

Avatar 1571

Chapter 1571: Who Will Break the Deadlock

No one had expected the situation to turn out this way. Everyone had thought that Lord Grim would be running for his life. Everyone had been wondering whether Lord Grim would end up dying or living. But now? The one who needed to worry about dying or living was Zhang Jiale and his Dazzling Hundred Blossoms.

It was a pincer attack. Just splitting your attention between two ends was a headache already. Even if pro players practiced for these situations, that didn't mean defending against a pincer attack was by all means easy.

Kill Lord Grim?

As time went on, Zhang Jiale felt more and more that his priority should be his own survival instead. If he tried to kill Lord Grim in this situation, Dazzling Hundred Blossom would lose health at a frightening speed, and his attacks towards Lord Grim wouldn't be very effective either. He would mostly likely end up as the one dying.

Retreat?

It seemed to be the safe option. If Little Cold Hands was suppressed, they wouldn't need to be in a hurry to kill Lord Grim, and Han Wenqing's Desert Dust would soon arrive as well.

That's what it looked like on the surface, but Zhang Jiale knew that this "safe" option was wishful thinking. As soon as the pressure that he put on Happy was put to a halt, Happy wouldn't need to continue attacking because their goal would have been accomplished. In that case, Happy would certainly shift their attention towards Lin Jingyan's Dark Thunder to rescue Little Cold Hands.

Once Little Cold Hands was safe, their advantage would be consolidated.

No matter how many twists and turns occurred in the team competition, attacking the healer would always be a good move. By pressuring Lord Grim with his attacks, Zhang Jiale became a chain preventing Happy from protecting their healer. From a certain perspective, it showed just how important Ye Xiu was to Happy.

Any other team would have likely abandoned one of their players to prioritize protecting their healer. Even if it ended up becoming a 4v5 later, having a healer while the other side didn't meant that their chances of winning wouldn't be low. This principle was backed by hard data. In all ten years of Glory pro play, this sort of 4 with healer versus 5 without healer situation had happened 101 times. In 74 of these 101 matches, the 4 with healer side won.

It had happened in Season 4, when Zhang Xinjie helped Han Wenqing topple Team Excellent Era's reign. In Season 5 and Season 7, the God of Healing, Fang Shiqian helped Wang Jiexi lead Team Tiny Herb to two championship wins, giving birth to the saying "Whoever has the healer rules the world."

The healer was immensely important to a team, and as a result, many strategies targeting healers had been created. During the regular season, Happy's healer wasn't looked upon highly, but Happy took

advantage of this opinion, setting up traps around their healer. It was a classic example of using the value of a healer to one's advantage.

Healers wouldn't be sacrificed. Even if Happy was currently using Little Cold Hands to protect Lord Grim, as soon as the pressure on Lord Grim lessened, Happy would immediately turn fire.

As a result, he definitely could not back down.

It was a 1v3, but he had to fight it. Attack Lord Grim!

Zhang Jiale didn't retreat. Dazzling Hundred Blossoms didn't retreat.

Everyone could feel his determination and the meaning behind it. Happy wanted to force Zhang Jiale back and then save Little Cold Hands. It would be killing two birds with one stone. However, Zhang Jiale refused to back down.

If he didn't back down, Happy could not turn fire. If they turned fire, an opening would appear, and Zhang Jiale would certainly take seize it to kill off the 7% health Lord Grim.

What now?

Happy's one hit kill against Immovable Rock had been a miraculous play. And now? How would they get out of this impasse? Desert Dust was getting closer and closer. Farther away, Qin Muyun's Negative Nine Degrees was also approaching.

Could he burst down Dazzling Hundred Blossoms before they arrived?

Unlikely!

Even if it was a 3v1, Ye Xiu's Lord Grim couldn't play too boldly. After all, he only had a sliver of health left. He needed to attack cautiously with safety in mind. As for Concealed Light's summons and Dancing Rain's artillery fire, although their damage was impressive, it wouldn't be enough to burst him down instantly. After all, Zhang Jiale wasn't a dead tree.

Ye Xiu would most likely have to risk it, using his 7% health Lord Grim to get close to Dazzling Hundred Blossoms.

The camera had switched over to Lord Grim. Suddenly, light shone from beneath Little Cold Hands and Dark Thunder. A summoning circle had formed, turning the soil black. A Devil World's Flower broke through the earth and bloomed!

Shua!

Vines immediately shot towards Dark Thunder's feet. He had no choice but to dodge them. If he didn't, he would be CCed, and it was exactly because Devil World Flower had outstanding crowd control that every Summoner would learn it. Whenever anyone faced against a Summoner, killing it was their first priority.

Luo Ji's presence was too tiny. No one had thought that he would be the one to break the impasse.

With the interference from Devil World Flower, Dark Thunder's attacks towards Little Cold Hands immediately stopped. An Wenyi seized this opportunity to get Little Cold Hands away from him. But Lin

Jingyan was old and experienced. He continued to keep pressure onto Little Cold Hands while inside the Devil World Flower's range. The difference was that his pressure was considerably lower than before. However, with this reduction in pressure, An Wenyi was more than capable enough to escape. It was just a matter of time.

Luo Ji seemed to have gotten the sweet taste of success. Concealed Light waved his staff again, and another summoning circle began to form. Summoners had the advantage of using summons to fight for them, allowing them to fight in multiple places at once. Luo Ji was putting this advantage to use.

The summoning circle quickly completed. The summon clearly wasn't a high-level one.

Goblin.

The Summoner's lowest-level skill. But since it was a prerequisite for many other skills, every Summoner could summon one. This extremely weak summon very rarely posed a threat on the battlefield. It was usually used as a sacrifice.

But for Lin Jingyan, who was urgently trying to keep pressure onto Little Cold Hands, this Goblin was extremely annoying.

No matter how weak it was, the Goblin could still attack. To dodge the attack or get rid of the Goblin, Dark Thunder would have to perform an action. Whatever this action was would be an opening for An Wenyi.

The Goblin hobbled its way over and threw a rock as if it were throwing a difficult problem towards Lin Jingyan.

At the same time, Lin Jingyan saw a third summoning circle...

Luo Ji's Concealed Light played the Four Beast Style, so the number of beasts he could control well at one time was around four or five. However, that didn't mean his Concealed Light only had those four beasts and a Devil World Flower.

Hua... a Death Knight walked out from the summoning circle. It was the core of a different Summoner style, so for a Four Beast style Summoner, it could only play a small role. As a result, it was a very rare choice, after all, the skill points needed to learn Death Knight was rather high.

But... skill points happened to be the area where Happy was number one in...

Chapter 1572: Like a Dream

The shadow created by the overtowering Death Knight covered the entirety of Dark Thunder. The Death Knight lifted his enormous rusty sword and swung downwards.

Dodge. Lin Jingyan's only choice was to dodge. The Death Knight wasn't a Goblin. If that strike hit, it wouldn't be just a small impact, it would likely knock him down.

Devil World Flower, Goblin, Death Knight.

The three summons by themselves weren't enough of a threat to make Lin Jingyan helpless, but completely suppressing An Wenyi's Little Cold Hands under these circumstances wasn't likely. Lin Jingyan would probably be able to interrupt longer casts, but Clerics had access to three instant cast heals: Small, Great, and Holy Cure. Knowing that Lord Grim would need to be healed after using Life-Risking Strike, An Wenyi had intentionally saved these skills for him.

Happy had stabilized the situation!

Everyone realized this point, and the one who helped Happy stabilize it was Luo Ji. This inexperienced rookie had shined brightly in both team competitions against Tyranny.

Last time, it had been through his outrageous Dismantle style. And this time? He had done it by putting to use one of the most fundamental characteristics of a Summoner.

Luo Ji's hands were shaking. He could sense his hurried breathing. More than thirty minutes had passed since the start of the match, and he was still nervous. However, his thoughts were exceptionally clear. His hands may be trembling uncontrollably, but he did what he had to do bit by bit.

He didn't even know himself how much of an impact his actions would have on the battle, but he kept telling himself that he needed to succeed. He needed to do the only thing that he could do: not make any mistakes!

Everything he did turned into a reality, and it showed.

He didn't overlook a single detail. He was playing perfectly. It wasn't easy for him to control six summons split between two different areas, but fortunately, his summons didn't need to fight too precisely.

If this continued, Happy would win!

That was what the pro player chat group thought. Luo Ji had no one on him. He had complete freedom in the battlefield. For Tyranny, who needed to focus on Lord Grim, Luo Ji had become their greatest hindrance.

Was Tyranny going to lose because of this rookie?

Luo Ji had been the decisive factor in both the team competitions that he had participated in.

Lose?

No!

Not yet!

Han Wenqing and his Desert Dust had arrived! For a Striker, he had initially been relatively far away from the battle, but he had finally returned. He had no one on him either. Didn't that mean he could go directly for Lord Grim? Or he could fend off Dancing Rain and the summons to let Dazzling Hundred Blossoms finish off Lord Grim. Or he could help Dark Thunder shut down Little Cold Hands.

Han Wenqing had several options, but at this moment, Zhang Jiale suddenly noticed Luo Ji casting something. It wasn't a summon, but a spell.

What was it?

For a moment, Zhang Jiale couldn't think of anything. However, his many years of experience was giving him feeling of danger. He could sense that if he didn't interrupt Concealed Light, things might truly be over for Tyranny.

Bang bang bang!

Ignoring everything else around him, Dazzling Hundred Blossoms fired three shots at Concealed Light. The Frost Wolf immediately pounced on him and knocked him to the ground.

It'll reach! Zhang Jiale was still looking towards Concealed Light. He saw Concealed Light's staff glowing with magic, but it wasn't yet complete. It was a spell with a very long casting time. His three bullets would make it in time.

But suddenly, a figure suddenly flashed into Zhang Jiale's view. Peng peng peng, the three bullets bounced off that shameless Myriad Manifestations Umbrella.

With only 4% of his health left, Lord Grim rushed into protect Concealed Light. Who would have thought?

The gathered magic burst out!

Concealed Light was able to cast his spell. Zhang Jiale could feel a biting chill. It was as if the spell had penetrated through to reality.

Absolute Zero!

Not towards him, but Desert Dust. The Elementalist Level 75 skill had completely frozen Desert Dust, who was perhaps Tyranny's hope for a reversal.

This was the skill that Luo Ji had chosen to put on his weapon, a powerful CC skill. With no one interfering with him, using a long-casting skill was naturally a suitable choice. But in the end, he had underestimated his opponents. He hadn't thought that Zhang Jiale would unexpectedly be able to notice it and even try to interrupt it. He had thought that with the enormous pressure on Zhang Jiale right now, he would be the last one to make a move against him.

The moment Dazzling Hundred Blossoms attacked him, his heart had turned cold. He had almost cancelled the skill, but at the last moment, Lord Grim appeared in front of him and blocked the attacks. Luo Ji had seen this sort of protection from Ye Xiu many times on the bench, and this time, he was the one being protected.

Absolute Zero was unleashed.

At this moment, Luo Ji suddenly had absolute confidence in winning because he knew that he wasn't as insignificant as he had thought. Everything he had done had influenced the battle.

Hit!

Due to Ye Xiu blocking Zhang Jiale's attempt to interrupt Luo Ji, Han Wenqing took the brunt of the after effects. By the time he saw the Absolute Zero come out, it was too late for him to dodge. This skill

created a new dimension, instantly affecting all those within its range. Desert Dust was instantly frozen, and once again, he wouldn't be able to participate in the battle for some time.

The freeze time was rather limited though, since it was only a level one skill without Ice Elemental Affinity to buff the Absolute Zero's effects, but in a situation where every second counted, it was enough to be a deciding factor. If not for this Absolute Zero, Desert Dust might be swinging his fist at Lord Grim. But right now, all hope was lost. An Wenyi didn't drop the ball just because he was a rookie. The no-healing period of time after Life-Risking Strike had finally ended. He quickly seized the opportunity and cast a Holy Cure.

Light flashed, a crit.

Lord Grim's health instantly shot up. It was now high enough to make the fans on Tyranny despair, even if they could see Qin Muyun's Negative Nine Degrees approaching closer and closer.

His Sharpshooter would soon be able to provide support for Tyranny, but it was too late...

Ye Xiu had dared to body block attacks with only 4% of his health left. Now that he had received a critical Holy Cure, what wouldn't he dare to do?

Target, Dazzling Hundred Blossoms!

Lord Grim instantly closed in. Dazzling Hundred Blossoms had only just climbed back up onto his feet, and now he was trapped inside an unspecialized combo. To make things worse, there was Dancing Rain's artillery barrage from behind, as well as attacks from the Wyvern and Thunder Eagle. In his attempts to finish off Lord Grim, he had lost a considerable amount of health. How much longer could he last?

Absolute Zero's effects ended, and Desert Dust rushed out.

A crisp gunshot could be heard from the other end. Qin Muyun's Negative Nine Degrees had finally arrived.

But Dazzling Hundred Blossoms was already at his last breath. Ye Xiu didn't even need to waste time on him anymore. Lord Grim turned around and went directly for Desert Dust. Concealed Light's Frost Wolf immediately took his place, and along with Dancing Rain's artillery support, they finished off Dazzling Hundred Blossoms.

It was a 5v4, and the side with 5 had the healer.

The Tyranny fans in the crowd were silent. The fans, who never became discouraged and never gave up, could already see their defeat.

Happy didn't give Tyranny any opportunities to turn things around. With such control over the battle, a comeback from Tyranny would only happen if Happy made a disastrous mistake.

"Don't relax!" Ye Xiu reminded everyone. Only now did the crowd realize that no one had said anything in chat for a very long time. Play after play had happened one after the other, yet during this time, there had been no communication on either team between any of the players.

Happy won!

This was the final outcome, yet no one had expected that after it became a 5v4, the match would take another half an hour to finish. Happy had relied on their healer advantage to win, sacrificing two of their players to take down the remaining four on Tyranny.

Happy clearly had control over the pace of the match, but Tyranny hadn't crumbled as fast as people had imagined.

Only now did people realize how important his seemingly modest "Don't relax" was.

Against a team like Tyranny, even if they were at such a huge disadvantage, if you relaxed for even a moment, it might come back to bite you.

Ye Xiu understood Tyranny too well. He knew how the team played, and he wouldn't give Tyranny this kind of opportunity. He led Happy, keeping up the same level of determination and perseverance until the last second.

It was over...

Happy had officially won. With this team competition, they won this round and this best of three. Happy would move on to the finals.

The stadium was quiet.

Tyranny's fans were silent. As for Happy's fans? The last half-hour had been nerve wracking to watch too. Although Happy had the clear advantage, it always felt like Tyranny would suddenly turn things around. The match didn't feel like it was over even when Happy stabilized their advantage. It wasn't until Happy finally won did they begin to regain their composure.

The crowd continued to be silent even as the players exited from the player booths, even as the two teams lined up at the center of the stage, even as the screen displayed its congratulations to the winners.

Finally, reality hit.

Happy had won. They had started at the bottom of the Challenger League, and now they would be moving on to the highest stage in Glory. It was all like a dream.

Chapter 1573: Their Own Roads

The simple celebration that Tyranny had set up in order to celebrate their own team making it to the finals ultimately couldn't be used. On the display screen in the stadium, there was just a rather standard congratulations to the winning team.

The two teams lined up in the center of the stage.

Ye Xiu, Han Wenqing, Lin Jingyan, Zhang Jiale...

On this stage built from passion, these old generals met each other, knew each other, killed each other; some felt joy, others felt sadness, others felt moved.

Perhaps they couldn't be called friends, but their mutual understanding was no inferior to that between any pair of closest friends. They had the same desires and the same goal. On this stage, they shed the same sweat, burned with the same passion.

But it was a shame, for not everyone could achieve the results they desired. Every time, there would always be those who had to leave the stage partway through.

It was over...

Han Wenqing looked at this familiar stage, at the silent stadium.

Another season was over. The tenth season of his professional career had come to an end.

Another failure.

Yes. In Han Wenqing's heart, not obtaining the championship was a failure. "Glorious defeat" was not a phrase that he liked.

And this time, the one who had orchestrated his failure – Ye Xiu, Ye Xiu once again, although in the past he had been called Ye Qiu.

Han Wenqing did not care at all about why he had to change his name. No matter what it was changed to, he would always immediately recognize this person onstage. This was the person who had left him the most memories over his ten-year career, from start to finish, from happiness to tragedy.

And this time, this was the fourth time, the fourth time that Ye Xiu had brought him and his Tyranny to bitter defeat in the playoffs. But after it was over, the first word that Han Wenqing said to Ye Xiu was: "Congratulations."

Congratulations, congratulating victory. His own grief was the other side's joy. Competition was simply this cruel.

"Thank you," Ye Xiu answered, and the two shook hands.

In the silent stadium, applause suddenly rose forth, applause that lasted for a long time. This was truly a pair of opponents worthy of respect. Ten years of Glory, they continued to persevere. No matter what difficulties they faced, their pursuit of the championship never faltered.

But between the two of them, only one of them could remain. This was truly an incomparably saddening fact.

Tyranny's fans disliked and even hated Ye Xiu, but in this moment, they couldn't help but think: if Ye Xiu and Han Wenqing were on the same team, if they could lift that championship trophy together instead of constantly being at each other's throats, then how wonderful would that be?

But these two players did not have such melancholy.

Countless cameras were focused on these two at this moment, desperately hoping that they would have some moving interaction, but there was none.

Congratulations, thanks, separation.

Never mind a hug or anything like that, when the two of them shook hands they hadn't even lingered very long before separating. And then the two of them each turned away, walking toward their next goal...

The next person that Han Wenqing met was Su Mucheng. What about Ye Xiu? He saw Lin Jingyan, Zhang Jiale.

Normally, when the teams lined up to shake hands after a match, they would follow a certain order. The captain first, and then the vice-captain, continuing down from there.

Happy only had Ye Xiu as the captain, and no one set as the vice-captain, so they were a bit more casual in their lineup. On Tyranny's side, vice-captain Zhang Xinjie's presence was very strong, but right now, Zhang Xinjie hadn't followed the typical order of shaking hands with Ye Xiu after Han Wenqing had. Instead, Lin Jingyan and Zhang Jiale arrived at about the same time in front of Ye Xiu.

"An excellent match," Lin Jingyan said, shaking hands with Ye Xiu first.

"Thank you." Ye Xiu still only had this simple reply.

These two in front of him now hadn't fought with him for ten years like Han Wenqing had, but they were perhaps more tragic than Han Wenqing.

The pair of Han Wenqing and Zhang Xinjie had at least defeated Ye Xiu in Season 4, overthrowing Excellent Era's dynasty and obtaining a championship. With that, they had somewhat of a foundation, so that even if they did not manage to obtain any results for the rest of their careers, they would not be considered a total tragedy.

But Lin Jingyan and Zhang Jiale, these two Season 2 debuts, had fought for only one less year than Ye Xiu and Han Wenqing had. Yet they still were unable to obtain that championship.

Lin Jingyan, last season was the first time he had even made it to the finals; Zhang Jiale, the synonym of unlucky in Glory, four times in the finals, four times his hand brushed against that championship trophy, yet in the end he still had nothing to show for it. And this time, he hadn't even had the chance to touch that trophy.

"Good luck," Zhang Jiale said to Ye Xiu. At this moment, he would still think of that summer two years ago, when he and Ye Xiu, the two retired pro players, met in-game.

They had seemingly already said farewell to Glory, but their championship hearts refused to die, and in the end they chose different paths. Ye Xiu picked up a new account, trained it up through the game, recruited soldiers and bought equipment. He built his opportunity himself, built hope himself, and ultimately created a team. And Zhang Jiale, he chose an easier and more direct road, he returned and chose to join Tyranny, creating an incomparably beautiful roster with Han Wenqing, Lin Jingyan, and Zhang Xinjie.

Zhang Jiale wouldn't forget that Ye Xiu, too, had given him an invitation at that time. If he had agreed, he would be a member of Happy right now.

But Zhang Jiale wouldn't deny, either, that at that time he didn't look favorably upon Ye Xiu's starting over from scratch. At the time, he'd thought, Ye Xiu is someone who already holds three whole

championships, maybe he would attach more importance to this more difficult path. But Zhang Jiale himself? All he wanted was to have a single championship trophy. No matter the method, he hoped that his professional career wouldn't have this blank space.

The two walked their own paths in the pursuit of victory.

Ye Xiu and his Happy defeated Excellent Era in the Challenger League. Zhang Jiale and Tyranny together lost last year's finals to Samsara.

Continue, again!

The two continued their pursuit. Ye Xiu broke through the Challenger League and arrived at the Pro Alliance, boldly carrying his Happy toward the championship. Zhang Jiale, with his Tyranny teammates, once again mounted a charge against the championship. In the end, the two teams met outside the doors to the finals, and in the end, Ye Xiu and his Happy won, while Zhang Jiale and Tyranny together fell at the doorway.

Did he regret it?

Did he regret rejecting Ye Xiu's invitation to join Happy?

No, he didn't.

If it were still the Zhang Jiale of two years past, after directly falling to Happy, he would probably be extremely upset about his decision. But the Zhang Jiale of today was not. He had walked together with Tyranny for two seasons now, had fought and killed together with these teammates for two years now. He still prioritized results, but he now deeply appreciated the process. These two years, he had experienced much, and his mentality had changed a lot as well.

Last season they'd had the chance to obtain a championship. This season, Happy had only taken the chance that they'd had last season. Even if Happy did ultimately manage to win the championship, Zhang Jiale would not have any regrets because of that. This Happy was this kind of Happy, and if he were there, it would be a different Happy.

Even if this kind of Happy could win the championship, that didn't mean that a Happy with him could also win. There were no absolutes when it came to victory and defeat on the professional stage, and these kinds of regrets were completely unnecessary. This was what Zhang Jiale had learned over these past two years.

There were many roads to the championship.

Ye Xiu had chosen one, he had chosen another.

The road that Ye Xiu had chosen was filled with difficulties, so he hadn't thought it would end well. And his own choice? He might have thought before that his choice was a shortcut, but now he understood that this absolutely wasn't the case. There were no shortcuts to the championship. Those who thought that obtaining top-level players and top-level characters was enough to easily take the championship were far underestimating Glory and underestimating the nature of competition.

Zhang Jiale didn't dare underestimate that, and so he would not regret his own choice. Refusing Ye Xiu's invitation, joining Tyranny instead of returning to Hundred Blossoms, he regretted none of it.

Now, he gave his congratulations to the victor. He still needed to rely on himself to walk his own road.

Just like this, the four generals completed their post-match greetings. Simple, without any unnecessary words, just exchanging those plain, almost boring phrases.

But everyone who watched this scene already felt their hearts tightening.

Even if it was so simple, even if it was just these boring phrases, would they have the chance to ever hear this again?

The four of them were already at the final stages of their careers. Would they ever have this kind of chance again, to stand onstage and exchange congratulations and thanks?

Good luck, thank you.

To these people now, just these kinds of phrases were already such a luxury. Did they still have a tomorrow? How many more tomorrows did they have? Everyone was left with only restlessness in their hearts.

“An extremely interesting performance.” After the three old generals, Tyranny’s vice-captain finally arrived before Ye Xiu.

“You too,” said Ye Xiu.

“This team is very strong.” Zhang Xinjie’s gaze slid toward the other members of Happy standing behind Ye Xiu. “Everyone has an area where they can’t be overlooked.”

Ye Xiu smiled. He knew that Zhang Xinjie could see much more than most other people. Happy was able to defeat Tyranny not because of one person or one thrilling moment. Their team’s operation was thorough and outstanding. In that thrilling battle to reverse the disadvantage, Happy hadn’t communicated in the chat at all – this was the greatest proof. This showed that their teamwork was well-trained, this showed that they had a shared awareness in that kind of situation, that they could cooperate, pushing themselves and the team in the direction of victory.

“Keep working hard,” Zhang Xinjie said.

“You too,” Ye Xiu said.

Zhang Xinjie nodded. He wasn’t someone who would say insincere polite words. Happy still had areas to improve, and their Tyranny did as well. Even though he had brought Ye Xiu to a downfall as soon as he joined the Alliance, he had never underestimated him. When it came to the strategic system of Happy, the team that Ye Xiu had pulled together, there was just too much to learn from and analyze.

The contents of the Glory Textbook were constantly updating, constantly evolving.

Chapter 1574: Real Analysis

Han Wenqing, Lin Jingyan, Zhang Jiale, Zhang Xinjie...

Tyranny appeared invincible because of these four, but Tyranny wasn't only just these four. Song Qiyang and Qin Muyun had played in this round's team competition. By the time Qin Muyun joined the battle, Happy already held the upper hand. He didn't lose his fighting spirit, though. He tried his best to turn things around, contributing greatly towards extending the intense battle by another half an hour.

As for Song Qiyang?

He had been the team's last hope in the group arena, but in the end, he failed to make a comeback. He had played in the team competition as well, playing until the last moment, but all that he received was another bitter defeat.

"Why?" Song Qiyang was trying his hardest not to cry, but tears were already racing down his cheeks.

"You seniors were all working so hard, but why, why did we still..." Song Qiyang couldn't accept this. He didn't understand. He himself was still young and had a future, and as a man of Tyranny, he wouldn't start crying uncontrollably just because of a single defeat. However, even if he had the future, what about his teammates, who were on the verge of retirement?

Their youthful days were over, and they no longer had any opportunities to waste. The amount of time that they could still remain on the Glory stage could be counted on one hand. It was because of this that they practiced no less than anyone else. Even at their final moments, they wouldn't give up on even the slightest chance of improving themselves.

Song Qiyang had seen their efforts with his own eyes.

They treasured every chance they had, but in the end, why did opportunity never gaze upon them?

Their efforts, their sweat, their everything, they had sacrificed it all, yet all they got in exchange was defeat.

Why?

Song Qiyang didn't know who he was asking.

Qin Muyun patted his shoulders to comfort him. Zhang Xinjie was ready to bring him away when he heard Ye Xiu say calmly: "Effort alone can't win you everything. Don't be so conceited!"

Conceited?

How was Song Qiyang being conceited? He couldn't help but feel stunned at that word.

"In terms of effort, do you think our Happy would lose to you? No, not Happy, and not any team," Ye Xiu said.

"On this Glory stage, effort is the last thing you should brag about, because it's a given, it's something everyone will put in, it's the lowest and smallest thing. Recognize this and keep climbing!"

"Keep working hard!"

As Ye Xiu said this, he shook hands with Tyranny's sixth player, Qin Muyun, and then waved to the crowd, even if this was Tyranny's home stadium, even if this place was filled with Glory fans who hated him.

Applause came, but it was rather reserved.

Although there were people who were moved by Ye Xiu's words, their hatred stood strong. Today's match was another addition to the list. The crowd didn't boo, instead giving Ye Xiu a bit of applause. It showed just how moving Ye Xiu's words were today.

The referee announced Team Happy's victory. This time, the fans in the away team seats gave thunderous cheers, looking more like winners than before. The applause from Tyranny's fans wasn't too soft either, but their applause wasn't for the winners, but the losers, Tyranny. Although their applause hid their disappointment, they had to tell their team that even in defeat, Tyranny would always be heroes in their heart.

The two teams entered the stadium's passageway. Neither team said anything as they walked to their prep rooms. The two teams were required to participate in the following press conference. The order wouldn't be by home and away team, but by losing and winning team.

The first to go up was Team Tyranny. Their loss didn't only symbolize the end of this round, but the end of this set and this season. The questions that Tyranny would need to face wouldn't be limited to just today's match.

Han Wenqing, Zhang Xinjie, Lin Jingyan, Zhang Jiale.

These four went out for the press conference. Their gathering ignited sparks among the Glory community. Just the names alone were enough to spark interest from Glory fans.

But after last year's defeat, they had lost again.

Everyone knew the weakness in this exciting lineup. Perhaps it was because of this weakness that such a luxurious team could be formed.

But they had failed two seasons in a row. This luxurious lineup failed to meet their fan's expectations, as well as their own. What would they do next? Compared to the contents of today's match, the future of Tyranny was a more important topic.

Questions needed to be asked in sequence though, especially when facing such an intimidating group of stars, who deserved respect. No reporter planned on making it hard for them.

"Tyranny's loss against Happy is regrettable." The first reporter to speak would often start off with this sort of opening remark before moving onto the next logical step: "How do you think your opponents played today?"

"Extremely well." As the captain, Han Wenqing answered back, giving a reply that every reporter hated. Luckily for the reporters, he turned his head to the side and added: "How about we have Xinjie give a more detailed explanation?"

"Of course, of course!" No one would object to that. Zhang Xinjie always said things as they were. Questions asking about how the opponents did were the easiest to brush off, but if Zhang Xinjie was answering it, that wouldn't be the case.

"Group arena or team competition?" After Zhang Xinjie received the question, he immediately asked for clarification.

“Team competition, team competition,” the reporters replied. The team competition had elements of teamwork and individual play, so there were more things to talk about than the group arena.

“For the team competition, we confirmed after the match that the spawn point was determined randomly, right?” Zhang Xinjie began, showing how strict and serious he was with the game. As soon as the match ended, he immediately made clear what doubts he had.

“Yeah,” the reporters nodded their heads in agreement.

Zhang Xinjie nodded his head and pondered for a moment. Then, starting from this point, he summarized what happened in the team competition before cautiously saying: “There are many things that we can learn from Happy in today’s team competition.”

“Because of the random spawn locations, Happy’s Tang Rou ended up coming across the five of us alone. This was an extremely bad situation for her. Tang Rou quickly came to a decision, while we hesitated slightly. This was all because neither of us nor Happy knew about the random spawn locations. On the surface, Happy was at a disadvantage. However, because of our hesitation, Happy was able to seize the initiative. They had Tang Rou try and bait us into chasing after her. Later on, by using the surrounding terrain, they were able to safely set up ambush locations to wear us down...”

Zhang Xinjie replied to the reporter’s question in detail. The reporter had simply asked about Happy’s performance, so that’s what he talked about. He didn’t say anything regarding how Tyranny played, let alone criticism.

Even so, the reporters didn’t feel that it was boring because of how honest Zhang Xinjie was. From his words, they could hear things that they might have missed, trying to analyze it themselves. Although everyone was more concerned with Tyranny’s future, today’s match had indeed been spectacular, especially Ye Xiu’s Life-Risking Strike. Everyone wanted to hear about Tyranny’s opinion on it.

The reporters hadn’t asked about it specifically, but because it was an important part of the match, perhaps even the climax of it, Zhang Xinjie naturally talking about it in more detail when he got there.

“Luo Ji coming out into play can already be considered a set up. Because of the first game in our best of three, Luo Ji’s presence made us mindful of the terrain.

“Happy’s ambush at the canyon exit wasn’t successful. It could be said that Happy had relied on Ye Xiu’s outstanding playing to stabilize the situation. At this point, Happy was in a defensive position, but they had a clear retreat path. Their destination was the center of the map, the Seven Color Springs. We had yet to explore this area.

“We had thought that this destination was the turning point that Happy was waiting for, but it turned out that our judgement was incorrect.” Zhang Xinjie didn’t cover up his mistake, directly calling it out.

“Happy had been waiting for an opportunity. This opportunity wasn’t the Seven Color Springs, but rather us thinking that the Seven Color Springs was the turning point.

“Once we made this prediction, the most effective method to eliminate this possibility was to win before the Seven Color Springs was reached.

“Starting from when we killed Fang Rui’s Boundless Sea, we had the lead and the initiative. As a result, we adopted a more aggressive posture.

“And this was the opportunity that Happy was waiting for. Their plan had begun the moment Fang Rui was killed. They were being pressured by us, but by creating a certain image of themselves, it gave them space to bounce back. Afterwards, they needed to wait, wait for us to increase our aggression to lure us into bringing out our healer.

“This is a strategy. I realized it after the match. During this course of events, there had been no communication within Happy. It was all an enormous and complex set-up. If it had been devised on the spot, there would definitely have been communication. Thus, this is a strategy that Happy has practiced before. At some point, everyone had received the signal to carry out this strategy. For the Switch to work, the Spirit Cat must have been summoned by Lord Grim, and none of us had noticed it. This was extremely critical because Luo Ji was a very important part of this strategy. Lord Grim’s Spirit Cat had to be hidden among Concealed Light’s summons, and the possibility of an Elemental Beast King Formation was a huge bait. If we had known that the Spirit Cat was Lord Grim’s, we wouldn’t have worried about it as much, and Lin Jingyan would not have been lured over by Luo Ji. Even if he had started casting Elemental Beast King Formation, since the Spirit Cat wasn’t Concealed Light’s, it would not have worked... but unfortunately, we had been tricked, beginning with us not knowing that the Spirit Cat was Lord Grim’s.”

Chapter 1575: Farewell, Lin Jingyan

Clear, accurate, logical.

The reporters present had all heard Zhang Xinjie make this kind of post-match analysis before, but they were still amazed at Zhang Xinjie’s calm. Even after this defeat, which had ruined a year’s worth of hard work, no one could tell that his mood had been affected at all.

Was he not bitter? Was he not disappointed? Was he not regretful?

Of course he felt those things!

No pro player could remain completely unaffected after this kind of defeat. But Zhang Xinjie could hide his own mood like this, could control himself to do the appropriate thing at the appropriate time. The reporters ask for our opinion of the opponents? Alright, whether you actually want to know or are just making conversation, since you’ve asked this, when it’s my turn to answer, I will answer in a direct manner.

The reporters couldn’t be more satisfied.

With the post-match analysis that Zhang Xinjie gave, their reports on this match could be much more sophisticated.

But now, how could they bring up the topic that everyone was more concerned about? Zhang Xinjie only talked about strategy, not emotion, so they couldn’t find a good transition point anywhere in the whole speech he gave. This was Zhang Xinjie’s consistently strict style in accepting interviews. His answers

always addressed the current question, nothing more. You couldn't find any content in them that would give rise to new topics. Not a single drop ever leaked.

There was no way to progress naturally from here, so the reporters could only start anew.

"It really was an incredibly thrilling match." One reporter followed Zhang Xinjie's analysis with a word of praise, then began to change the topic. "Then, after today's loss, what are all of your plans for the future?"

The question was very direct.

And this was exactly the question that everyone was most concerned about. Instantly, the press conference quieted down.

"I can still continue to fight," said Captain Han Wenqing.

The keen reporters immediately realized something. Han Wenqing had used the word "I." Even though he was the captain, at this moment, he did not speak for the whole team. Everyone immediately guessed the hidden news revealed by this sentence: Han Wenqing could continue to fight, but some people could not...

"I as well," Zhang Xinjie answered after him.

Of course he could... He was of the Golden Generation. Compared to Season 1 and 2 debuts, he still had plenty of matches left to fight. The question that everyone cared about had never been directed at him.

"I won't give up either," the next person said. But when the reporters' gazes turned, they already began to recognize something even more clearly.

Tyranny's current seating order onstage: Han Wenqing, Zhang Xinjie, Lin Jingyan, Zhang Jiale.

As the captain, Han Wenqing answered first, but he didn't represent the whole team, he only spoke for himself.

And then Zhang Xinjie. And then, it wasn't the next person in line, Lin Jingyan, who spoke, but Zhang Jiale.

Lin Jingyan was skipped. Evidently, it was because they knew that what Lin Jingyan was going to say wouldn't be of the same atmosphere as the rest of them.

Everyone's gazes turned back to Lin Jingyan. Cameras and everything were all at the ready. They had all already guessed: an ending had finally arrived.

Lin Jingyan stood up. He wore a smile on his face. This representative of Glory's Brawler class, he himself had always had a refined and gentle air about him.

"I think, it's about time I finished..." Lin Jingyan finally opened his mouth. The prepared reporters instantly clicked the shutters of their cameras. They needed to record these images, these sounds, this scene.

And of the other three Tyranny players sitting onstage, Han Wenqing's face was as strong and unyielding as ever, and Zhang Xinjie was also calm. Only Zhang Jiale's face showed a bit of sadness at this moment. Was it because of today's loss? Or was it because of Lin Jingyan's imminent retirement? Or a bit of both?

It seemed like he wanted to say something, but in the end he didn't open his mouth.

It was clear that his Tyranny teammates already knew Lin Jingyan's decision. Perhaps they had tried to persuade him otherwise, but in the end, they chose to respect his decision. None of them said anything, giving this moment entirely to him.

"And in this end, I want to give thanks," Lin Jingyan continued to say.

"First, I want to thank the teammates sitting beside me. Before coming to Tyranny, I never thought that one day I'd have the chance to fight alongside all of you for the championship. You are all the most outstanding players in the Alliance. To be able to fight side by side with you is my fortune, and the glory of my lifetime.

"Therefore, I also want to give special thanks to Tyranny as a team. I thank this team for giving me such a good opportunity, even in the twilight years of my career. These two years, for me, have been fulfilling and happy. My only regret is that I was still unable to lift that championship trophy alongside everyone, and here I would like to apologize to Tyranny, that I... cannot continue to work hard with everyone.

"This decision does not come lightly. It is a careful decision that I have made after considering my own condition. I believe that my professional career should end here.

"No life is perfect, and it's unfortunate that I wasn't able to win a championship. But from Wind Howl to Tyranny, I have always had the most outstanding teammates at my side. It is Glory that allowed me to meet you all. What I want to say is, to be able to play Glory, to become a Glory pro player, this is the greatest fortune of my entire life.

"Today, I leave this stage first. But I won't leave Glory – I never will. I will still watch you, and I hope that you will fulfill your dreams.

"In the end, I want to give my best wishes to everyone, everyone connected to Glory. It is Glory that has linked us all together, this will be the glory of our lifetimes!

"Thank you everyone, I wish you all the best..." Lin Jingyan bowed, concluding his farewell speech. The reporters had finally gotten to a relatively interesting topic, but in this moment, they wished that this news didn't exist. They wished that Lin Jingyan could be like Han Wenqing, Zhang Xinjie, Zhang Jiale, and express his intent to continue working hard.

But, no.

Everything that had just happened was real.

Lin Jingyan had already declared his retirement. He was leaving. This Season 2 debut, this pinnacle player, the number one Brawler, had finally finished walking the path of his professional career.

He hadn't won a championship, and he hadn't had any special individual accomplishments. Before he'd joined Tyranny, he'd never even made it to the finals.

And yet he still was indomitable, he still pressed on relentlessly, he still worked hard for victory.

No one would laugh at him, even if he was already surpassed by his junior during his career. Because, this was an inevitable law created from the passage of time, there was nothing laughable about this. What everyone saw was that, even when Tang Hao seized the title of number one Brawler from him, seized his position in Wind Howl, seized the character with which he'd fought for seven years, he hadn't seized his fighting spirit, nor had he seized his championship heart.

Lin Jingyan came to Tyranny, and with joy and elegance he fought alongside his new teammates for another two years, all the way until he himself felt that he'd reached his end. Only then did he set everything down.

No one could force him to choose to leave, no one but himself.

"Thank you everyone, I wish you all the best," Lin Jingyan had said.

And now, the other three Tyranny players onstage had already turned around. They shook hands with Lin Jingyan, they embraced him, they gave him their well-wishes.

Perhaps there was sadness in their hearts, but on their faces, nothing but determination brimmed. No matter where the road led, they would continue to walk it with determination. No compromise, no regret, no hesitation. Walk forward, straight ahead.

"Goodbye!"

After he finished his exchanges with his teammates, Lin Jingyan waved to the reporters below. He gave a final nod to his three teammates, before turning and walking toward the exit passageway.

Was it over?

The reporters were a bit stunned, but soon, they realized that Han Wenqing, Zhang Xinjie, Zhang Jiale, these three players had already sat back down at their seats. It was as though nothing had happened, as though that empty seat had been empty since the beginning.

Lin Jingyan had made his decision, and they had made theirs as well.

Lin Jingyan had already bid farewell to this stage, and so he left; and they had chosen to stay, chosen to continue, and so, this press conference would continue.

The reporters were in a daze. Having never experienced this kind of scene before, they didn't know what they should ask the three remaining players. They even hoped that this press conference would quickly come to an end, which was something they'd never felt before. Tyranny's determination, Tyranny's unwavering spirit, they felt it, and they almost couldn't bear the weight of it.

"Then, after Lin Jingyan's retirement, what adjustments will Tyranny make?" In the end, someone still stood up to ask a question.

"Naturally, there will be someone to fill the opening," said Han Wenqing.

"Then could you reveal who it'll be? Will it be someone in Tyranny, or will moves be made during the transfer window?" one reporter asked.

“This hasn’t been decided yet,” said Han Wenqing.

“Alright...” By this point, the reporters no longer had their normal strength to desperately fight for answers. The atmosphere was completely smothered, and after these two questions, it instantly became silent again.

At last, Tyranny’s news official stood up and said, “Then, if there are no further questions, the press conference can end here?”

“Alright, that’s fine...” The reporters quickly agreed.

It was over.

Tyranny’s press conference was over, and the professional career of a top player was also over. But on this stage, even as some people left, others would continue to resolutely walk onward.

Others of Tyranny would walk onward. And right now, Happy, this team, their road this season hadn’t ended yet, they still had more to walk. The finals, the championship, this newbie team in the Alliance had actually made it to the finals. Just making it here was already a miracle, just this step was enough of an explosive topic.

Happy walked onstage.

They’d sent out three representatives.

Ye Xiu, Fang Rui, Luo Ji.

Excellent! These people got the reporters excited. After Tyranny left, they’d returned to their normal condition and instantly detected the interesting topic here. Without even asking about Happy themselves, someone had already stood up and asked, “Do you know that Lin Jingyan just announced his retirement?”

As soon as the question came out, everyone looked at Fang Rui, Lin Jingyan’s partner of many years in Wind Howl.

Chapter 1576: Storm’s End

The silence of the press conference was far quieter than Happy’s prep room. Even though they could see the live broadcast of Lin Jingyan’s retirement announcement on the television, the Alliance rookies still had limited experience with the helplessness and grief of retirement. Moreover, they were still immersed in the wild joy of having made it to the finals. The news of Lin Jingyan’s retirement didn’t change the atmosphere in Happy’s prep room.

The young players were still laughing merrily, but at that moment, melancholy still spread in Happy’s prep room.

Ye Xiu had known Lin Jingyan for a long time. They’d fought against each other from Season 2 until now, so they were no strangers. Ye Xiu had played from Season 1 all the way until today, and over the course of these years, he’d seen familiar faces leaving one after another. Some had been teammates, some had

been opponents, but in that moment of departure, everyone would forget these identities. All they would feel was the departure of a partner.

Today was the same. Another familiar face was fading away.

Ye Xiu was silent.

Fang Rui, too, was silent. He hadn't known Lin Jingyan for as long as Ye Xiu had, but he, who had debuted in Season 5, had immediately come to Lin Jingyan's side. It was Lin Jingyan who had watched him grow, and then they'd become a famous duo. And then after Season 8, Season 9, they'd gone their separate ways.

To Fang Rui, Lin Jingyan had been both a teacher and a friend. If he had to pick the player in the Alliance that he respected the most, Fang Rui would vote for Lin Jingyan without any hesitation, even if Lin Jingyan wasn't the best player in the circle.

And now, he had left.

Fang Rui, who now already had several years of professional experience, had realized that this day would come eventually. But he had never imagined that he would witness Lin Jingyan's departure like this.

He'd originally thought that the two of them would fight side by side, until one day, Lin Jingyan would suddenly smile and say he couldn't fight any longer. And then Fang Rui would make fun of him for it, but Lin Jingyan wouldn't change his mind, and just like that, smiling, he would say goodbye.

And today, he saw it.

Lin Jingyan was smiling, he said farewell to everyone, but it was after being defeated by the team that Fang Rui represented...

The sadness hidden beneath the smile, how many people could feel it?

Fang Rui knew, Lin Jingyan definitely still hoped to win a championship. He hoped so, so much.

But the ones who had ultimately destroyed that hope were himself and Happy.

Lin Jingyan would have no more chances.

Because he had already chosen to leave.

I wish you all the best.

He gave his well-wishes to everyone, and this, of course, included Fang Rui.

But how could this kind of well-wishing make someone feel better? Fang Rui, at least, wouldn't. He couldn't bear to watch any longer, and in that moment, he found an excuse and left Happy's prep room. After him, Wei Chen, this old guy who had retired early on only to return many years later, ignored the rules that forbade smoking in the prep room, and roughly pulled out a cigarette.

Unlike normal, Chen Guo didn't go to scold him. As a senior Glory fan, even though she had never personally experienced this kind of goodbye, she had seen it happen like this many times before. And

now that she had entered this circle, she felt the pain, and she was aware that she would gradually see these farewells occurring next to her. Wei Chen, Ye Xiu, and then after that, Su Mucheng, Fang Rui...

Chen Guo was scared, truly very scared.

She watched as Fang Rui mumbled something and left the prep room. No one tried to stop him. Even the still-celebrating rookies, at this time, recognized that the prep room wasn't entirely this joyful atmosphere, and they quieted down as they saw Fang Rui leave. And then, they saw the broadcast of the press conference, as Lin Jingyan hugged and said goodbye to the other three Tyranny players, thanked everyone, and left.

Um...

Those whose brains moved a little faster already realized something.

Fang Rui had left the prep room, and Lin Jingyan was returning from the press conference. Then, wouldn't these two meet in the passageway?

The prep room instantly went quiet, and someone had even muted the television, as though it would disrupt the two talking in the passageway. No one moved, no one made a sound, until the door to the prep room was pushed open again.

"It's our turn," Fang Rui said calmly, standing in the doorway.

And so Ye Xiu and Luo Ji, the two that Happy had already arranged to participate in the press conference, walked out of the prep room. In the passageway, they saw Lin Jingyan, who smiled at them, and then patted Fang Rui. He didn't return to Tyranny's prep room, but instead continue to walk down this passageway, which would eventually lead outside the stadium.

"Let's go." Ye Xiu didn't watch him any longer. He waved at the others, and the three Happy players walked out of the passageway, toward the press conference.

"Do you know that Lin Jingyan just announced his retirement?"

The reporters had already pulled out their first question.

"Yes," Ye Xiu nodded.

"Could each of you say some of your thoughts on this?" The reporter emphasized "each of you." Evidently, they weren't very interested in Ye Xiu answering this question. What they wanted to hear was Fang Rui's thoughts.

Fang Rui didn't shy away, voluntarily taking the microphone, so Ye Xiu didn't try to say anything first. Just as the reporters wanted, he waited for Fang Rui to say his thoughts.

"I wish him the best." Fang Rui took the microphone and said five words.

Everyone quietly waited. But then, there was nothing after. Fang Rui said only these five words. To his partner of many years, to his teacher and friend, to Lin Jingyan, whose lifelong dream he'd personally ruined, Fang Rui only said these five words.

"That's all?" The reporters didn't give up. They wanted to hear some more deeply moving thoughts.

“That’s all.” But Fang Rui shook his head, smiling, just like Lin Jingyan. All of his thoughts, all that he’d wanted to say, he’d already said to Lin Jingyan when they met in that passageway. To Fang Rui, this was enough. There was no need to retell it to these reporters.

After that, there was nothing left but to wish him well. Him, and only him.

But the reporters still refused to give up easily. Even if Lin Jingyan hadn’t retired today, as a former partnership, meeting onstage was still a big topic.

“Forgive my bluntness.” Another reporter opened his mouth. “It seemed like your performance today didn’t meet expectations. Was it because your former partner was among your opponents, and you found it difficult to fight against him?”

“My performance today was indeed not very good, so it was lucky that the team could still win the match. In the upcoming matches, I will continue to fight to my fullest,” Fang Rui said.

It seemed like a very ordinary response, but at this moment it was quite clever, completely avoiding the issue of “former partners,” and then taking responsibility for his poor performance, analyzing the results, and facing the future.

How were the reporters supposed to continue? What else could they ask?

There was no way they could continue to tangle with questions about Lin Jingyan. They could only begin to ask serious questions about Happy’s performance this match. The analysis that Zhang Xinjie had provided in the press conference suddenly became important data that everyone could use to ask Happy questions.

“Was Happy completing a Life-Risking Strike against Zhang Xinjie’s Immovable Rock in the team round today a carefully-trained tactic prepared beforehand?” a reporter asked.

“Hahaha,” Ye Xiu laughed, “don’t use Zhang Xinjie’s analysis to ask me questions. I was watching the broadcast. Everything he analyzed was wrong.”

The reporters instantly felt like facepalming. Everyone knew that Ye Xiu was spouting nonsense. But he so rudely scorned Zhang Xinjie’s analysis just like that, what were the reporters supposed to do?

Before, Ye Xiu never appeared at these sorts of events. When it came to press conferences, in reality, both Ye Xiu and Luo Ji were rookies. But this rookie was terrifyingly difficult to deal with. Compared to those who were very slippery when answering questions, Ye Xiu simply didn’t care about them. When a question came, he would just casually make something up, and when you turned around to ask clarification, he could forget what he’d just said. Worst of all was that he never tried to avoid this point. He would simply reply to you, very honestly, “Really? Did I say that?”

So what if he’d said it? So what if he hadn’t said it?

Could the reporters report on the sort of made-up nonsense he spouted? Of course not. Wouldn’t it make the reporters look like they had very low IQ, for believing that kind of nonsense?

Seeing Ye Xiu activate this status once again, the reporters internally freaked out, but on the surface they still gave off a very even-tempered and good-humored air.

“Then, was there any special reason for sending out Luo Ji in this match?” someone asked.

“Training rookies, training rookies on the big stage. It’s just like how Tyranny sent out Song Qiying; we sent out Luo Ji,” Ye Xiu said, very seriously.

Motherfucker!

The reporters raged in their hearts.

This kind of reply here was simply evasive. Maybe you didn’t believe it, but what he said followed logic; maybe you believed it, but you’d always feel that something was wrong with what he said, that you were being taken for a ride.

“And we’re braver than Tyranny. In this critical match, we actually sent out as many as three rookies,” Ye Xiu continued to speak.

The reporters wanted to cry.

Try not sending them up! In your Happy, aside from you, Fang Rui, Su Mucheng, and Wei Chen, who’s not a rookie?

“Perhaps in the finals, we’ll experiment with a full rookie roster. Let them accept the toughest test of all,” Ye Xiu said.

Who believed that?

Who would believe that?

Send rookies into the finals to train? This was taking the joke to the extreme!

The reporters all looked miserable. How were they supposed to write today’s article? Some were already mentally in a different place. It looked like this press conference wasn’t going to give them any material.

“Then, shall we end here today?” In the end, Happy’s press conference hastily came to a close, The reporters didn’t resist much, they weren’t even in the mood to snap a few extra pictures. Once upon a time, getting a picture of Ye Xiu had been such a beautiful and rare accomplishment, but now, seeing this guy appear in the camera lens, everyone only felt like their mouths were dry. They didn’t know what to ask, and they didn’t know what they should listen for.

The press conference ended.

At last, the curtain fell on the winds and storms of today’s match.

The losers, the victors, they all walked their own paths.

But no matter what kind of path they took, the direction in which they charged was always the same. They each took their own path, but it was always the path chasing victory, the path to be champions.

Chapter 1577: The Potential World War

After fighting for almost a week in City Q, Team Happy finally returned to their home City H. What awaited them was a torrential downpour.

Samsara, Happy.

One was a championship team that had won two consecutive championships, while the other was a new team that had just joined the Alliance. These two teams, with a world of disparity between them, ultimately entered the finals together.

No one would dare underestimate Happy ever again. No one would dismiss them as a grassroots team ever again.

Sixth place in the regular season, defeating the powerhouses Blue Rain and Tyranny in the playoffs, Happy was currently attracting everyone's attention with an unstoppable momentum.

Now, not only did people want to see the birth of a new dynasty, a number of Glory players also wanted to see the birth of a miracle – a new team that had just entered the Alliance, with never-resting footsteps, snatching the championship.

At midnight, the victory polls for the first round of the finals and the finals as a whole had all opened. By 8:00 in the morning, after eight hours, the support that both teams had received was actually tied.

Before this, whether facing Blue Rain or Tyranny, the rate of support that Happy received was always lower by a huge margin. Even if their team had no lack of All-Stars, even if their team had the Best Rookie, even if they had brought surprise after surprise over the course of this season. Despite all that, in the playoffs, the Glory fans still didn't look favorably upon them.

Until today. Until now.

They defeated Blue Rain, defeated Tyranny.

Happy had received enough trust. In the pre-match support poll, they were in fact tied with Samsara.

Samsara: 51.6%.

Happy: 48.4%.

Samsara had a slight lead, but such a small difference was really nothing. For Happy to be able to split the vote so evenly with Samsara, that was already enough to prove how remarkable they were. Even if it were Blue Rain or Tyranny who had entered the finals, it was possible that they wouldn't be able to tie the vote like this. But Happy, under unfavorable circumstances, defied all expectations to make it here. This led more people to become interested in them, and people began to once again look forward to the unexpected.

Three days later, City H, Xiaoshan Stadium, would that be where the miracle began?

The rain washed clean Xiaoshan Stadium, and because it was such a downpour, the streets were unusually cool and clear. No matter how passionate or enthusiastic the Happy fans were, in this kind of weather, they couldn't cheer on Happy with all the energy they would have liked. But business at Happy Internet Café was exploding in this weather. The internet café no longer seemed like an internet café, even the aisles were packed. Using excuses like finding shelter from the rain, everyone scurried into the

internet café and began enthusiastically talking about the upcoming finals match. Even those who were sitting at computers weren't really using their computers. Everyone was discussing with the people next to them.

They might know each other, or they might not.

This wasn't important. Right now, those who were gathered here, they all had the same hope, the same anticipation: for Happy to win the championship!

The second floor of Happy Internet Café could be considered Team Happy's base of operations. Even though they were a team that had already made it to the finals, the team's simple infrastructure couldn't be changed immediately.

Right now, all the members of Happy had gathered in this training room that was definitely last place in the Alliance.

Yesterday, they had traveled through the night to return to City H. Luckily, the ugly weather hadn't affected their flight. And this morning, they were once again unaffected by the weather, and right on time, they arrived at the training room.

This kind of discipline was required during the regular season. After the playoffs began, Ye Xiu advocated individual adjustment more. The team didn't schedule too many training plans, and instead allowed the players to arrange their own time.

But now, they were at the finals, only one step away from winning the championship. Happy's players had spontaneously complied with the discipline of the regular season, and gathered here just like this.

"What's going on? Didn't I say that there were no plans this morning, and that you all should rest up?" Ye Xiu said, seeing the room full of people.

Everyone scoffed. Look at you, when you're talking, can't you look at your own standpoint first? You said there were no plans in the morning and that we should rest, but aren't you also standing here right now anyway? When you're saying something like this, could you not be so matter-of-fact?

"Alright! Since everyone's here, then let's enjoy Samsara's exciting performance in the playoffs!" As Ye Xiu spoke, he was already setting up the screen to display data on Samsara that no one knew when he'd organized.

Samsara's strength couldn't be doubted, and Happy had recognized this point long ago. In the first match of the regular season, they were swept by Samsara, and at the halfway point of the season, when the teams switched stadiums and fought again, Happy had only won three points.

But the results of the regular season didn't affect Happy too much.

Blue Rain, Tyranny.

Hadn't these two teams each defeated Happy twice in the regular season? But the one who had the last laugh in the finals was Happy.

To use past victory and defeat as the basis of judgment, that was something the media loved doing. Their work was to find topics to discuss, and discussing the past encounters of two teams was undoubtedly a very accurate line of thought.

But for pro players, for pro teams, past defeats were simply sources of experience. They wouldn't feel unduly humbled, nor would this make them feel that defeating the opponent was too difficult. Every match was a new start; every victory required two hands to build once again.

Failing to defeat Samsara in the regular season had nothing to do with the present.

On this point, Happy's faith was unshakeable. They weren't tied down by their past failures. Under Ye Xiu's leadership, they clearly and logically analyzed the Samsara that they were about to face in the playoffs.

One day, two days...

The sky was clear after the rain.

This was Happy's home, these were the streets where past Excellent Era fans and current Happy fans ruled. When, gradually, chants rose up in support of Samsara, everyone knew, Samsara was here. The reigning champions, the ones who were currently gunning for their third straight championship, Team Samsara had arrived in City H.

As the saying went, a powerful dragon could not crush a snake in its home.

But the atmosphere changed that occurred in Happy's home streets after Samsara arrived, there was the impression of a fierce dragon crossing the river.

At this time, security was increased in the area to prevent clashes between the fans of the two teams. Luckily, these fans were all Glory players, so if there were any real conflicts, 80% of the time they would just find some computers and begin a round of Glory PK. A street brawl didn't really fit the spirit of Glory's diehard fans.

So Glory, as a competition, would always see its fans clashing, but very rarely would situations escalate to harming physical safety, precisely because they had this different way of resolving conflict. Most of them preferred to display their brains and power in Glory.

The match day approached steadily, and the fans of the two teams steadily gathered. In the streets, the atmosphere seemed harmonious, but beneath that calm, the surrounding internet cafes had seen countless ferocious Glory PKs. One day, Happy's Wu Chen with a dark expression had gathered a whole group of people and left the café, killing his way to who knows where. But afterward, he had returned with that same dark expression, so he probably hadn't managed to accomplish anything good.

On Happy's side, Wu Chen was still at the head. But because Samsara had made it to the finals, guild leader Three Realms Six Paths, as an in-game leader, of course came to City H himself. He brought a whole group of Samsara workers with him and took over Grand Internet Café, making it their battle headquarters. The two teams hadn't even officially begun to fight, but the battle between the fans of the two teams was already escalating non-stop. But under the control of the two guild leaders, the battle at least hadn't escalated to wild PK in-game. For now, everyone still resolved things in the Arena.

Clearly, under these circumstances, the two guild leaders still hadn't lost their cool. Wild PK, no matter who had the upper hand, would always end up harming both sides, and it would give the rest of the guilds an opportunity to get ahead. The two guild leaders didn't forget their true responsibilities at this time, and they didn't let the finals affect the balance in-game.

But this was only temporary. After all, the matches hadn't even been fought yet. If the players really were provoked by what happened in the matches, then nothing could stop the explosion. In past years, more often than not, large-scale wild battles would erupt between the two guilds, all because after a certain point, the guild leader could no longer keep control.

Guild Excellent Dynasty, supporting Excellent Era's dynasty, was originally the most powerful guild in-game, but precisely because the team entered the finals four times, it had gone through all of those world wars. This time it'd be war against one, next time war against another, again and again for four years. They'd had to fight every year, but their opponent was always changing. They'd fought for four years, and then Excellent Era's dynasty was broken, and Excellent Dynasty's strength was greatly weakened. After that, when the Three Great Guilds were named in-game, they were Tyrannical Ambition, Herb Garden, and Blue Brook. The once all-powerful Excellent Dynasty could not lift this title to Four Great Guilds.

And because of this lesson learned from Excellent Dynasty's mistakes, after that, guilds would always be very, very careful.

After Excellent Era, Tiny Herb entered the finals three times. There was one small war, one large war, and finally the third time passed calmly.

The small war was Season 5, against Hundred Blossoms. In the middle of that season, Hundred Blossoms' Sun Zheping's injury rendered him unable to fight. When the finals arrived, Hundred Blossoms was filled with a determination to win the championship for Sun Zheping, but, unfortunately, they lost to Tiny Herb. After the match, the fans immediately began fighting in-game, but then, Sun Zheping made the official announcement that he was retiring due to his injury. Hundred Blossoms was in no mood to engage in a world war, so in the end, it was no more than a small war.

And then in Season 6, Tiny Herb's consecutive championship was fiercely stolen away by Blue Rain. The world war that came afterward was shocking, the fiercest in history. It was from this battle that the deep feud between the two teams was born.

And then in Season 7, Tiny Herb once again met Hundred Blossoms. The two teams both had experience with the finals and very much understood the harm of allowing the flames of battle spread to the guilds. Thus, this time, with the hard work of the guild leaders to maintain the peace, they managed to control the situation in game, and no war occurred. This became the only time so far that everything ended peacefully.

And then Seasons 8 and 9 had both seen guild world wars, but under the leadership and control of the guild leaders, they ended fairly quickly after everyone vented their emotions, and there were no lasting injuries.

And this time, Samsara, Happy. In-game, they couldn't be considered top guilds, but the tide began to build toward a potential world war.

Chapter 1578: Little People Sneaking into the Stadium

Three days' time, not too long, not too short, but it passed by in a flash.

As the sun shone down upon City H after the rain, the city seemed refreshed and pure. After being washed, even the familiar streets seemed to have something new about them.

One hour until the match's start, the audience had been let into the stadium long before, but the area outside of the stadium was still bustling with crowds of people.

Far too many Glory players hoped for the chance to watch the finals live, but unfortunately, tickets were hard to obtain. There were a number of people who hung around near the stadium to try their luck, some who wanted to sneak their way in, some who were asking around to see if anyone had an extra ticket. In any case, no one was idle.

Fu Chao was one of these Glory players, and his goal was the same as those of these gathered gamers, but from the very start, Fu Chao hadn't joined the crowd. There were too many people here, it would be much too difficult to try and sneak in through the front or get a ticket from someone.

Fu Chao stayed far away from the crowds, and instead lingered around another area of the stadium, paying close attention to his surroundings.

There were many passageways leading in and out of Xiaoshan Stadium. Right now, during such a large event, they of course opened the main doors, which were the largest and could accommodate the most traffic. And the side doors, the small doors, wouldn't be freely open for use at this time, of course.

But just because they weren't open for use didn't mean that they couldn't be used. Fu Chao planned to use one of these side doors. After he walked away from the main doors, the surroundings became much calmer, and just ahead, Fu Chao saw a small unassuming door, closed shut.

Fu Chao went up to it. He didn't know whether to push or pull it, but either way, after several tries, the little door didn't budge. Clearly, it was tightly locked.

Fu Chao didn't give up. He hadn't thought that the stadium workers would be that careless, anyway, he'd just come here to try his luck.

Just casually walking in through an unlocked door hadn't been his real plan, either.

What he wanted to do was find a worker passageway. There might be stadium workers there, but he could try and find a good opportunity to sneak in through there.

There should be!

Fu Chao had a great deal of faith in his assumption. He believed that there must be these kinds of staff passageways convenient for workers. He just didn't know whether Xiaoshan Stadium's workers could be bribed that easily.

No matter what, he had to give it a try.

Fu Chao continued to walk, until he heard the indistinct sound of voices coming from up ahead. He quickened his footsteps, turned a corner, and saw another side door, which was just about to be closed by the last person entering.

“Wait up!” Fu Chao disregarded all else as he shouted and sprinted toward it. This was a chance he didn’t want to miss.

That person had clearly heard the shout and stopped moving, turning around to take a look. As Fu Chao ran, he waved his right hand to get attention, while his left hand was already clutching the wallet in his pocket.

The side door wasn’t far, and Fu Chao closed the distance in a few steps, just as the other person completely turned around. Their eyes met, and Fu Chao suddenly tripped, nearly toppling over. When he stabilized, shock was written all over his face, and he was at a loss as he stared at this person who had stopped to look at him.

This was a face that Fu Chao wasn’t unfamiliar with, but he’d never thought he’d have the chance to see this person at this close of a distance. Fu Chao suddenly felt like the fingers clutching his wallet were a bit stiff.

Han Wenqing?

Tyranny’s Captain Han Wenqing?

Fu Chao’s brain had completely shut down. How did the stadium worker he’d been planning to bribe suddenly turn into Han Wenqing?

He just looked like him. That must be it, right?

Just as Fu Chao thought this, he heard another voice from inside the doorway.

“What’s going on?”

And then another person walked out, one hand adjusting his glasses, and looked at Fu Chao.

Zhang... Zhang Xinjie?

Fu Chao loosened the hand clutching his wallet in his pants pocket, and pinched his leg. It hurt.

“Who’s shouting?”

Another sound, another person walked out.

Zhang... Zhang Jiale?

Tyranny’s three fierce generals were actually standing in front of him right now, living and breathing.

“How come you’re not coming?”

Another new voice.

Was it Lin Jingyan? Evidently, Fu Chao had adjusted, and was already beginning to subconsciously make predictions. But the person who came out...

Wang... Wang Jiexi?

Fu Chao felt another wave of dizziness. It was actually Tiny Herb's Captain Wang Jiexi, another impossibly major figure.

"What's going on?"

"What are you guys doing?"

One voice after another, one person after another. Less than three meters in front of him, Yu Wenzhou, Huang Shaotian, Li Xuan, Chu Yunxiu, Yang Cong, Yu Feng...

Fu Chao felt like his five senses were destroyed for good.

Is this magic? Is this some cosplay group? How come so many gods suddenly appeared out of this little door? Glory's top gods!

And then – what are they doing here? Are they all looking at me? What am I supposed to do? Immediately kneel on the ground and beg forgiveness? That's not right, I don't think I had the chance to do anything wrong yet? Then what should I do? Go up to them and say "it is an honor to meet you all"? Damn, isn't that a bit dramatic? I have to change the tone, but how should I say it?

As Fu Chao pondered, the pro gods all exchanged glances, each with expressions of confusion. In the end, it was Han Wenqing who, unsure whether to laugh or cry, swept his gaze over everyone and said, "Someone just shouted to hold the door. What are you all doing?" After that, he simply entered the door first.

As soon as everyone heard that it was just that, that they'd all dragged each other into this for nothing, they all laughed and re-entered the door. The last one to enter was Tiny Herb's Xu Bin, who looked at Fu Chao, and left the door open for him.

This is...

Fu Chao hadn't yet figured out how to greet so many gods when they'd all already went back inside. But they'd left the door for him, and Fu Chao, remembering his original intention, rushed forward and caught the door. Looking around, there were people not too far away, but none of them seemed to be paying attention to this area, so Fu Chao entered, closed the door, and then realized that he'd actually managed to sneak in just like that. And the people that had led the way for him were all of Glory's top gods.

This is... they misunderstood, and thought he was a worker?

Fu Chao's mind was actually quite good, being able to think of a plan like this. Just earlier, he had been knocked a bit silly by the continuous appearance of so many gods, but now he returned to normal, and it only took a moment to realize what had happened.

These pro gods of course weren't any cosplay group, they'd also come to watch the finals live. But to have them walk in through the front doors would definitely cause unthinkable chaos, so the stadium had specially prepared for them an unassuming side passageway. Fu Chao had mistakenly ended up here, just in time to see all of these gods entering. He'd shouted without seeing who it was, and so the gods had mistakenly thought that he was a stadium worker, and he'd cheated his way in just like that.

So lucky!

How excited he felt! Excited at being able to enter the stadium, and even more excited at having done so through this kind of method. At this moment, Fu Chao felt like his desire to see the match wasn't even as strong as before. He was more excited to get online and gossip about this legendary encounter to all of his friends.

His heart was surging, but Fu Chao didn't dare show it on his face. He had to maintain this misunderstanding.

Soon, there was a bright light coming from up ahead, and the sounds of cheering rang clearer and clearer. He was just about to enter the main stadium area, the stadium of the finals.

Fu Chao's thoughts instantly returned to the match. He didn't just come to the finals for the excitement. Fu Chao, as a City H resident, had been converted into a hardcore Happy fan after a season of matches, and he couldn't wait to see Happy defeat Samsara, a never-before-seen black horse miracle.

Go Happy!

Go Samsara!

The stadium echoed with the sounds of cheering from the two teams' fanclubs. Although Samsara was the away team, they had a very strong following, as expected of the current most powerful team in the Alliance. Aside from the fans that had followed the team here, even in City H they had a number of supporters. Right now, even though they couldn't overturn Happy's home stadium, they could still make some waves here. They weren't suppressed by Happy's home at all.

"Defeat Samsara!!"

Fu Chao was instantly angry. This was Happy's stadium. No matter what team came, this sort of pride and arrogance just wasn't allowed. Although he didn't even have a seat, he simply stood in the passageway and started shouting. As for where the pro gods had gone to sit down after arriving, Fu Chao forgot to pay attention.

"Sir, please quickly return to your seat."

Jumping around like this in the passageway, Fu Chao quickly drew attention, and a worker came over. But the worker didn't suspect that he didn't have a ticket, and simply instructed him to return to his seat in the interest of maintaining order.

"Alright alright, as soon as I go to the bathroom I'll return to my seat." Fu Chao had already thought about how to remain undetected after making it into the stadium. Just now, he'd forgotten himself and attracted attention, and when the worker came up to speak to him, he regretted it so much that he wanted to hit himself. He'd hurriedly used a bathroom excuse, and the worker hadn't become suspicious, so he quickly headed to the bathroom.

He hid in the bathroom for quite a while.

Watching the time, hearing the shouts from the stadium, Fu Chao grit his teeth and endured. The stadium stopped letting people in half an hour before the match officially began, and during that half an hour, the stadium went through strict procedures to secure the area. To stay in the stadium during this

time without a seat, he would be discovered very easily. Fu Chao had to last through this period of time. After the match officially began, if there wasn't an absolute need, there wouldn't be any large movements from security. At that time, if workers were still wandering around everywhere and disrupting the audience, they would probably be blasted to death.

8:30...

Fu Chao's watch had slid to this time, and he could hear the sounds from the stadium. The match was indeed just about to begin.

Group arena, Happy's first player was still Ye Xiu. That "full rookie roster" he'd talked about in the press conference last time indeed turned out to be nonsense.

Samsara's first player was Lu Boyuan, the All-Star Grappler player.

"You have to win!" Fu Chao could only sit in the bathroom, grind his teeth, and pray. The match had only just begun, so to be safe, he was prepared to wait for a few more minutes. On one hand, he hoped for Happy to win quickly; on the other, he hoped they could play a little longer so he wouldn't miss as much. One could only imagine the conflict in his heart.

Two minutes passed...

He couldn't hold back any longer!

Fu Chao charged out of the bathroom, and flew back toward the main stadium area.

Victory!

Happy opened strong. Ye Xiu, undefeated in individual match, continued his brilliant record this season, coming onstage first and defeating Samsara's Lu Boyuan.

"Beautiful!!!" By the time Fu Chao arrived, all he saw was the word "GLORY," but even so, he was as thrilled and excited as if he'd seen the entire process. But after waving his fist once, he immediately remembered that he was supposed to be lying low, and after carefully examining his surroundings, Fu Chao began to sneak around, looking for a corner where he wouldn't be noticed.

The match continued.

Only now did Fu Chao remember that so many top gods had come to this stadium to watch the match live. Where were these people sitting now?

With how large this stadium was, there was of course no way he could find them. But when he thought about it, he knew that these people would definitely be gathered together, and the stadium would definitely have special security measures around them. As someone who didn't even have a ticket, Fu Chao would be looking for death if he tried to find where they were and slip in among them.

Here's a good spot!

Fu Chao finally found a seat that he was relatively satisfied with. Standing, sitting, or crouching, just being able to sneak in here and enjoy this match was satisfying enough.

That was what Fu Chao had originally thought, at least. But in the end, he found that he was wrong.

To be truly satisfying, the match itself needed to have a satisfying outcome. But today's match ended in Happy's defeat. In the finals, Samsara took the lead in their away game.

Chapter 1579: Heart's Longing

Happy lost.

The result of the first match of the finals was like a bucket of cold water, instantly splashing many people awake.

Just before this match had begun, when the poll had finally closed, Happy had actually obtained a 51.1% support rate. They had actually surpassed the defending champions Samsara.

Because of this, Happy's supporters were very excited. They forgot that this poll only represented people's hopes. Happy had more support only because people were curious and excited to see the black horse, the underdogs, overturn the giants.

Votes didn't determine the teams' strengths.

Votes certainly couldn't determine this match's outcome.

Happy didn't lose faith from their two losses to Samsara in the regular season. And Samsara? They weren't scared of how Happy had consecutively defeated Blue Rain and Tyranny in the playoffs.

In comparison, it was clearly Samsara, having eliminated both of their opponents 2-0, who was more at ease in the playoffs.

Because they were more at ease, Samsara obtained more sufficient time to rest. While Happy was bitterly fighting their third match against Tyranny, Samsara had rested for a full six days.

This battle had been very exhausting for Happy, especially the last half-hour of the team round. Tyranny, with only four players left and no healer, had stubbornly and fiercely fought against Happy for half an hour. They had still lost, but Happy had paid a large price for this victory.

After that bitter battle, Happy returned to City H that night. After rushing about, they really only had two full days of rest. And then they met Samsara, who had calmly adjusted their condition for six days.

Six days without battle wouldn't cause any deterioration in condition, because the span of six days was just about the length of time between matches in the regular season. Pro teams and players had more experience using six days to adjust their condition than they did using three days.

From the contents of the first match, it could be seen that although Happy still carried that fierce excitement from their battle with Tyranny, this excitement soon turned into their burden. Their spirits, not having relaxed enough from that battle, were once again tightened, and they quickly lost the tension that they needed.

Happy lost.

This shouldn't have been too surprising of an outcome.

But because of their earlier excellent performance, because it was their home game, people placed high hopes on Happy. In the face of this outcome, these people were helpless.

There were many analyses searching for reasons for Happy's loss, and practically every article pointed to their exhaustion from Tyranny's match.

The reason was there, but now, could Happy solve it?

After this, there was still only three days of rest time. Samsara had won at their away game, and their spirits were high. And Happy? Could they stabilize when they were one game down?

That night at midnight, voting for the second match opened, and Samsara's support rate surged...

Sometimes gamers would vote for the team they hoped would win, but usually they voted for the team they expected to win.

Hope was a type of aspiration, while expectation came from a type of trust.

Happy was still a black horse, and people still could only put their hopes of a revolution on them. But now, their hopes weren't as energetic as they'd been at the start. Because of the first round's loss, these hopes had wavered, had been shaken.

Happy's support rate trembled in the balance.

Three days passed, and they returned to City S, Samsara's home stadium. When the poll closed before the match, Happy's support rate had fallen to 39.1%.

There were still a number of people who hoped for a miracle. But a greater number people now followed logic in their prediction, giving their vote to Samsara.

61.9%.

With this kind of support rate, Samsara was about to turn this support into reality. They were about to win the Season 10 championship, their third consecutive championship, and build the second dynasty in Glory history – the Samsara dynasty.

This kind of slogan was already being proclaimed in the stadium. Samsara's fans couldn't wait to welcome this day. And Samsara's stadium had already prepared a magnificent celebratory ceremony, celebrating the establishment of the Samsara dynasty.

The stadium's atmosphere was joyous. It felt nothing like the tense excitement of a playoffs match, it felt like an award ceremony.

"How irritating!"

Pro players had a very sharp sense of the atmosphere of a stadium. That crowd of Glory stars who watched the first match in Xiaoshan Stadium now gathered in City S to watch the showdown of this second round. This atmosphere in Samsara's stadium of a dynasty being born, as though they'd already won the championship, was very irritating to these competitive players, exceptionally irritating.

"Ye Xiu, that guy, can't he show some promise? Where's the spirit he had when he fought us!" Huang Shaotian shouted indignantly. To be honest, for these people, watching from the audience as two teams

fought for the championship was quite painful. No one wanted to see Samsara establish their dynasty, but they also weren't happy at all at the prospect of Happy winning the championship. So even as they were upset at Samsara, they had to criticize Happy as well. And they definitely had to criticize Ye Xiu. Criticize and criticize again.

"Say, all of us running here together to see this finals match, are we looking for pain or looking for pain?" said Void's Li Xuan, deeply understanding this uncomfortable feeling.

"We will witness history!" said Zhang Xinjie.

If Samsara won the championship, a new dynasty would be born, and history would be made. If Happy won the championship, they were a black horse, a new team that won the championship just after joining the Alliance. That, too, would enter Glory's history books.

"So we're standing in a historical moment!" Tang Hao said sarcastically, even mocking himself along with everyone.

These people didn't want to witness any history. They came here, came to Glory's battlefield, in order to create their own history. Each of them wanted to be a participant. But now, they had become bystanders.

Pop!

Next to Li Xuan, Wu Yuze cracked open a drink, the sound crisp. Everyone else was silent. To explain in relation to the fans in the rest of the audience, these players here were all fans, far more dedicated and loyal than any other fan. They were fans of themselves, their own teams, and this would never change at any moment. So, when they watched this match, they didn't particularly wish for either side's victory. What they wished most of all was to go onstage themselves and destroy both of those teams, and of course, if they could destroy all these people around them right now, that would be nice too.

The atmosphere was oppressive.

"Captain do you want to drink anything, I'll go buy!" Tiny Herb's Liu Xiaobie jumped up. He didn't like this kind of pressure, and so he found an excuse to temporarily escape.

"A Coke, thanks," Wang Jiexi said.

"Get two bottles for me too," Royal Style's Tian Sen said.

"I'd like a mineral water," Li Xuan said, nodding.

"Get me a bottle of milk tea," Chu Yunxiu also requested of Liu Xiaobie.

"I want a green tea."

"I want a black tea."

With everyone talking at the same time, Liu Xiaobie instantly collapsed. "I can't remember that many!"

"Write it down on your phone," Xiao Shiqin suggested, very kind-heartedly.

Liu Xiaobie sighed and pulled out his phone.

“Come on, faster, get that hand speed up!” Misty Rain’s Li Hua said, pushing forward to watch Liu Xiaobie type.

On his phone, a long list of requests quickly stretched out. Practically no one was polite with him. Liu Xiaobie felt like crying. He suddenly felt like that oppressive atmosphere earlier was quite good, a great time to examine his own strengths and faults!

“This many, I can’t hold them all...” Liu Xiaobie said weakly, after writing down everyone’s requests.

“Just make a few extra trips,” said Xiao Shiqin. As expected of the most detail-oriented Master Tactician, the king of ideas.

“With such fast hands, your legs should be pretty quick too, no?” Dai Yanqi supported her captain.

Liu Xiaobie was already despairing. He slowly began to trudge away, but when he felt at his pocket, his spirits suddenly lifted. He flipped his pockets inside-out and then laughed loudly. “Ahahaha, I forgot to bring my wallet today.”

“We’re already giving you so much trouble, how could we let you pay out of pocket too!” Yu Wenzhou, calm as always, pulled out his own wallet. “I’ll treat everyone.”

“Alright!!” Yu Feng led the applause, boosting his former captain.

“Captain, save me!!” Liu Xiaobie was about to kneel down in front of Wang Jiexi.

“A few others go with him, the match is about to start.” Wang Jiexi spoke justice.

And so the younger players of the various teams here all voluntarily stood up, teaming up to carry out this task.

Everyone began to quietly wait for the match to begin.

These pro players didn’t care too much about who would win, and there was no need to come to watch the match live if they just wanted to analyze their opponents. Yet even so, they had all gathered here.

In the end, their heart’s longing still haunted them. Everyone here wished that they were the ones standing on that stage.

They couldn’t participate in the finals. Then, it was still nice to come here and experience the atmosphere live...

Chapter 1580: Win Streak Pattern

The finals. Countless pro players and even ordinary gamers would dream of this ultimate PK stage, and now, the ones standing on that stage were Happy and Samsara.

After losing the first round, Happy had no room for error. But defeating Samsara in their home stadium, so far, not a single team had accomplished it this season. Samsara’s stadium had become territory that no one in the Alliance could capture. Tyranny, Blue Rain, Tiny Herb, these powerful names had found only defeat here. The team that had come closest was actually Hundred Blossoms, in Round 38 of the

regular season, ending their battle against Samsara with 4-6. And what they'd approached was only a tie...

After leaving their city first, the upcoming matches would both occur in their defended fortress, and this round's fortress was undoubtedly the strongest. This round, Samsara had the advantage of map choice.

"This time we won't hold back anymore!"

But before the match, the one who spoke first was actually Happy's Ye Xiu. When he said this, his attitude was so confident and righteous that even the judge felt a bit embarrassed. Without context, one could actually believe that Happy had purposely let Samsara win in the first round.

How could that be true.

This was the playoffs, the teams were fighting for every inch of land. And moreover, this was the finals, the stage where ownership of the championship would be determined – even that description of the struggle didn't feel strong enough!

"Who will Happy send up first?" Looking at the large display screen, the pro players in the audience were all deep in discussion. If they went from habit, then it would definitely be Ye Xiu. All this time, Ye Xiu had fought Happy's first battle.

But if this arrangement became a certainty in the minds of the opponents, then if there was a sudden change or adjustment, then it would be a very surprising blow.

Among the pros, there was no lack of smart and resourceful people. In their minds, Happy may have used this arrangement all this time just so that they could surprise their opponents in a crucial moment.

And now, this was the finals, and Happy was down one game. They had no more path of retreat. If they didn't use this surprise tactic now, wouldn't they have wasted the set way of thinking that they'd built up in their opponents' minds over the course of this season?

"Ye Xiu." But in the crowd of pro players, someone spoke with complete certainty that Ye Xiu would be the first onstage.

Han Wenqing.

The one who understood Ye Xiu even more than the Happy players did.

Han Wenqing of course understood that Ye Xiu wasn't a rigid and unchanging person. As long as it was for victory, anything could happen when it came to Ye Xiu.

But at the same time, he also understood clearly, Ye Xiu wasn't someone who would shy away from responsibility at a crucial point. Ye Xiu's win streak exerted a great pressure on his opponents, but when the win streak became a fixed pattern, this pressure would gradually transfer to Ye Xiu as well. Once this pattern was broken, Team Happy would suffer the effects, so Ye Xiu had to maintain this pattern.

And it was exactly because of this that many people would think that not going first was a smart thing to do. This way, the pattern wouldn't be broken, and there would be no risk of it being broken.

But this would be deceiving the self as well as the enemy.

Now that Ye Xiu had solidified his win streak pattern to this extent, for him to suddenly change it, too many people would probably think that this was a sign of weakness. Even if there was very logical strategy to explain it, it couldn't completely eliminate the shadow over the heart.

A shadow over others, that didn't matter, but if Happy's own players had no way of dispelling this shadow, and it affected their condition, then there wouldn't be much difference between this and the win streak pattern directly breaking.

Comparing the two situations, there was greater opportunity if Ye Xiu continued to go first. And Han Wenqing still believed firmly that Ye Xiu had the bravery to take up this kind of pressure.

As expected!

Looking at the players onstage, everyone quickly realized that while the pros on both sides were showing signs of leaving the stage, only Ye Xiu took a step forward.

"Who's coming to die first?" Ye Xiu asked Samsara. Happy's first player was still him.

Hua!

Applause.

The Happy fans, in this deadly Samsara stadium, desperately sent applause to their team and their captain.

Knowing that the mountain hid a tiger, yet advancing toward that mountain anyway. Just this bravery was worthy of great recognition.

"Senior really is quite cunning!" But then, someone from Samsara spoke, unhurried, wearing a smile.

"To be able to win consecutively for so long, everyone feels that it only gets harder and harder. If another win can be gotten under these circumstances, the morale boost to your own team and the blow to the other team reaches a peak. On the other hand, because the win streak has gone on for so long, everyone has recognized the difficulty, so perhaps too many people have already made mental preparations for the streak to be broken, right? Even if the streak was broken, I imagine it wouldn't hurt your team's morale too much either," said Samsara's vice-captain Jiang Botao. "You have this double-edged sword, yet the side facing you has already been blunted, while the side facing us is as sharp as ever. Senior, you have sharpened a good sword!"

"It looks like you recognized this pretty clearly!" Ye Xiu also smiled.

"What I know more clearly is this: the side of Senior's sword that faces us is, in fact, not that sharp. A win streak is only a record. Five wins, ten wins, a hundred wins, in reality, it doesn't have any impact on the outcome of the upcoming match. It's like flipping a coin. If it came up heads last time, everyone feels that it's a bit more likely that it'll come up tails the next time. But actually, every time you flip a coin, the chance of heads is always the same, 50%. The chance of flipping 10 heads consecutively is the same as the chance of flipping any other sequence of outcomes."

"This is a very complicated math problem, you can't draw a conclusion lightly! In a bit, come over and learn from the outstanding student in our team. As for right now, are you ready to meet your death?" Ye Xiu said.

“No, no. It’s not me.” Jiang Botao smiled, and took two steps back.

And at the same time, the stadium display lit up with the rosters of the two teams for the group arena. And onstage, Samsara’s first player walked forward from the rest of the team.

Whoa!

Instantly, the stadium was filled with shocked exclamations.

Zhou Zekai!

It was actually Zhou Zekai. Samsara’s first player in the group arena was actually their core player, the one currently called the number one of Glory, Zhou Zekai.

“Oh...” Ye Xiu was also caught off-guard, and then he glanced at Jiang Botao and smiled. “It looks like you guys are pretty cunning too.”

“Likewise.” Jiang Botao smiled as well.

Jiang Botao had clearly laid out all of the implications and deceptions hidden beneath Ye Xiu’s win streak pattern, but Samsara still didn’t back down. They actually sent out their strongest player to deal a strong blow to Happy’s spirit, just like many teams had tried before.

But they had made this arrangement while knowing all of the depths of Ye Xiu’s win streak. This was psychological warfare at a higher level. They were using their powerful self-confidence to pressure Happy. And this kind of confidence came from their past championships, from their huge lead throughout the regular season, from their two 2-0 victories in the playoffs, from defeating Happy in their away game.

They thoroughly used their advantage and their situational lead. Without doubt, Samsara was not a team that had only outstanding skill and no brains.

Jiang Botao, huh?

Ye Xiu smiled. The opponent before him was Zhou Zekai, but his gaze still lingered on Jiang Botao.

“The younger generation is worthy of respect,” Ye Xiu said.

“Thank you for the compliment.” Jiang Botao smiled modestly.

“It looks like I have the responsibility to show you guys how fearsome we seniors are!” Ye Xiu said.

Jiang Botao continued to smile, and didn’t respond. After all, he wasn’t the one going onstage right now.

“Little Zhou, don’t get too confident,” Ye Xiu said to Zhou Zekai.

“I won’t.” Zhou Zekai shook his head and walked toward Samsara’s competitor booth.

“Good luck, Senior!” Jiang Botao shouted to Ye Xiu.

Ye Xiu lifted his head to look at the roster on the display, and nodded in satisfaction. “The next one is you! I like this arrangement very much.”

“Senior should focus on the upcoming match first!” Jiang Botao said.

“Don’t worry, just wait for me.” He actually said that kind of sentence to the opponent. The judge looked like his world was being fundamentally changed. And then, Ye Xiu also walked toward the competitor booth, while the rest of the players quickly left the stage. Round 2 of the finals, first battle of the group arena, was just about to begin. Players: Happy’s Ye Xiu versus Samsara’s Zhou Zekai.

One was the past, one was the present. Both called the number one players in Glory, they now met onstage. Today’s face-off was already off to an extremely thrilling start.