's not enough time, is there?

The long-ranged characters had started this battle with relatively more health than the close-ranged characters, and Song Xiao's Receding Tides was nearly there. The broadcast even put down a countdown to his arrival.

20 seconds!

Blue Rain still had almost half their health left. It didn't seem possible to kill them all in this amount of time. There were less players on both sides, so their overall damage output was lower than before.

19, 18, 17...

The countdown continued to tick. It no longer seemed possible to kill either of the two Blue Rain members at this point. What mattered now was how much health they would have left by the time Receding Tides arrived. If they only had a sliver of health, Happy could just ignore Receding Tides and finish off Bullet Rain and Swoksaar for the win.

16, 15, 14...

Ye Xiu's Lord Grim finally caught up to Bullet Rain, dodging the two attacks towards him. He grabbed Bullet Rain with a Fling.

Throw!

The landing point was One Inch Ash's double overlapping ghost boundaries.

Weakened, Frozen, Bullet Rain received two negative status effects as soon as he landed. Soon afterwards, a third ghost boundary appeared, Blind!

Bullet Rain was in trouble. Everyone could see it. The Happy fans cheered excitedly.

Ye Xiu's Lord Grim dashed towards Bullet Rain. As he moved, his Myriad Manifestations Umbrella fired towards Yu Wenzhou, forming a pincer with Su Mucheng.

They were originally Best Partners with a spear and cannon combo, but their dual gun synergy was no worse. The attacks from both sides multiplied the pressure on Yu Wenzhou.

Bang!

Swoksaar was hit by Lord Grim's Stun Bullet.

Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain completed a movement at just the right time. Electricity crackled into a ball and shot out. The X-1 Extruder sucked in Swoksaar towards One Inch Ash's ghost boundary.

10, 9, 8, 7...

Only ten second were left. Qiao Yifan's One Inch Ash was struggling to keep Bullet Rain locked into the formation. Fortunately, Ye Xiu's Lord Grim arrived just in time to give him a helping hand.

6, 5, 4, 3...

Song Xiao's Receding Tides could already be seen, his figure getting closer and closer.

There was no need to count down to zero! Receding Tides was a Qi Master, and Qi Masters didn't need to get close to attack.

Sky Piercing Strike!

Receding Tides sent out an attack. Rippling qi fired from his two palms, lifting up yellow sand into the air. Like a yellow dragon, it crashed into the battlefield.

The characters in Happy within its attack range hastily moved aside, but at this moment, Qiao Yifan's One Inch Ash burst apart his ghost boundaries.

Ghost Feast!

The power of the ghost gods were like demonic shadows. Along with the yellow sand scattered by the Sky Piercing Strike and the desolate atmosphere of the ancient ruins, a sense of eeriness could be felt.

Ghost Feast dealt enormous damage, but because of the limited amount of time Qiao Yifan had, there weren't a lot of ghost boundaries placed down yet. Song Xiao's Receding Tides invaded like a storm. At full health, he didn't care about what damage he took. He could quickly break open the situation through force. As a result, Qiao Yifan didn't dare delay and immediately used the skill while he still had the chance.

Boom!

Dancing Rain started aiming at Receding Tides, but Song Xiao ignored the damage and continued his charge forward. His character leaped into the air, Landmine Quake! Another AoE rumbled over.

Yellow sand rose again.

Void Sand Sea had no wind, but the skills from the characters lifted up the sand like a strong storm. Everything always seemed to be wrapped up in sand.

Kill!

Happy did not choose to retreat. They surrounded Swoksaar and Bullet Rain and attacked ferociously. The Landmine Quake knocked Lord Grim into the air, but with a Quick Recover, Lord Grim immediately got up and continued attacking.

Lord Grim's health: 6%!

The hearts of Happy's fans tightened.

Ye Xiu's Lord Grim was extremely important. The stickiness of melee characters were a characteristic that long-ranged classes could not replace. Qiao Yifan's One Inch Ash was a Phantom Demon and didn't count as a true melee class. If Ye Xiu's Lord Grim fell, Blue Rain would have three mid- to long-ranged classes. Blue Rain could just pull apart, and Su Mucheng and Qiao Yifan would have a difficult time grabbing onto them.

Blue Rain understood this point. Whenever they had a chance, they would focus on Lord Grim.

6% health. A single combo from any of them would be enough to send him off!

Spiral Qi Kill!

Claw of Darkness!

Electric Grenade!

Blue Rain's three players launched attacks towards Lord Grim from three angles.

But...

All of them missed!

Lord Grim was like a demon. He switched between several movement skills, switching directions three times within a small gap. All three skills hit nothing but air. Then, he turned around and counterattacked!

Everyone in the stadium went crazy.

What was a God? What was a core player? This was the embodiment of one!

Had there been an opening in Blue Rain's attacks? There didn't seem to be one, but through extraordinary intuition and control, he dodged a series of attacks that shouldn't be able to be dodged.

Yu Wenzhou and Zheng Xuan wanted to pull away, but Lord Grim was right besides them. They had no way of escaping.

One Inch Ash's ghost boundary fell again.

Not only did their attacks fail to land on Lord Grim, they gave One Inch Ash an opportunity to cast a ghost boundary.

This was the value behind a top player. The openings that they could create weren't ones just anyone could achieve.

Ghost fire blazed inside the Flame Boundary as if trying to refine Swoksaar and Bullet Rain. Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain provided assistance with her artillery fire.

Song Xiao was in a difficult situation. He was the healthy general leading the charge, yet he still hadn't broken open the situation. He was also extremely nervous.

Lord Grim!

Lord Grim was key.

Only 6% health left!

A Flash Burst or a Qigong Blast was enough. Focusing on a single target was to prevent any mistakes. However, their attempt to prevent mistakes backfired. Lord Grim slipped out, and Happy was able to latch onto Blue Rain's two long-ranged classes.

Flash Burst!

Song Xiao didn't think too much. Even if he couldn't kill Lord Grim, he had to at least force him away! That would give his two allies some space to maneuver.

Receding Tides threw everything aside and stepped into One Inch Ash's Flame Boundary. He took the damage from ghost fire and fired an attack at Lord Grim.

Lord Grim dodged to the side. Yu Wenzhou and Zheng Xuan seized this opportunity and pulled apart, one to the left, the other to the right. But Lord Grim waved his sleeves.

Shadow Cloak!

Swoksaar and Bullet Rain were suddenly grabbed back.

However, Qi Burst!

Receding Tides followed up with another attack, seizing the opening that appeared when Lord Grim used his skill.

Lord Grim's health instantly turned to zero, but then, a Satellite Beam descended.

Lord Grim's final move had bound Swoksaar and Bullet Rain together. This Satellite Beam had hit both characters.

Is it over?

Amidst the shining light, the health on both characters rapidly fell, stopping at single digit percentages. Qiao Yifan's One Inch Ash sent out several slashes, successfully killing Swoksaar. Although he wasn't able to take down Receding Tides, at this point, victory was already there's.

With the little health Zheng Xuan's Bullet Rain had left, Happy's remaining two characters ignored Song Xiao and finished him off. No matter how much damage they took, they didn't care. Song Xiao could be completely disregarded. It didn't matter how perfect of a condition Receding Tides was in...

Chapter 1428: Victory

"Victory has already been decided. In the first round of the playoffs, Happy takes their home game win," The match wasn't truly over yet, but Pan Lin gave the announcement anyways.

Happy had won five points in the group arena and had won five points in the team competition so far, for a total of ten points.

As for Blue Rain? They had only won three points in the group arena. To win or tie the first round, they would have needed to not only win the team competition, but win it with at least two players left. Unfortunately, they failed to achieve this goal. With Bullet Rain down, Blue Rain had lost five players. Even if Song Xiao took down Su Mucheng and Qiao Yifan, it was impossible for Team Blue Rain to win this round's team competition.

"Coach Li, how about you give a rundown of this match?" Pan Lin asked.

"This match... how can I say it..." Li Yibo pondered, "Team Happy had completely grasped Team Blue Rain's tactical traits, limiting Team Blue Rain's performance by a considerable degree. We can see that the two opportunities seized by Team Blue Rain had actually been intentionally prepared by Team Happy. But you can't say it was entirely a trap. Those opportunities were indeed good opportunities for

Team Blue Rain. It was just that they were met with hindrance during their execution and could not reach the desired outcome.”

“Such as Wei Chen stalling Yu Wenzhou and Lu Hanwen?” Pan Lin said.

“Yes. Happy’s strategy was actually very ambitious. It required an old general, who had left the pro scene seven years ago and only just returned, to contend with Lu Hanwen and Yu Wenzhou, two All-Stars. Let’s think about it for a moment. If Wei Chen’s Windward Formation had been killed earlier, or if he failed to stall both players, the match may have ended completely differently,” Li Yibo said.

“If those imaginary situations really had happened, perhaps Happy might have countermeasures in place?” Pan Lin said.

“This we don’t know. If I had to guess, I’d say probably? After all, it was a rather risky strategy,” Li Yibo said.

“Oh, the match is now officially over. As expected, even though Song Xiao was in a 1v2, he came into the fight much much healthier than Happy’s two players. In the end, he was able to win the 1v2, but it no longer has any effect on the final outcome of today’s match,” Pan Lin said.

“From the data we have on the team competition, Blue Rain had the advantage. After all, the team competition was their win. Unfortunately, if you look at the round as a whole, they lost,” Li Yibo said.

The two teams walked out of their player booths.

The two teams met in the center and shook hands.

Compared to the start of the match, the mood on both teams were now two extremes.

“You played very well. Thanks for the match,” Yu Wenzhou maintained his calm.

“You played so-so,” Ye Xiu wasn’t polite at all.

“We’ll see you next round,” Yu Wenzhou said. If he were anyone else, it might sound like there was a hint of vengeance in his words. But coming from Yu Wenzhou, these words just sounded like he was stating a fact.

Next, Huang Shaotian.

“Hahahaha,” Ye Xiu only laughed.

“What are you so happy about? You just barely won,” Huang Shaotian remarked disdainfully.

“The championships are won by just a narrow margin,” Ye Xiu said.

“Leave it for after you beat us!” Huang Shaotian said.

“That’s next round’s business,” Ye Xiu expressed dully.

The teams passed by each other one player at a time. The two sides had simple exchanges. The winners weren’t arrogant, and the losers weren’t downcast. Happy’s last player as their sixth player, Wei Chen. He shined the brightest in the team competition, doing what people considered impossible.

“Are you convinced?” Wei Chen shook Yu Wenzhou’s hands.

“I’ve always been convinced,” Yu Wenzhou smiled.

“Are you scared?” Wei Chen asked Huang Shaotian.

“What’s there to be scared of,” Huang Shaotian rolled his eyes. He had respect and gratitude towards Wei Chen from the bottom of his heart, but in terms of their interactions, there was no way he could be serious with him.

“Little demon, now you know the might of your senior!” Lu Hanwen was third in line. He was still going through puberty, and his voice hadn’t deepened yet. He was shorter than the other players by a head. Wei Chen rubbed his head instead of shaking his hands.

“Amazing,” Lu Hanwen nodded his head, “Let’s see who’ll win next time, senior!”

“Little bastard!” Wei Chen cursed inwardly. He obviously knew that if he had to fight Lu Hanwen several times, he would definitely lose more than he won. In today’s match, from a PvP perspective, he had been killed by Yu Wenzhou and Lu Hanwen. He had done what he had hoped to accomplish. He had achieved his goal, so he had succeeded, but in terms of winning... let alone him, the team competition had been won by Team Blue Rain.

The final outcome was a difficult problem for the Alliance. They weren’t sure who to give the MVP award to.

Team Blue Rain had won the team competition, but Team Happy had won the overall round. From the overall flow of the team competition, it could be seen that Happy had no intentions of winning. Their goal was to win as many points as possible in the team competition. From this perspective, Happy had been more successful in the team competition. They had achieved what they wanted. However... how could they ignore the actual outcome?

From pure numbers, Huang Shaotian was excellent in the team competition. Whether it was the damage he took or the damage he dealt, he was number one in both categories. His contribution in the team competition was obvious. However, the first problem was that Happy had reached their goal in the team competition, and the second problem was that Huang Shaotian’s Troubling Rain had half his health knocked away by a tree in the group arena. No matter how it was spun, that should be considered a big mistake.

As for Happy’s players? Wei Chen’s performance in the team competition had been astonishing, being the decisive factor there. However, he had died early in the match. There were many other deciding factors later that he wasn’t a part of. He also didn’t appear in the group arena.

For the group arena, Happy’s Mo Fan performed spectacularly, but he didn’t participate in the more important team competition.

As a result, the two sides had their pros and cons. In the end, the MVP award was given to Ye Xiu.

Ye Xiu had completed a 1v2 in the group arena too. It was just that Mo Fan being a rookie beating Huang Shaotian to complete a 1v2 made his performance more eye-catching.

In the team competition, Ye Xiu wasn't as stunning as Wei Chen, but he had been the deciding factor in multiple crucial moments.

"Maybe we're just too used to Ye Xiu's amazing performances, so we always forget about him?" In one of the reports for this match, Ye Xiu had been described as the MVP who won the award without batting an eye.

This round's performance didn't garner Happy too much praise. In the next day's Esports Weekly, Happy's victory was described as "a successful exploitation of the new competitive format".

This comment came about mostly because Happy had exposed their intentions in the team competition, revealing that they would win the overall match through points. The team competition had always been the most important part of a match. Happy had lost the team competition, yet still won the overall round, which was quite unusual to many people. The new competitive format had been used in Season 9's playoffs as well, but it was the first time this sort of situation had occurred.

"In the home game, they took advantage of their group arena fluke to win the overall round, but in the following two away games, does Happy have enough courage and enough confidence to face them?"

Another report commented in this way.

The group arena win was regarded as a fluke, obviously because of Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain losing half his health from a tree. This sort of situation would obviously be treated as an accident. Happy's win had been built upon this fluke.

Next, two away games...

This seemingly normal statement was actually filled with malice. As long as Happy won the next match, this first round would be over. But the report stated two away games, indicating that Happy would certainly lose the following one.

The Happy haters found quite a bit to talk about because of this match. But before Happy's next round began, the next day's first round fourth match came knocking down.

In the fourth match, Tiny Herb played against Thunderclap, winning 10 to 9. In addition, the point distribution for this match was identical to the point distribution for the Happy vs Blue Rain match. Tiny Herb won the group arena 5 to 3, but lost the team competition 5 to 6. However, the total points tallied to 10 to 9, Tiny Herb's win.

Was it on purpose?

Was it by luck?

No one knew.

The discussion point was the same for two matches. The results were the same, but the responses were different. It was easy to think that the evaluations were unfair. In the numerous reports, Happy's match against Blue Rain was pulled out, comparing the differences between the two matches to explain that despite the same outcome, Happy's had been intentional, while Tiny Herb's had not been.

"In the group arena, Tiny Herb earned a tremendous win, and it was not through luck."

“In the team competition, the home game Thunderclap played powerfully, but Tiny Herb didn’t rely on their group arena advantage. Instead, an intense confrontation between the two teams unfolded. In the end, the 5 points obtained was a result of their intent to win.”

“The goals and attitudes that the two teams displayed are conclusive.”

The evaluation of Tiny Herb and Thunderclap became a comparison between Happy and Tiny Herb. The reports were scared that if they didn’t explain their thoughts clearly enough, their reputation would be damaged.

Chapter 1429: Two Teams Eliminated

Whether or not it was intentional was a topic that could be discussed for an entire week, if the match had occurred during the regular season. But the tempo of the playoffs didn’t give anyone a break to consider such topics.

With the high frequency of one match being played each day, it was almost too much for the spectators to take in, with each match leaving a different impression on them. Whether or not winning through the group arena was intentional was already an outdated topic. At this point, it was already the first match of the second round. In their home stadium, Team Samsara would face off against Team Hundred Blossoms.

Having already lost one home game, Hundred Blossoms already had no path of retreat. But even facing off against Samsara, the most dominant team in the season, the team aiming for three consecutive championships; Hundred Blossoms didn’t show any sign of fear. Under Yu Feng’s command, Hundred Blossoms took the initiative to go on the offensive against Samsara in their away game. In the group arena, both teams fought fiercely, going back and forth, with each side eliminating the opposing players quickly. Neither side was able to secure a significant lead, but in the end, Samsara still won the group arena with a score of 5 to 4.

Just like this, Team Hundred Blossoms entered the life-or-death team competition with a one point disadvantage.

They didn’t play conservatively, only taking the necessary precautions when playing an away game. Even in their position, one step away from elimination, Hundred Blossoms continued to take the initiative to the best of their abilities.

In the last round of the regular season, Hundred Blossoms had also faced off against Samsara. It had also been their away game, and they had also been on the precipice of elimination, but relying on their tenacious determination, they played to the best of their abilities, seizing one point after another. At the end of the day, it was a one point advantage that had secured them a spot in the playoffs.

But even in that round, in the team competition that followed afterwards, Hundred Blossoms had also tried their very best, but ultimately lost. In the first round of the playoffs, Hundred Blossoms had personally experienced Samsara’s different temperament when it came to the playoffs.

Winning two championships had given them a great deal of self-confidence. This allowed them to put on a steady and calm performance in the playoffs. In this manner, they unflinchingly withstood the great

waves from Hundred Blossoms in their home game, defeating them and letting Team Hundred Blossoms clearly understand the difference in strength between the two teams.

Faced with this steady and stable playstyle, Hundred Blossoms had little chance of winning. Samsara's stability meant that everyone could hardly imagine them making any fatal mistakes that would lead to their defeat.

That night, the players of Hundred Blossoms felt somewhat depressed. Facing off against what seemed to be an unbeatable opponent had dampened their spirits. But after one night, everyone from Hundred Blossoms had re-adjusted their state of mind.

If they already felt as if victory was nigh unachievable, what else was there to fear? They would throw caution to the wind, play an exciting match, and that would be it!

Yu Feng could feel this kind of an atmosphere throughout the team. So, in this crucial away game, they simply put aside their reservations, allowing everyone to put their all into this battle.

Victory? Defeat? Forget about such matters for the time being!

On the most cut-throat stage of the playoffs, against the strongest team, let's see what we can achieve! The team competition showcased an even more brilliant back and forth than the group arena. Every single member of Hundred Blossoms put on their best performance, with each player having their own outstanding moments. Nevertheless, the team that achieved victory at the end of the day was still Team Samsara.

Team Hundred Blossoms had been eliminated, but after this loss, Yu Feng could see unwillingness and vexation on the faces of all the members of Hundred Blossoms.

"If only my deployment of the Devil World Flowers hadn't been disrupted!" The Summoner, Zhu Xiaoping, slapped his leg as he lamented, unresigned.

"It's my fault, if only I had given you the proper covering fire at that time, then..." Zou Yuan said.

"If only that sneak attack of mine had succeeded, then..." Zhou Guangyi, their Assassin, said.

One match had left them with too many "if only"s.

At this time, these hypothetical scenarios actually symbolized hope for Team Hundred Blossoms. Because they would have opportunities and circumstances to turn those hypotheticals into reality.

"Next year, we will return once more!" Yu Feng said.

"Once more!" Zhu Xiaoping didn't slap his leg, instead clenching his fists tightly.

"Once more!" Everyone in Hundred Blossoms solemnly nodded their heads.

After desperately killing their way into the playoffs, two matches in the first round had spelt the end of their journey through the playoffs. They were regretful, they were unresigned. But Yu Feng felt that these were exactly what they had gained. Because they were regretful, because they were unresigned, they would have more motivation. If the only thing they felt was despair from losing against a strong opponent, how would this team ever have the courage or confidence to fight once more?

Having such a competition, having such a group of teammates, it was really too great!

Yu Feng thought of this, feeling that he would definitely have incomparably bright prospects in the near future.

Team Samsara advanced into the top four, taking a solid step towards their goal of winning three consecutive championships.

In the various reports the next day, they naturally still sang the praises of the victor. Two rounds, two group arenas, two team competitions, and Samsara had won them all, indisputably seizing victory in their opening round. For them, aside from words of flattery and praise, there really wasn't much else to say.

"Samsara's greatest enemy may only be a feeling called 'arrogance'," one report said.

Immediately, the question of which team could possibly snipe Samsara's three consecutive championships became a topic of discussion. Just like the question of who could stop their consecutive victories in the regular season, it quickly became a hot topic of discussion amongst everyone.

The team that had put an end to Samsara's record of consecutive victories, Hundred Blossoms, had already been personally sent out of the playoffs by Samsara. Then, would there be another team that would say goodbye to the playoffs next?

In the first round of the playoffs, in their second game, Team Tyranny would face off in their home stadium against Team 301.

In their previous home game, Team 301 had lost miserably. Everyone could see that in the more cautious environment of the playoffs, Team 301's help from abroad, who had only been part of the team for half a season, was increasingly unable to create opportunities for his team. What's more, their opponents were Team Tyranny, home to a number of old generals who had incomparable levels of experience. On top of that, they had an extremely cautious tactician, Zhang Xinjie, along with the fact that Team Tyranny's current playstyle was no longer their old, hyper-aggressive style, instead focusing on defence. All these factors greatly restricted Team 301's ability to execute their gameplan. What was originally a dark horse that countless people had thought highly of was now the team with the most disappointing performance in the playoffs. In the first match, it had been as such, and in this match, it was the same.

Compared to their first match, 301's only improvement was taking one more point for themselves.

"Your tactics aren't bad, go back and keep working hard!" When the players were shaking hands after the match, Zhang Xinjie said this to Team 301's foreign help, Bai Shu.

Ridicule? Contempt?

Bai Shu obviously didn't have a sufficient understanding of Zhang Xinjie, completely misunderstanding the intention behind Zhang Xinjie's words. Actually, it had to be understood that Zhang Xinjie's words were always very simple, so what he had meant was just the most simple and direct interpretation of those words. On the other hand, Bai Shu's thought process wasn't as uncomplicated. Because they had suffered defeat, because the tactics that he had brought weren't able to be fully put to use, Zhang

Xinjie's praise, saying that his tactics "weren't bad" after the match sounded exceedingly ear-piercing to him.

Bai Shu wasn't too happy, preparing to retort sarcastically. Trash talk was, after all, a global language.

"Thank you for your advice." Before he could open his mouth, the person standing in front of him, Team 301's captain, Yang Cong, had cut in, replying to Zhang Xinjie in his place.

Obviously, Yang Cong clearly understood Zhang Xinjie's personality, and at the same time, he also foresaw that Bai Shu, who didn't really understand Zhang Xinjie, might have a negative reaction to his words, so he had quickly intervened.

Bai Shu was stunned for a moment, but he didn't say anything, deferring to Yang Cong's attitude, and quietly finishing the post-match formalities. It was only when they had returned to their club that Yang Cong explained to Bai Shu that Zhang Xinjie's words were utterly devoid of ridicule; instead, he was simply stating the facts.

"Continue to work hard!" Yang Cong patted Bai Shu on the shoulder.

Bai Shu lowered his head, spending some time in deep contemplation, but he also realized that with only half a year to fit into the team, his tactics were indeed lacking in many aspects. After using them for half the regular season, they were no longer surprising to the rest of the teams in the Alliance, and in the cut-throat environment of the playoffs, it was inevitable that he would hit a wall.

"Continue to work hard!" Bai Shu raised his head, replying to Yang Cong, his eyes filled with determination.

Yang Cong laughed. As a player who had debuted in the third season, he didn't have much time left in his professional career. Being the core, or the main force, such roles would gradually leave him. If he stubbornly refused to budge, it would instead burden his entire team.

Yang Cong would no longer be able to build 301's future. The person in front of him, Bai Shu, he was the one who would have to shoulder the burden of 301's future. In Yang Cong's eyes, Bai Shu was a talented player, worthy of being entrusted with such a role. He was quite happy that his team was able to dig out such an outstanding player from the pro scene overseas.

Outside of the Glory Alliance, how many Glory experts were there that they had never seen, and never played against? Yang Cong couldn't help thinking about this.

If he had the chance, he really wanted to experience it first-hand! As Yang Cong thought about this, he felt a sense of melancholy. Whether or not he would still have such a chance was something that he couldn't be sure about.

Team 301 became the second team to be eliminated from the playoffs. And Team Tyranny, who had been underestimated throughout the regular season, now looked like they had gathered themselves once more in the playoffs. In front of Tyranny, 301, who had been a headache for countless teams in the second half of the regular season, had instead been battered and bruised.

This was Team Tyranny's real strength! Many articles ran such a tagline.

“Real strength”, these two words would always make people feel deeply moved. After the end of the first round, Team Tyranny’s popularity rating increased by an incredible amount. Many people had already begun to predict that the two teams vying for the championship in the end would still be Tyranny and Samsara. In the news, aside from discussion of the match between Tyranny and 301 from the night before, there were also predictions and opinions on the match that would happen that night.

Happy’s away game against Blue Rain!

Three days after their first match, these two teams would face off once again. The Happy haters flocked out of their holes, wanting to see if Happy, who had fought such an arduous and utilitarian battle in the first match in order to win, would be able to make any waves in their away game.

“In Blue Rain’s home game, there shouldn’t be any big tree blessing Happy anymore, right?”

The tree falling on Troubling Rain still remained as the most eye-catching moment of the first match. Happy’s haters especially liked to use this as an example to explain that Happy’s victory had been a fluke, something purely based on luck. It was a pity that no matter how many times they brought it up, Happy didn’t feel anything much, but instead, Huang Shaotian was gnashing his teeth, viciously cursing this group of Happy haters hundreds of times.

“That smelly brat, it’s best that he doesn’t run into me!” Huang Shaotian repeated many times over these three days. The “smelly brat” naturally was referring to Mo Fan, but “not running into him”, meant quite the opposite. Huang Shaotian couldn’t wait to run into Mo Fan again.

Chapter 1430: Blue Rain’s Starting Player

With the second match, it was Happy’s turn to play the away game. The day before, they flew over to Blue Rain’s home city, City G. A night of rest allowed them to recover from the fatigue of travel. That morning, they warmed up in the temporary training room specifically for away teams. In the afternoon, there weren’t any group activities, so everyone found their own ways to get into condition. When it was about time, they would go over to the stadium together to familiarize themselves with the surroundings, and soon after that, tonight’s match would be upon them.

After lunch, everyone returned to their own rooms to take a break. Wei Chen, smoking, stood by the hotel room window and absently stared outside.

“Isn’t this already your second time here? And the second time you’ve stayed here? What’s with the sad face?” Ye Xiu said from the side. Like their place in Upper Forest Park, he and Wei Chen were rooming together.

“Last time we came, I don’t think I went to visit the team,” Wei Chen said.

“You want to visit?” Ye Xiu asked. He knew that by “team,” Wei Chen was referring to Team Blue Rain.

“Before, not really, but after last match, I suddenly kind of want to,” said Wei Chen.

“I understand,” Ye Xiu said, nodding.

“You understand?” Surprised, Wei Chen turned to look at him.

“Last match was a struggle for you, so now you need to go in front of those guys and aggressively show off,” said Ye Xiu, with a face of sympathy.

“Oh, fuck off!” Wei Chen said snappily.

“If you want to go then just go. Do you really need to waver over something as small as this?” After that, Ye Xiu didn’t pay him any more mind. He went to go take a nap to rest up. Wei Chen stood by the window and continued to waver for quite a while. In the end, he made up his mind, firmly finished and extinguished his cigarette, and left.

Ye Xiu slept for the entire afternoon. By the time he woke up, Chen Guo was already calling everyone to head over to the stadium together to familiarize themselves with it. By this time, Wei Chen had already returned, and was acting as though nothing was up. Had he gone? Ye Xiu didn’t ask, nor did he say anything about it. After Happy assembled, everyone left the hotel together and arrived at Blue Rain’s stadium, Xiaochuan Stadium.

Last time it had been somewhat unfamiliar, but this was now their second time here. Following the workers, Happy filed into the stadium. All of the facilities needed for the match were already prepared, and Happy’s members were simply wandering around, imagining the atmosphere that this place would have in a few hours. They would often do this during the regular season as well, so everyone was used to it. No one could say for sure whether it was useful, but because everyone did this, there wouldn’t be any downside.

“You’re here!” As Happy was aimlessly hanging around, they suddenly heard someone greeting them. When they turned, they saw Blue Rain’s Captain Yu Wenzhou. He was just by himself, calmly standing to the side and looking at the entire Team Happy. The greeting had sounded less like an opponent, and more like a host welcoming some guests.

“Yeah, we’re here.” Ye Xiu answered for Happy.

“Good luck with your preparations.” Yu Wenzhou dipped his head and didn’t bother them any further, leaving them to their devices.

“What was that for?” Chen Guo asked Ye Xiu. The home team players generally wouldn’t come to familiarize themselves with the stadium beforehand. Of course, a few players had their own unique habits, but it didn’t seem that Yu Wenzhou had been exposed for having any such special habits.

“Who knows,” said Ye Xiu, watching Yu Wenzhou depart. “Just casually wandering around, probably!”

The next time they saw Blue Rain’s current captain, it was already nighttime, right before the match’s start. The two teams were lined up in the player passageway, waiting to enter.

“Work hard.”

“Good luck.”

The two captains at the front of the two lines represented their teams as they encouraged each other. The air actually seemed quite harmonious. After that, the teams entered the stadium as normal, nothing out of the ordinary. But because Blue Rain had lost the previous match, they had to win today’s match no matter what. As soon as the players entered, Blue Rain’s home fans erupted.

In order to cheer on their team today, special preparations had been made on Blue Rain's side. Guild Leader Changing Spring had specifically recruited helpers and arranged everyone in all corners of the stadium. This let the devoted fans act like a train, driving up the spirits of the whole stadium.

And Changing Spring himself was sitting in the east seating section, directly across from the west.

On the west side was the section reserved for the away team fans, while the east side had Blue Rain's diehard fans. Over here, they were directly opposite the away team fans, and could easily engage in contests with them.

With the explosion from the Blue Rain fans, the Happy fans on the west section weren't about to be outdone. Even though there was no way for them to get the upper hand due to their inferior numbers, they would certainly let the opponent recognize their presence. The fan squad following Happy for the playoffs had been personally organized by Wu Chen. Right now, the west seating area included Thousand Creations, Horse Shooter, Seven Fields, Sleeping Moon, these players who were the backbone of Guild Happy. Everyone had made thorough preparations with sophisticated equipment, all sorts of eye-catching noisemakers that swiftly began to disrupt the home crowd's cheering.

"Wow, the players have only just entered the stadium, and the fans on both sides are already going at each other! It looks like today's match is going to be exceptionally exciting!" said the broadcast commentator Pan Lin, feeling the atmosphere in the stadium.

"Blue Rain has no more path of retreat. They're going to have to give their all in this match," said Li Yibo.

"But Happy won their last match by only a narrow margin. Blue Rain isn't under too much pressure, right?" Pan Lin said.

"Well, a team should never let themselves feel too much pressure. But if they let down their guard because Happy only won narrowly, then that attitude would be very bad for them. I trust that Blue Rain would not do such a thing. Whether a narrow or a big victory, Blue Rain's situation right now would be the same," said Li Yibo.

"You're right. Right now, the players from both teams have already arrived at their own competitor booths, and the match will start soon. For the group arena, Happy will probably send Ye Xiu up first again, right? Then on the home side, who will Blue Rain send up to deal with Ye Xiu? The win or loss of this first point can have a big impact on the morale of both sides!" said Pan Lin.

"But they also have to be careful, what if Happy doesn't send Ye Xiu first? Then whatever plans Blue Rain makes to deal with him might come to nothing, and it'll hurt their own rhythm," said Li Yibo.

"Then what should Blue Rain do?" Pan Lin said.

"There isn't a perfect way to deal with this, so let's just see what they do. This is the pressure exerted by a top-tier player!" said Li Yibo.

"Alright, let us wait and see. Will Happy continue to send Ye Xiu onstage first? And what kind of response will Blue Rain make? Right now, there are still five minutes until the match officially begins," said Pan Lin.

The five minutes passed in the blink of an eye. The judge came to call for them, and the two teams began to send their players onstage.

“Ye Xiu! As it turns out, it’s still Ye Xiu!” Pan Lin shouted. On Happy’s side, Ye Xiu had already stood up.

“What about Blue Rain? Who will Blue Rain send up to battle?” Pan Lin looked at Blue Rain’s side, but still didn’t find his answer. But at this moment, the digital screen in the stadium displayed the names.

Happy, Ye Xiu, Lord Grim.

Blue Rain, Yu Wenzhou, Swoksaar.

It was as though the broadcast froze, entering five seconds of dead silence.

Pan Lin’s mouth had fallen open. For a long time, he was unable to say anything. In the stadium, too, when the names came out, it went completely quiet.

“Yu... Yu Wenzhou?” Pan Lin double-checked the words on the screen, and then took another look at Blue Rain’s player area, where Yu Wenzhou was already walking toward the stage.

Yes, it was Yu Wenzhou.

In reality, when Ye Xiu had stood up, Yu Wenzhou had also already stood up on Blue Rain’s side, and when Pan Lin had checked the screen, he had seen that. But... he never would have thought that Yu Wenzhou was the player that Blue Rain was sending out. He had subconsciously thought that he’d stood up to let another player pass by, or maybe as the captain he was giving some last reminder to the player about to go onstage. Who would’ve thought that this was Yu Wenzhou himself about to head onstage?

Yu Wenzhou... was about to 1v1?

Five seconds of silence, a stammered announcement of Yu Wenzhou’s name, and then another five seconds of silence. Finally, Pan Lin recovered for good, and began yelling with disbelief in his voice.

“Yu Wenzhou! It’s actually Yu Wenzhou! Blue Rain’s first player in the group arena, the player facing off against Ye Xiu, is actually Yu Wenzhou?! Coach Li!” At the end, Pan Lin called for Li Yibo. Such a big thing happening, you hurry up and say a few words!

“This is indeed an extremely unexpected arrangement.” Li Yibo forced himself to remain calm. He couldn’t allow himself to be as passionate or volatile as Pan Lin, he had to display how much more of a refined person he was.

“Yu Wenzhou... I don’t even remember the last time he appeared in a 1v1,” said Li Yibo.

“Today he’s suddenly going onstage, this is probably a tactic specifically targeted toward Happy sending Ye Xiu first?” said Pan Lin.

“I would think so...”

“Has Yu Wenzhou found the secret to dealing with the unspecialized Lord Grim?” said Pan Lin.

“This... There probably isn’t any such secret, right?” said Li Yibo.

“Then what’s he thinking?” said Pan Lin.

Li Yibo couldn't answer that question, and so he didn't. Yu Wenzhou, who hadn't played an individual match in who knows how long, today wanted to challenge Ye Xiu, challenge this season's King of Dueling, the unspecialized Lord Grim who had been an incomparable headache for countless players...

They hadn't even finished processing this reality by the time the two characters had already finished loading in, and the round officially began.

"The battle's starting, right now the battle's starting, Happy's Ye Xiu, against Blue Rain's Yu Wenzhou. This is a matchup in a group arena, I don't think I need to describe just how unusual this confrontation is?" Pan Lin shouted.

"Hey!"

At this time, the two players entering the battle had already begun conversation in the chat. The first one to speak was Ye Xiu.

"You're really too bold, aren't you!" Ye Xiu said.

"I'm giving it a try," said Yu Wenzhou.

"If you end up winning this, no one in the pro circle will have any face left! This season's King of Dueling finally taken down, and it's by you?" Ye Xiu said.

"Don't rule out that possibility," said Yu Wenzhou.

"How's your hand speed right now? Can you reach 200?" Ye Xiu said.

"So-so!" Yu Wenzhou answered.