

Avatar 1451

Chapter 1451: No Tactics

Fang Rui had barely exited the player booth when Tang Rou stood from her seat at Happy's bench.

They had finally gotten to the playoffs stage, but Tang Rou didn't get a chance to fight at all in the first round. She was, naturally, extremely disappointed.

She hadn't been a member of the team competition last round, but she was the anchor for the group arena. But Happy ended the group arena with their fourth player last round. Tang Rou had been eagerly anticipating a fight that night, yet had been no more than a spectator.

Logically speaking, it would be better for Happy if Tang Rou, as the anchor, didn't get a chance to fight. That was something Happy would be happy about.

Tang Rou naturally wasn't hoping that Happy did badly, she just wanted to fight.

This round, Tang Rou was positioned fourth and finally got her chance. Without waiting for Fang Rui to come down, she was already charging up onto the stage.

"Little Tang is pretty much the antonym of Blue Rain's Zheng Xuan!" Ye Xiu exclaimed.

Chen Guo paused for a moment in surprise before considering it again. That was... true.

Zheng Xuan's lack of motivation was infamous, always ready with a "how stressful" on his tongue. As for Tang Rou? Tang Rou had the most motivation for competition. She loved a challenge and being under pressure.

"You think they'll go up against each other?" Chen Guo was suddenly very interested in watching the two antonyms face off.

"Probably not?" Ye Xiu said.

"There's still another player on Blue Rain's side!" Chen Guo exclaimed.

"Huang Shaotian," Ye Xiu reminded her.

"Oh yeah!" Chen Guo slapped a hand on her forehead. She had forgotten; Blue Rain's Huang Shaotian hadn't fought yet, today! She was so used to Zheng Xuan having a set spot in the 1v1 matches, but today Blue Rain decided to try something new and gave Yu Wenzhou a spot in the group arena, and thus Zheng Xuan managed to get out of playing today. As for Blue Rain's anchor, that was definitely Huang Shaotian. He was the core and ace, after all!

Happy's two, one heading onstage, the other coming offstage, met halfway.

"You're eager, aren't you?" Fang Rui grinned.

Tang Rou just smiled, not saying anything.

"That brat's a straightforward sort of guy, just close in directly and overwhelm him!" Fang Rui said.

"Alright." Tang Rou nodded.

“Good luck.” Fang Rui returned to Happy’s player bench after giving his blessings.

Though it was Blue Rain who had won, it was Happy’s player coming back, so the applause was restrained. The wildest applause came from the west stands. That was where the Happy fans congregated, offering thunderous applause for Happy when they came on and off stage, no matter if they won or lost. Though Blue Rain had won a round just now, the Blue Rain fans were pretty solemn due to the overall situation not being in their favour.

“Young people nowadays sure are something!” Fang Rui exclaimed, having returned to Happy’s bench. When discussing Lu Hanwen, he obviously did have the right to act the veteran.

“Did you think you could defeat him easily?” Ye Xiu asked.

“Actually, I really did think so at first. I’ve fought the brat a few times in these past two years,” Fang Rui admitted.

“He’s improving really fast, isn’t he?” Ye Xiu said.

“He has a limitless future ahead of him.” Fang Rui’s expression was uncharacteristically serious.

Chen Guo was listening in on the side, and after a good while, she turned her head to look at Fang Rui. “So you mean to say your loss was reasonable?”

“Ah, boss, you really know how to start a conversation!” Fang Rui slapped his leg excitedly.

Chen Guo rolled her eyes. She had thought it was weird that these two were suddenly feeling generous and nice enough to complement their juniors. She should’ve expected that they were just shamelessly setting up a scenario to make this loss seem reasonable! Seems like Fang Rui was rather embarrassed at losing to this second year rookie.

“Haha.” Ye Xiu laughed, sitting to the side, but afterwards, he said seriously, “Boss, I think we should keep an eye on him. He’ll become a powerful rival that Happy won’t be able to shake off for ten years.”

“Like Han Wenqing!” Chen Guo blurted out. Rivals of ten years, Chen Guo, used to seeing things with One Autumn Leaf in mind, immediately thought of Han Wenqing and his Desert Dust.

“How?” Ye Xiu didn’t agree. “I destroyed him ages ago. It’s him who can’t avoid me.”

“Hey, hold your horses! In season four, he destroyed you.” Wei Chen couldn’t help but interrupt.

“Haha, everyone who walks by the river will get their shoes wet some time,” Ye Xiu replied.

This analogy... how come it sounded no less arrogant? Chen Guo was speechless.

The reason why Happy’s players had the energy to chat was because the match had yet to start. Although Tang Rou went up early, the break between each round was set. Tang Rou had already gotten up there, but now she still had to wait.

After about half a minute, the battle between the fourth position players on each side began.

Tang Rou, having accumulated her aggression for so long, had full health. Soft Mist charged right out. Lu Hanwen, with Flowing Clouds only at 23 percent health, resolutely choose to play tactically after the match began.

“Lu Hanwen is planning on being tactical!” From Pan Lin’s tone, it was clear that this choice was rather surprising.

With what Lu Hanwen had shown so far in terms of personality and play style, he was definitely not a tactical player. Plus, as a second year rookie, could he really do tactics well?

“His opponent is Tang Rou, after all!” Li Yibo’s words cut through everyone’s doubt.

Although Lu Hanwen only had two years of experience, that was more than Tang Rou, who had only played one regular season and was in her first playoffs.

Lu Hanwen wasn’t a tactical player, but Tang Rou... wasn’t one either, no?

Hoping for a battle of wits like what Yu Wenzhou and Ye Xiu had from two brute force style players wasn’t realistic. Lu Hanwen’s tactics might not be very methodical or deep, but Tang Rou was the same. His not-so-good tactics might just be enough here. They were both at the same level, so who knew.

“Speaking of, this is Tang Rou’s first playoffs battle!” Pan Lin brought up.

“You’re right. She didn’t get a chance to play last round,” Li Yibo said.

“She doesn’t seem nervous at all! She was so impatient, coming up,” Pan Lin laughed.

“Nervous? Think about it. She’s the player who said she would 1v3, then faced all those accusations, yet could still still play normally onstage. Think of what sort of mental fortitude she has,” Li Yibo reminded the other.

“That’s true. It seems like the usual problems that newbies would face won’t be an issue here,” Pan Lin said.

“Indeed. The problems Tang Rou faced never came from the environment. They were mostly self-focused, like her grasp of rhythm, her defensive ability, etc. which we discussed in the regular season,” Li Yibo added.

“That’s right, we did discuss some of her problems in the regular season, but with each battle until now, I can see a clear improvement,” Pan Lin commented.

“Now it’s time to test these improvements,” Li Yibo said.

These two talked with a hint of pride, like it was they who had guided Tang Rou to where she stood now.

“Tang Rou has gone directly for the middle while Lu Hanwen’s decided to head to his right, and thus circling to the map’s west side.” Pan Lin focused on the match and began to commentate.

Tang Rou had charged quickly and Soft Mist soon arrived at the center of the map. She carefully looked around, but didn’t see her opponent.

“Have you yet to arrive or are you circling around?” Tang Rou asked in the chat.

As expected of someone from Happy, who spent all her time with Ye Xiu and the others. Tang Rou asked this question so reasonably and straightforwardly, as if she hadn't considered this to be a crucial match of the playoffs. There was no reason for an opponent to give you a straight answer to that sort of question!

Lu Hanwen, that poor child, answered ever so honestly, "I'm circling around."

"Which side?" Tang Rou asked.

The entire stadium was filled with whispering. Why did none of Happy's member care for these courtesies? They were all wondering.

"Guess." Lu Hanwen sent an emote with its tongue out, finally not being so honest anymore.

"Alright then, I'll wait for you," Tang Rou replied and then Soft Mist just stopped there, turning her head back and forth and observing her surroundings.

Lu Hanwen was, naturally, very familiar with this map. Flowing Cloud soon circled around to the central route's west flank before starting to carefully approach, using the forestry as cover. Finally, when he peeked out from behind a tree, he found Soft Mist.

How should he strike?

Seeing Soft Mist who was turning her head back and forth, Lu Hanwen scratched his head. This really wasn't his forte!

After thinking for about five seconds, Lu Hanwen made a decision.

He'll ambush from behind!

He thought to himself. So, he carefully watched Soft Mist turn her head around, and when she was facing away from his direction, Flowing Cloud darted out!

"..." Pan Lin was rendered speechless for a moment. After being given a top tier dirty performance, Lu Hanwen's Flowing Cloud charging out like that just seemed so lacking. Pan Lin was too embarrassed to call it an ambush.

"Flowing Cloud circles around to the west side and strikes!" In the end, he summarized it with that.

Offstage, Fang Rui was rolling on the ground with laughter as he gestured wildly towards Blue Rain's other players. Over on Blue Rain's side, Yu Wenzhou also changed the topic immediately when it was brought up. He didn't want to talk about Lu Hanwen's attempt at being tactical because there was nothing to talk about.

Such a simple and direct ambush from behind... those who would be caught off guard by that would only be the newest of newbies.

Tang Rou wasn't that new anymore, and her mental fortitude was far greater than many veterans.

Lu Hanwen's very, very simple sneak attack didn't do anything a sneak attack was meant to.

Soft Mist immediately rolled to avoid it, and when she got up, she already had a counterattack at the ready.

Lu Hanwen's tactics ended there.

Clang clang clang!

Their weapons slammed against one another.

Everyone immediately felt much less awkward.

This was how the juniors should be fighting! Direct and intense. Leave those sneaky, crafty tactics to those old men!

Clang clang clang!

The clash of weapons, the collision of skills. The terrain was nonexistent and the map no longer had any effect. For two players like them, just them a small space and they could turn the world upside down with their battles.

This was a battle purely of mechanics and skill.

Chapter 1452: One Step Above

The atmosphere in the stadium livened up.

The previous rounds had reflected Blue Rain's reasons for their map choice. There was layer upon layer of hidden intent. In the last round, Fang Rui and Lu Hanwen had fought face to face. However, everyone was wary of Fang Rui, afraid he would suddenly slip away. And when Fang Rui fought, he still played dirty. The greatest strength of playing dirty was that it not only struck at your character, but at your heart too. Lu Hanwen had won quite handily, but Blue Rain's fans had been worried the entire time.

It was fine now.

A matchup that everyone could enjoy had finally arrived.

Spear vs sword.

The two weapons clashed and collided, immensely satisfying. Even so, Blue Rain's fans couldn't be entirely happy because their Lu Hanwen's Flowing Cloud only had 23% health left! It wasn't suitable for him to fight head on. Blue Rain's fans were conflicted. They wanted to watch this sort of battle, but they were worried about how it was disadvantageous for their team.

23%. Let's hope for a miracle!

Their hearts were gripped with anxiety. They didn't dare to look down on Tang Rou.

Her reputation had hit rock bottom as soon as her pro career began, but the Alliance still gave her the title of Best Rookie despite the controversy. It could be seen just how convincing her performance in the regular season was.

A player who won Best Rookie could not be treated like a normal rookie.

Could he do it with 23% health?

Blue Rain's fans were so worried that they were too scared to look at Flowing Cloud's health.

But whether they looked at it or not, his health would still fall in this unyielding battle.

47 seconds!

After Lu Hanwen's Flowing Cloud rushed out from behind a tree and launched a sneak attack, the battle had lasted for 47 seconds. In the end, Flowing Cloud fell.

Lu Hanwen had done his best.

He knew that with Flowing Cloud's health, he could not trade hitpoint for hitpoint. He had done his best to avoid forced trades with Tang Rou and played more flexibly.

Nonetheless, the fight only lasted 47 seconds.

Flowing Cloud had no more health left.

Soft Mist had lost 31% of her health.

From the numbers, Soft Mist had lost more health than Flowing Cloud in this battle. It appeared as if Tang Rou hadn't played as well as Lu Hanwen.

But wins couldn't be looked at from statistics alone. After all, a player played differently depending on their circumstances. Lu Hanwen needed to play flexibly and focus on defending. Tang Rou could be more aggressive and forceful. It was only by utilizing an advantage that it could be called an advantage.

Lu Hanwen came down from the stage.

23% for 31%. It wasn't an impressive trade. Blue Rain's fans had higher expectations.

It wasn't a bad trade though. When Lu Hanwen came down from the stage, the crowd applauded fervently.

As for Lu Hanwen himself? He was somewhat unhappy with the result. He had performed to the best of his ability though. Though he was disappointed, there weren't any moments which he had felt upset about. It simply meant that he wasn't good enough!

I need to continue working harder!

Lu Hanwen returned to his team with this resolution. Their last player in the group arena appeared on the big screen. To no one's surprise, Blue Rain's anchor was their number one player: Huang Shaotian.

The cheers from the crowd reached a peak.

He was Blue Rain's last hope for the group arena and their ace player.

Last round...

Blue Rain's fans didn't want to think about what happened in the last group arena. They just hoped that Huang Shaotian could hold on to Blue Rain's last point at this crucial moment.

Huang Shaotian went onto the stage and entered the player booth. The crowd instantly quieted down.

Everyone stared at the big screen, at the loading screen, at Troubling Rain's spawn point shown by the holographic projection technology.

The match began.

"Where are we meeting," Tang Rou said bluntly.

"Wait for my ambush!" Huang Shaotian replied quickly. Troubling Rain moved swiftly, taking the right road, the roundabout path on the west side. Huang Shaotian's opening was the same as Lu Hanwen's.

Tang Rou didn't make any changes. Her Soft Mist went straight for the center.

Soft Mist arrived first.

As for Troubling Rain?

Huang Shaotian seemed to have copied Lu Hanwen's pathing. He chose the same direction, the same route, and even the same ambush spot as Flowing Cloud. Then, he began observing Soft Mist.

"This... is he planning on teaching Lu Hanwen?" Pan Lin said.

"He shouldn't be?" Li Yibo said. This was the playoffs, and Team Blue Rain was on the verge of being eliminated. No matter how important it was to teach a junior, it couldn't be as important as the team's playoffs run, no? Unless Huang Shaotian was truly confident that he could beat Tang Rou with ease.

But those familiar with Huang Shaotian knew that no matter how much smack he talked, he was never careless. If even a tiny opening appeared, it didn't matter if you were a God or a rookie, he would seize it without question.

"He probably just thinks it's a good opening play too!" Li Yibo said.

The audience members were discussing it amongst each other. Everyone thought Huang Shaotian must be trying to tell Lu Hanwen something.

The two teams, Blue Rain and Happy, were also discussing Huang Shaotian's actions.

But before they could discuss it for too long, Huang Shaotian made a move.

Troubling Rain rushed out!

Yes, it was similar to what Lu Hanwen had done. While Tang Rou's line of sight was turned away, he launched a very simple and very crude sneak attack from the back.

But Troubling Rain was faster!

His Silver weapon, Ice Rain, had a much higher attack speed and a much lighter weight than Flowing Cloud's Flame Shadow. All of these factors determined Troubling Rain's faster movements. Among these, attack speed was more important, while weight had less of an impact.

How would Tang Rou respond?

She responded the same way to the same attack. Although she was surprised that Huang Shaotian would actually copy Lu Hanwen's opening, it didn't affect how fast she reacted to it.

Soft Mist rolled. The moment she got up, her spear slashed upwards in a counterattack.

Pu!

A streak of blood flew into the air. Troubling Rain's Silver weapon, Ice Rain, struck the rolling Soft Mist.

The sword didn't pause. Without any extra movements or any wasted inputs, the second slash came...

Pu pu pu pu...

Sword light danced as sword and body collided. As Soft Mist rolled, four attacks had hit her, a mix of skills and normal attacks.

Tang Rou's counterattack was completely sealed and didn't come out. After the four attacks, Tang Rou saw a slight opening.

Dragon Tooth!

Soft Mist stabbed towards Troubling Rain with her spear.

But Troubling Rain sidestepped it and attacked in retaliation.

Downwind Sword Slash!

His sword slid across Soft Mist's spear. The viewers could even hear the whistle from Ice Rain and Dancing Fire Flowing Flame.

The sword light split into two. This Downwind Sword Slash had stopped Dragon Tooth mid-attack. If Tang Rou continued with the attack, she would miss. Cancelling her attack would require an input which would give her too little time to dodge.

The threat of Downwind Sword Slash was frightening. As the sword light flew her way, Soft Mist rolled backwards.

Everyone was dumbstruck.

It was the same attack, but when Lu Hanwen and Tang Rou fought, it had been even. On the other hand, Huang Shaotian immediately suppressed Tang Rou.

What was Huang Shaotian trying to tell Lu Hanwen?

Can't tell!

It looked as if Huang Shaotian was slapping Lu Hanwen in the face: look, I can do what you can't.

As for how he did it...

"He's faster!" This was Pan Lin's understanding of it.

"Openings. It's all about finding openings," Li Yibo emphasized.

“Despite being in a similar situation, Huang Shaotian’s timing was far better than Lu Hanwen’s. That Downwind Sword Slash was the same. Huang Shaotian could have directly followed with this attack previously, but that would have given Tang Rou some space to dodge it. He intentionally created an opening for Tang Rou to take, but he had been waiting for her to attack. Tang Rou was unable to do anything in response. It was a beautiful play.”

“So he really is different...” After Li Yibo’s analysis, Pan Lin sighed. Both Lu Hanwen and Huang Shaotian were Blade Masters, but Huang Shaotian was clearly on a higher level.

After Downwind Sword Slash, Huang Shaotian continued his offense. After a few more exchanges, he no longer seemed as dominant.

“Tang Rou is not bad at defending,” Li Yibo said.

“That’s a huge improvement!” Pan Lin smiled. During the regular season, the two had commented on Tang Rou’s view on defending. Tang Rou followed the belief that offense was the best defense. This belief had its justifications, but these were justifications. The saying never indicated that defense was not important.

Tang Rou’s defense wasn’t bad. Despite Huang Shaotian taking the initiative with his sneak attack, she was defending to limit her opponent’s attack options.

As a result, Huang Shaotian was very generous and promptly gave another opening.

An excellent opening for Tang Rou to counterattack.

Chapter 1453: Opening

“Chance!” Pan Lin shouted. But as soon as he called it out, he wondered... was this really an opportunity?

The experienced players, who were familiar with Huang Shaotian, like Ye Xiu saw through it immediately.

The cake was a lie! It was a cake filled with poison. If Tang Rou tried to seize this opportunity, Huang Shaotian would most likely retaliate fiercely after just one move. If you saw through it and didn’t take the opportunity, what then? This opening would give Huang Shaotian an opportunity to make adjustments. His previous assault had reached a certain point and then stopped. He left this opening at the perfect time. Whether the opponent attacked or not, Huang Shaotian could re-establish his attack tempo. The advantages were all his.

Amazing!

Everyone sighed inwardly.

Opportunists couldn’t only be good at finding opportunities, creating opportunities was just as important. Huang Shaotian had given away this opening at the perfect time. If he had given away this opening a bit earlier or a bit later, the outcome would not have been as perfect.

If I saw this opening, what would I have done?

The pro players who saw the opening asked themselves this question. As for Tang Rou? She didn't have time to think so much. Combat was all about timing, and opportunities didn't last forever.

Counterattack!

For Tang Rou, this bait was too enticing. The moment the opening appeared, she instinctively took action.

Soft Mist turned her wrists. Her actions immediately caught Huang Shaotian's attention. Tang Rou moved exactly how he predicted she would. This girl's style was always so intense. Everyone had a clear understanding of it.

Come!

Huang Shaotian had been ready. Troubling Rain also turned his wrists slightly.

But Soft Mist's turn of the wrist became more and more rapid. It was as if she were squeezing out all the energy she could muster. The spear in her hands seemed to want to fly out of her hands.

This is...

Huang Shaotian suddenly frowned.

He had predicted that Tang Rou would immediately seize the opening and attack, but he didn't expect her to counterattack so fiercely!

"Beautiful!" Ye Xiu praised from below the stage. Huang Shaotian giving away the opening and Tang Rou seizing it took only an instant. When Ye Xiu said these words, it was hard to tell if he was praising Huang Shaotian or Soft Mist.

Soft Mist rushed out.

Dragon Breaks the Ranks!

An opening suddenly appeared at such a close distance. A Dragon Tooth would perhaps be the fastest way to seize it. A Falling Flower Palm would give her more momentum. A Tyrant's Destruction wouldn't have been a bad choice either.

But... Dragon Breaks the Ranks!

Tang Rou unexpectedly used such a high-level skill. No matter how much she liked this move, it didn't seem logical. High-level skills required more inputs than low-level skills. As a result, high-level skills were almost always preceded by low-level skills as set-ups to ensure the high-level skill would hit. But Tang Rou used a high-level skill to seize such a tiny opening. This was a form of confidence. She wasn't worried that her hand speed wouldn't be enough to complete all the inputs in this short window.

And in the end, she completed it.

Dragon Breaks the Ranks!

Dancing Fire Flowing Flame flew out along with Soft Mist, its surging momentum stirring up the surrounding fog.

Dodge!

Huang Shaotian was in a fluster facing this attack.

The hitbox of Dragon Breaks the Ranks wasn't just the tip of the spear. The powerful force of the strike tore through the air like whirlwinds. These whirling air currents brought along the destructiveness of the strike, turning the attack into an AoE skill.

And in this map, the whirling air currents could clearly be seen because of the fog. The fog was pierced through and blown away.

Shua!

A sword light flashed out, not towards Soft Mist, but to the side.

Triple Slash.

To dodge this Dragon Breaks the Ranks, Huang Shaotian immediately used a skill. Triple Slash was his fastest movement skill. However, the powerful air currents from Dragon Breaks the Ranks made Troubling Rain lose his balance. Huang Shaotian's control over his character was valiant though. He stabilized himself with the second attack of Triple Slash, but with the second part burned, it was too late to chase after Soft Mist with the third. The movement from Dragon Breaks the Ranks was fast and powerful!

"Ah!" Ye Xiu felt that it was a pity.

"What's wrong?" Chen Guo asked.

"So close! She almost had him. If she had adjusted it according to the Triple Slash, it would have hit," Ye Xiu said.

Chen Guo stared blankly.

Could a human even do that? Ye Xiu's criticism was too nitpicky.

"Aren't you asking for too much?" Wei Chen also thought the same.

"Little Tang wouldn't care," Ye Xiu said.

"Okay..."

Everyone could only acknowledge this point helplessly.

"Could you even do it?" Chen Guo suddenly asked.

"I'd try it," Ye Xiu replied. Even he wasn't 100% confident either. The window had truly been too short.

Dragon Breaks the Ranks didn't hit Troubling Rain, but Huang Shaotian's motive for giving away the opening was ruined by Tang Rou's boldness.

Was it a coincidence? Or had she seen through it?

Pan Lin and Li Yibo were discussing this issue, but the answer didn't really matter. Huang Shaotian didn't care either and typed out a message: "How brave!"

"Doing the same thing twice? Don't you think that's a bit much?" Tang Rou replied.

Pan Lin and Li Yibo stopped their discussion.

Tang Rou's reply said everything.

"Haha, was it too obvious?"

"It looks like I underestimated you."

"I'll take it more seriously next!"

"Watch my sword!"

Shua shua shua, four messages came out in the chat. Huang Shaotian had begun his chat spam. But when he shouted "Watch my sword!", it was Soft Mist's Dancing Fire Flowing Flame that flying at him.

Tang Rou was truly a representative of someone who took action. How could she stop to appreciate Huang Shaotian's trash talk? The moment she gave her reply, Soft Mist had already turned around. When Huang Shaotian typed out his four messages, her Soft Mist had started to attack.

Tu tu tu tu.

Four consecutive strikes.

Dragon Tooth, a normal attack, and then a Double Stab. Four strikes at four different positions, all of which were dodged by Troubling Rain.

Huang Shaotian was the first God besides Ye Xiu that Tang Rou had ever met online and offline. At that time, Tang Rou didn't have much of a concept of the pro scene, and she had still been a beginner. She only knew that the player, Flowing Tree, who she was dungeoning with, was an expert. But she didn't really know how skilled he truly was. She only remembered that he and Steamed Bun just kept talking and talking, so her initial impression of Huang Shaotian was on the same level as Steamed Bun.

Now, Tang Rou understood clearly just how skilled Huang Shaotian was.

In this 1v1 match so far, her Soft Mist had yet to create a Chaser. Huang Shaotian had always dodged her attacks and never blocked them.

By not blocking them, he wasn't giving her an opportunity to create Chasers. It sounded very logical. But who could actually completely avoid blocking in practice?

Tang Rou experienced it for herself.

"What's wrong? Do you feel like you're missing something?" Huang Shaotian wouldn't stop talking. He kept typing as he fought.

"Something super important to Battle Mages!"

"Chasers, the answer is Chasers!"

“You’re a Battle Mage! But where are your Magic Chasers?”

Huang Shaotian kept talking as he played. If you just looked at the actual content of his words, it was difficult to summarize them. He just said whatever came to his mind. There wasn’t any point to it. Sometimes, it sounded like he was making fun of you. Sometimes, he wasn’t. Sometimes, he just sounded like an idiot...

His cocky tone of voice was absolutely loathsome, but he was stating facts. The ridicule wasn’t small.

“So what?” Tang Rou simply replied.

So what?

Yeah! So what?

A Battle Mage without Chasers could still battle, no? Huang Shaotian’s taunting didn’t bother Tang Rou. Her attacks only became more intense.

“You’re so unwavering! How rare!” Huang Shaotian said. He was also unwavering in his trash talk. It was hard to discourage him in this area.

Tang Rou ignored him. She simply continued to attack.

Huang Shaotian continued to go at his own pace. Block? He didn’t completely avoid it. But Battle Mages could only produce Chasers with certain skills, and he always made sure to dodge these skills. He continued to use this method to restrict Soft Mist’s full combat ability. At the same time, he carefully observed Soft Mist’s offense, constantly harrassing, searching for opportunities to establish his offense.

“Coach Li, don’t you feel that Huang Shaotian is playing rather cautiously and conservatively?” Pan Lin said.

“Of course! Just winning isn’t enough. He still has another opponent to beat afterwards!” Li Yibo said.

“Happy’s Tang Rou is an aggressive player. Huang Shaotian retreating is exactly what she wants him to do,” Pan Lin said.

“This... let’s see how it turn outs...” Li Yibo seemed to have his own thoughts.

Chapter 1454: Annoying

“Tang Rou’s rhythm isn’t good...” After careful observation and thought, Li Yibo finally concluded.

“Oh?”

“Too rushed. It’s a bit out of control,” Li Yibo said.

“This... it’s not anything too surprising,” Pan Lin sighed.

When they talked about Tang Rou, losing control of her rhythm was a point that frequently came up.

For many rookies, the issue was usually because they lacked confidence. They played scared and over cautious, unable to bring out their full potential.

But Tang Rou? She attacked aggressively and fearlessly. Scared? Not at all. No confidence? Also not an issue. Her problems weren't playing scared or playing too careful, but rather playing too aggressive.

Playing too aggressively didn't result in her being unable to bring out her full potential. Instead, it pushed her to try for impossible goals, which led to numerous problems.

"It looks like Tang Rou doesn't have a good solution to this problem!" Pan Lin sighed.

"You can't really say that," Li Yibo said, "She actually pays quite a bit of attention to this problem of hers, but Huang Shaotian unwittingly forced her into this trap."

"Oh?"

"Huang Shaotian is extremely good at controlling the tempo. He's making Tang Rou feel like if she tries just a bit harder, she'll be able to break through. But when she ups the tempo by just a little bit, she discovers that it's still not quite enough. Huang Shaotian has been slowly increasing the tempo to a speed that Tang Rou isn't able to handle," Li Yibo said.

Shua shua shua!

Three sword lights, three strikes.

Opening!

Tang Rou finally let out an opening. She had good hand speed. Her awareness, decision-making, and reaction speed weren't bad either. But in this fast-pace battle, her awareness and her decision-making weren't enough to ensure she made no mistakes. She didn't have the experience that Ye Xiu and the others did. Her intuition and instinctive reactions weren't always the most optimal.

An opening appeared, and Huang Shaotian wasn't going to let it pass. The cautious Troubling Rain instantly launched a powerful counterattack.

Three streaks of blood flew into the air.

Troubling Rain attacked fast and finished fast. It wasn't the start of a shift in position. He simply used the opening to deal as much damage as possible to Soft Mist during the short window of time. Tang Rou's playstyle was forceful, and she quickly found her footing again. Huang Shaotian simply took a step back and let Tang Rou have it.

"This..." Pan Lin didn't understand, "Huang Shaotian's counterattack was so short! Was the opening not enough for him to establish an offensive play?"

"He could have, but because his opponent is Tang Rou, he decided to retreat," Li Yibo said.

"Why?"

"Because Tang Rou is an extremely aggressive player. If Huang Shaotian wants to attack, he can't avoid forced trades. If this were a normal 1v1, he would have no fear of doing so. But Happy still has another player, so Huang Shaotian wants to minimize the amount of damage taken and go into the next match with as much health as possible."

“Oh,” Pan Lin understood. This logic was easy to understand. Huang Shaotian chose to play differently because of the situation.

He calmly controlled the pace and carefully observed his opponent. He carefully dodged or blocked her attacks and whenever the slightest of openings appeared, he would mercilessly strike it and deal damage to Soft Mist. He was never persistent. After a few attacks, he would go back to being careful and wait for the next opportunity to appear.

“Huang Shaotian is teaching Tang Rou an important lesson! His meticulous control over the pace of the battle is absolutely brilliant,” Huang Shaotian sighed.

“But why does it seem like... Tang Rou is speeding up?” Pan Lin questioned.

Li Yibo immediately checked. Soft Mist’s attacks were becoming increasingly fierce.

“This is... if she isn’t able to realize her problems, how can she improve!” Li Yibo grieved, feeling disappointed in her.

How stubborn!

Many of the audience members felt the same way.

Tang Rou winning Best Rookie didn’t help win her much public favor, instead it only increased the hate towards her. Watching her hit a wall was something many people liked to see.

A difference in attitude gave off different opinions.

From a positive point of view, Tang Rou recklessly speeding up was a show of unwavering determination and bravery. From a negative point of view, she was stupidly stubborn; she wouldn’t shed a tear until she saw the coffin.

Go die!

Most people were the latter. They wanted to see Tang Rou fail and feel shame for her loss.

But she kept on speeding up, using 100% of her abilities. However, she kept trying to push her limits, using 101%, 102%, 103% of what she had.

What is this girl thinking?

Huang Shaotian didn’t understand.

Huang Shaotian didn’t think she was that ignorant. He didn’t think that she didn’t know her limits. He didn’t think that she didn’t know she was leaving all these openings in order to increase her tempo.

As for himself?

He was Glory’s number one opportunist. You’re going to give me all these openings. What’s the meaning of this?

Huang Shaotian wondered, but he didn’t relent. If a suitable opportunity appeared, Troubling Rain would take action. In order to seize these opportunities, he had no choice but to increase the tempo to match her.

Is that her aim?

Does she want to wear me down?

If that's your plan, then you're too naive!

I'm far more experienced than you. My judgement is more precise than yours. Just you alone won't be enough to reach a tempo that I can't control! Before that happens, you'll be the one to fall! Look, another opening.

Bladestorm!

A storm of blades swept over, a whirl of blue sword light that rushed towards Soft Mist. Suddenly, amidst this dense sea of blue light, red flames burst out.

Hundred Dragon Meteor Strike?

Soft Mist had let out an opening, but she still attacked, abandoning any plans to defend. The Hundred Dragon Meteor Strike collided with Troubling Rain's Bladestorm. The attack was meant to cover a fan-like range, but Tang Rou condensed it into a small area, focusing its destructive power.

Bang bang bang bang....

Blue and red light clashed, but some of them still went through. Tang Rou didn't retreat, and it was too late for Huang Shaotian to cancel it. Rather than be the only one to get hit, it was obviously better to make a trade.

Pu pu pu pu...

Both sides were hurt. Blood splattered as the opposing lights clashed and burst forth.

In the end, Huang Shaotian was the one who won the trade, dealing more damage to Tang Rou than she did to him. However, Huang Shaotian couldn't be happy about it. His goal was to minimize the damage he took. This trade was completely outside of his expectations.

Tang Rou's offense didn't stop. After the Hundred Dragon Meteor Strike, her spear continued to strike at Troubling Rain.

Huang Shaotian's calmness wasn't shaken by this unexpected exchange.

She's still speeding up?

He could feel a change in Tang Rou's tempo. After giving up on defending, she focused all of her effort into attacking.

As a result, more openings appeared so much so that Huang Shaotian wasn't actually sure which openings to seize because there were simply too many good ones.

It didn't matter though.

Just one opening was enough. If there were this many good openings laid out, then it didn't matter which one he took.

Completely reckless. Tang Rou had thrown caution out the window in front of Huang Shaotian. Facing this opportunist, there was no difference between one opening and one hundred openings. Tang Rou didn't care if she gave away any openings. She continued to speed up the tempo.

Troubling Rain's sword was about to hit Soft Mist, but facing this reckless offensive, he couldn't avoid taking damage as well.

Huang Shaotian had the upper hand, but it was again at the sacrifice of his original goal.

Huang Shaotian had no doubt that someone who let out a hundred openings would never beat him. But at what price?

Shit!

Huang Shaotian realized it.

At the beginning, he had been baiting Tang Rou to increase the tempo. Huang Shaotian was very pleased, seeing her fall for it.

But just when he thought that a good tempo had been achieved, Tang Rou didn't stop. She raised it even higher. And Huang Shaotian had no choice but to keep up with her.

Huang Shaotian hadn't thought this reckless move would cause him any trouble.

But later, he realized that while Tang Rou left even more openings, she traded it for a more powerful offensive. All of her energy was being put into attacking.

A threat?

Everyone laughed. With so many openings, how could this sort of offensive be a threat?

But Huang Shaotian knew that it was trouble.

He would have no trouble beating Tang Rou.

But the trouble was what came after when he needed to face Happy's next player.

Tang Rou wasn't playing to win this 1v1, but rather for Happy's next player to win.

The damage she could deal couldn't compare to the damage that Huang Shaotian could deal by taking advantage of her openings. However, she gave Huang Shaotian no choice but to take damage as well.

She wouldn't beat Huang Shaotian, but she ruined Huang Shaotian's goal.

The moment that Soft Mist fell, she told everyone her intentions.

"I might lose, but Happy definitely won't!"

Chapter 1455: Shut Out

63%.

Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain had 63% left. Tang Rou's Soft Mist had traded 69% of her health for 37% of Troubling Rain's.

It was not an equal trade, but if the fight had followed the pace that Huang Shaotian had set, the trade may have been even worse. In the end, Tang Rou had used her usual style to break through Huang Shaotian's control.

Tang Rou was the same Tang Rou, strong-minded and refusing to back down.

You want me to increase the tempo? Okay, I'll do that.

You don't want me to increase the tempo anymore? Sorry, I'm going to keep doing it.

Rude and stubborn without reason.

From the day Tang Rou stepped into the pro scene, that was her playstyle. Countless people hoped to see her fall, but she never did. She continued to do what she did throughout the entire season. Facing Huang Shaotian, although she lost, she had achieved the outcome she wanted.

Even so, did that mean Happy would definitely win?

Many people questioned Tang Rou's final words.

Troubling Rain had a little more than half his health left. Huang Shaotian just might be able to win under these conditions.

More importantly, who would Happy send out next?

Su Mucheng? Qiao Yifan? Bao Rongxing (Steamed Bun)? Wei Chen?

Pan Lin and Li Yibo quickly did an overview of Happy's remaining players.

Su Mucheng seemed to be the most reliable of the four choices. But the problem was that this map was unfavorable for Launchers. Launchers could not display their ultra-long-range advantage.

"If Happy knew that Blue Rain would choose this sort of map, then they definitely would not have put her in the group arena," Li Yibo said. He implied that he favoured having Su Mucheng as Happy's anchor. It would indeed be Happy's most stable arrangement. Unfortunately, the map chosen by Blue Rain erased this stability.

"This is probably one of the reasons Blue Rain chose this map: to make Su Mucheng useless!" Li Yibo said.

Who would it be?

The crowd members and the viewers at home were waiting nervously. It was as if whoever was chosen would dictate the winner of the group arena.

Under everyone's gaze, someone stood up from Happy's player seat and headed towards the stage. Her long hair fluttered in the wind.

The Blue Rain fans were wild with joy. For the Happy fans, it was as if a bucket of cold ice had been splashed onto their heads.

Su Mucheng.

In the end, it was Su Mucheng.

The crowd immediately started livening up. Blue Rain's fans had been on the backfoot the entire time, but at this moment, they could see the dawn of victory.

"So Happy really did pick Su Mucheng!" Pan Lin sounded somewhat gloomy.

"Yeah," Li Yibo sighed.

The map chosen today by Blue Rain had troubled Happy again and again. Happy had passed through each test, finding themselves in the lead at the final step. However, they were now met with one last obstacle in their path.

Launchers.

Launchers had an attack range of 40 units. The map itself didn't change the Launcher's attack range. However, visibility was limited to 20-25 units, thus, having an extremely long range was pointless.

20-25 unit attacks was still quite a distance. However, for Launchers, it was still too close. Launchers had strong AoE and high damage attacks, but their attack speed was very slow. At too close of a distance, before the attack went off, it was very possible that the attack would be interrupted. What's worse was that her opponent was the opportunist king, Huang Shaotian.

Thinking of all these points, Blue Rain's fans felt like victory was already theirs. The depression from the previous rounds had been swept away.

"We didn't know that Happy's final player was Su Mucheng, but Tang Rou should have! Was it not the right move to entrust the win to Su Mucheng on this map?" Pan Lin said.

"What else could she do?" Li Yibo said, "If she could beat Huang Shaotian, do you think she wouldn't try? It was exactly because she couldn't see herself winning that she went through with such a strategy. This map is unfavorable for Su Mucheng, but Su Mucheng is still a pro player. I'm sure Tang Rou's confidence in her will act as motivation, not pressure."

"I hope so!" Pan Lin replied.

At this moment, the two female players on Happy, one coming down from the stage, the other heading towards the stage, met midway.

Pa!

The two girls didn't say anything. When they passed by each other, they gave a high-five as if handing off the torch from one player to another. Neither of them turned back as they continued forward.

Tang Rou went back to her seat.

Su Mucheng went into the player booth.

Chen Guo was extremely worried. Her concern for Su Mucheng was extraordinarily abnormal. She was concerned for her as a friend and as an idol that she worshipped.

“Hey!” She yelled at Ye Xiu.

“Hm?” Ye Xiu turned his head.

“How will it turn out?” Chen Guo said.

Ye Xiu understood what she meant. His expression wasn't too carefree either: “This map isn't good for Launchers.”

“Then what can she do?” Chen Guo said.

“Even if it's not easy to play, she's still got to do it,” Ye Xiu said.

“Stupid,” Chen Guo rolled her eyes. It might sound stupid, but it was the truth. There were countless times where the matchup was bad or the fight seemed unwinnable, but giving up and getting discouraged was never the solution.

She'll win!

Chen Guo could only tell herself this. The match began.

“Ah, how unfortunate, to think you'd have to play on this map,” Huang Shaotian started chattering. He chatted, but he also hoped for the other person to talk back. When facing players like Mo Fan, Huang Shaotian felt discouraged at times when he typed madly. As a result, he usually got excited when he met a player he was familiar with because it meant an actual conversation. It wouldn't be just him talking!

But he immediately started by poking at Su Mucheng's weak point and didn't get a reply back.

“Why aren't you talking? Too much pressure? Hahaha,” Huang Shaotian continued.

“Where are you going to go? With a visibility of 20-25 units, are you going to the left or the right?” Huang Shaotian guessed.

“But I don't think you'll be that naive. With only 20-25 units to work with, will you be able to set up a firing line?”

“If you can't, then I'm sure you know that closing this distance will be too easy for me.”

Huang Shaotian chattered on and on. As for the firing line, everyone knew that the closer the distance, the harder it was to set one up. Launchers had slow attacks, so they needed distance. At 20-25 units away, her attacks would need to be extremely accurate. Only by hitting the opponent would she be able to maintain a safe distance.

But against Huang Shaotian, no one dared to say that they would never miss.

Huang Shaotian was also confident.

Last round, Tang Rou had taken out 37% of Troubling Rain's health, which was outside of Huang Shaotian's expectations. He was feeling a bad premonition.

No one could say that they could win 100% of the time, let alone when he wasn't coming in with 100% of his health. Huang Shaotian felt a bit uneasy about this last round. But he did feel a lot better after seeing that his opponent was Su Mucheng.

Li Yibo's analysis wasn't wrong. One of the reasons for choosing this map was to shut out Su Mucheng. Su Mucheng had plenty of experience and her skill was first-class. Her character Dancing Rain was quite powerful too. Compared to Happy's rookies, she was a much more reliable choice. Happy didn't know what map Blue Rain chose, so it had been very likely that Happy would choose Su Mucheng.

Su Mucheng really did come out and in the final deciding round too. Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain may only have 63% of his health left, but everyone thought that he had a higher chance of winning. He had no qualms about using his map advantage to bully Su Mucheng either. Troubling Rain didn't take a roundabout route and took the central path. As he made his way to the center while chatting, Troubling Rain and Dancing Rain met.

"You!"

Huang Shaotian was surprised. The viewers had noticed it, but he found out now. At this rate, it would be a face to face fight, and because of this map, Launchers would lose their long-range advantage.

23 units.

The two found each other at this distance. Under normal circumstances, Launchers would feel that the distance was too close and would need to pull away. But in this map, Su Mucheng could only take the fight at this distance.

Huang Shaotian was somewhat startled, but he didn't think much of it.

The purpose of the map was to shut out Su Mucheng. It could be seen that they had come prepared against Su Mucheng. They didn't underestimate her just because the map was unfavorable for her. Under these limitations, how would she fight? They had studied this question too. At 23 units apart, Huang Shaotian didn't think Su Mucheng could give him any trouble. On the other hand, this distance would make her feel uncomfortable.

Launchers feared close combat. The heavy armor and cannon slowed down her movements, plus she didn't have close combat skills like Sharpshooters did. If the Launcher was closed in on, then the Launcher needed to run.

"Watch my sword!" Huang Shaotian typed. After finding Dancing Rain, Troubling Rain rushed at her. A trace of blue was left in the dense fog wherever the sword swung. The sword light was like a storm as it swept towards Dancing Rain.

Boom boom boom!

Three missiles flew out.

Anti-Tank Missiles. This low-level skill was quite fast. But against Huang Shaotian, how could a few missiles stop him?

Blue light flickered amidst the fog. Troubling Rain turned slightly, avoiding the missiles. He didn't slow down as he continued forward.

As for Dancing Rain, she used the recoil from the Anti-Tank Missiles to fly backwards. She needed to keep her distance no matter what.

“Can you run?” Huang Shaotian messaged. Suddenly, an explosion sounded from up above.

Chapter 1456: What Type of Player Is She?

This is!

Huang Shaotian looked up. A Heat-Seeking Missile pierced through the fog from above.

How?

The Heat-Seeking Missile had come, but where was the heat source?

Everyone looked at the scene and fell silent.

Where was the heat source? From their omniscient view, it was clear as day. The heat source was next to Dancing Rain. The surface of the forest wasn't flat. Dancing Signal had placed the signal in a small pit in the ground behind her. This skill had activated before the Anti-Tank Missiles. When Dancing Rain used the recoil from Anti-Tank Missiles to fly backwards, the signal couldn't be seen from Huang Shaotian's point of view.

Boom!

A small mushroom cloud bloomed in the forest. Compared to the thick smoke, the forest fog seemed thin and dreadful.

Huang Shaotian had Troubling Rain run as soon as he heard the explosion. But the missile moved faster than he could. He had noticed the Heat-Seeking Missile too late, and it was no longer possible for him to dodge it. Troubling Rain only had time to take a single step before the missile landed in the pit near Troubling Rain. The rumbling mushroom cloud sent Troubling Rain into the air.

6%!

Troubling Rain's health instantly dropped by 6%.

Launchers had terrifying firepower. And this had been after Huang Shaotian had Troubling Rain move away from the core of the explosion. If the full impact of the missile had hit him, he would have certainly lost more than 6%.

Even so, just this 6% made Huang Shaotian's heart ache. Troubling Rain had only started with 63% to begin with. He now only had 57%.

“Dirty! When did you become so dirty!!” Huang Shaotian vented! Before Troubling Rain even landed back onto the ground, he sent a complaint to Su Mucheng.

Bang!

His reply was another explosion from above.

Stinger!

The viewers had noticed it before Huang Shaotian. Dancing Rain hadn't retreated too far using the Anti-Tank Missiles. Seeing the Heat-Seeking Missile hit, Su Mucheng wasn't going to let this opportunity pass.

The Stinger borrowed the smoke and dust as cover until it reached just above Troubling Rain's head. As Troubling Rain fell, the Stinger split apart in the air. Countless stinger missiles descended, surrounding Troubling Rain.

"I already knew!"

A message leapt out. Troubling Rain swung his Ice Rain, and his character shifted horizontally.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh...

The stinger missiles brushed past Troubling Rain.

Boom boom boom boom...

The stingers exploded but only acted as a backdrop for Troubling Rain. Under the light reflecting from the explosions, Troubling Rain walked towards Dancing Rain.

Was Huang Shaotian intentionally slowing down the pace to make it more dramatic? Of course not. After noticing Su Mucheng's craftiness, he didn't dare rush forward too hastily. He slowed the pace to more carefully observe his surroundings.

I have the advantage! Huang Shaotian was confident on this point. He stared at Dancing Rain's weapon and saw a bright sparkle suddenly light up like a star.

Laser Beam!

The speed of light was incomparable, but Huang Shaotian had reacted before the attack came out. Troubling Rain started making irregular movements, swaying left and right as if he were drunk*.

BIU. A Laser Beam tore through the air. Su Mucheng had tried to predict where he would move, but Huang Shaotian was swaying left and right without any logic behind his movements. Su Mucheng could only gamble and see whether she could get lucky enough to hit Huang Shaotian.

Unfortunately, the laser brushed past him and missed.

Seven steps!

The distance between Troubling Rain and Dancing Rain was even steps, a distance that a Launcher needed to retreat from.

Boom!

A missile was fired. It was only a normal attack.

The attack was secondary. Su Mucheng was simply retreating with Aerial Cannon.

Was it enough at seven steps away?

Many couldn't help but feel worried. Troubling Rain dashed through the explosion from the artillery shell.

Triple Slash!

Huang Shaotian didn't dodge and instead used Triple Slash. The first slash cut apart the missile. Although his character would take some damage, Huang Shaotian clearly didn't care about it. He needed to stick close to her and establish his offensive tempo. The instant Su Mucheng chose to retreat, he launched his assault.

All caution flew out the window. He was like a red-eyed gambler who would throw everything he had regardless of anything else.

This was his style. When an opportunity came, he wouldn't hesitate or hold back. He would do all that he could do to strike at his target.

When it rains, it pours!

Sword light!

With a flicker, he reached Dancing Rain. Troubling Rain's approach was faster than Dancing Rain's retreat.

Because he had actually used Triple Slash before Dancing Rain started to retreat. He had calculated the moment that Su Mucheng would have no choice but to run and use Aerial Cannon to do so. Triple Slash had been executed before that missile had been fired. This tiny difference helped Huang Shaotian win this decisive opportunity. He Triple Slashed through the missile directly towards Dancing Rain. Moving with Aerial Cannon was faster than moving along the ground, but there was a flaw. The movement speed wasn't balanced, going from slow to fast, slow to fast. Triple Slash had closed the distance during the slower portion of Aerial Cannon movement.

But just when the third slash of Triple Slash was used, the final angle wasn't enough to strike Dancing Rain.

I need another attack!

The attack would need to be fast because Dancing Rain would reach her fastest speed soon, which would pull apart the distance between them. The opportunity to attack would only last an instant.

Opportunity! Instant!

These words always made Huang Shaotian's blood boil. He loved this feeling.

Fast, he needed to be fast.

Meteor Form!

The Level 75 skill was the fastest Blade Master skill in their kit. The sword carried the user, and the user pushed the sword. A flash of blue light cut through the fog like a meteor.

Pu! The sound could barely be heard as if there was no time for the sound to resound.

Blood wrapped around the trace of blue light as if a long wound had been drawn across the sky.

Swift and accurate!

Dancing Rain spun in the air from the sword's momentum.

Troubling Rain turned around, ready to follow up. But the instant he turned, he saw Dancing Rain's weapon in front of him.

Opportunity! Instant!

The same key words, but this time for Su Mucheng. The Meteor Form had knocked her spinning in the air, could she hit him?

Boom!

During her first spin around, Su Mucheng attacked.

The first rotation was the fastest, but also the moment when Huang Shaotian would be most off guard.

Huang Shaotian saw the cannon flash and shoot out a missile at extremely close range. Launcher attacks had strong knockback, forcefully taking the powerful attack was not a good idea. It would destroy his tempo. Huang Shaotian did not take the blow. Having started with less health than her, he chose not to force his way through.

Dodge, he could only dodge.

Huang Shaotian felt that it was a pity, but he maintained his cool. He dared to take risks, but he still knew how to be patient. He only took risks that he could afford to take. And right now, taking the risk would reap him no benefit, so he waited.

Move to the side!

Huang Shaotian had Troubling Rain dodge to the side, but soon afterwards, he felt his heart tighten.

Dancing Rain had used Anti-Tank Missiles. Given her situation, accurately hitting a target from her position was already very difficult, yet the Anti-Tank Missiles fired were even lined up in a formation!

By using the spin from Meteor Form, the three Anti-Tank Missiles were lined up in a row, left, middle, and right, blocking off all of Troubling Rain's escape options.

Boom!

Troubling Rain was engulfed in a fiery explosion. Huang Shaotian instinctively dodged, not thinking that Su Mucheng could utilize the spin from Meteor Form. By the time he realized it, it was too late.

"Amazing!" Pan Lin sighed.

On the other hand, Li Yibo was dumbfounded.

It had taken him quite a while to figure out how the Anti-Tank Missiles had hit. If the previous Heat-Seeking Missile was a dirty play exploiting the terrain, then this attack was a display of sharp precision and control.

Su Mucheng...

How should she be evaluated?

When she joined the Alliance, she had joined the number one team and stood as the partner of the number one player in Glory. No one started higher than she did.

But afterwards, their team never took home another championship trophy.

Because of her beauty, she always remained a popular player. But because of her beauty, there was always controversy surrounding her.

For a lot of players, if they were surrounded by so much controversy, they would probably want to prove themselves as soon as possible, no?

But she never did. She continued to play as a supporting character in Excellent Era. She was never impatient to make any stunning plays.

Was Su Mucheng reliable or not?

It was difficult to give a clear answer.

You could say she wasn't reliable, but she always performed solidly.

You could say she was reliable, but it always felt like she was lacking something.

Everything about her seemed to be consistent but never outstanding. When she played, what are her thoughts? Li Yibo was suddenly very curious.

Chapter 1457: An Aggressive Su Mucheng

Li Yibo had time to think about things carefully, but the players on stage did not.

Su Mucheng's brilliant technical display led to a successful strike against Troubling Rain, whose body hung suspended in the air due to the explosion from the Anti-Tank Missiles. The recoil from these Anti-Tank Missiles also shifted the tumbling Dancing Rain to the side. Even so, she wasn't going to let this opportunity go.

Boom!

Another missile flew into the air. Dancing Rain was still spinning, making it look like she had thrown it out. Even if it was a throw, it was an accurate one.

The distance between the two players was too close. Troubling Rain had yet to escape from the Anti-Tank Missile's hitstun before the new attack struck.

Ka!

The sound of metal cracking could be heard alongside the explosion.

Armor-Piercing Missile!

The skill dealt damage and reduced the target's defense. The sound of metal cracking indicated that Troubling Rain's light armor had been damaged, and his defense would temporarily be lowered.

At max rank, Armor-Piercing Missile's effect lasted 8 seconds and reduced the target's physical defense by 30%.

30% was a considerable reduction. Launchers didn't have many attacks with special effects, and this skill was one that allowed them to deal more damage.

The skill usually marked the beginning of a fierce assault. But Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain was still spinning in the air!

Both the Anti-Tank Missiles and the Armor-Piercing Missile had been released consecutively in a short time frame. Could Dancing Rain keep up the assault given her situation?

She could!

A bright pillar of light descended from the air just as people were beginning to show doubt.

Not only did she attack, she used a powerful high-level skill, Satellite Beam!

Everyone was shocked, especially the viewers who played Launchers. They knew just how unbelievable it was. Satellite Beam was a skill that was difficult to control and aim accurately. If she landed the Satellite Beam in her current state, then that would be even more astonishing than the previous Anti-Tank Missile and Armor-Piercing Missile.

But she missed!

Huang Shaotian deserved his reputation. He wasn't able to dodge the previous Armor-Piercing Missile because it had simply come too fast, but this Satellite Beam had a rather long start-up time. Although the previous attack had increased the hitstun duration, it was just a tiny bit too short.

Huang Shaotian grasped that small opening!

Lunge!

It was a low-level skill. The damage was low and the movement it enabled was very short. But this sudden lunge was just enough to let Troubling Rain dodge the first part of the Satellite Beam. After that, he traversed through the smaller beams that split off.

Downwind Sword Slash!

Sword light flew out from Troubling Rain on his third step. A streak of blue crossed through the heaven and earth, but it was too hard to see what it was exactly because it was soon covered in dark red.

Hit!

The airborne Dancing Rain had nowhere to run to. The recoil from her previous attacks had reduced much of her spinning, and her position in the air wasn't too clear. From a certain perspective, this Downwind Sword Slash removed Dancing Rain's knock-up status effect, sending her flying towards a tree. Although Su Mucheng hastily had Dancing Rain shoot twice, it wasn't able to stop the momentum from Troubling Rain's attack.

The tides of battle instantly shifted again.

No one had expected this Blade Master and Launcher battle to turn out this way.

According to common knowledge, when Blade Masters and Launchers fought, the Launcher ran while the Blade Master gave chase. If the Blade Master caught the Launcher, the Blade Master won. If not, the Launcher won.

Right now, the Blade Master and Launcher were fighting an even battle at such close range. To be able to make such an abnormal situation happen, Su Mucheng was undoubtedly deserving of praise.

Fighting at close range was extremely unfavorable for Launchers, but through impeccable timing, Su Mucheng was able to use this close range to send out attacks that were harder to dodge.

These successive attacks worried Blue Rain's fans.

They were unexpectedly worried for Huang Shaotian in close combat against a Launcher. When they thought about it again, they found it hard to believe.

Dancing Rain had finally been hit flying by Troubling Rain, giving everyone a little bit of room to relax.

In reality, the previous exchange had been very quick. From beginning to end, it had taken less than ten seconds. But those ten seconds were so filled with content that it would take more than ten minutes to digest.

The match continued.

Sending Dancing Rain flying was just a start. Troubling Rain quickly gave chase.

Shadow Steps!

This time, Huang Shaotian used Shadow Steps to prevent Su Mucheng from tricking him. No matter how familiar Blue Rain's players were with this map, there was no way they could have anticipated that Su Mucheng would place a signal in that little hole. What's more, the terrain would undergo changes from the previous battles in the group arena. Who knew if that hole had come with the map or if it had been created.

All sorts of tricks could be employed in this map. As for Su Mucheng... Huang Shaotian admitted that he had taken it too easy at the start probably because his opponent had been a Launcher. He couldn't help it. That isn't right! Huang Shaotian scolded himself. He had known Su Mucheng for quite some time. He knew how crafty she could be.

Shadow Steps!

In order to get close to her, Huang Shaotian had used seven shadows to surround Dancing Rain. This time, he wasn't careless. He blocked off every retreat path. Su Mucheng would most likely send out attacks as she fell to use Aerial Cannon to adjust her positioning.

Boom!

As he expected, Dancing Rain sent out attacks. With seven shadows, Su Mucheng didn't know which one was real. She could only use these attacks to help push her Dancing Rain away.

These movements had been within Huang Shaotian's predictions and he quickly reacted.

Sword Draw!

Whether the shadow was real or fake, all seven sent out sword slashes towards Dancing Rain.

Which one was real? Which one was fake?

Su Mucheng had no way of telling. Even if she could, she wasn't like a bird who could fly nimbly through the air and dodge the attack.

As a result, Su Mucheng abandoned her defense and had Dancing Rain take out a Gatling Gun.

Ta ta ta ta...

A string of bullets rapidly fired, practically the moment Dancing Rain was hit.

Su Mucheng immediately deduced where the real body was. As Dancing Rain flew back, she aimed her gun and fired towards the real Troubling Rain before the drops of blood even hit the ground.

Pu pu pu pu pu...

Several bullets struck Troubling Rain. With Gatling Gun's firing speed and this distance, it wasn't possible for him to dodge. As Dancing Rain flew back, the bullets were focused on Troubling Rain. The burst of bullets made Troubling Rain look like a ragdoll. It was true that Gatling Gun was a low-leveled skill, but it still did considerable damage when all of the bullets landed.

Everyone was awestruck, including Team Happy and Chen Guo.

She had already forgotten to cheer and become excited. She was completely shocked.

Aggressive!

Su Mucheng fought extremely aggressively.

She didn't know which shadow was real, so she used herself as a testing stone and then made an aggressive counterattack, making both sides suffer from the exchange.

She had been trying to run the entire time, but running away wasn't a choice she made because she was sacred. Throughout this entire match, she seemed to have no fear of engaging in close combat, and she didn't act like a typical Launcher who decisively chose to run as soon as the opponent got near.

In close combat, she tried every way she could think of to display a Launcher's power. She didn't yield an inch as she attacked her opponent.

Her aggressiveness had caught Huang Shaotian off guard.

He had never met a Launcher like this before.

He had never seen Su Mucheng play like this before either.

Despite his shock, Huang Shaotian maintained his composure.

Troubling Rain had lost another 9%, but this time, Huang Shaotian didn't lose the trade. Meteor Form, Downwind Sword Slash, Sword Draw, these three fast skills had taken out 11% of Dancing Rain's health.

But overall?

Troubling Rain only had 48% health left, while Dancing Rain still had 89%.

There was a 41% health disparity and Su Mucheng was playing abnormally aggressive. Huang Shaotian didn't dare act blindly.

With less health, he didn't dare make too many trades, but Su Mucheng's aggressive playing was showing that she intended on doing so.

In the previous group arena round, he didn't want to trade to conserve as much health as possible for Happy's fifth player, but Tang Rou forcefully made trades to make him lose health.

Right now, Su Mucheng was utilizing this point to make things difficult for Huang Shaotian.

Last time, he didn't want to make trades so he could keep himself healthy.

This time, he didn't want to make trades so he could keep himself alive.

48% health wasn't just Troubling Rain's life, but Team Blue Rain's last life in the group arena.

Huang Shaotian no longer gave chase. Troubling Rain turned and disappeared into the fog. He had given up on chasing after her relentlessly and decided to be more tactical. He wanted to ambush her, which meant the first thing he needed to do was to go into hiding.

Chapter 1458: Hurricane Cannon

Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain had taken the initiative to retreat, but this time, it was Su Mucheng's turn to be relentless. Raising her cannon with both hands, Dancing Rain chased after Troubling Rain, following the path that he had taken. Even though Troubling Rain had vanished from her sight in the blink of an eye, her attack was still extremely decisive. Boom!

The forest was filled with bright flashes from the explosions. It was already the last round, so there was no need to conserve mana, and on top of that, the Launcher's normal attacks also did damage in an area-of-effect. The aggressive Su Mucheng had now turned into the destroyer of the forest, with her artillery barrage engulfing her path as she steadily chased in the direction that Troubling Rain had fled in.

In the end, just as she had just reached the spot where Troubling Rain was hiding behind a tree, sword light flashed towards her.

Huang Shaotian had been called the Demon Blade, and this title was precisely because he was able to seize opportunities that others weren't able to notice, and could often launch attacks in situations which others deemed to be impossible.

When he seized these impossible opportunities, the things he accomplished were always a little strange, and so after some time, the nickname of Demon Blade was born.

At this moment, if not for the viewers' omniscient point-of-view, how many people would think that Huang Shaotian, having just decided to escape and seeing Su Mucheng closing in, would instead

immediately drop his original decision to quickly lay in ambush along the path that she was taking? Even though this new decision was a very logical one, Huang Shaotian's reaction was simply too fast, catching everyone off-guard.

Of course, being fast could allow him to catch others unprepared.

When this sword light emerged, Su Mucheng really was somewhat unprepared.

The sword light landed squarely, and Dancing Rain staggered and fell towards the side.

Collapsing Mountain!

Troubling Rain brandished his sword, preparing to continue the assault, but once again, he was met face-first with the mouth of Dancing Rain's cannon.

Su Mucheng didn't become any less aggressive after forcing Huang Shaotian to run. In this moment, her split-second reaction was to launch a counterattack.

"What have you been through, why are your attacks so fierce!"

Huang Shaotian blew his top and shouted, as Troubling Rain stopped his attack in mid-air. The Collapsing Mountain was changed into a Falling Light Blade, and with a stroke, he fell towards the side.

Boom!

Of course, the cannon fired an attack. Though this attack was unable to prevent Collapsing Mountain from completing, Huang Shaotian really didn't want to engage in any trading with Su Mucheng.

"The one who wronged you wasn't me, right?"

In the midst of the attacks, Huang Shaotian was still sending messages. After dodging the cannon blast, the shockwave from the Falling Light Blade was just enough to reach Dancing Rain.

Dancing Rain was already rolling, using the knockback from the attack earlier along with the Falling Light Blade's attack to cancel each other out. As she was rolling, a single grenade also rolled outwards.

"..."

Huang Shaotian was speechless, and could only have Troubling Rain jump and dodge the attack. He wouldn't be able to dodge the attack by moving forwards, so he could only retreat.

"Blocking our road to the championship title, is there any wrong greater than that?" Su Mucheng replied.

"If you look at it this way, you've also wronged me considerably!" Huang Shaotian replied.

Troubling Rain jumped nimbly backwards just enough to dodge the explosion from the grenade, and retaliated at the last moment.

Headwind Strike!

Troubling Rain jumped forwards, his body spinning in mid-air and dodging one of Dancing Rain's artillery shells. Immediately after, sword light condensed into a circle, flying towards Dancing Rain.

This one sword was quite a strong move.

In close-quarters combat, no matter what, the Blade Master would reign supreme, not the Launcher.

Su Mucheng had used her aggressive performance to suppress Huang Shaotian. To be suppressed by a Launcher in close-quarters combat was a disgrace, and even to normal players, it was embarrassing enough. But as for the esteemed Sword Saint, even after being bullied like this, his mental state was still calm.

He had a very clear understanding of what capital Su Mucheng had to rely on.

She was aggressive, but there was a reason that she was aggressive. Su Mucheng didn't just decide to fight head-on and charge for no reason, taking her Launcher to be a Knight.

The disparity in health between the two was what allowed Su Mucheng to make some decisions in close-quarters combat that would normally be disadvantageous to her. As for Huang Shaotian, because of his health disadvantage, he had no choice but to dodge these "decisions", and gradually, it looked like he was in a difficult situation.

And now, knowing that Su Mucheng would fight in this manner, he also calmly made his decision. He would avoid playing into Su Mucheng's intentions, and begin his attack from there.

Headwind Strike connected, and Huang Shaotian had Troubling Rain use Rising Dragon Slash!

This blade didn't hit Dancing Rain, but as Troubling Rain rose in the air, he narrowly avoided another attack that Su Mucheng had sent towards him whilst she was stumbling.

"Oh oh oh!!!"

The entire crowd saw this thrilling moment and cried out in surprise.

The Rising Dragon Slash brought Troubling Rain behind Dancing Rain, and at that moment in mid-air, his body twisted. Falling Phoenix Slash!

His body didn't twist completely at all, and this Falling Phoenix Slash was awkward and ugly, but the sword light accurately chopped towards Dancing Rain's head. On top of that, she still hadn't regained her balance from the stumbling that the Headwind Strike had caused!

This was the rhythm of a professional player at the apex of Glory.

The difference between them and a normal player was clear as day. If it was an ordinary player, they wouldn't be able to combine a Rising Dragon Slash and Falling Phoenix Slash so quickly, right after Headwind Strike had completed.

Slash!

The sword light descended, and Dancing Rain was knocked onto the ground.

The stadium was filled with applause.

In the beginning, Huang Shaotian being beaten up by Su Mucheng had made them extremely anxious, but at this moment, it looked like Huang Shaotian had found his rhythm.

As Dancing Rain rolled, offsetting the attack, Troubling Rain's figure had already begun moving towards the side. Huang Shaotian believed that Su Mucheng would forcefully attack at this moment, so the path that he chose wasn't the fastest path to get close to Dancing Rain. Instead, he moved to a location that Dancing Rain wouldn't be able to attack while rolling.

Pressing hard, but not pressing too hard.

To a Launcher, a class bad at close combat, a distance of one, two or three steps could all be considered close-quarters fighting, preventing them from displaying their ranged superiority. So now that Huang Shaotian hadn't chased as closely, he was a bit further away from Dancing Rain, but Su Mucheng was now unable to make her aggressive counterattacks.

As expected, Huang Shaotian wasn't such an easy player to take down.

As Su Mucheng rolled and tried to forcefully counterattack, she saw that Huang Shaotian had unexpectedly controlled Troubling Rain to move towards an area that she couldn't adjust her attack to hit, and also understood what had happened in her mind. She knew that Huang Shaotian had already made adjustments to his attacking rhythm.

As such, after rolling, Dancing Rain rolled once more.

Roll, roll roll, Dancing Rain rolled in an arc on the ground.

"Hahaha, is this some vulgar movement that you've learned from Fang Rui?" Huang Shaotian laughed.

When one thought of Su Mucheng's beautiful figure also rolling on the ground in a vulgar fashion like Fang Rui, it was certainly difficult to bear. Huang Shaotian's words completely shattered the "female goddess" image in the blink of an eye.

He wasn't particularly worried about such movement. Fang Rui was an opponent that they had researched for several years. Even if she had learnt Fang Rui's dirty movements, it wasn't enough to catch an experienced veteran like Huang Shaotian off-guard.

As he ridiculed her, he was actually carefully watching where Dancing Rain's rolling silhouette, paying attention to angles from which he could dodge her attacks before continuing to close the distance.

In the end, just as Troubling Rain succeeded in drawing close and was preparing to attack, he heard a "whoosh".

The sound was a little bit smothered, and a bit long. It also seemed to have some kind of revolving sound, rubbing against the cannon's walls as it fired out.

This is.....

Huang Shaotian's brain flashed with understanding, but in the end, this skill appeared slightly faster than he was able to react.

As the artillery shell left the cannon, a whooshing sound rang out.

Hurricane Cannon!

A level 75 Launcher skill.

At this time, Huang Shaotian had already reacted. He had Troubling Rain frantically dodge to one side, but it was already too late.

Unexpectedly, Su Mucheng had simply and directly fired this cannon shot at him while rolling. After that whooshing sound rang out, a hurricane swirled up, with Dancing Rain's body as the center. In an instant, Dancing Rain was sent flying in the air, as the hurricane rapidly expanded. Troubling Rain, who was trying to retreat, was only able to take half a step before caught by the hurricane, and in an instant, he was sucked into it.

That Hurricane Cannon shot was still drilling into the ground, frantically revolving. This intense hurricane seemed to come from the ripples on the body of the artillery shell. But how could Huang Shaotian have the mood to appreciate this at this time? In the instant that Troubling Rain's body went out of control, he knew it spelt disaster. He already had no way of controlling his character to do anything. The only thing he could do was to forcefully raise his field of view, and what he saw was Dancing Rain, floating in mid-air with the help of a cannon shot. He saw the pitch-dark mouth of the cannon aiming once more towards the hurricane, and aiming towards him.

Boom!

At the same instant that the Hurricane Cannon exploded, Dancing Rain's cannon sent a charged-up Quantum Bomb towards him. On top of the explosion, there was another layer of energy fluctuating out. The recoil from a Quantum Bomb was incomparably strong. If a character was standing on flat ground, they would have to take a step back in order to dissipate the recoil, or they would be flipped onto the ground.

At this time, Dancing Rain had already charged up this shot in mid-air. As she reached the highest point, she synchronized with the explosion of Hurricane Cannon, sending out the Quantum Bomb. With the strong recoil, Dancing Rain was just like an artillery shell, rocketing through the sky.

All of this was clearly seen by the crowd. But what about Huang Shaotian? After one round of explosions, his field of view was completely covered with the light and thick smoke from the explosions.

What about Dancing Rain?

After freeing himself from the explosions, he quickly swept all 360 degrees around him, but he couldn't find her.

On top of you!

The viewers wished they could run up and pull Huang Shaotian's ear to tell him, and as for Dancing Rain, she had already begun to fall at this point. The pitch-dark mouth of the cannon once more locked on to its target. She wasn't impatient to fire her shot, instead, she wanted to wait for a certain distance, to wait for a distance in which even Huang Shaotian wouldn't be able to dodge in time.

It's already more or less there!

Su Mucheng had already made a precise judgement, and immediately began inputting her skills to attack, but all of a sudden, Troubling Rain, who had been looking in all directions vigilantly, suddenly raised his sword towards the sky.

Piercing Form!

One blade dotted the firmament.

Fine sword qi flew out, and the incomparably strong Piercing Form immediately wrecked Dancing Rain's figure in mid-air.

Did he really not know that Dancing Rain was above him? Those who thought as much were underestimating Huang Shaotian.

Chapter 1459: Dangerous Opportunity

To land the hit, Su Mucheng had Dancing Rain fall down to a low height, a height within a Blade Master's attack range. When Troubling Rain's Piercing Form came out, the high priority skill disrupted Dancing Rain's positioning. She wasn't able to cancel her attack, and the artillery shell completely missed its target.

Huang Shaotian was unphased. Troubling Rain raised his sword and leapt into the air.

Sky-Plunging Blade, Immortal Guides the Way.

Two skills, one after the other. In a normal player's hands, using these two skills in such quick succession would be unthinkable.

The Sky-Plunging Blade caught Dancing Rain and swung her towards the ground.

By the time Immortal Guides the Way came out, Dancing Rain was positioned below Troubling Rain. The powerful blow-away effect made Dancing Rain fall even faster.

This sudden push made Dancing Rain crash even harder into the ground, messing up her Quick Recovery timing. She tried to adjust it, but she wasn't able to in time. Dancing Rain hit the ground, her heavy armor crushing the branches beneath her.

Both players lost a good chunk of health in this short instant.

Troubling Rain had been hit by a Level 75 Hurricane Cannon and then a charged Quantum Bomb. These two attacks had taken away 11% of his health.

Dancing Rain took even more damage.

The exchange started with Huang Shaotian's ambush to Headwind Strike, Falling Phoenix Slash, Piercing Form, Sky-Plunging Blade, and Immortal Guides the Way. All of these skills dealt considerable damage, and all of them had hit. Dancing Rain had lost 18% of her health.

In the end, Troubling Rain had 37% health left, while Dancing Rain had 71% health left.

When the two started the round, it had been 63% to 100%. In total, Troubling Rain had lost 26% of his health, while Dancing Rain had lost 29% of her health.

Huang Shaotian had a slight 3% lead in terms of damage dealt, but that was meaningless.

He had started out behind by 37%. A 3% lead didn't even make up for 10% of that number.

Now, Troubling Rain had even less health, making it even more unfavorable for Huang Shaotian.

He could not afford to miss any more opportunities. As Troubling Rain fell, his sword swept towards Dancing Rain.

Because Su Mucheng had messed up the Quick Recover, she had no way of dodging this attack. The strike would be from the back as well. Would she be able to avoid the follow-up?

Shua!

Another sword light fell, but all it hit was branches and leaves. Dancing Rain had rolled to the side, her cannon aimed coldly at Troubling Rain.

Boom!

Smoke rolled into the air.

She was firing at nearly point blank range. It wasn't possible to dodge it at this distance. However, Huang Shaotian swung his sword faster than she could fire her cannon. He wasn't able to dodge, but his sword was able to strike Dancing Rain.

Blood blossomed into the air. All Su Mucheng could see was red. Glory used these realistic details to let the players know of their condition.

Dancing Rain was covered in blood, but what about Troubling Rain? The artillery shell exploded in his face. The smoke and fire engulfed him as he was sent flying away.

But as he flew backwards, Huang Shaotian sent out another strike. The sword light from Sword Draw split apart the smoke. By the time Su Mucheng noticed it, it was too late. Huang Shaotian had used the smoke as cover for a follow-up.

Su Mucheng had also wanted to follow-up, but it was interrupted by the sword strike. After steadying herself again, the smoke in front of her had dispersed. She saw as Troubling Rain rolled across the ground and rushed back towards her.

Boom boom boom.

Su Mucheng fired three Anti-Tank Missiles, attacking Troubling Rain while retreating.

She had played aggressively, but it had been done with thought. Playing aggressive didn't mean that she didn't care about the distance between the two sides. When there was an opportunity to trade with Huang Shaotian, she would engage in close combat with him. But if there was no such opportunity, she would try her best to pull apart the distance and wait for one to come.

"You're running again?" Huang Shaotian messaged. He had seen through Su Mucheng's playstyle and strategy. She had retreated because she wasn't able to see an opportunity to attack. These were the moments that Huang Shaotian needed to grasp.

Triple Slash!

Troubling Rain used it as a movement skill. He didn't take a straight path towards her, instead taking a curved path. It was a very smart method of dealing with Aerial Cannon. With Aerial Cannon, the Launcher would be moving backwards. If the opponent gave chase from the front, it would be easy for the Launcher to delay him. However, it was hard for the Launcher to change directions while in the air.

Thus, taking a curved path was effective against Aerial Cannon movements. But taking a curved path had its own problems. It required the player to cross a longer distance, so it took more time. Aerial Cannon was fast too, so it made it harder to close the distance.

As a result, taking a curved path could not always be done. It depended on the distance and the timing.

Grasping timings was Huang Shaotian's specialty. The Triple Slash path was completely beautiful. The viewers could tell that Dancing Rain was trying to adjust her aim to catch Troubling Rain, but she was always behind all the way until Troubling Rain reached her flank.

Upwards Slash.

Troubling Rain made a simple slash upwards, but it was at a spot which the opponent couldn't dodge. Dancing Rain, who had been moving backwards with Aerial Cannon, was lifted into the sky.

Su Mucheng had Dancing Rain aim towards him. In reality, being in the air wasn't too bad for Gunner classes because their firing produced recoil, allowing them to move in the air and disrupt their opponent's aerial control.

However, as a pro player, just trying to escape wasn't all. They would always be trying to search for opportunities to injure the opponent too. You couldn't win a match just by running away.

Su Mucheng moved her cursor, but there was no sign of Troubling Rain.

Sua!

Another sword strike, dealing damage and keeping Dancing Rain in the air. Su Mucheng kept searching, but she was unexpectedly unable to find him.

Vanishing Step!

Vanishing Step was considered a peak Glory technique. It required a player's intuition and technique to reach perfection to perform. Even in the pro scene, there were few players who could execute this technique well. It had always seemed to be a technique that only existed in theory.

At this moment, Huang Shaotian was using Vanishing Step to keep the opponent in the air, and if it continued, it was likely that victory would be his.

"But it's very difficult," Li Yibo said, "Juggling a Gunner class to death is extremely difficult, let alone a top-tier Launcher like Su Mucheng."

"Let's keep watching," Pan Lin didn't seem to want to elaborate. This battle was too intense. The two sides were constantly going back and forth with neither side able to hold a dominant advantage. All sorts of brilliant plays were being displayed. Right now, Vanishing Step had finally appeared. Would Huang Shaotian be able to keep this technique going against Su Mucheng? Would he be able to make up for the deficit with this play?

Everyone looked at the sword in Troubling Rain's hands, at the sword light flying out from it. The sword light weaved across Dancing Rain, keeping her tumbling non-stop.

But Su Mucheng seemed to have no reaction.

As a Gunner class, even just randomly attacking would make it very hard for the opponent to keep the Vanishing Step going. But Su Mucheng didn't do this. She just seemed to be looking around.

Was she looking for an opening? Was she waiting until she could counterattack?

Shouldn't her first priority be to get out of Vanishing Step? Wasn't Su Mucheng being a bit too confident, thinking of directly going for a counterattack?

Dancing Rain's health continued to drop.

1%.

2.3%.

0.9%.

4%.

Attack after attack dealing different amounts of damage. High, or low, or perhaps just to keep her in the air. All of them left marks on her character. Damage quickly accumulated as Dancing Rain's health fell rapidly at a visible speed.

60%...

50%...

The difference between their health bars was closing.

Still not going to move?

Happy's fans were starting to have trouble sitting still. They had no idea what Su Mucheng was thinking.

Huang Shaotian did though. He knew exactly what she was thinking.

They were only paying attention to why Dancing Rain wasn't attacking. However, they didn't notice that although she wasn't attacking, she was constantly adjusting her weapon angle.

Huang Shaotian saw it very clearly because he needed to predict where Dancing Rain would be, which meant that he needed to see where her cannon was aiming towards so he could react and prevent her from escaping. Huang Shaotian was aware of what Gunners could do to escape from the air.

However, Dancing Rain didn't attack, and it was making Huang Shaotian feel exhausted.

Su Mucheng had anticipated Huang Shaotian being on guard against her aerial movements. As a result, she kept moving her cannon to have Huang Shaotian keep making adjustments. It had only been a few seconds, but the ordinary person had no idea just how focused Huang Shaotian was. Vanishing Step was an extremely difficult technique that required a lot of concentration. And now, Su Mucheng was making it even harder for him.

This isn't right! When Huang Shaotian realized that the situation wasn't right, he had already gone too far. He discovered that he wasn't able to keep up and adjust to Dancing Rain's tempo. For a keen opportunist like him, he had sniffed out an incredibly dangerous opportunity for him.

Chapter 1460: Advance Bravely

What an opportunity!

Even though this opportunity didn't belong to him, Huang Shaotian couldn't help but feel excited at any opportunity he saw.

Would Su Mucheng be able to grasp an opportunity like this?

While everyone else hadn't even realized what was going on, Huang Shaotian was already beginning to worry about whether the opponent would miss the opportunity. No matter what, opportunity was always an exceptionally beautiful thing to him.

She didn't miss it!

Dancing Rain's swinging cannon opening suddenly steadied, and sparks flew outward.

"Ah!"

For the audience, this attack came too quickly. Even though they had been wondering why Su Mucheng wasn't firing any attacks to give Huang Shaotian some difficulty, this fire that now came from Dancing Rain still felt off.

It was just this attack, but it caused so much difficulty!

This one shot broke Huang Shaotian's Vanishing Step. That wasn't all – after this shot, Dancing Rain gracefully twisted in the air, and where before she had seemed helplessly tossed around in the air, she now very steadily aimed her cannon right at Troubling Rain.

Boom boom boom boom!

The cannonfire was like a pouring rainstorm. Troubling Rain was instantly swallowed whole.

Breaking the Vanishing Step?

Everyone discovered that they had underestimated that first shot that Su Mucheng had fired. It had been the herald of the counterattack. In the blink of an eye, the situation had completely flipped on its head.

How did this happen?

Everyone was speechless. The Blue Rain fans in the stadium who had been cheering had issued a few sighs of regret at that first shot, but now that things were like this, it was as though their necks had been collectively broken. No sound came from them anymore.

Boom boom boom boom!

In their ears there was only the sound of Dancing Rain's cannonfire, eating away bit by bit at Troubling Rain's health. And Dancing Rain was using this combo to slowly fall to the ground. The whole offensive was completed while she was in motion – to restrict Huang Shaotian to the point where he was completely helpless, it was clear how perfect Su Mucheng's control was. Huang Shaotian was the kind of person who only needed the barest hint of an opportunity to pull off a trick.

30%...

20%...

10%...

Once a pro player established an offensive, the opponent's health could be cut down this quickly.

Blue Rain's fans in the audience had grown pale. At 10%, the health bar became red, signaling the danger of the situation. But the combo still hadn't been interrupted, and Su Mucheng still had the initiative. A distance of 21 body lengths could still be fully covered by the cannonfire.

Her Firing Line?

Everyone was in a daze as they watched Dancing Rain attack. Today's Su Mucheng was so powerful, it had taken everyone aback.

Keep fighting!

Blue Rain's fans were furiously cheering on Huang Shaotian in their hearts, but they didn't dare make a sound, as though any sound would distract him.

"You're trying to take me down in one go?"

But before anyone distracted him, Huang Shaotian was already distracting himself, sending a message in the chat.

This was the talkativeness that so many people hated, but now that this sentence appeared, it instantly reassured everyone.

The fact that Huang Shaotian was still trash-talking meant that he hadn't given up yet. He was definitely still brimming with fighting spirit.

He would definitely find an opportunity to counterattack!

Blue Rain's fans were instantly filled with confidence and anticipation.

And Huang Shaotian didn't disappoint.

Sword's Divine Judgment!

A ring of sword energy rippled through the cannonfire, slicing through the shots with a series of booms.

Sword's Divine Judgment, this wasn't a skill that could be adjusted with minute inputs. The only thing that could be controlled was the timing of the skill's start. To achieve this effect now, this was an opportunity that could be encountered but not begged for. Yet this was Huang Shaotian, and he instantly seized the chance.

Triple Slash!

With the bonus from Sword's Divine Judgment, Triple Slash became even faster. With three flashes of swordlight, Troubling Rain finally broke free from the Firing Line that Su Mucheng had established.

But Dancing Rain's cannon was still locked onto him.

There was nowhere for Huang Shaotian to dodge, and Troubling Rain only had 8% health remaining. For a Launcher, this was low enough that one powerful attack could take him down.

His options were limited. Retreat and then find another chance to ambush? He might not get a better chance than the one he had now. His target was right before his eyes.

Advance!

Huang Shaotian controlled Troubling Rain to charge forward, toward Dancing Rain's cannon pointed at him.

In his eyes, this wasn't just the character of an opponent. This was a struggle for the championship, and all obstacles needed to be shattered with his sword. This was the path that could not be avoided.

No turning back. Curving Wind Form!

The skill was released, carrying the boost from the Sword's Divine Judgment. Faster. Fiercer.

The sword energy retracted, and Dancing Rain had no choice but to crash into the tip of the sword, but the cannon in her hands was steady.

This was the moment that would decide victory!

Everyone stared with eyes open wide, watching the swordlight and cannonfire meld together, shining brilliantly. On this stage, this was everyone's goal, their dream, their glory.

Everyone.

But only one person could be the last one standing.

Su Mucheng, Dancing Rain.

After a period of calm, she was the one who stood at the very end.

Huang Shaotian lost, Blue Rain lost. In the group arena, the choice of map had demonstrated how much they had prepared, but in the end, Happy had obtained victory.

Was Blue Rain's performance bad?

No one would think so.

The players of both teams had performed excellently. But there could only be one winner. That was all it was.

Su Mucheng and Huang Shaotian walked out of their competitor booths together, to be met with a quiet stadium.

This battle was undoubtedly the most fierce and exciting of all the group arena battles today. The entire fight had been conducted under extremely dangerous conditions, where one mistake could spell defeat. During the entire battle, the audience felt that they didn't even have the time to take a breath. Now that it was over, it was clear that Huang Shaotian's performance was faultless, and there wasn't really anything to criticize about the performance of Blue Rain as a whole. But, they had lost, and this ending made their hearts heavy.

They had already lost an away game. Now, they were playing their home game, but they had still lost the group arena.

With the new playoffs competition format, losing one point in the group arena wouldn't affect the team competition that much. But just from the current mood of the fans, it was clear that although it didn't affect the numbers much, people's emotions weren't so robotic.

As the two players walked offstage, the ones who reacted first were Happy's fans in the west seating area. A thrilling process with victory as the outcome, was there anything more they could ask for in this match? Happy's fans had full reason to go wild with excitement.

Blue Rain's fans came to their senses after seeing Happy's celebrations. The team was already behind, they were already at the critical hour. As fans, how could they be so downtrodden, how could they spread their negative emotions so casually?

They were Blue Rain's loyal supporters. They sat here today to wait for Team Blue Rain's victory.

They might not be able to help the players onstage, but offstage, they could at least help the team keep their spirits up!

"Go Blue Rain!" It wasn't clear who started it, but soon, the sound filled the entire stadium. All of the Blue Rain fans came together. Now wasn't the time to wallow in melancholy. The situation was serious for them, and so it was more important than ever to boost morale.

"We're only one point behind, the situation isn't too bad."

And so everyone began to think this way. Of course, they hope that Blue Rain's players would also be able to take this kind of mindset. The fans couldn't directly change the players' moods. They could only try and shape the atmosphere of the stadium to motivate the players.

They watched Huang Shaotian, watched him return to Blue Rain's player area, watched as the other Blue Rain players surrounded him.

"I swear, Su Mucheng was hacking today!" Huang Shaotian said indignantly, standing in the middle.

Everyone laughed.

"In the team competition, we also need to pay attention to her performance," said Yu Wenzhou.

Blue Rain immediately entered the rhythm of preparing for the upcoming team competition. They didn't speak a single word more about the situation of the group arena.

"We're only one point behind, the situation isn't too disastrous," was the mantra that the fans were using to reestablish their confidence. But on Blue Rain's side, there was no mention at all.

Without wasting a single moment, Blue Rain was already beginning to plan for the team competition.

They'd prepared before the match, of course, but in the stadium, there would always be minor adjustments depending on the performance of the opponents during the group arena. Today, for example, Su Mucheng's condition was exceptionally outstanding, so in team competition they would have to pay attention to her.

Team Blue Rain was already entirely immersed in the rhythm of the team competition.

What about Happy? After all, they had a number of rookies, and so it would be hard for them to match the mature mood of Blue Rain. But Ye Xiu didn't say anything to dampen their spirits after their victory.

"Keep up this momentum, let's crush them in the team competition!" Ye Xiu said.

Crush them! Facing Blue Rain, even Samsara wouldn't dare use this kind of wording. But Ye Xiu used it, and Happy's members didn't treat it like a big deal.

"Watch me, Boss!" Steamed Bun said, with unparalleled confidence.

"It's up to you, Steamed Bun," said Ye Xiu.

"Of course," said Steamed Bun. He made all sorts of arrogant faces at Blue Rain's player area, with the look of a conqueror.

"Good luck, Steamed Bun," everyone said.

The break between the group arena and the team competition was rapidly drawing to a close. With the judge's signal, the players of the two teams began to enter. Everyone leaned forward to get a better look at the rosters of both sides.

Blue Rain: Yu Wenzhou, Huang Shaotian, Lu Hanwen, Zheng Xuan, Xu Jingxi, Song Xiao.

Exactly the same as the previous round.

Happy's side had some adjustments, though. Last round's Wei Chen, who had ties to Blue Rain, did not appear this time. He and Qiao Yifan had been swapped out with Tang Rou and Steamed Bun this round. Happy's team competition roster this time was: Ye Xiu, Su Mucheng, Fang Rui, Steamed Bun, An Wenyi, Tang Rou.

Among them, it was unsurprising that the three All-Star level players Ye Xiu, Su Mucheng, and Fang Rui appeared. So far, these three players made the most consistent appearances. An Wenyi, of course, couldn't be left out of the team competition. So, when Happy made adjustments, it would be of the other two slots, and this time, Happy switched them both.