

Avatar 1521

Chapter 1521: One Step Away

The third round of the group arena soon began. On Happy's side was Mo Fan and his Deception. On Tyranny's side was Zhang Jiale and Dazzling Hundred Blossoms. He had sacrificed much to win over Ye Xiu. Dazzling Hundred Blossoms had nearly no health or mana left. He had almost no combat capabilities. This fight would end without any suspense.

Even so, Mo Fan played cautiously like he always did. When the round began, he didn't hurry to approach his opponent.

However, with how small and simple the map was, even if he didn't hurry over, what else could he do?

Chen Guo had been keeping up with the matches this season from up-close. She also had many Glory experts surrounding her, constantly giving her pointers. Her knowledge had improved day by day. Before the two had even begun fighting, she suddenly realized something.

Picking this map might not be favorable for Tyranny facing Ye Xiu's unspecialized. However, this map would be used by every player participating in the group arena. Who else did Happy have besides Ye Xiu?

Chen Guo obviously knew what Happy's lineup was for the group arena. After Mo Fan was Su Mucheng, then Fang Rui, and finally Tang Rou.

Mo Fan's Fireworks Style required a lot of space to maneuver around in. As for Su Mucheng, the Launcher's biggest strength was their ultra long range. And for Fang Rui, the more complicated the terrain, the more opportunities he had to display his dirtiness.

But the Arena...

There was nowhere to hide, and the map was small. Happy's three players would suffer because this map would restrict their playstyles to a certain extent!

This was the complete reason behind Tyranny choosing the Arena. Force Ye Xiu into an intense fight to exhaust him. And once Ye Xiu was gone, the Arena would become Tyranny's advantage.

Zhang Jiale wasn't able to survive for long and quickly left the stage. Tyranny's third player was Qin Muyun.

Qin Muyun's Negative Nine Degrees was a Sharpshooter. This map was slightly cramped for Sharpshooters, but Qin Muyun was an expert at picking spots. In a wide open space without any obstructions, movement became crucial for attack and defense. Although Qin Muyun's class was restricted by this map, his exceptional talent at positioning was perfectly suited for this map.

The others on Happy watched the match with solemn expressions. They had realized this point earlier than Chen Guo had. It was because of this that Chen Guo's plan wouldn't work out. Because Happy's next players would be restricted by this map, Ye Xiu could not afford to hold back. He had to do his utmost to win as big of a lead as possible for Happy to reduce the pressure on them.

Ye Xiu had done an outstanding job. He had faced Lin Jingyan and Zhang Jiale, two formidable opponents, and nearly completed a 1v2. Happy had a one player lead, but would it be enough to equalize the disadvantage that three of their players would face?

The fight between Mo Fan and Qi Muyun began. Mo Fan didn't hurry to charge over, but Qin Muyun? Negative Nine Degrees raised his gun and began firing immediately. His attack range could cover the distance between their two spawn points.

The loud sounds of gunfire reverberated throughout the stadium. Mo Fan's Deception moved nimbly about, trying to use his speed to get into Qin Muyun's dead angles.

But what happened next gave everyone an even clearer understanding of Qin Muyun's ability to pick spots.

The Arena was considered unfavorable for long-ranged classes, but nevertheless, Qin Muyun was still able to freely kite around.

Negative Nine Degrees wasn't just standing there, he was also moving. Every step of his matched Deception's. The distance between the two would sometimes decrease and sometimes increase, but after a few back and forths, it would always go back to what it was in the beginning.

In an open map like the Arena, it was a pure contest of who had better movement. And in this fight, it was obvious who was superior.

Mo Fan had succeeded many times in escaping from huge chaotic battlefields in the game. He naturally had extraordinary skill in that domain, but there was a huge difference between a huge chaotic battlefield and a 1v1. Mo Fan had been trained in an unorthodox way, while Qin Muyun had trained under standard professional procedures. His ability to pick spots was detailed and meticulous. His every action was backed by clear logical reasoning. Tens years of Glory innovation and improvement had produced this fighting method, and Qin Muyun was executing it perfectly.

Tyranny's players weren't just heroes who knew only how to fight fiercely. Qin Muyun, Song Qiyang, the two talented rookies that had come from Tyranny, had the mark of their vice-captain, Zhang Xinjie: careful and meticulous.

Mo Fan was clearly losing in this contest of positioning. Compared to Qin Muyun's precise positioning, Mo Fan's positioning seemed right but was actually wrong. Oftentimes, he himself wouldn't know why he took that step. It had come to him instinctively out of habit. This was the biggest flaw of someone who had been trained in an unorthodox way, and it could clearly be seen through Mo Fan.

Mo Fan quickly realized that he had no way of closing in on his opponent purely relying on his own movements. He could only try a few attacks. Ninjas had a few mid-ranged attacks, so when the distance between the two characters pulled a bit closer, Deception attacked.

Shuriken!

A Shuriken was thrown. It was the Ninja's lowest-level ninja tool. It didn't deal much damage, but it inflicted a brief stun. As a result, it was very useful for interrupting skills. However, Sharpshooter skills didn't have cast times, so the Shuriken's threat was rather limited against them. Mo Fan's reason for choosing this skill wasn't at random.

At this distance, even if the Shuriken hit, the brief stun wouldn't be enough to give Mo Fan any sort of advantage, so it wouldn't pose a problem for Qin Muyun if he didn't have his Negative Nine Degrees dodge. Most people would make this judgement and ignore the Shuriken.

However, Glory was a game with very precise mechanics. The effects from a skill would vary depending on where it landed on the opponent. Mo Fan's Deception threw this Shuriken, seeking this precise effect. His target was Negative Nine Degrees' right wrist!

During combat, the arms would often be moving, so the chances of hitting the wrist was extremely low. But for Sharpshooters, their arms wouldn't move nearly as much as Fighter classes who would be throwing out punches left and right. Mo Fan saw an opportunity and had Deception throw a Shuriken.

When a Shuriken hit the wrist, the stun effect wouldn't affect the entire body, but the stun time would be longer. Sharpshooters used both their hands to fire their guns. A temporary stun on the wrist would be enough to create an opening for an attack.

His reasoning was sound, and even when he threw out the Shuriken, no one had seen through it. Throwing a Shuriken towards the body and throwing a Shuriken towards the wrist looked nearly identical. It was almost impossible to distinguish between the slight difference in angle. If Qin Muyun waited until after the Shuriken before realizing it, it would be too late for him to dodge.

Any ordinary person would not have been able to see through his calculations. When Deception suddenly attacked, Pan Lin got excited. But after shouting out the skill "Shuriken", his voice suddenly went from loud to quiet. The final "-ken" syllable exposed his disappointment. He clearly recognized that the attack was meaningless. Qin Muyun could completely ignore it and have Negative Nine Degrees continue attacking to punish Deception for his misplay.

But to his surprise, Qin Muyun did not ignore it.

Negative Nine Degrees kept attacking, but he also took a step to dodge the Shuriken.

"Was that necessary?" Pan Lin was in a daze. Even though dodging it didn't seem to take him much effort, this was a high-level confrontation. A wasted movement that seemed to not matter could be a sign of a deficiency in the details.

"Qin Muyun is being very cautious," Li Yibo said. He hadn't noticed the trouble that Shuriken would have caused Negative Nine Degrees either. He was right though. In reality, Qin Muyun hadn't seen through Mo Fan's plan either, but he chose to dodge anyways out of caution. Since it didn't disrupt his tempo, he didn't care about a possibly wasted movement, so he dodged.

A deficiency in the details?

Being hit by the Shuriken would have been a deficiency in the details! In comparison to getting hit by it, it would be better to take the initiative to react to it.

The Shuriken missed, and the dodge from Qin Muyun had been the right move. He didn't give Mo Fan an opening.

Since his plan had failed, he could only force his way to Qin Muyun!

Deception moved to the side, ready to rush forward. However, this slight movement to the side drew a reaction from Qin Muyun as well.

Negative Nine Degrees took a step to the side, and from his new viewpoint, he could see Deception's hands.

Hand seals!

Deception was forming hand seals. He had attempted to hide his intentions by that slight movement to the side. Qin Muyun hadn't neglected this sort of Ninja trick. He had his Negative Nine Degrees follow along. He noticed the hand seals, but he couldn't tell what ninjutsu Mo Fan was planning on using. In any case, getting away from his current position would not be wrong.

Negative Nine Degrees continued to move. His aim was to find a new spot, where he could maintain the same type of suppression onto Deception.

Negative Nine Degrees moved back, while Deception moved forward.

Shadow Clone Technique!

Mo Fan had wanted to use this skill to get close, but Qin Muyun had taken precautions. It was Mo Fan's first time getting this close to his target, but he was off by just one step... just one step was enough for Qin Muyun to set up his wall again.

The fourth round of the group arena ended in Tyranny's victory.

Chapter 1522: Snowflake Firing Line

A crushing defeat.

Qin Muyun's playstyle might not have been as hot-blooded or as tough as Tyranny's fans would have liked, but winning with such dominance was still something that they enjoyed. Thunderous cheers greeted Mo Fan as he left his booth.

It wasn't his first time fighting against Qin Muyun. Last time, it had been the group arena too. Qin Muyun's Negative Nine Degrees only had 11% of his health left, yet it took Mo Fan's Deception nearly half of his health to finish him off. It could be considered a loss for Mo Fan.

This time, the two started the fight at equal health, and in the end, Mo Fan suffered a crushing defeat. 31%.

Deception had only taken out 31% of Negative Nine Degrees' health when he fell. Putting it nicely, you could call it one third of his health.

It was another loss against Qin Muyun. When he returned to his seat, hints of unhappiness could be seen in his usual poker face.

Su Mucheng, who could be considered as the person closest to him compared to everyone else on the team, patted his shoulders to console him. Mo Fan thought hard for a moment, but when he raised his head to say something, Su Mucheng was already gone.

“It’s my turn,” Su Mucheng called out to everyone before heading over to the stage. She was Happy’s next player in the group arena.

Mo Fan stared blankly. He had just been about to say something, but...

“Have you got any questions?” Mo Fan suddenly heard a voice from beside him. Mo Fan turned to look and saw Ye Xiu looking at him.

Mo Fan turned his head back. He seemed to be struggling whether he should speak or not. Ye Xiu didn’t say anything and simply waited patiently on the side.

“What should I do?” Mo Fan didn’t turn to look at Ye Xiu, but he spoke up in the end.

“Learn from him,” Ye Xiu replied.

“And then I can beat him if I do that?”

“Don’t limit yourself to just the opponent. You have many opponents. The purpose of learning from him isn’t purely to beat him, but for you to improve, so you can win more,” Ye Xiu said. Qin Muyun could be considered a great wall for Mo Fan. The strengths that Qin Muyun had gained from going through Tyranny’s training camp were things that Mo Fan lacked. If Mo Fan could use what Qin Muyun had for himself, his individual prowess would improve considerably. Just take Qin Muyun’s talent at positioning and movement. If Mo Fan could take those for himself, his Fireworks style would certainly become more threatening.

Ye Xiu hoped that Mo Fan could understand this point, but Mo Fan was giving him the silent treatment again. Ye Xiu waited for a long time, but seeing that Mo Fan didn’t intend on speaking again, he didn’t pursue it.

“Give it a try!” Ye Xiu said before leaving. Mo Fan stared thoughtfully at the new round that was about to start.

The fifth round of the group arena would be Su Mucheng versus Qin Muyun, a battle between Gunners.

The match began with the crisp sounds of gunshots and the loud sounds of cannonfire. As soon as the two entered the map, they began attacking their opponent from afar without needing to move.

Launchers had a longer range than Sharpshooters, but it didn’t matter in the Arena. Sharpshooters had a fast and explosive firing speed, so the gunfire from Negative Nine Degrees seemed denser and more concentrated. Sparks instantly blossomed all around Dancing Rain. As for Negative Nine Degrees? Her first artillery shell had only just exploded. Even though the artillery shell dealt AoE damage, Negative Nine Degrees had already escaped cleanly from it, all while keeping up a continuous stream of attacks.

Unfavorable!

For Happy, this was not a favorable map for Su Mucheng. Negative Nine Degrees moved and attacked without pause. His attack and defense didn’t interfere with each other. Compared to Dancing Rain, his

advantages were much more threatening. Qin Muyun even moved his Negative Nine Degrees closer to her. Launchers needed to play from a long range. But Sharpshooters? At close range, they had Gun Fu. Pushing closer to Su Mucheng would put pressure on her. In this map, she didn't have any ways to pull apart the distance between them. The Sharpshooter's Gun Fu might not be as sticky as other close ranged classes, but the amount of space it controlled was much greater.

What should she do?

Mo Fan had just been asking himself what he should do, and now he started to worry for Su Mucheng.

On the battlefield, a myriad of changes could happen in an instant. There was no time for her to wait patiently like Ye Xiu did when talking to Mo Fan. She needed to be decisive, and the answer she gave was: burst!

Dancing Rain's attacks suddenly sped up several notches. The explosions from her bombardment instantly swallowed Negative Nine Degrees. Qin Muyun hastily had Negative Nine Degrees move away, but it was as if he had some sort of blinking target light on him. No matter what he did, Dancing Rain's attacks followed Negative Nine Degrees closely, refusing to let go.

Firing line?!

Some people could see it. This was the burst from a Launcher's firing line, but how could she do it at this distance? The firing line's distance wasn't limited by the player's skill, but rather the slow attack speed of Launchers. At too close of a distance, Launcher had no way of linking their attacks together. However, right now, it seemed like Dancing Rain was planning on breaking apart this predetermined limit.

"Why would she do this?" Pan Lin was stunned. Li Yibo felt his head ache. He had a vague feeling that he needed time to think and organize his thoughts, but today, the group arena between Happy and Tyranny was moving at such a fast pace. By the time he finished organizing his thoughts, it would probably be the next round, no?

"Her distance isn't fixed..." The pro players had more perceptive eyes. On Tyranny's side, Zhang Xinjie figured out the reason. Some of the more minute details might skip over a normal viewer's eyes, but not Zhang Xinjie.

"Su Mucheng is using burst skills for her first wave of attacks, borrowing the recoil to retreat. As she pulls away, she chooses skills that can link together to keep up a continuous offense." As a Gunner, Zhang Jiale was extremely acute towards this area.

"It can be considered a cross-shaped firing line, where the horizontal axis can shift freely!" Lin Jingyan said.

"It's not just that," Zhang Jiale said.

"Yes..." Lin Jingyan could see it too, "If it was a cross, it wouldn't be able to seal off Muyun's movements..."

"It's a variation using three overlapping firing lines," Zhang Jiale said.

"Three overlapping lines... like a snowflake?" Lin Jingyan displayed his imaginative capabilities. (Think of: *)

Snowflake Firing Line!

Pan Lin and Li Yibo were having a headache. In the meantime, Tyranny had given Su Mucheng's technique a good name.

"The debate over whether Su Mucheng is a flower vase has reached an end," Zhang Xinjie expressed. This sort of technique was a masterpiece born from a Launcher's experience and intuition reaching the apex. It wasn't something that anyone could use.

"Didn't that debate come to an end a long time ago?" Zhang Jiale was puzzled. No one in the pro circle thought of Su Mucheng as just a pretty face.

"There has always been debate over it," Zhang Xinjie said.

"Alright..." Zhang Jiale didn't argue. He knew that this was Zhang Xinjie's meticulousness at work. If you had to look at things from his view, it probably wasn't possible for a debate to ever end.

"But... this match..." Lin Jingyan commented.

The match wouldn't end just because of this. Su Mucheng's performance was outstanding, but unfortunately, there was a limit to how far Dancing Rain could retreat. Her attack tempo should be restricted soon.

"What if she goes again in reverse?" Zhang Jiale said. If Su Mucheng's changing firing line could retreat, then it could advance. All she needed to do was do things in reverse order. But after seeing their situation, Zhang Jiale found an answer: "Muyun has realized it."

Yes, Qin Muyun had noticed this possibility. His Negative Nine Degrees was being suppressed by the firing line, but his outstanding positioning negated much of the damage. He had avoided the attacks that would have interrupted his own offense. Qin Muyun was tenaciously continuing his attacks despite the suppression from the Launcher firing line. He kept up his pressure, waiting patiently for an opportunity. He had the same thoughts as the other Tyranny players. He was aware of the problems that Su Mucheng would encounter.

The end... for the Arena, that was the farthest distance away from where Su Mucheng had been at initially.

She's almost there!

Qin Muyun watched Dancing Rain's every step. Would she make any changes before then? Qin Muyun didn't neglect this possibility. He made adjustments to prevent her from taking those options. Dancing Rain's only choice was to keep retreating.

There!

Dancing Rain made her last step. Her offense stopped there. Next it should be Negative Nine Degrees' turn to counterattack. Dancing Rain was cornered.

Boom boom boom...

Taking her final step, Dancing Rain gave one last burst. Su Mucheng clearly understood this point. At the last moment, she threw out everything she had.

"It's her final attack," Zhang Jiale sighed. Even though Su Mucheng was an opponent, he still felt sad about this one last burst.

"No!" This time, Lin Jingyan felt something was wrong.

"What is it?" Zhang Jiale had already relaxed. He wasn't as focused, so he hadn't caught it!

"Negative Nine Degrees doesn't have enough health," Han Wenqing, who hadn't joined in on the discussion, said.

Everyone was stunned, including Qin Muyun.

Everyone had been paying close attention to Su Mucheng, Dancing Rain, her firing line, how many attacks she could make in this short amount of time.

She played beautifully, but the map was too small. The distance was too short. This was the limit of what she could do.

That was what everyone thought, and they couldn't help but sigh. But everyone had neglected the fact that this limit was enough.

Because Negative Nine Degrees hadn't been at full health to begin with. He had lost 31% of his health to Deception.

From 69% to 0%, Dancing Rain was able to finish off Negative Nine Degrees with her final wave of attacks.

"We were tricked. The firing line before hadn't been her limit. She held back, so she could save up for this last final wave," Lin Jingyan said.

"Don't forget about her craftiness. She was Ye Xiu's Best Partner, after all." Han Wenqing noted.

Chapter 1523: Two Second Kill

"In the end, Qin Muyun wasn't able to defend against Su Mucheng's fierce assault. Negative Nine Degrees has fallen, and the winner of this round is Su Mucheng!!!" Pan Lin announced the winner passionately, not knowing that Qin Muyun was in fact not far from winning.

If only I had realized it just a bit earlier, if only I had been ready for it... Qin Muyun felt upset as he walked down from the stage. Along the way down, he greeted Tyranny's next player, their captain, Han Wenqing.

"Sorry..." When Qin Muyun was still a few steps away, he stopped to apologize to Han Wenqing.

"Even we as spectators weren't aware of Su Mucheng's intentions. All of us underestimated her," Han Wenqing said. He wasn't consoling him, or finding an excuse for him. He was pushing the burden onto the entire team.

“Go back and get ready for the team competition!” Han Wenqing said and then continued onto the stage. Falling was nothing to fear as long as you immediately stood back up. Tyranny’s members needed this sort of backbone.

“Yes!” Qin Muyun nodded his head and returned to the team.

“Tyranny’s fourth player is their captain, Han Wenqing!!” Pan Lin shouted excitedly as the next round of the group arena began.

“How is Han...” Pan Lin wasn’t speaking slowly, but before he could even say four words, Han Wenqing’s Desert Dust had rushed forward at an extremely fast speed. His clothing fluttered wildly as the wind flew past him. Desert Dust swung his fist, followed by an enormous explosion. Desert Dust had used his own fists to smash apart Dancing Rain’s artillery shell...

“Ferocious Tiger Flurry!” Pan Lin called out the skill name. Before this, he had wanted to say “How is Han Wenqing planning on facing Su Mucheng” to start the match, but before he could even say four words, Han Wenqing answered his question.

Ferocious Tiger Flurry! He started immediately with a Level 70 skill. Even the normal players knew that this was a very rash and very wrong move choice. But this was the playoffs, the highest stage in competitive Glory, and the “King of Fighting” Desert Dust chose to use such a move to start the match!

Why was it not recommended to use a high-level skill to initiate the fight?

Because even though high-level skills were powerful, if the skill missed, it would leave a huge opening for the opponent to take advantage of. As a result, low-level skills were often necessary as set-up for high-level skills. Players would use their high-level skills when they were certain that it would hit.

As a result, directly using a high-level skill was considered a rash move. However, when Han Wenqing, who had ten years of Glory experienced, used it, no one thought of it in that way.

What they saw a confidence.

Confidence that his skill would definitely hit.

The wind whistled like a tiger’s roar as the punch flew out. Desert Dust rushed straight for Dancing Rain, piercing directly through her artillery shell, and swung his fist. A hit!

Was there too little space in the group arena?

No, no matter how little room there was, it wasn’t to the point where the player could reach the opponent in just one step. Han Wenqing’s unconventional move had been completely outside of Su Mucheng’s expectations. While she was still sending out probing attacks, Han Wenqing bared his fangs and mercilessly pounced onto her.

It had been only two seconds since the start of the round. The King of Fighting, Desert Dust, had closed in on Dancing Rain, and Ferocious Tiger Flurry had landed...

In two seconds, Han Wenqing had killed the match.

“It’s... it’s over...” Pan Lin announced the end of the match, but he didn’t shout out the winner excitedly like he usually did. Instead, he just barely managed to squeeze out these few words.

How much health did Dancing Rain have left? How much mana did Dancing Rain have left? Pan Lin had planned on slowly going over this information, but it turned out that none of it was important. Right now, Dancing Rain’s health had turned to zero. The fight was already over.

Pan Lin didn’t know what to say. The pace of today’s group arena was far outside of his expectations. No fight had lasted more than 2 minutes.

Su Mucheng left the player booth. Her expression wasn’t lighthearted at all.

Ye Xiu had given Happy a nearly one player lead, but Mo Fan’s crushing defeat lost half of that lead. Su Mucheng finished off Qin Muyun quite cleanly, but as soon as Han Wenqing came onto the stage, he thoroughly wiped away Happy’s lead.

Happy and Tyranny both had two players remaining. Although Han Wenqing’s Desert Dust had just fought a round, he had lost a negligible amount of health.

After fulfilling their purpose of exhausting Ye Xiu, Han Wenqing personally pulled the group arena back to the starting line. Moreover, Happy’s next player would be restricted by the map.

Fang Rui. He had no terrain to utilize. Solely relying on technique, his dirty playstyle might have some effect on rookies, but against Han Wenqing...

Han Wenqing may not be as all-around as Ye Xiu, but the hardships he had gone through weren’t any less than Ye Xiu.

“My turn,” Fang Rui said. As he walked onto the stage, he passed by Su Mucheng. The two simply nodded their heads as greetings.

The fast-patched fights in today’s group arena made it so the players were constantly switching in and out. One player came onto the stage, and then before they could be satisfied, the next player came onto the stage.

The seventh round of the group arena, Fang Rui versus Han Wenqing, Qi Master Boundless Sea versus Striker Desert Dust.

It was a confrontation between two Fighters, but the playstyles of the players were complete opposites.

Fang Rui with his dirty tricks versus Han Wenqing with his aggressive attacks.

Tyranny’s fans obviously detested Fang Rui’s playstyle. To them, Fang Rui’s playstyle was heresy. In their eyes, this fight was to annihilate this heretic. The atmosphere in the stadium suddenly turned ablaze.

The match began. It was a simple map, and the characters quickly loaded in. As soon as the match began, Boundless Sea immediately rolled.

This was to prevent Han Wenqing from initiating the same way he did last time. But this time, Han Wenqing’s Desert Dust didn’t move. Boundless Sea rolling away made him look like a startled mouse.

The crowd burst into laughter. Compared to Desert Dust, who stood there straight as a javelin, Boundless Sea looked too hilarious.

Fang Rui didn't care though. If Desert Dust wasn't going to move, then he should continue moving. Boundless Sea spun round and round, rolling several times.

Desert Dust turned around, his gaze fixed onto Boundless Sea.

Fang Rui was feeling annoyed. This stupid map wasn't suitable for his usual methods of attack, and just relying on his own movements to get into Han Wenqing's dead angles was simply impossible.

Boundless Sea made a few turns, but not a single opening could be found on Desert Dust. Boundless Sea turned towards another direction. Suddenly, Desert Dust took a step.

The viewers didn't think much of it, but this one step made Fang Rui feel extremely uncomfortable. The group arena was so small. A single step could change the amount of space a character grasped. Desert Dust's step had been timed precisely, restricting the amount of space that Boundless Sea could move around in.

No matter how experienced Han Wenqing was, he shouldn't have been able to find his weak point that fast.

"Old Lin, you sold me out!!!" A message suddenly popped up in the chat.

Everyone was stunned. Then, they realized that Old Lin was probably referring to Lin Jingyan.

Lin Jingyan understood Fang Rui well. Even if Fang Rui had changed classes, the person who understood Fang Rui the most was still Lin Jingyan. And Lin Jingyan's understanding became Tyranny's understanding. Right now, he wasn't Fang Rui's teammate, but his opponent.

Yes, opponent.

Fang Rui sounded as if he were in the right. It left everyone speechless. What's more, Lin Jingyan was sitting on the sides. Had he been hoping for Lin Jingyan to reply back?

The crowd laughed heartlessly at Fang Rui, but then, Boundless Sea suddenly acted!

How despicable! How crafty!

Everyone gasped in surprise. Those words were actually just as a distraction. His sudden but reasonable words

Qi Bullet, Flash Burst!

Boundless Sea chained together two skills. The Qi Bullet in the front blocked Desert Dust's line of sight. The Flash Burst was only the size of a finger, but the condensed qi would pierce through everything.

Desert Dust didn't dodge. He unexpectedly stepped forward.

The Qi Bullet reached Desert Dust's face. This skill didn't deal that much damage, but with Fang Rui shooting it right at his eyes, how many people wouldn't try to dodge it instinctively?

Han Wenqing didn't!

Desert Dust didn't shift in the slightest. He stepped straight forward at the shortest distance and at the fastest speed. The Qi Bullet exploded, and the Flash Burst arrived, but in the blink of an eye, the qi dispersed.

Boundless Sea's right hand had been grabbed by Desert Dust.

Empty-Handed Blade Block!

Han Wenqing had unexpectedly used a Dismantle skill despite not being able to see and accurately grabbed Boundless Sea's hand.

For Fighters, their hands were their weapons. Gloves and claws were worn on the hand.

Dismantle, a block and then a grab. It was enforced by the system. If the block succeeded, the grab would be guaranteed as a follow up.

Desert Dust elbowed Boundless Sea's chest and then followed with a flurry of punches and kicks.

Both were Fighter classes, but Qi Masters couldn't compare to Strikers at close range.

Boundless Sea covered his head, trying to scurry away. He whirled and spun around, rolling and flipping. The crowd laughed loudly. Just when they were having fun, Desert Dust's offense suddenly stopped. Boundless Sea had actually escaped from the combo.

This...

Everyone was dumbfounded.

They hadn't noticed any openings in Desert Dust's combo, but all of a sudden, Boundless Sea seemed to have pushed him away, interrupting Desert Dust's combo.

"Being oppressed like that isn't carefree at all," Fang Rui typed in the chat.

Carefree? The crowd laughed. That word didn't seem to have any relationship with someone as dirty as you, no?

Chapter 1524: Referee Decision

Desert Dust was in the middle of throwing out a punch, when Fang Rui's Boundless Sea escaped.

Desert Dust retracted his fists and turned around. His unchanging expression had nothing to do with Han Wenqing's state of mind, although at the moment, Han Wenqing's expression was as heavy as his character's...

Many people might not have found any problems with his previous punch, but Han Wenqing knew clearer than anyone else that his punch had been too slow.

This wasn't a mistake. Han Wenqing knew that his punch needed to chain together faster, but there was nothing he could do. Perhaps if it were five or ten years ago, that punch would have been unavoidable and would have definitely hit his opponent, but now...

Some things couldn't be accomplished with just effort. For the current him, it was truly difficult to keep up such a fast pace. When he slowed down just a tiny bit, an opening appeared, and Fang Rui immediately grasped it.

What fast reactions...

Han Wenqing sighed. Even if he refused to give up, he couldn't help but feel how he was past his prime.

He was past his prime, but he didn't hesitate.

Desert Dust turned around, facing Boundless Sea. Han Wenqing was already preparing for his next wave of attacks.

It hadn't been easy for Fang Rui to get Boundless Sea to escape. He didn't dare provoke Han Wenqing so easily anymore. Boundless Sea swayed left and right, drawing in his opponent's attention, waiting for an opportunity.

But Desert Dust unexpectedly stepped back.

Everyone was shocked.

If Desert Dust had charged forward, even if it was at a bad timing, no one would have been surprised because that was Han Wenqing. Going against the flow, daring to face the dangers, he had done it far too many times.

But he retreated...

Fang Rui hadn't shown any attempts at an attack, yet he chose to retreat. Perhaps Han Wenqing had realized something. However, retreat had never been a part of Han Wenqing's toolkit.

But Boundless Sea's swaying suddenly stopped as well.

What's going on? Everyone felt like the pace of this match had suddenly turned strange. And the only ones who understood what was going on were the skilled experts.

"To think things would go this way. How boring," Ye Xiu mumbled.

"What do you mean?" Chen Guo asked. She needed an explanation.

"Fang Rui's purpose in having Boundless Sea sway left and right was to repeatedly display his intentions to attack. In a high-level confrontation, you have to determine what options are available depending on how the opponent moves. Although Fang Rui's movements look simple, if they go on for awhile, it's very exhausting for Han Wenqing," Ye Xiu explained.

"So you're saying, Fang Rui was planning on wearing out Han Wenqing?" Chen Guo said.

"Yes," Ye Xiu nodded his head, "But he probably didn't think that he could just sway his way to victory. With Han Wenqing's personality, once Han Wenqing saw through his intentions, he thought that Han Wenqing would try to break through it by force. He was baiting Han Wenqing to continue with his fast-paced offense, but it looks like Han Wenqing simply decided not to take it and retreated."

"So what if he retreats?" Chen Guo asked.

“By retreating, he widens his vision and opens up more space between them. That way, he can observe Boundless Sea’s movements from a more general perspective, which requires less of his attention,” Ye Xiu said.

“Oh... then why not just have Boundless Sea move forward and keep swaying?” Chen Guo said.

“Then all he needs to do is keep retreating. It’s not like he’ll be forced into a corner. Fang Rui’s move has no value anymore. Insisting on it isn’t stylish at all,” Ye Xiu said, but when he looked back to the stage, “Well, it looks like I underestimated his shamelessness.”

Stylish?

How could the master of playing dirty care about something like style?

Fang Rui didn’t hesitate to do something unstylish. It was just like Chen Guo said. Boundless Sea pressed forward and continued to sway left and right, baring his claws like a crab.

Just as Ye Xiu said, Han Wenqing simply continued to retreat.

The viewers who understood what was going on looked at Fang Rui disdainfully for being so boring. The viewers who didn’t understand were confused. Could Boundless Sea’s swaying be the start of some sort of trump card? Something threatening enough to force Han Wenqing to retreat?

One side advanced, while the other side retreated. Desert Dust moved along an arc to make sure that he wouldn’t be pushed to the edges of the map. The two continued like this, and not long afterwards, they had went around half the map.

“He’s really become patient!” Ye Xiu sighed. If this was the Han Wenqing of the past, Desert Dust would have certainly charged over to punch his opponent by now.

“What’s going to happen if they keep going round and round in circles?” Chen Guo asked.

“The referee will intervene,” Ye Xiu said.

“Fang Rui’s not planning on continuing until the referee makes his move, is he?” Chen Guo said speechlessly. She understood why a player like Fang Rui wasn’t suited to be the core of a team. This was too shameless!

“He’s testing Han Wenqing’s patience,” Wei Chen spoke up.

Ye Xiu nodded his head. Fang Rui knew that Han Wenqing was dealing with his threats with ease, but if he insisted on continuing with his threats, then that was probably his plan. Fang Rui was using his shamelessness to tear down Han Wenqing! Pressing forward like this was boring and unstylish, but if Han Wenqing followed along and kept retreating, he didn’t look any better. Seventy percent of the shamelessness was coming from Fang Rui, but the other thirty percent was from Han Wenqing cooperating with him. Han Wenqing probably disdained doing something like this, so Fang Rui refusing to give up was intentionally provoking Han Wenqing to act.

However, it looked like Han Wenqing was quite tyrannical in terms of his bottom line. They had went around half the map, but Desert Dust’s footsteps were as steady as ever. It seemed like he had no

intentions of breaking this stalemate. Had he really decided that he would bring down this fight to the lowest point with Fang Rui?

Those who understood the fight had mixed feeling about Han Wenqing. The Alliance's symbol of a hot-blooded hero was also going to stoop this low?

After half a circle, they went around another half a circle. The two had now circled around the entire Arena. The pace for a two minute match had finally been broken, but no one would have expected it to be done in such a shameless method with Han Wenqing joining in on it.

After going around an entire circle, Fang Rui had no trouble keeping up the shamelessness. Boundless Sea continued to sway freely left and right. It looked like he would have no issue going for another hundred circles. As for Han Wenqing? If he really did go around a hundred circles with Fang Rui, the image that he had upheld for ten years would be completely destroyed. That was what the people who understood what they were watching thought.

What would happen next? Everyone had mixed feelings. Finally, when the two started their second circle around, the envoy of justice, the referee, couldn't endure it any longer.

"Please display a proper competitive attitude." A system notification appeared.

"Haha," Fang Rui laughed as a reply to the referee. Boundless Sea immediately paused, followed by a punch from Desert Dust.

"Fuck, how despicable!!" Boundless Sea went flying. Fang Rui typed furiously. A yellow card lit up, along with with punches and kicks.

Everyone was wide-eyed.

Fang Rui very rarely had the opportunity to call others despicable. Usually, he was the one being despicable. But this time, honestly speaking, Fang Rui was right...

He unexpectedly seized the moment Fang Rui was responding to the referee's call to attack.

The Glory competitive rules never stated that the two sides needed to immediately stop when the referee made a decision, but the referee decision would definitely influence the fight in some way. During this time, the players would make certain adjustments.

Han Wenqing decisively launched his fiercest attacks, strike Fang Rui while he was responding to the referee with a "Haha"

This was most definitely a dirty move. Fang Rui had even used it at the start of the round. He had sent a message to Lin Jingyan, who wasn't even playing, in an attempt to distract his opponent and use that as an opportunity to attack.

And now, Han Wenqing had used the referee's decision instead.

"Han Wenqing... um..." Pan Lin didn't know what to say.

"What rich experience! He anticipated that the referee would intervene. The moment the referee intervened, there would be a change in tempo, and he used this opportunity to attack," Li Yibo didn't

hesitate, immediately explaining the situation to Pan Lin. He made it sound like the move from Han Wenqing wasn't a dirty sneak attack.

Li Yibo used to be from Tyranny, after all. Han Wenqing had been his captain. This time, Li Yibo clearly showed his bias in defending him.

"Ah... yeah, what rich experience, to anticipate even something like this..." Pan Lin instinctively agreed with Li Yibo.

"In the end, Han Wenqing won the battle of patience. Fang Rui wasn't focused enough, even responding to the referee with a "haha". This superfluous act led to him losing the initiative," Li Yibo was playing favorites today. After praising Han Wenqing, he criticized Fang Rui. His words were correct though. It was just that he intentionally overlooked how dirty such a move was.

"He should... be able to win..." Pan Lin said.

Strikers were exceptional at close combat. It was common for them to kill their opponents in one go after getting close to them. Fang Rui had been able to escape from Han Wenqing previously, and this time? By launching a sneak attack when Fang Rui's attention was elsewhere, he put himself in a very favorable position. Fang Rui, who had been baiting Han Wenqing, had been mentally prepared initially, but when the referee decision came, he indeed got careless. Because of the referee announcement, his previous plan stopped there. He hadn't thought that Han Wenqing would actually take advantage of the referee to launch his offense that he had been waiting to do...

Whether or not a move was dirty had never been something Fang Rui was concerned with. When he cursed at Han Wenqing's despicableness, Fang Rui had been upset with himself. To think he would overlook the possibility of launching a sneak attack when the referee came to a decision. His own dirty playstyle wasn't dirty enough!

Chapter 1525: A Historic Clash

I lost...

Fang Rui shook his head as he walked down from the stage. His greatest strength was his dirtiness, yet he actually lost because of a dirty move from his opponent. Like a swimmer drowning, it was too disgraceful.

"Fuck, Han Wenqing!"

When he returned back to the player bench, he took the towel that his teammates handed over, but he didn't wipe his hands. Instead, he threw the towel hard against the seats as if Han Wenqing was sitting there.

"If you were my opponent, I definitely wouldn't have fallen for that," Fang Rui said honestly to Ye Xiu.

"Nah, you definitely would have," Ye Xiu replied back honestly.

"Definitely wouldn't have."

“Definitely would have.”

Chen Guo felt a bit confused, but after thinking about it for a bit, she understood.

Fang Rui meant that he had been careless because Han Wenqing wasn't the type to play dirty. If he had been against Ye Xiu, he definitely wouldn't have been so careless because Ye Xiu was someone who did play dirty, but Ye Xiu was denying it.

“Pay attention to the match! Stop arguing!” Chen Guo scolded the two.

“Little Tang, good luck! Destroy him!” Fang Rui immediately turned around and called out to Tang Rou. But because of how loud the audience was, his voice could no longer reach her.

Chen Guo felt deeply worried. Ye Xiu had won a lead at the cost of his energy, but not only had they lost their lead, they had fallen behind.

Han Wenqing had beaten two of Happy's players. He lost almost no health against Su Mucheng, and although his fight with Fang Rui had taken a long time, half of the time, they were just running around. The other half of the time he had the initiative. Fang Rui hadn't been able to land any effective combos. He had only been able to trade a few blows while he was defending against Han Wenqing. In the end, Desert Dust won with 59% of his health left, and much of this was because Han Wenqing had often taken blows that he could have avoided in order to keep up his offense.

1v3!

Tyranny's home crowd had already begun shouting for a 1v3. Considering he had beaten two players and still had over half of his health left, it was a very reasonable expectation.

On stage.

Han Wenqing, Tang Rou.

Desert Dust, Soft Mist.

Striker, Battle Mage.

Ten years ago, it was these two classes that began the longest rivalry in the Glory Alliance.

The two weren't teammates, but Han Wenqing was incomparably familiar with this class and was very proficient against them. Facing Battle Mages not named Ye Xiu, Han Wenqing had an astonishingly high win rate. Apart from a few rather extreme situations in the group arena, in a fair 1v1, Han Wenqing had never lost against a Battle Mage.

At the Season 8 All Stars, One Autumn Leaf's successor, Sun Xiang, who was the most skilled Battle Mage of the new generation, had fought against a Han Wenqing past his prime. In the end, Han Wenqing still came out on top.

Now, he was facing Tang Rou, this season's Best Rookie and a Battle Mage.

But no matter the Battle Mage, there was always a shadow of Ye Xiu. Even the proud Sun Xiang had practiced hard to learn Ye Xiu's Dragon Raises Its Head. As for Tang Rou, she had been taught by Ye Xiu, and there was no escaping his legacy.

However, Han Wenqing discovered that not only were there shadows of Ye Xiu in Tang Rou, there were also shadows of himself.

This girl also liked to be fierce and aggressive, wanting to use force to destroy everything, just like him. Attack, attack, and attack, never retreating, always attacking. It didn't matter how much health was lost, as long as the opponent was injured more.

This was their style, and Han Wenqing couldn't be any more familiar with it.

A familiar opponent and familiar self. The shadows of these two rivals had overlapped in her.

How difficult would it be to face this sort of opponent?

Han Wenqing sucked in a deep breath and focused.

The match began.

Dragon Breaks the Ranks!

Without any hesitation, the moment Tang Rou loaded into the map, Soft Mist launched an attack. In this small map, for these two players, the start of the match was like a gunshot signalling the start of a 100m dash.

Who would be faster?

Tang Rou!

Tang Rou's Soft Mist was faster because Han Wenqing chose to run away as soon as the match began.

A decision that he would have never done in the past had once again appeared another fight today.

This time? Because he was familiar with himself and his opponent's playstyle, he chose not to make this a contest of speed. In the past, he would often like to win this way, seeing who was faster, who was fiercer.

But now, Han Wenqing was very clear about how his hand speed and reaction speed had slowed down. He couldn't compare with his past self.

So he used what reaction and hand speed he had to dodge.

Boom...

The dash from Dragon Breaks the Ranks seemed to explode as it swept past Desert Dust. It failed to hit, but just the surging magic energy from it shook Desert Dust. However, this was all within Han Wenqing's expectations. Desert Dust borrowed this force to spin his body, using a Whirlwind Kick to strike Soft Mist's back.

Peng!

The sound of a collision sounded.

The instant Tang Rou realized that the Dragon Breaks the Ranks would miss, she cancelled the skill. Dragon Breaks the Ranks was a high-level skill with little starting or ending lag. It could be considered an

abnormality among high-level skills. Soft Mist turned around. Before her Dragon Breaks the Ranks had completely dissipated, she used a Sky Strike, blocking the Whirlwind Kick from Desert Dust.

The two characters ricocheted back. They readjusted themselves and charged forward again!

When two players of this playstyle met, the result was going to be an intense battle. However, from their first exchange, it could be seen that the two relied on different things. Han Wenqing relied more on his experience and his understanding of Battle Mages and Tang Rou, guessing what his opponent would do next. As for Tang Rou? She relied on her fast reaction and hand speed. It was always Han Wenqing's Desert Dust making the first move and then her reacting, catching up and not losing out.

The two were locked in combat. Their healths plummeted. In this sort of confrontation, how could there not be fierce trades?

It was just that even though Han Wenqing's Desert Dust was losing in terms of health, he had other players behind him. As for Tang Rou's Soft Mist, even though she came in with full health, after this even fight with Han Wenqing, even if she won, she would be facing the next opponent heavily injured.

This was why players like Han Wenqing and Tang Rou weren't suited for the group arena, especially with five players rotating. Their brave advances often led to trades, health for health. If they could completely suppress their opponents, it worked out well. But in today's match, force against force, it was unlikely that either side would be winning without losing much health.

If this continued, Happy would win this round, but their hopes for the group arena as a whole weren't optimistic.

"Sigh... Little Tang..." Even Chen Guo felt that it wouldn't be good if this continued.

"What's wrong? I think she's playing very well!" Ye Xiu said.

"Tyranny still has another player!" Chen Guo reminded Ye Xiu. Did he count wrong?

"If she doesn't play like this, she probably won't even be able to see the next player," Ye Xiu said.

"Ah?"

"Do you think Little Tang has a better chance at winning against Han Wenqing meeting force with force, or by slowly playing it out in a contest of experience, decision-making, and technique?" Ye Xiu said.

Chen Guo was stumped.

Experience, decision-making, technique... a contest with Han Wenqing?

Chen Guo already knew the answer.

"Through a spurt of energy, she still has a chance. But if she slows down the pace, it'll be much more difficult," Ye Xiu said.

The fight was like a whirlwind, decided in less than a minute. Tang Rou, but she sacrificed much of her health in doing so. Soft Mist only had 50% of her health left, exactly half of it. The two traded blow for blow, with neither side able to gain an advantage over the other. In the end, it could only be a draw.

Tyranny's fans were feeling quite regretful about this outcome! They had hoped to see a 1v3 from their captain on this playoffs stage. It would truly be too amazing of a comeback.

However, doing this much was already an outstanding performance. When Han Wenqing walked down from the stage, the applause was thunderous. Apart from that, Tyranny's fans also felt that Tang Rou was quite admirable, daring to face their captain so bravely. Of course, if she had been a different class, it would have been even more admirable. They had a subconscious hate for Battle Mages.

The group arena was at the final match point. Tyranny's fifth player appeared on the big screen.

Song Qiyang, Striker, River Sunset.

A new generation Battle Mage against a new generation Striker. The two would be facing each other on the stage. However, they didn't have the personalities of their seniors.

Although Tang Rou's Battle Mage had absorbed much of Ye Xiu's techniques, her style was a complete opposite of Ye Xiu's.

As for Song Qiyang? He was rumored to be Han Wenqing's successor, but his playstyle was more similar to his vice-captain's. It was the complete opposite of Han Wenqing's.

But no matter how much their styles had changed, the subject of this confrontation would never change.

Victory! Only victory mattered!

As soon as the match began, Soft Mist rushed forward. She didn't use Dragon Breaks the Ranks, instead running to start her offense. With only 50% of her health left, she needed to gain the upper hand. And Tang Rou? She was most proficient at establishing advantages through aggression. And in this simple map, there was no better method.

Song Qiyang was very calm. Although he wasn't as experienced as Han Wenqing, he knew what Tang Rou needed. He calmly avoided her rush.

Then, he didn't immediately counterattack like Han Wenqing did. Such a forceful counterattack would quickly result in the two sticking together. Even though trading blows would be an effective strategy for him since he had the health lead, it wasn't his style, so he didn't do it.

Perhaps this was Tyranny's true style: it wasn't just pressing onward relentlessly, but tenaciously persevering with one's own path.

Chapter 1526: A Match Decided by Force

The pace of the group arena had slowed for a second time after the match between Fang Rui and Han Wenqing.

This definitely wasn't the pace that Tang Rou was hoping for. Under these circumstances, it wasn't hard to figure out who held the advantage.

Song Qiyang.

He was a rookie too. Compared to Tang Rou, he had started playing Glory much earlier. He had also gone through the same training camp as Qin Muyun and had a solid foundation.

He controlled the pace of the fight extremely well, ruining Tang Rou's plans. She wasn't able to break open this 1v1 situation. The pro players watching were discussing the battle. This was a battle between a spear and shield, and right now, the sturdy shield was blocking the sharp spear.

If the sturdy shield couldn't be broken, it would rebound back. As a result, in this confrontation between attack and defense, it would end up as a trade. Song Qiying's strategy was to trade using a dense defense. Compared to Team Blue Rain, who could launch an explosive counterattack at any moment while defending, Song Qiying's defense was more simple and pure.

To think a player like this could come out of Tyranny. Countless people were clicking their tongues in wonder.

Tang Rou obviously wasn't thinking the same. It was depressing. Song Qiying's control over the pace of the match felt oppressive. It wasn't that she wasn't thinking of a solution, but no matter what she did, her opponent would quickly figure it out and then eliminate it.

It looked like Soft Mist was attacking, while River Sunset was defending, but for Tang Rou, it didn't feel like she was attacking. She felt like she was hitting against a wall. She would hit it again and again, and every time, she would bounce back. So far, she had lost 30% of her health. As for her opponent? He had only lost 15% of his health. It was an exact two to one trade as if everything was precisely calculated.

If this continued, when her opponent lost 10% more health, wouldn't it be the end for her?

Tang Rou was unwilling to lose. Being unable to win would always be something she would be unhappy about.

Soft Mist's attacks suddenly stopped, and she retreated several steps back.

"Oh..." Many people sighed emotionally.

"She should have stopped a long time ago. Being reckless isn't a solution," Pan Lin also said.

"It looked as if she had the initiative, but in reality, she was being led around the nose by Song Qiying. She should have taken a pause and looked carefully for an opening," Li Yibo said. He had gone back to his fair and unbiased commentary, earnestly giving advice to Tang Rou.

"But what if she isn't able to find any openings?" Pan Lin asked.

"Then... it's impossible to win," Li Yibo said.

Yes, if you couldn't find any openings and you couldn't beat the opponent, then you would be the one who lost. It was very simple reasoning.

What will Tang Rou do?

She had always given them an impression of having a fierce offense, but in front of this unbreakable wall, how would she make adjustments?

Soft Mist had stopped attacking for five seconds already. Song Qiying's River Sunset didn't hurry to counterattack, but he was also pressing forward step by step. He obviously wasn't someone who only knew how to defend and didn't know how to attack. It was just that he attacked just as carefully as he defended.

"Uh, is Tang Rou planning on giving the initiative to Song Qiying and then searching for an opening in his offense?" Li Yibo had a few ideas, "That is a decent solution, considering that she isn't able to get past her opponent's defense. But... Song Qiying's cautious style will make it hard for Tang Rou to find an opening. What's more..."

Before Li Yibo could finish speaking, a figure rushed forward.

Soft Mist.

Dragon Breaks the Ranks!

After a five to six second pause, Tang Rou started attacking again. Giving the initiative to Song Qiying? The idea was proven wrong before Li Yibo could even finish up his commentary.

The distance was very close, and Dragon Breaks the Ranks wasn't an easy-to-dodge attack. However, Song Qiying's caution was such that he would always be ready for any attack.

Dragon Breaks the Ranks?

The moment Soft Mist raised her spear, River Sunset had already begun rolling to the side.

Magic energy and wind collided, creating a loud boom. Dragon Breaks the Ranks rushed forward, but River Sunset was already moving away. However, to his surprise, Soft Mist's Dancing Fire Flowing Flames was turned slightly towards where River Sunset would dodge to.

Those who weren't perceptive enough wouldn't be able to notice this small detail.

Song Qiying had noticed it though. He was the same as Zhang Xinjie, someone who carefully observed the opponent and paid attention to the details. He had even determined correctly that this slight turn had happened after River Sunset had started dodging.

In other words, Tang Rou hadn't predicted where he would move to, she had reacted to his movements.

It had only been a slight shift to the side, but at this close of a distance and the speed of Dragon Breaks the Ranks, being able to make this adjustment showed how astonishing her reaction speed and hand speed was.

Dragon Breaks the Ranks wasn't a single target attack. The collision between magic and wind dealt AoE damage.

The area that the attack covered deviated slightly from where it was before, but luckily for Song Qiying, he was still able to dodge it.

Song Qiying could see it clearly. Even with this adjustment, the Dragon Breaks the Ranks wouldn't be able to hit him. If Soft Mist had been a bit further, if the adjustment had been slightly bigger, the outcome might have been different.

Song Qiying was still thinking about this, when suddenly saw a flash of red light before him.

How!

He was shocked. He instinctively dodged, evading this sudden attack.

It missed and then... there was nothing afterwards.

That sudden attack wasn't from Dragon Breaks the Ranks. If it had been, he wouldn't have been able to dodge the AoE. Song Qiying saw Soft Mist retract her red spear. It looked like she wasn't done with her assault.

River Sunset and Soft Mist had been about 4.5 steps away previously.

With only a distance of 4.5 steps, she was able to use Dragon Breaks the Ranks, adjust it, cancel it, and then follow up with another attack to make up for what her Dragon Breaks the Ranks couldn't cover.

Even though it ultimately didn't work, Song Qiying felt his body go cold. What was more terrifying was that it wasn't over yet. The red light quickly returned. Shua shua, two thrusts in quick succession, Double Stab!

River Sunset didn't dodge because Song Qiying knew that if he only dodged, he would lose control over the tempo. He would lose control over the fight.

The pause from Tang Rou was to give Song Qiying a chance to attack? The people who thought that were gravely mistaken. The pause looked to be a short mid-fight break. What came after was an even fiercer and more explosive assault. When she attacked, she didn't make any probes, nor did she hold back. She went all out with her attacks. More importantly, whenever Song Qiying made any changes, she would immediately react to it. She was accelerating the tempo to her maximum speed, biting tightly onto her opponent.

It was dangerous for the enemy and for herself. It was obviously very difficult to maintain such a tempo. It would be easier for her to make a mistake, and for Tang Rou, a single mistake could mean the end for her.

Pu pu!

Two streaks of blood from River Sunset flew into the air. Song Qiying didn't dodge the skill, tanking the damage. River Sunset stepped forward and let out a punch. He needed to respond with a few attacks so he could keep the tempo of the fight under his control.

He punched, but he missed. Soft Mist looked as if she didn't even dodge. However, the punch had missed by just a hair.

When Han Wenqing saw this scene, he couldn't help but feel emotional. The spear was long, while the fist was short. A stab was the spear attack with the longest reach. If the Striker wanted to attack after taking the hit, he would need to get close to her first. He had encountered this challenge repeatedly when he had fought with Ye Xiu in the past. Ye Xiu would always take advantage of these sort of situations.

The punch missed, but Soft Mist's counterattack arrived. Song Qiying was able to find an opening to use Reinforced Iron Bones and had River Sunset take the hit again to continue his attacks!

He needed to control the tempo, and he could no longer rely on just defense to do so. Song Qiying focused on his offense.

But Tang Rou didn't retreat. She also knew where the key to her victory lay in. She couldn't stop. If she stopped, she would lose without a doubt.

The pace of the fight soared, quickly following the style of today's group arena again. Fist and spear clashed, making everyone think of the former rivalry between Han Wenqing and Ye Xiu. What made many Tyranny fans annoyed was that the Battle Mage played the way they liked. Fortunately, Song Qiying wasn't bad either. Facing this fierce opponent, he didn't cower.

Who won today's group arena would be decided through a contest of force.

Who would win?

For a moment, no one could tell. Soft Mist had less health, but she held the advantage. River Sunset's health was dropping faster. And at this tempo, it was very easy for a mistake to happen. It was possible for a last second comeback.

Everyone quieted down, focusing on the match. Even Pan Lin and Li Yibo had stopped talking. With the speed they were going, how were they supposed to commentate? They might as well wait for the outcome and then analyzing it from there!

Bang!

In the end, with one final collision, the winner was decided.

Song Qiying, River Sunset. In the end, he stood until the end. Tyranny had won the group arena.

Although Tang Rou had lost, she had used 20% of her health to take down 60% of River Sunset's health. Her performance had been astonishing.

The group arena ended. The two players walked out from their booths amidst thunderous applause. The applause was for Song Qiying's win as well as Tang Rou's performance. Even though Tang Rou wasn't well liked by the public and used Tyranny's most hated class, the Battle Mage, Tyranny fans loved the way she played!

Since they liked it, they happily applauded. This was just how Tyranny's fans were.

Chapter 1527: Sunset Dunes

"You should have done that earlier!" Ye Xiu told Tang Rou as she came down from the stage and received applause from her teammates.

"Okay, next time," Tang Rou replied with a smile. She knew that Ye Xiu's words were probably a form of encouragement for her outstanding performance in the latter half of the fight.

The current Tang Rou was no longer the noob who challenged Ye Xiu and got crushed dozens of times. She could see the difference in skill between two players now and wouldn't be so foolishly confident like before. She knew what sort of tempo she played best at. The higher she raised the tempo, the more likely it was for her to make a mistake. It was similar to how in basketball, the farther away you are from the hoop, the less likely it is to make it in. Although half-court three point shots sometimes made it in, who would count on those to be their main method of attack?

Tang Rou's final burst was like a half-court three point shot. If she hadn't been forced to do so, why would she have made such a choice?

Ye Xiu smiled as well. He was very pleased with Tang Rou's spirit.

"In the playoffs, when it's time to go all out, don't hesitate," Ye Xiu added.

"Of course," Tang Rou said.

"Pay attention to the timing," Ye Xiu said.

"Okay..." Tang Rou nodded her head pensively. In that previous fight, her Soft Mist had used 20% of her health to wipe out 60% of her opponent's health after her explosive burst. What if she had done it earlier? If she had started with that burst and kept it going until the very end, Happy might have won.

It looks like I'm still not fast enough at making these types of decisions! Tang Rou sighed.

"Then, let's take back the point we lost in the group arena in the team competition!" Ye Xiu said to the team.

Although Happy had lost a point in the group arena, since they had won the previous game, they didn't feel too nervous about the loss. The entire team was still in high spirits.

On Tyranny's side, despite winning the group arena, the atmosphere wasn't as lively as Happy's. Their team was huddled together, anxiously preparing for the following team competition. As the home team, their plans could be more targeted.

The mid-match break quickly passed, and the referee called for the two sides to come onto the stage. The lineup for the two teams were displayed onto the screen. On Happy's side, there was a player not on the main roster, who was being followed closely, Luo Ji. In the previous game, Luo Ji had demolished the map, leading to Tyranny's loss. He had been proclaimed as someone who had exceptional talent in this area. Would he continue playing in today's match?

The names lit up on the screen one at a time.

Happy – Ye Xiu. Tyranny – Han Wenqing.

Happy – Su Mucheng. Tyranny – Zhang Jiale.

Happy – Fang Rui. Tyranny – Bai Yanfei.

Happy – Tang Rou. Tyranny – Qin MUYUN.

Happy – An Wenyi. Tyranny – Zhang Xinjie.

Happy – Bao Rongxing. Tyranny – Lin Jingyan.

No Luo Ji.

A commotion began going among the crowd. When they saw that Luo Ji wasn't being put in, they felt like the claim that Luo Ji could destroy the map whenever he pleased turned out to be a bluff. Happy didn't dare choose Luo Ji in their away game.

On the broadcast, Pan Lin and Li Yibo didn't immediately start analyzing the two team's lineups. They first discussed why Luo Ji wasn't put in, before commenting on the differences between their lineups compared to the previous game.

On Happy's side, Ye Xiu, Su Mucheng, Fang Rui, and An Wenyi had the most stable positions in the team competition. This time, Tang Rou was put in as a starter. Steamed Bun replaced Luo Ji, but he was designated as Happy's sixth player.

Tyranny's lineup was the same as before. The only difference was that their Elementalist, Bai Yanfei, had swapped positions with Lin Jingyan. Bai Yanfei would be in the starting lineup, while Lin Jingyan would be their sixth player.

"Both sides have made slight adjustments to their lineup! But the home team usually has a clear strategy in mind. Tyranny specifically placed Bai Yanfei in a starting position. Coach Li, do you think there's a reason for this?" Pan Lin asked.

"Bai Yanfei, Zhang Jiale, Qin Muyun. Tyranny has three long-ranged classes in their starting lineup. Bai Yanfei's Elementalist is nicknamed the "Gun Turret" and is proficient at AoE spells. By coordinating with Zhang Jiale's Dazzling Hundred Blossoms, the two can cover an extremely large area. My guess is that Tyranny has chosen a relatively large map to play in."

"Oh oh, we'll see. The players have entered their booths. The match is about to begin," Pan Lin then confirmed that these ten players would be starting in the team competition.

The map began loading. The answer to the question that everyone had been wondering about was on verge of appearing.

"Ah, it's Sunset Dunes!" Pan Lin called out. He immediately followed up with praise for Li Yibo: "Coach Li, you guessed right. As you said, Tyranny has chosen a large map. As expected of someone who came from Tyranny!"

"Hahaha," Li Yibo laughed. After laughing, he felt like something wasn't quite right. "As expected of someone who came from Tyranny?" Wasn't that implying that he couldn't make accurate predictions for teams that weren't Tyranny? Li Yibo's confidence had been wavering recently. He couldn't help but overthink it. Pan Lin hadn't meant to imply that and wasn't aware of the issue. He continued by introducing the map to everyone.

Sunset Dunes was a desert under the light of the setting sun. The main features of this map were the sand dunes and the oasis at the center of the map. The map was indeed quite large.

“Happy’s decision not to field Luo Ji was the correct decision,” Pan Lin said half-jokingly. Who would have thought that as soon as the match started, Ye Xiu would type into the chat: “Just as I thought! Not putting in Luo Ji today was so smart of me.”

There were no buildings in this map. The sand dunes were the only parts of the map that weren’t flat. The oasis at the center was really just a small puddle. The lonely tree near the oasis and the cacti scattered throughout the desert were the only objects in this map.

Luo Ji’s “Demolition Style” would be useless here.

The two teams spawned at the north and south ends of the map. Tyranny was more proactive, immediately pushing forward as soon as they spawned. As for Happy, they were a bit slower than Tyranny, but they quickly set out as well.

The two teams didn’t take a roundabout route, heading straight for the center. Tyranny didn’t stop after moving past a sand dune. As for Happy, they paused slightly. The five characters were looking left and right, observing their surroundings.

The sand dunes weren’t mountains and weren’t that tall. Just standing on the slope gave them a fairly good view. Not only could they see all around them, they could see several hazy figures in the distance to the north.

“There doesn’t seem too many good places to set up ambushes in this map...” Happy’s team members began discussing their next moves. Fang Rui started with his opinion.

“There are some good spots for me to attack from,” Su Mucheng remarked.

“The sand has a certain level of impact on our movements,” An Wenyi’s gaze was fixed at his feet. Their feet sunk into the sand, leaving behind deep footprints.

“They’re rushing straight for us,” Tang Rou mainly observed their opponent’s movements.

“Let’s go somewhere high enough where we can see them more clearly before making any further plans!” Ye Xiu said, giving them an opening of sorts in this team competition. As a result, Happy didn’t go down from this sand dune. Ye Xiu led the way as they climbed it. After Tyranny’s five players ran across the sand dune, they could be seen more clearly. Tyranny also noticed Happy. They turned and rushed towards them.

“It looks like they want to attack us directly,” Fang Rui said.

Happy didn’t like direct fights. As a new team, they were slightly inferior to Tyranny’s old team in a direct fight in many aspects. What’s more, the terrain was special. An Wenyi noted that the sand would affect their movements. It wasn’t just movement speed; their jumps, rolls, and other movements that required leverage would be affected. It would affect their attacks as well. Tyranny chose this as their map and was used to these effects. But Happy? Ye Xiu would be better. He had played in countless matches and would adapt quickly to this sort of terrain. Su Mucheng and Fang Rui had experience as well. However, Tang Rou, An Wenyi, and Steamed Bun were rookies. Their playing would definitely be impacted to a greater degree.

“Does the wind do anything?” Ye Xiu suddenly asked.

“It does, but the direction of the wind is constantly changing and it isn’t easy to grasp,” Fang Rui replied. His Qi Master’s qi attacks would be affected if the speed of the wind was high enough.

Happy examined their surroundings carefully. Tyranny was obviously familiar with these characteristics, and they clearly wanted to use this map to restrict Happy.

The sunshine... couldn’t be used either.

Ye Xiu took a look at the sun. The setting sun was just about to go under the horizon. The sun rays were dim enough for him to look at the sun directly. There wasn’t much of a difference between having their backs against the sun or facing the sun.

“You guys stand here,” Ye Xiu called out to the others. He used his umbrella to point to a spot.

The four gathered there.

“Stand in a line,” Ye Xiu said.

“Are we taking a group photo? I don’t think that’s a good idea. It’s the playoffs, let’s be more serious,” Fang Rui said as his Boundless Sea posed for the camera.

“Stand up straight,” Ye Xiu said, while his Lord Grim retreated.

Happy’s four players lined up. As for Ye Xiu’s Lord Grim, after moving away a certain distance, he turned back to look at them.

The opening period was a bit dull since the fighting hadn’t started yet. It was just the commentators guessing what the two team’s intentions were.

Tyranny was pushing forward. Their intentions were rather obvious.

As for Happy? They were just moving on top of a sand dune, but because the team was discussing the map in the chat, it wasn’t too boring. Ye Xiu suddenly ordered everyone to do this and that, so the viewers were obviously curious about what he was planning. The broadcast nimbly cut to Lord Grim’s perspective.

Under the backdrop of the setting sun, Happy’s four characters were standing directly in the center of the sun. It looked rather imposing.

Were they... really taking a group photo? Everyone was puzzled.

Chapter 1528: Flowing Sand Dunes

“What?” Not just the spectators, but Happy’s teammates were having trouble understanding what Ye Xiu was doing. Fang Rui had his Boundless Sea posing for a camera, but he obviously didn’t actually think that Ye Xiu was lining them up for a picture.

“If you’re standing in the sunlight, it’s hard to differentiate between you guys at a glance,” Ye Xiu said.

The others on Happy immediately understood what he was getting at. If Ye Xiu couldn’t differentiate between them, then their opponents wouldn’t be able to either. This meant that it would be hard for

Tyranny to determine what attacks they were planning on using. It was a characteristic of the map that could be taken advantage of.

The viewers could see Happy's chat, so they quickly caught on as well. Everyone loved to see the players communicate their goals in the chat. Teams with too much synergy wouldn't speak much, often leaving the viewers puzzled.

"Let me see," Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain walked over to Lord Grim's spot and turned to look at the setting sun. Amidst the warm red sunlight, only the silhouettes of the characters could be seen. Under these circumstances, it was indeed very difficult to tell what attack or move was being used.

"Yes yes yes..." Fang Rui's Boundless Sea walked over to take a look and expressed his approval.

"Maybe we can set something up over here to take advantage of it?" Fang Rui suggested as he watched Tyranny come closer and closer.

"I doubt Tyranny would overlook this possibility. We just need to be on guard against them taking advantage of it. Apart from that, if a chance arrives, we can try taking advantage of it too," Ye Xiu said.

The countless viewers looking at Happy's chat felt somewhat ashamed. They had thought that Happy could set something up using this discovery, but when they saw Ye Xiu's words, they realized that they had looked down on Tyranny too much. To think they would feel as if Tyranny would overlook an important detail in the map that they had chosen themselves.

"How are we going to fight them?" Fang Rui asked. They had made several insights into the map, but in the end, they hadn't come up with a plan.

Ye Xiu finally issued out orders telling them where to stand.

No one questioned him. The rest of Happy immediately went into position according to Ye Xiu's instructions. Tyranny was about to reach the bottom of their sand dune, but when they saw Happy's arrangements, they immediately changed directions.

Fang Rui looked behind him and saw the setting sun. From Tyranny's actions, it looked like Tyranny knew about the effects of the sun on the map. Ye Xiu's arrangements had been to take advantage of the sunlight, but Tyranny noticed it and immediately made adjustments. Tyranny no longer faced the sun, instead choosing to rush in from the side.

"Let's go!" Ye Xiu led the team forward. Tyranny stopped. Happy stopped. This time, the others on Happy didn't need Ye Xiu to instruct them. They understood what he wanted to do and carried it out themselves. Ye Xiu wanted to take advantage of the sun behind them, using it to stop Tyranny from approaching.

This time, Tyranny didn't give chase. They simply waited at the bottom of the sand dune. There was no communication in the chat, so the viewers didn't know what they were thinking.

"Coach Li?" Pan Lin was starting to make Li Yibo feel sick.

Li Yibo felt his head hurt. He had a certain understanding of Tyranny, but right now, he couldn't see through their thoughts. Under Zhang Xinjie's lead, Tyranny should be taking the more reliable approach. In this case, the reliable approach was to circle around a bit farther. Eventually, they would be able to

escape from the influence of the sun. Instead, Tyranny had stopped. What were they thinking? There was nothing in their chat either. It seemed like everyone already knew what to do.

"They're probably waiting for the right opportunity," In the end, Li Yibo had to say something. He had to resort to using a word like "probably" implying that he wasn't sure.

"What will this opportunity be? Let's wait and see," Pan Lin spoke tactfully. When he heard Li Yibo's uncertainty, he immediately knew that he shouldn't continue pursuing this topic.

Tyranny stood still at the bottom of the dune. Happy stood still at the top of the dune. Tyranny wasn't communicating, but Happy was.

"Let's see what they're planning," Ye Xiu said calmly.

"Should I send out a probing attack?" Su Mucheng asked.

"Sure," Ye Xiu agreed.

In terms of distance, Tyranny was within Dancing Rain's range. But because Dancing Rain held the high point, she had to take in account the height difference. She could reach them if she calculated the angle well enough, but this sort of max-ranged attack wasn't any sort of threat to them.

Even so, as soon as Dancing Rain raised her cannon, Tyranny collectively retreated back a few steps.

"I can't hit them..." Su Mucheng felt that it was a pity. Dancing Rain lowered her cannon.

"How careful," Ye Xiu sighed. Zhang Xinjie wasn't even willing to give them the slightest of opportunities.

Ye Xiu suddenly noticed that his vision had become somewhat hazy. Just when he was wondering what it could be, there was finally some signs of movement.

The movement was the wind, blowing from the north to the south. The sand seemed to be like a wave as the wind swept it up, slowly gathering beneath the sand dune.

Tyranny wanted to use the wind to start the fight!

Although Ye Xiu didn't have a deep understanding of the map, he had much experience! He had guessed what sort of medicine Tyranny was brewing.

Bang bang bang bang, the sound of gunfire could be heard. Zhang Jiale and Qin Muyun, the two Gunners, open fired at the sand. The sand lifted up from their attacks was swept up by the wind, adding to the growing whirlwind of sand.

How big could it get? Big enough to completely cover an entire team?

Ye Xiu wasn't sure, but more and more sand was building up, and the whirlwind was getting denser and denser. More importantly, the wind was picking up as well. This was Tyranny's biggest assurance for their plan.

It's coming!

The sand that had gathered reduced the visibility to only a few steps distance, which was more than enough to cover up Tyranny's movements. Happy could no longer see Tyranny as the whirlwind of sand quickly approached them...

That was what Happy thought at least. However, the viewers could see that Tyranny wasn't in a hurry. They weren't in a hurry to use this sandstorm to approach Happy. Although their movements were already covered, they controlled their pace as if they were waiting for something.

What are they waiting for?

No one knew. The viewers only knew that Happy had started moving. The sandstorm passed over the sand dune, swallowing them up.

Right when Lord Grim stepped to the side, he immediately realized that something wasn't right.

"Be careful beneath you" He quickly warned, but the others on Happy had taken the step already and lost their balance.

The sand was moving down from the sand dune. The ground beneath them wasn't stable. The movement of the sand wasn't slow either, and it couldn't be seen from the surface.

To think they hid such a move!

Ye Xiu knew that they wouldn't be able to escape from Tyranny. Sand filled the skies and silently flowed beneath them. The entire sand dune seemed to be collapsing.

Everyone on Happy was struggling to keep their balance. This wasn't a situation that could be kept under control through normal movements.

Rotor Wings!

Ye Xiu realized it the earliest and reacted the fastest. Lord Grim flew into the air, dispelling the effects of the sand.

Boom boom boom!

The sound of cannonfire rang. Su Mucheng used Aerial Cannon, and Dancing Rain seemed to hop across the sand like a dragonfly touching water. Not far from her, Little Cold Hands floated into the air, using Angel Wings to rise.

Fang Rui and Tang Rou used skills to deal with the sand. However, since they didn't have any way to directly avoid it, they could only forcefully blow away the sand around them to disrupt the flow of sand and give them an opportunity to adjust themselves.

Happy's five players each used their own methods to resist the sand and looked to be doing it skillfully. However, Ye Xiu knew that this wouldn't last long. For example, the skills that Lord Grim and Little Cold Hands used had a time duration. They couldn't keep using it forever, and the movement of the sand couldn't be seen from the surface. They knew didn't know where to land. What's worse, it was about time for Tyranny to start their attacks.

Sure enough, Ye Xiu's judgement was correct. Gunfire! Tyranny's two gunners had started firing at them. Even if Ye Xiu had predicted it and warned everyone to be careful, what could they do?

Bang bang bang bang...

The wings on An Wenyi's Little Cold Hands was instantly riddled with holes. When he fell, he was immediately swept up by the sand, and An Wenyi didn't have any other methods to escape from it.

He was their healer though, and he had to be saved. Ye Xiu's Lord Grim immediately headed towards him. Tyranny wasn't in a hurry to strike Little Cold Hands, firing towards Lord Grim instead.

Ye Xiu cancelled Rotor Wings in midair and plummeted down.

He had determined the direction of the bullets and figured out Tyranny's location. Perhaps the ground over there was more stable.

"Follow me!" Ye Xiu didn't forget to call out to everyone. Right now, even if he didn't want clash with them, he had no choice but to.

Falling Light Blade!

Lord Grim used a skill in midair, following the slope of the sand dune. With this, he dropped down very far and looked to be having an easy time. But when he saw Tyranny, he could only grumble bitterly. They had been waiting for him!

Soaring Tiger!

Han Wenqing wasn't polite. He locked onto the Falling Light Blade. Desert Dust jumped towards him and kicked.

But as soon as Ye Xiu saw Tyranny waiting for him, he knew the situation wasn't good. How could he just keep going? He cancelled Falling Light Blade, but intentionally let himself continue falling towards them to keep Tyranny's attention onto him. When he saw Desert Dust approach, he immediately had Lord Grim finish the hand seals.

The shadow clone left behind poofed into smoke when Desert Dust struck. Ye Xiu was quite bold. Lord Grim had teleported directly into the center of Tyranny's formation.

Desert Dust wasn't there though. There were only long-ranged attackers there.

Chapter 1529: Being Familiar Only Makes It More Troublesome

Shining Cut! Charge! Colliding Stab!

Lord Grim used three movement skills back to back, attacking the three characters in a triangular formation.

All three players dodged. Not a single hit landed on any of them, but his attacks carved out a triangle deep into the sand.

Son of a bitch!

Tyranny felt astonished seeing the grooves in the sand. They hadn't expected Ye Xiu to be able to find the key point to this map.

The sand dune was crumbling, and the sand was sliding downwards. However, Tyranny was also situated on the sand dune, yet their area was safe.

Why? How did he do it?

Ye Xiu didn't know the details, but he clearly remembered that Tyranny's two Gunners had started their assault with attacks towards the sand. In the beginning, he thought that their aim had been to lift the sand up to cover their movements, but now that he looked at it again, their attacks hadn't been just to lift the sand up but to start the crumbling of the sand dune as well.

They used their attacks to create a hole in the surface of the sand to initiate the sinking of the sand. That was the idea that Ye Xiu was able to come up with at the moment, which was why he carved out that triangle.

In the blink of an eye, the triangle was erased by the sand. Ye Xiu could feel the movement of the sand underneath Lord Grim's feet and confirmed his theory.

With the movement of the sand beginning to spread, Tyranny's small safe harbor would soon be wiped away.

Tyranny knew that they couldn't stay here much longer and began to retreat. However, at this moment, Bai Yanfei was startled by a realization.

His retreat path had been blocked by Lord Grim. In such a short amount of time, how many moves ahead had he planned? Cancelling Falling Light Blade to dodge Desert Dust's attack, separating the three long-ranged Tyranny players while simultaneously destroying their safe zone, and also positioning himself such that he blocked off Bai Yanfei's Rota.

Fortunately, Bai Yanfei wasn't the only one who made the realization. Tyranny's Zhang Xinjie, the strategist who refused to overlook even the smallest of details, caught on to Ye Xiu's intentions.

Pray, Sacred Fire!

Bai Yanfei immediately understood, and Rota began to move.

Lord Grim moved forward to block him, when a burst of white flame leapt in front of his path.

Ye Xiu immediately had Lord Grim stop, but in this short instant, Rota was able to Teleport past Lord Grim.

Bang bang bang bang.

The ones who were able to escape first, Zhang Jiale and Qin Muyun, counterattacked, retreating while firing. However, the biggest threat came from behind.

Han Wenqing's Desert Dust rushed straight for Lord Grim once again. Because he was moving with the sand, his speed was faster than before. As expected, since Tyranny had chosen this map, Tyranny seemed to be far more comfortable with the sand than Happy.

Boom boom boom!

But this time, before Desert Dust could reach Lord Grim, he heard an explosion. The sand in front of him had been blasted into the air, covering the sky. Even though it wouldn't be able to stop him, it blocked his vision to a certain extent. No matter how brave Han Wenqing was, he didn't dare get close to someone as crafty as Ye Xiu while blind.

Change directions!

Han Wenqing didn't even try to approach the wave of sand to prevent Ye Xiu for using any underhanded tricks. When he turned around, he looked behind him and saw Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain sliding down from the sand dune. The cover from the sandstorm didn't differentiate between friend or foe. Once Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain entered the sandstorm, Tyranny had lost her location as well. When she suddenly showed up in Han Wenqing's view, she was already half way down from the sand dune.

No, it wasn't just Su Mucheng.

Boundless Sea and Soft Mist. Fang Rui and Tang Rou were there as well.

Dragon Breaks the Ranks! Soft Mist raised her spear and charged forward. The sand swirled around the dragon as it flew towards Desert Dust. Not only had the sand not provided any resistance to the surging momentum of Dragon Breaks the Ranks, it had strengthened it.

On one end was Ye Xiu, who was hiding who knew what tricks behind the cover of the sand. On the other end was the powerful Dragon Breaks the Ranks. The two threats formed a pincer attack. Lord Grim's position wasn't just to seal off Rota's retreat path. More importantly, he maintained a constant threat to Desert Dust. While the rest of Tyranny's attention was on rescuing Bai Yanfei, Su Mucheng and Ye Xiu coordinated together to trap Han Wenqing.

Ye Xiu had simply picked a spot, yet it hid so many hidden motives. This was what it meant to be a top player!

But Han Wenqing was also a top player.

If there was no opening, then he simply had to make one. This sort of brute force method was his specialty.

Reinforced Iron Bones!

He moved while activating Reinforced Iron Bones. Desert Dust moved past the wall of sand, dodging Soft Mist's Dragon Breaks the Ranks. But what did Lord Grim have in store for him?

Two hands stretched into the sand. In these hands was a dismantled Myriad Manifestations Umbrella, the Tonfa form.

Grab!

Han Wenqing was able to determine what it was immediately.

As expected, Ye Xiu had expected him to brute force his way out. He had also predicted correctly that he would use Reinforced Iron Bones to give himself Super Armor.

Grab skills ignored Super Armor.

Ye Xiu had predicted what Han Wenqing would do, but Han Wenqing had also predicted what Ye Xiu would do.

Stomach Kick!

Desert Dust kicked so fast that it was all just a blur to the audience. Then, they heard a “pa”. The Stomach Kick was fast enough to produce a sonic boom.

He had attacked later, but it was fast enough to arrive first.

However, it didn’t hit!

To be able to dodge such a fast kick, Ye Xiu must have predicted it.

Han Wenqing didn’t delay. The instant his Stomach Kick retracted, he kicked again.

Whirlwind Kick!

As he spun, he kicked up a bunch of sand.

His body had turned, but his head was still locked in the same direction. Han Wenqing was adjusting his line of sight as he used the move.

The Whirlwind Kick could be dodged, but the sand couldn’t be.

Crash...

Sand rained down smashing into Lord Grim, allowing Han Wenqing to see Lord Grim’s outline.

The Whirlwind Kick fell, and then another kick chased after that outline. The purpose of the Whirlwind Kick hadn’t been to attack the opponent, but to sweep up the sand.

Pa!

So many exchanges had happened in an instant. The kick should hit, but Han Wenqing immediately noticed that his kick had struck Lord Grim’s Myriad Manifestations Umbrella shield.

Nothing could be done. Ye Xiu was too familiar with him. Ye Xiu knew that he would use the kicked-up sand to attack. The attack had been too quick for him to dodge, but using his umbrella shield to block it wasn’t a problem.

Jump off the umbrella and then Eagle Stamp.

Han Wenqing instinctively wanted to use this move, but a thought suddenly flashed into his mind.

Wasn’t Ye Xiu able to predict what he would do because of his instinctive habits? Facing an opponent who knew him this well, it was only by doing something unexpected would he be able to give him a surprise.

But with this slight hesitation, Han Wenqing immediately noticed that the moment Desert Dust missed, Lord Grim’s Myriad Manifestations Umbrella had retracted.

A cold light flashed as a sword swung towards him.

It was only then did Han Wenqing realize that his Desert Dust was in a situation no different from being knocked up into the air.

It had only been an instant, yet in this instant, Han Wenqing had lost the initiative. He didn't panic though. His Desert Dust straightened up in the air, Thousand Ton Drop!

His Reinforced Iron Bones was still active. With Thousand Ton Drop, no matter how powerful the attack, it wouldn't be able to make his Desert Dust budge. Han Wenqing was prepared to take the sword slash. But when he saw the sword light spinning, Han Wenqing suddenly realized that something wasn't right.

It didn't deal much damage, but wherever the sword light passed, space itself seemed to warp, giving it a different type of strength. Because of the yellow sand, it wasn't until it got close that Han Wenqing was able to recognize it. But it was already too late to react.

Spellblade skill, Wave Wheel Slasher!

Sword light cut apart the void. The spell waves formed a seal, locking the target in place. For Swordsman classes, whether or not you were a Spellblade, it was a must-learn skill to deal with Super Armor.

Facing a Swordsman, Han Wenqing would have been 100% on guard against it.

But because he was facing Ye Xiu, an unspecialized, in such a fast-paced fight, Han Wenqing had overlooked this possibility.

The difficulties of the unspecialized lay here. No matter how familiar he was with Ye Xiu, he wasn't familiar with this class because of its uniqueness. The more experienced the player, the more the player relied on what possible options their opponent's class had in a given situation. However, these sort of intuition didn't work facing an unspecialized.

And Han Wenqing was an old rival of Ye Xiu and understood him incomparably well. However, he would instinctively think of him as a Battle Mage. He had to force himself to unlearn his habits against him because he wasn't facing One Autumn Leaf. After that, he had to comb through what possible options an unspecialized had. But because each form of the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella could have a bonus skill added to it, in theory, it meant that apart from class advance skills, Ye Xiu had access to any skill in Glory. Han Wenqing wasn't a robot. No matter how big-brained he was, how could he sort through so many options in an instant?

The unspecialized was indecipherable.

You had no experience against the class. Your intuition would fail you. The transformations that Lord Grim's weapon had access to broke through the limits of what a player could think up. And because of the extremely fast-paced combat, there was simply no way to predict what skills an unspecialized might use. Even if he understood Ye Xiu's style and his habits, he couldn't pick out what Ye Xiu would do next. There were simply too many options to consider.

This familiarity became a burden. His familiarity made him instinctively react a certain way, which gave out an opening.

Han Wenqing had been trying hard to remind himself that he was no longer facing a Battle Mage.

But just telling himself that couldn't stop the battle habits and intuition he had built up through eight years of rivalry. In a crisis, his instincts had been polished through many years of experience, and that made his skills incomprehensible.

"How difficult!" His evaluation from ten years before never felt closer today.

Chapter 1530: Response, Negligence

Dancing Rain, Boundless Sea, and Soft Mist rushed forward together. Desert Dust, who was trapped by Wave Wheel Slasher, looked to be in a dire situation. However, no one forgot that this was a team competition. The broadcast no longer focused on Desert Dust and switched over to the others on Tyranny.

Dazzling Hundred Blossoms, Negative Nine Degrees, and Rota. Sure enough, the three long-ranged attackers had already set out. They moved like the wind, focusing their long-ranged attacks on Happy's healer, Little Cold Hands, who was standing far away at the back; he hadn't rushed over to attack Han Wenqing like the others on Happy.

Sacrifice Han Wenqing for a trade?

Tyranny's choice was truly brave, decisively abandoning their captain and their core player. As for Little Cold Hands? When he had been using Angel Wings, he had already been the main target for Tyranny's long-ranged attackers. Later, the sudden death charge directly into their formation from Ye Xiu's Lord Grim had destroyed their little safe zone, leading to a slight strategic shift from Tyranny.

As soon as they regained their footing, they continued to bite at Little Cold Hands. It was as if they didn't even see Desert Dust's predicament.

What to do?

Tyranny had been decisive. Now, it was Happy's turn to be troubled. With this trade, even though Happy would be able to eliminate Tyranny's captain, it would be at the sacrifice of their healer. In a one to one trade, the healer had to be prioritized. In the team competition, this was practically an established rule.

Understanding this rule, Su Mucheng had Dancing Rain shift targets.

Boom boom boom.

Her explosions lifted a cloud of sand into the air, reducing the visibility that Tyranny's long-ranged attackers would have. But after those artillery shells exploded, it also led to a sudden change in the flow of the sand. Little Cold Hands, who had been standing there, felt the ground beneath him slip, and he fell onto his butt...

The Launcher's heavy firepower was far more destructive than the likes of a Sharpshooter or Spitfire. On the other hand, Elementalists dealt magic damage. Their destructive abilities couldn't compare to physical attacks.

Dancing Rain had created a wall of sand, obstructing the long-ranged attacks from Tyranny, just like she had intended. However, by blowing up a hole in the sand dune, the flow of sand suddenly accelerated.

“Careless!!” When Pan Lin saw Little Cold Hands slip and fall onto his butt, he criticized Su Mucheng.

But that wasn't what Tyranny thought.

Don't underestimate Su Mucheng's cunning. This was the lesson that they had just learned in the group arena.

Tang Rou's Soft Mist had switched directions. And Little Cold Hands, who was sitting on the sand dune, was now sliding down the sand dune.

Anyone with an eye for tactics should be able to understand.

By accelerating the downward flow of the sand, Little Cold Hands would be able to get under the protection of his teammates faster. Blowing a hole into the sand dune and accelerating the flow of the sand definitely wasn't out of carelessness. It had been intentional. As for Little Cold Hands slipping and falling onto his butt, that had been intentional from An Wenyi as well. He wasn't as technically skilled as Ye Xiu and the others on Happy. Trying to control his character in the moving sand was very difficult for him. He understood Su Mucheng's intentions, but he wasn't confident in being able to adjust to the sudden increase in speed.

As a result, he didn't force himself to. Instead, he fell down, letting the sand carry him.

It was quite clever, and in a match, cleverness and decisiveness were often needed.

Soft Mist suddenly charged at Tyranny's long-ranged attackers, interfering with their attacks towards Little Cold Hands. Lord Grim and Boundless Sea teamed up on Desert Dust, with Dancing Rain supporting them.

Happy had no intentions of letting Desert Dust go, and at the same time, they wanted to save Little Cold Hands.

It was a brilliant response. Those who saw through Happy's solution praised them. Unfortunately, it stopped there.

Happy's brilliant response wasn't able to be carried out to completion because they had overlooked a certain someone.

Han Wenqing.

Han Wenqing was being attacked from all sides, and it looked as if Happy wouldn't have any trouble dealing with Desert Dust, which was why everyone had focused on An Wenyi's Little Cold Hands instead.

Dancing Rain turned fire, Soft Mist switched directions. In that instant, Su Mucheng and Tang Rou indeed hadn't been worried about Han Wenqing. After all, both Ye Xiu and Fang Rui were there.

But...

Thousand Ton Drop!

Desert Dust crashed to the ground, pressing on the loose sand with a thousand tons of force. His two legs sunk deep into the sand. Following afterwards, a whirlpool seemed to be created. The surrounding

flow of sand above it all changed directions towards the deep pit smashed out by Desert Dust's Thousand Ton Drop.

Of the four surrounding him, only Lord Grim who was below him had firm footing. The three above him, including Soft Mist who had switched directions, instantly lost their balance.

Thousand Ton Drop ignored Grab skills. Even if Ye Xiu had used a Toss or a Back Throw, Desert Dust wouldn't have budged.

Only a move like Wave Wheel Slasher, which used magic to create its own space, could seal Desert Dust's movements. However, Wave Wheel Slasher only lasted for so long, and it didn't interrupt Thousand Ton Drop.

As a result, when Wave Wheel Slasher ended, Thousand Ton Drop continued.

Happy's brilliant response was disrupted just like this by the trapped Desert Dust.

Ye Xiu immediately had Lord Grim attack. With Desert Dust's legs stuck in the sand, he wasn't going anywhere. Lord Grim's Myriad Manifestations Umbrella transformed into a spear. A Circle Swing was just about to nab Desert Dust, when he twisted around...

Not good!

Ye Xiu's instincts were telling him to retreat.

Cancel and jump back!

Ye Xiu reacted extremely fast. The Circle Swing was cancelled, and Lord Grim jumped as far back as possible. However, the other three on Happy who were still regaining their balance couldn't react in time. Desert Dust finished turning around, and all three characters were pulled into his grasp.

Spiralling Whirlwind!

A Level 70 Grappler skill. Han Wenqing had chosen this skill to put on his Desert Dust's Silver weapon, Flame Fist!

Hua!

Yellow sand burst into the sky.

Desert Dust shot out of the ground. The spinning force produced by his two arms held tightly onto the three from Happy. They rose into the air along with Desert Dust, flipped upside down, and then crashed to the ground...

Pu pu pu...

Grab skills could not be Quick Recovered. The three slammed into the ground, creating three craters in the sand dunes and three waves of sand.

Ye Xiu's Lord Grim was in this area, but he didn't go and rescue his teammates. Instead, Lord Grim ran towards a different direction. It looked like he was in a hurry, yet he didn't use any movement skills.

It wasn't that Ye Xiu didn't want to, he couldn't.

He could not save Su Mucheng and the others, and he could not increase his speed with a skill like Shining Cut.

Because the moment he dodged that Spiralling Whirlwind, he stepped onto a Sacred Fire...

Zhang Xinjie, Immovable Rock.

Han Wenqing's most trusted partner had his back.

Ye Xiu's choice was out of helplessness. Unable to use any skills, he didn't dare fearlessly charge towards the enemy Cleric. If he moved any closer to Desert Dust, Han Wenqing would probably give him ten years worth of revenge.

The tides instantly shifted.

The three on Happy had been thrown into the sand, while Desert Dust calmly landed. Trapping and suppressing him wasn't going to be possible anymore.

However, the one in the most danger was An Wenyi.

Happy's response had been crushed instantly. Little Cold Hands was now sliding down into the mouth of the tiger. An Wenyi needed to get up and run away. This time, An Wenyi being called Happy's weakness were no longer empty words. He tried his hardest to move his character in the river of sand. In the end, it looked like he was trying to doggy-paddle his way up.

The crowd laughed loudly seeing this scene, but not Tyranny.

An Wenyi looked to be in a sorry state. Little Cold Hands wasn't moving gracefully at all, but his judgement was correct. The direction he chose to run away to was the worst possible direction for Tyranny. He had chosen to move towards the Lord Grim and Immovable Rock.

But Tyranny wasn't worried at all.

Previously, Happy had neglected the trapped Han Wenqing. This time, they had neglected Zhang Xinjie. Tyranny's two core had actually been overlooked...

All three long-ranged attackers fired at Little Cold Hands.

Multiple people targeting with a flustered rookie was much more efficient than Ye Xiu targeting an experienced Zhang Xinjie.

Tyranny's reasoning was that simple. They had confidence in themselves and in Zhang Xinjie. An Wenyi had picked the best possible option, but it wasn't enough to shake Tyranny.

Happy's other three players had gotten up. When they saw the situation, they knew that they had to save Little Cold Hands. However, an imposing figure stood in their way.

Han Wenqing, Desert Dust.

One person, ready for a 1v3!

The crowd erupted!

This was their captain. When they needed him the most, 1v2, 1v3, 1v4, he wouldn't retreat.

This bravery had never faltered no matter how much time had passed. Even if he was beginning to play more flexibly, when brute force was needed, he would proudly stand at the front.

Ten years, just like the past.