

Avatar 1601

Chapter 1601: True Assault

For both Lu Boyuan and Su Mucheng, distance was their advantage. Distance would be what decided the win.

Seeing Chaotic Cloudy Mountain getting blown farther and farther away from Dancing Rain, all of the Samsara fans felt their hearts sink.

Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain set up a Mounted Gun again. She had used this Level 75 Launcher skill to great effect countless times in the playoffs.

This skill restricted her character's movements but greatly increased her attack power. It represented a powerful assault with the intent to fight a bloody battle with the opponent.

X-1 Extruder's final landing position was at the perfect firing line distance for Su Mucheng. When the X-1 Extruder exploded, the artillery barrage from Mounted Gun arrived. Launchers were most threatening when their targets were at their firing line, and it had already been shown that Su Mucheng's firing line was very flexible. It wasn't just a single dot or a line. It encompassed an area. Whether you moved forward, backward, left, or right, you would still be inside.

Chaotic Cloudy Mountain was engulfed by the artillery fire. His zero-distance close-ranged character wasn't able to counterattack. He could only run away and dodge.

() But where should he run to? Should he go forward or backwards?

This was the trickiest part about Su Mucheng's firing line.

You could go forward, but you wouldn't know if you could get close to her under such a heavy barrage without dying. You could go backwards, but you wouldn't know if you could actually retreat far away enough to a safe place.

Long distance was the domain of Launchers. It wasn't something that Grapplers could touch.

He was trapped inside Su Mucheng's desired firing line.

Lu Boyuan didn't get discouraged.

Advance? Retreat? He found a third option, an option that was only possible in this map.

Sprint, jump, roll.

It was hard to move around amidst the barrage of artillery shells, but he was still moving. He wasn't locked into place by Dancing Rain's assault. The stalagmite up ahead was his goal. He wanted to run over there and take cover. Once he was able to catch his breath, there would be more opportunities laying in wait.

Lu Boyuan acted on his plans. Chaotic Cloudy Mountain rushed towards that stalagmite.

Su Mucheng quickly saw what Lu Boyuan intended. It seemed like Dancing Rain would need to make adjustments to keep up pressure after Chaotic Cloudy Mountain reached the stalagmite.

But Su Mucheng didn't make any.

Dancing Rain continued to use her Mounted Gun and the buffs it provided.

Chaotic Cloudy Mountain's health dropped rapidly, but he wouldn't die before he reached that stalagmite. Did Su Mucheng have a way to burst him down?

It was hard not to think of this question. Even though Su Mucheng was a high DPS class, she didn't brute force things. She would often set up subtle traps that were only understood after being caught inside.

() Pan Lin and Li Yibo looked at one another. They wanted to say something, but were too afraid to say it, fearing that their faces would get slapped. They didn't dare make any predictions for any of the players today, let alone someone like Su Mucheng who was so close to Ye Xiu. Just this relationship alone scared them.

"Let's wait and see." The two called for everyone not to ask them and instead wait to see it for themselves.

And so everyone watched.

The Samsara fans were worried and anxious. The Happy fans were filled with energy and hope.

90%...

80%...

70%...

60%...

Because Lu Boyuan had held the upper hand at the start of the fight, Dancing Rain hadn't been able to deal much damage to him. As a result, most of the damage had been dealt starting from this moment. Starting from around 90%, Chaotic Cloudy Mountain's health dropped in chunks as he approached the stalagmite.

Not enough, no?

That was what everyone was thinking.

However, Su Mucheng had only now retracted her Mounted Gun. No, to be more precise, her Mounted Gun's duration was up. She hadn't cancelled it. Dancing Rain moved and began chasing Chaotic Cloudy Mountain.

But because she had been attacking from a fixed spot previously, Chaotic Cloudy Mountain had moved away from the center of her firing line. Even though she could still reach him, her attack rate couldn't compare to before and she couldn't restrict his movements. As a result, Chaotic Cloudy Mountain began moving much faster than before. Soon, he was next to the stalagmite. Then, he circled around behind it. If Dancing Rain wanted to attack him, she would need to go around in a huge circle to get to a different angle.

That... was it?

The people who had been worried about Lu Boyuan felt like their worries had been for nothing. As for the people who had their hopes up for Su Mucheng, their hopes were destroyed.

“This... this...” Pan Lin and Li Yibo stuttered. They had been too afraid to make any statements when she set up a Mounted Gun. Now that they saw that nothing ended up happening with it, they were still too afraid to say anything. Everything else seemed to be a profound mystery, and the two didn’t know where to start.

The fight suddenly stopped.

Chaotic Cloudy Mountain, now hiding behind the stalagmite, had 42% of his health left. He had taken tons of damage escaping from Su Mucheng’s firing line. After all, Dancing Rain had set up a Mounted Gun. All of her attacks had been drastically buffed.

But he was able to escape. He had won an opportunity to turn things around. He likely would not have had as good of an outcome if he had advanced or retreated. Lu Boyuan was thankful for choosing the third option.

As for Su Mucheng?

From the eyes of the viewers, she had simply been trying to deal as much damage as possible. It didn’t seem as if she had any intentions of stopping him from reaching the stalagmite nor did it seem like she had any ideas for what would come afterwards. This shouldn’t be a mistake that a pro player made. People who liked conspiracy theories suspected that she was intentionally sandbagging. But thinking of Su Mucheng’s relationship with Ye Xiu and how she had practically volunteered to join a grassroots team like Happy, sandbagging didn’t make any sense.

What is she thinking?

Whether it was the fans who supported Samsara or the fans who supported Lu Boyuan, they all felt a little bit suspicious. Anyone with a bit of Glory knowledge would have given up on a bit of damage from Mounted Gun to chase after Lu Boyuan’s Chaotic Cloudy Mountain, no?

The camera focused on Dancing Rain. In this situation, Pan Lin and Li Yibo had to say something.

“Uh, Lu Boyuan has successfully escaped from Su Mucheng’s firing line!” Pan Lin summarized what had happened.

“Su Mucheng’s offense was very powerful because she didn’t stop using her Mounted Gun,” Li Yibo wasn’t going to fall behind.

“But why didn’t she stop using her Mounted Gun?” Pan Lin asked.

“Yes, why didn’t she?” Li Yibo said.

“YOU TWO!!” Someone from behind them shouted at them. People would usually be more respectful of Li Yibo since he was a guest commentator, but right now, Li Yibo was being yelled at along with Pan Lin. The director’s patience was reaching its limits.

"If Su Mucheng had given up on her Mounted Gun earlier and chased after Chaotic Cloudy Mountain, do you think she would be in a better spot, Coach Li?" Pan Lin could only move on to a different topic.

"On the surface, yes," Li Yibo said.

"Okay!" Pan Lin nodded his head.

"But for some reason, she didn't do that," Li Yibo said.

"Yes yes," Pan Lin nodded his head again. What was this reason? Everyone wanted to know what this reason was!

"We'll see," Li Yibo said.

Pan Lin wanted to cry. To think Li Yibo would still use his trademark escape tactic at this crucial moment. Pan Lin was wondering whether "We'll see" would become a trending meme tomorrow. Would people use that to make fun of their incompetence?

In any case, the words had been said. Li Yibo couldn't say it again. Pan Lin didn't want to bring trouble onto himself, so he might as well just let it be.

The camera focused on Dancing Rain. Nothing unexpected that was worthy of a "let's wait and see" happened. Su Mucheng just calmly packed up her Mounted Gun and then started moving horizontally to get to a different angle.

Everything was calm as if none of the previous crazy attacks had happened. It was as if the match had reset back to when the two came across each other the first time. Chaotic Cloudy Mountain had taken cover behind a stalagmite, while Su Mucheng started searching for him bit by bit.

Everything was the same as before.

The only difference was that Chaotic Cloudy Mountain was at 42% health, while Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain was at 87% health.

42% versus 87%. There was a difference in health between the two compared to before. Chaotic Cloudy Mountain was losing, and right now, Chaotic Cloudy Mountain was far away from Dancing Rain. The situation seemed to favor Su Mucheng.

Pan Lin and Li Yibo were at least able to make this sort of analysis. At the end, Li Yibo suddenly blanked out. A thought suddenly sprung into his mind as he watched Dancing Rain's calm movements.

Could it be... Su Mucheng knew that even now, she held the advantage. There had been no need to use that opportunity before to kill off Chaotic Cloudy Mountain in one go. That was why she hadn't cancelled her Mounted Gun, instead dealing as much damage as she could. She could still be calm now because she had a huge lead. There was no need to be nervous or worried. It was Lu Boyuan who would be feeling those emotions. The Lu Boyuan, who was still rejoicing that he had escaped from Su Mucheng's firing line.

He would probably soon realize it. Escaping wasn't anything worth celebrating. Su Mucheng wouldn't let him easily recover from the lead that she had gotten. Su Mucheng was confident in this, and this confidence was her true assault.

Chapter 1602: A Fully Deserved Win

Artillery shells began being fired again.

Before Su Mucheng circled around to where she could see Lu Boyuan, she began using the splash damage from her Launcher attacks to hit behind the stalagmite. An Electronic Eye was released again to expand her view from another angle.

Step by step, steadily and surely. Su Mucheng played patiently. Her attacks weren't dense, even though she was using more normal attacks. Normal attacks didn't use mana. Their threat was low, but they were AoE attacks nonetheless. She didn't know where exactly Chaotic Cloudy Mountain was located, but it didn't matter if her attacks hit. If they hit, then it would deal some damage. If they didn't, then it would scare him.

Lu Boyuan was indeed feeling the pressure. He had thought of the possibility that Su Mucheng would chase after him, but he hadn't expected her to play so patiently.

Artillery shell after artillery shell landed beside Chaotic Cloudy Mountain. Sometimes, they landed far from him. Other times, they landed close to him. Evidently, the other side wasn't certain of his location. But at the same time, Lu Boyuan didn't know her location. When he had taken cover behind the stalagmite, he had turned around to confirm her location one last time. However, it had been some time since then.

As a result, he had no way of figuring out how far away Su Mucheng was from him. He had no way of knowing whether rushing out from hiding would be an opportunity for him. He also had no way of knowing how much cover the stalagmite was giving him.

All that remained was pressure.

Explosions were still happening all around him.

Lu Boyuan hadn't forgotten that Su Mucheng had Electronic Eye. The Electronic Eye didn't need to be placed right in front of him. As long as it was looking at him from a different angle than Dancing Rain, Su Mucheng would be able to attack him more precisely. Her calm attacks showed that she was still feeling him out.

He couldn't keep waiting. He needed to act, but should he advance or retreat? He needed to make a decision.

Lu Boyuan checked his surroundings.

The terrain wasn't ideal. He could try and move towards another stalagmite. It was somewhat far though, so this third option didn't seem to be a good one this time. Could it be... Su Mucheng had intentionally let him move here? Had she known that this place was a dead end?

No, it couldn't be considered a dead end.

Luo Boyuan was familiar with the map. When he had looked at this stalagmite, he had checked which nearby ones he could move to. But now...

Lu Boyuan turned around. The direction he wanted to move towards would leave him open to Dancing Rain's attacks.

This path hadn't originally been a dead end. However, Su Mucheng had blocked the path, turning it into one. He had fallen into Su Mucheng's grasp. This was why she was calm and unhurried.

Okay!

Even if that was the case, he couldn't hesitate. He was trapped in a corner, and his only choice was to force his way out of it.

Facing this predicament, Lu Boyuan didn't become discouraged. Instead, he strengthened his resolve because there was no other way out. He would have to create his own bloody path.

Chaotic Cloudy Mountain spun around to the other side of the stalagmite, exposing half of his body to the open.

Dancing Rain saw him. Her Electronic Eye saw him too. Su Mucheng reacted quickly, immediately adjusting her aim and firing at him. Chaotic Cloudy Mountain hastily pulled back, but the explosion landed right beside him. The splash damage hit him, and Chaotic Cloudy Mountain rolled on the ground to reduce the knockback. Then, he got up and went to the other side to try again.

Left or right?

Su Mucheng only had two choices. As a result, Lu Boyuan had Chaotic Cloudy Mountain expose his left side to as a feint to shift her attention over to the left. Then, he immediately rushed out from the opposite side to the right. He was fighting for this tiny opening.

Last chance!

Lu Boyuan knew it was his last chance. Chaotic Cloudy Mountain moved like the wind as he charged towards Dancing Rain.

Boom!

Su Mucheng fired at him as she jumped back, using the recoil to retreat. Dancing Rain didn't try to stand her ground and attack. With Chaotic Cloudy Mountain charging towards her relentlessly, she needed to keep away from him.

Fire and smoke surrounded Chaotic Cloudy Mountain. He dodged and ran. There was only one option left for him: get closer. If he could get close to her, even if he was at his last breath, he would still have a chance.

One advanced, while the other retreated.

A chase had begun. The distance was slowly closing, but Chaotic Cloudy Mountain's health was slowly dropping too. From 42% to 35% to 30% to 20%...

I can catch her!

Lu Boyuan was ecstatic. He had calculated it. He would be able to hang on until he reached Dancing Rain. This was the small opening that he had fought for in the beginning. That small opening allowed Lu

Boyuan to perceive that Su Mucheng's offense wasn't perfect. Her tempo was slightly off, and the distance hadn't been perfect for her firing line. She had put pressure on him and blocked off his escape, but it wasn't nearly as focused and oppressive as before.

I can do it! I can do it! This time, I have to seize this opportunity properly. I don't have much health, but it doesn't matter. 10% is enough as long as I don't let Dancing Rain escape.

Five steps! Five steps away!

The next step he took would be the turning point. Once Su Mucheng was five steps away, there would be huge holes in her Launcher's offense. Su Mucheng might be able to use her experience to cut that distance down to three or four steps, but nevertheless, with this next step, her threat would be drastically reduced. He would be the one in control!

Lu Boyuan stared intently at Dancing Rain. He couldn't make any mistakes. Suddenly, he saw Dancing Rain suddenly put away her handcannon and take out a rifle.

Gun Switching Style?

Lu Boyuan felt his heart tighten. The Gun Switching Style or the Weapon Switching Style had its clever uses in combat. One of these uses was to help give the character another skill, since a skill could be attached to each weapon.

Dancing Rain had suddenly switched to a Rifle. Perhaps it was to increase her attack speed, but Launchers that didn't use their class-specific weapon would deal significantly less damage. In addition, they lose the bonus from their class advancement skill "Heavy Gunfire Control". All of their skills would become less effective. As a result, she wouldn't be using her Launcher skills to retake control. What's more, the rifle was only slightly faster than the handcannon.

Then... it was very likely that the bonus skill on the rifle could turn things around. What could it be?

Luckily, she wasn't an unspecialized, so there was no need to consider skills from all 24 classes. He could narrow it down to the 4 Gunner classes. However, instantly coming up with an answer was too difficult. He could only be wary of it. At this moment, the rifle began to fire at him.

What is it?

Lu Boyuan opened his eyes wide. He noticed something rise up from Dancing Rain's feet. It was a Mounted Gun.

What?

Lu Boyuan wasn't the only one surprised. Hadn't Mounted Gun just been used? This Level 75 skill's cooldown wasn't so short. It couldn't be a Mounted Gun from her rifle. If the skill added to the weapon wasn't a new skill, then the skill level would be raised by one. It didn't mean that the user would have two of the same skill.

It wasn't possible for it to be a Mounted Gun. Switching to a rifle wouldn't refresh the skill and get rid of its cooldown.

Uh? Refresh?

He understood now.

It was the Sharpshooter skill: Dual Load. It was a skill that let the user instantly refresh a skill on cooldown, and Su Mucheng had chosen to refresh Mounted Gun.

So it's like that...

Lu Boyuan let out a bitter laugh. He hadn't expected Su Mucheng to come out with this move. This was his loss.

Grappler grab skills were high priority moves, but there were things that couldn't be grabbed such as the Summoner's Devil World Flower. Once it put down its roots, it could not be moved. Grappler grab skills would only deal damage. There would be no secondary effects. To put it simply, grab skills only dealt damage when used against targets that could not be moved.

A Launcher using Mounted Gun was considered a target that could not be moved.

His grabs would only deal damage. He wouldn't be able to stop Dancing Rain from attacking. Mounted Gun would increase her attack power by a massive amount. It would also increase her defense and give her Super Armor. There was no way to stop a Launcher using Mounted Gun from attacking. Su Mucheng could easily finish him off. She would simply have to sacrifice a bit of health to do so.

Boom!

A Satellite Beam descended, and Chaotic Cloudy Mountain fell. Chaotic Cloudy Mountain didn't have much health left. He could not retreat. During his final moments, he could only try to deal as much damage as possible to Dancing Rain. When he fell, he was able to take out 28% of Dancing Rain's health. Even though his grabs didn't have secondary effects, just the damage alone was frightening. Unfortunately, Chaotic Cloudy Mountain didn't have much health left. If not, if he could survive a bit longer, it would be hard to say who would win.

Happy's Su Mucheng had won with 59% health, giving Happy a substantial lead. This fight had the clearest winner and loser in the group arena so far. In the match between Jiang Botao and Mo Fan, when Jiang Botao had no skills available, Mo Fan had given him quite the beating. In this match, although Lu Boyuan was able to take out 28% of Dancing Rain's health during his final moments, much more than what Su Mucheng did to him during that period of time, it couldn't really be said that he had the upper hand the majority of the battle. Ever since Su Mucheng was able to escape from his grasp, Su Mucheng took complete control over the fight. She fully deserved this win.

Chapter 1603: Believe in the Power of Love

In the group arena, Happy finally established a clear lead for themselves. Lu Boyuan quietly left the stage. The Samsara fans in the stadium didn't blame him though.

In this round, no matter who won or lost, it would be very easy to widen the gap between the two teams. This was something that any experienced Glory player would understand, simply due to the two player's classes. One was a Launcher, and the other was a Grappler. If an appropriate distance was maintained, the Grappler would simply have no way to land attacks on the Launcher; if the Grappler

could close the distance and latch on to the Launcher, the Launcher wouldn't be able to put up a proper fight.

Victory and defeat would be determined by the to-and-fro of controlling the distance. The resulting difference in health would definitely be influenced by the disparity in distance control between the two players, something decided by the uniqueness of their classes.

In the end, the result really was determined by such logic.

Samsara still had two players left. Would they be able to close the gap?

The audience gazed at Samsara's player bench, waiting for their fourth player to take the stage.

Du Ming!

Samsara's fourth player was Du Ming, meaning that one of their ace players, Sun Xiang, was set to come out as their fifth, a somewhat conservative arrangement. After Zhou Zekai was the first to take the stage, the one viewed as the second best in 1v1s, Sun Xiang, wasn't their third or fourth player, but instead their last. The purpose for this was already something that people had started to discuss as soon as the list of players for the group arena had first been broadcasted.

But at this time, when Samsara had fallen behind, needing to win a two versus two and a half, having Du Ming go up first and Sun Xiang bringing up the rear seemed more stable.

Conservative, but also stable.

As Du Ming rose from the player benches while talking to his teammates, he couldn't help but cast a glance at Happy's player bench.

But no matter how many times he swept his gaze across, Tang Rou still continued to single-mindedly watch the review of the previous round that was being played on the large TV screen.

"What's the point in looking, it's not like anyone's looking back!" Someone on Samsara's side noticed Du Ming's wandering gaze and said.

"Could she be avoiding me?" Du Ming said to himself.

"You joker! Quickly get on stage!" Most of the Samsara players couldn't take it anymore.

Du Ming raised his head, looking at the list of players for both teams displayed on the large screen. If he wanted to face off against Tang Rou, he had no choice but to fight till the very end! That meant that not only did he have to beat Su Mucheng, whose character was still at 59% health, he also had to beat their next player, Fang Rui.....

He had to do his best!

Du Ming silently clenched his fists, firmly walking towards the stage.

"Is this why you kept suggesting that he play fourth?" Jiang Botao watched all of Du Ming's actions and asked the Cleric player, Fang Minghua.

“Believe in the power of love!” Fang Minghua wore an experienced look on his face. As one of the few married players in the Glory Alliance, he felt that he had a particular authority on the topic. On top of that, most of the players in the community were still very young, and were always on the computer, meaning that most of them didn’t even have a girlfriend.

“At the very least... it’s safe,” Jiang Botao evidently didn’t allow for this arrangement of players due to such a childish-sounding reason. More importantly, he believed that having Sun Xiang as the fifth player to bring up the rear was a more dependable decision. So in the end, Samsara’s decision meant that they would bear witness to “the power of love”.

“Happy’s group arena arrangements almost always seem to have Tang Rou as their anchor. By putting Du Ming as the fourth player, if he happens to directly run into Tang Rou, he will use everything he has to defeat her, to make her take note of his abilities. If he doesn’t run into Tang Rou, then he will use everything he has to kill his way to this goal.” Once again, Fang Minghua expounded on why he believed in this particular arrangement.

“Brilliant,” Jiang Botao nodded and said.

Everyone else was completely speechless. Perhaps only their vice-captain would be able to accept all of these things without batting an eyelid! Everyone felt that Du Ming’s looked extremely solemn and tragic as he walked onto the stage. What exactly was he fighting for?

Du Ming walked onto the stage and entered his player booth. A new round began as the characters loaded in.

Within Samsara, Du Ming could definitely be considered part of the main force, even though his fame wasn’t as resounding as Zhou Zekai and the rest. That being said, in the recent few years, Samsara had invested more and more into their team, making remarkable improvements to all of their characters. Even his Blade Master, Moon-Luring Frost could now be counted as being mostly kitted out in Silver gear. The Lightsaber in his hands, Ice Shards, didn’t have a high-class sounding name, but after repeated refinement, it was now considered to be one of “Glory’s Top Ten Swords” by many players, so it was clearly exceptional.

Deep breaths!

Du Ming calmed himself. At this time, he couldn’t afford to think too much about Tang Rou, who had yet to take the field. If he wanted to have a decisive battle with her, he still had to get past the next two obstacles. Now, he would concentrate and take out Su Mucheng first.

Battle start!

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Du Ming’s attitude was resolute. Moon-Luring Frost quickly set off, directly moving towards the center path.

On Su Mucheng’s side, Dancing Rain also didn’t opt to take a roundabout way, and similarly headed for the centre. However, she knew that the center path had a stalactite running from top to bottom, which would block her view of the other side. As such, Dancing Rain strategically headed in a slightly slanted direction from the beginning, so that her view wouldn’t be blocked by the stalactite.

Advance!

The distance between the two characters continued to shrink.

Just when the respective players had advanced halfway, Du Ming's Moon-Luring Frost instead changed his direction, heading horizontally to the side.

He didn't resolutely take the middle path, as everyone had expected. Once he had taken the middle path halfway, he suddenly started to take a roundabout route.

The roundabout route wasn't that far away, but with the field of view from the strategic angle that Su Mucheng had Dancing Rain take, she wouldn't be able to notice Moon-Luring Frost's movement.

With regards to using the stalagmites in this map, all of Samsara's players were extremely masterful. With the final path that Du Ming's Moon-Luring Frost took, instead of calling it a roundabout route, it was more like the strategic angle that Su Mucheng had taken, slightly offset from the centre. It was just that this slight slant made full use of the distributions of the stalactites. Obviously, this was a route that Samsara had researched to advance towards the center while still being able to conceal oneself.

Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain reached the middle of the map and stopped moving.

Seeing that her opponent hadn't appeared, that meant that he hadn't taken the middle path, or that he had hidden himself...

Even though she didn't exactly know what trick Du Ming had pulled, after these few rounds, the way in which Samsara used the stalagmites in this map was something that an experienced player like Su Mucheng could already faintly infer.

Instead of advancing, Su Mucheng had Dancing Rain use an Electronic Eye. Afterwards, Su Mucheng began advancing again, but she maintained an appropriate distance with each and every stalactite within her field of view.

Her footsteps were so soft that the match was suddenly devoid of sound, as if someone had muted it.

Through their omniscient point of view, the audience could see that both the characters were moving closer to each other, step by step. However, Dancing Rain maintaining a cautious distance from any stalagmite meant that Du Ming didn't have any opportunity to make a move.

The Blade Master wasn't like the Grappler that required a zero-distance confrontation, but it still couldn't take a long-ranged fight. In reality, this match actually followed very similar logic to the previous one.

What would happen next? Everyone held their breaths and watched on.

Chapter 1604: Extraordinary Du Ming

Moon Luring Frost's head suddenly poked out from behind the stalagmite.

Boom!

Cannonfire immediately shot towards him. It was certainly unfortunate timing for Moon Luring Frost. He had come out just when Dancing Rain was aimed towards him. When Su Mucheng saw him, she immediately pulled the trigger.

The artillery shells were aimed at the edges of the stalagmite instead of directly towards Moon Luring Frost. Su Mucheng had taken into account that Du Ming's Moon Luring Frost would be able to take cover in time. As a result, she went for the splash damage instead, while simultaneously having Dancing Rain circle around to get to a different angle.

However, Moon Luring Frost didn't take cover. He came out of hiding completely.

The artillery shell exploded, and the shockwave spread out, but Moon Luring Frost was unaffected.

How?

Dancing Rain was startled. Moon Luring Frost suddenly rushed out. Behind him were one, two, three, four, five Moon Luring Frosts followed behind in quick succession.

Shadow Steps!

Du Ming had used Shadow Steps. The Moon Luring Frost that had been unaffected by the first shot was evidently a fake shadow.

The shadows created from Shadow Steps were different from Ninja shadow clones. Shadow Steps produced afterimages, which couldn't be damaged. As long as the skill wasn't interrupted, these afterimages could not be destroyed. To interrupt the skill, you needed to hit the true body. Du Ming was able to produce six shadows. He had the ability to produce more, but not to this level of perfection. Su Mucheng had already eliminated one of the possibilities with her first shot, but which one among the other five was the real one? Su Mucheng couldn't distinguish between them from observation alone.

In that case, she could only test them out one by one using attacks.

Gatling Gun!

Dancing Rain lifted up a Gatling Gun and swept across. The bullets flew towards the five untested Moon Luring Frosts. However, the five Moon Luring Frosts weren't just standing there like sitting ducks. Under Du Ming's control, all of them went in different directions to hide and dodge the incoming attacks. The audience suddenly realized that when Du Ming chose to hide behind this specific stalagmite, his objective hadn't simply been because he could no longer move covertly after reaching it. When the shadows from Shadow Steps scattered, the arrangement of the surrounding stalagmites was perfect for their escape. To dodge the Gatling Gun, the five shadows went straight for the closest stalagmite.

This didn't seem to be an impromptu decision. It seemed more like something he had practiced. Du Ming had clearly studied this map on his own in order to coordinate his Shadow Step with the surrounding terrain.

Su Mucheng realized that the situation wasn't good. With the shadows scattered, she didn't know which one to target. She didn't know which one posed the most threat to her. The terrain was perfect for Du Ming right now.

Retreat first.

Su Mucheng had Dancing Rain retreat. However, Du Ming didn't stop to rest after disrupting Su Mucheng's offense. The shadows immediately rushed out again, coming towards her from different directions.

Which one was real?

Let alone Su Mucheng, even the viewers didn't know. Which one was the real threat?

Five shadows, five swords flashing with a dangerous light. Su Mucheng discovered that she had no safe way to escape. Under Du Ming's meticulously practiced pursuit, from the scattered shadows back to a combined assault, all of her retreat paths were blocked.

Her only choice was to figure out which one was real and attack it, or run away and leave it up to luck.

Her chances were quite high. There was only one real one. All the others were fake and wouldn't actually deal any damage to her. If she chose one to rush towards, there was a high probability that she would run into a fake one.

But pro Blade Masters wouldn't just watch quietly as the opponent ran recklessly towards one of the shadows. They would adjust what their shadows did depending on their opponent's movements. The shadow that you run towards might try to avoid you, but that didn't mean it was necessarily the fake one. The shadow charging towards you filled with killing intent might not be the real one.

Experienced Blade Masters would control their shadows to make it very difficult to tell which one was real or fake. Choosing which one to go towards wasn't as simple as a gambling on chance. It would also test the opponent's courage and resolve.

Which one will she choose?

Du Ming stared intently at Dancing Rain. He was certain that Su Mucheng would end up choosing one of the shadows to move towards, but no matter which one she chose, Du Ming had a way to make Dancing Rain take damage. He was confident because he had practiced this Shadow Step formation numerous times. The distance between any two shadows seemed random, but in reality, the distance had been carefully studied so that it was optimal. And then, through practice, he was able to set up this formation in a short amount of time.

Come!

Choose one! Let's end this fight.

Du Ming was waiting. Finally, Dancing Rain moved. However, she didn't seem to move towards any of the shadows. She moved towards the center of their combined attacks.

What is she thinking?

Du Ming stared blankly at her. Dancing Rain lifted her arm, pointing her cannon into the air as if she were giving out a signal.

Satellite Beam!

Du Ming immediately recognized what skill she planned on using. Had she somehow figured out which one was real?

Impossible! Du Ming had even watched his own recordings when he practiced this five Shadow Step assault. He didn't remember which one was the real body, and he couldn't figure out which one was the real body either. Du Ming's execution of this tactic had reached perfection.

There was no way she knew. She was probably bluffing, baiting me into making a mistake!

Du Ming concluded. His control over his Shadow Steps was unaffected. The shadows grew closer and closer. Boom! The Satellite Beam descended, unexpectedly with Dancing Rain in the middle. The smaller pillars of light spinning around the main pillar, swept through the surroundings.

Since I can't get you to make a mistake, then I'll just attack all five!

Six pillars of light spread outwards. The five shadows were too close. Two of them were immediately swallowed by two of the pillars. These two shadows weren't affected by the attack, fakes.

Three more!

Su Mucheng was just about to check them, when a sword light flashed in front of her. A blue light tore through the Satellite Beam.

Meteor Form!

The sword light was like a meteor, weaving between two smaller light pillars, straight into the main light pillar. A streak of red blood splashed into the air.

Then, Curving Wind Form!

The blood suddenly curved back in the opposite direction, bringing Dancing Rain along with it.

Colliding Stab!

After two Level 75 Blade Master skills, Du Ming followed with a low-level Berserker skill. However, this skill was the key to breaking open this situation.

Moon Luring Frost's weapon, Lingering Ice, pressed against Dancing Rain's stomach. When a Blade Master used Colliding Stab, the attack wouldn't have as fearsome of a knockback. But it was enough to carry along the opponent outwards. Moon Luring Frost escaped from the Satellite Beam's range, dragging Dancing Rain along with him.

The stadium erupted with thunderous applause!

Du Ming had made a brilliant play. The AoE from the Launcher's Satellite Beam seemed to be nonexistent to him. Such precise movements and attacks deserved the applause.

"Look, this is the power of love!!" Fang Minghua slapped his leg, laughing at Du Ming.

The other Samsara players nodded their heads and applauded. Whether it was the power of love or not, Du Ming had made a beautiful play. It was an exceptional display of skill that could definitely woo any girl. Thinking of this, several Samsara players glanced towards Happy's seats, at Tang Rou. But what they

saw was Tang Rou watching the match intently. She seemed to have an expression of worry on her face. It didn't look like she had been enchanted at all by Du Ming's incredible play.

It's not enough, Du Ming! A bit more!

Du Ming's teammates cheered him on.

Du Ming continued to perform, but he wasn't thinking about all that. Beating the opponent in front of him was everything right now. He had to focus on this goal. Tang Rou? She might be one source of motivation, but she wouldn't be on his mind right now.

He only had one thing on his mind: beat his opponent.

Sword light flashed.

With the Colliding Stab landing, he had closed the distance between himself and Dancing Rain. Moon Luring Frost immediately started his assault, using the blossoming blood to perform a brightly-colored dance.

Beautiful!

The crowd applauded again.

He had dragged Dancing Rain out of the Satellite Beam beautifully, and his follow-up had been beautiful as well. Su Mucheng wasn't going to just have Dancing Rain stand there like a dead tree. She kept searching for a chance to escape, but the interweaving sword light locked her in place. She would occasionally find an opportunity to attack from close-range, but these attacks never created any substantial opportunities for her. She didn't give up, but even when Dancing Rain fell, no opportunity had come.

One combo to death!

Even though Dancing Rain only had 59% health to begin with, killing her in one combo was an incredible performance from Du Ming. His Moon Luring Frost had only lost 12% of his health. Du Ming had closed the 59% lead by 47%. There was only a difference in 12% health between the two sides.

Du Ming didn't get too pleased with himself over this point. The instant Dancing Rain was killed, he immediately waved away Su Mucheng from his mind.

Next! Du Ming was already thinking. There was a bit of a gap in his thoughts right afterwards: if I win the next one, then I can meet with Tang Rou.

And his next opponent was Fang Rui and his Boundless Sea.

Chapter 1605: An Undeserving Pay

"Du Ming's in really good condition today. Be careful," Ye Xiu said to Fang Rui.

"In better condition than me?" Fang Rui scoffed.

"Haha," Ye Xiu laughed.

“What’s ‘haha’ supposed to mean!” Fang Rui could feel the disdain from Ye Xiu’s laugh.

“You’re getting paid the most out of all of us. Please,” Ye Xiu said.

“Peh!” Fang Rui wasn’t going to fall for Ye Xiu’s trap. He turned around and headed towards the stage.

However, his actions didn’t match his thoughts. Ye Xiu wasn’t wrong. He was the highest-paid player on Happy, and it wasn’t even close. But ever since the playoffs began, what had he been able to accomplish?

He hadn’t been completely useless, of course, but not being completely useless wasn’t really deserving of having the highest pay on the team.

The core player on the team was usually the highest paid player. Fang Rui knew that he wasn’t the core. Even so, he should at least be a deciding factor in the matches to correspond with that pay.

But what had he been able to do thus far?

He had only been a bit of use in the playoffs. Wei Chen, who was practically a dying grandpa in the pro scene, had more highlights than him. There was also Luo Ji, a college student who barely even played in the regular season. All of them had made plays that had won the team the game.

As for him?

He couldn’t compare with Ye Xiu, fine. But not being able to compare with a young rookie and an elderly grandpa? What’s going on?

Fang Rui asked himself. In particular, in their third and final game against Tyranny, he had been carried by his teammates to victory. He had been extremely unhappy with his performance. He had been hoping to redeem himself against Samsara. In their first game against Samsara, he had been Happy’s third player in the group arena. In the end, he had lost to Sun Xiang, who had been Samsara’s third player as well. In the team competition, he continued to perform like he was just a placeholder in the team. The deepest impression that people got from him that match was when he was killed.

What am I doing?

He had repeatedly underperformed during the playoffs. Fang Rui felt like he should have already lost his position. However, Fang Rui continued to send him up. The team’s trust in him only made him feel more pressured.

I have to change! What do I need to do?

Fang Rui said to himself as he came across Su Mucheng.

“Be careful. He’s in really good condition today,” Su Mucheng said to him.

“Fuck, are you two colluding?” Fang Rui replied.

“What?” Su Mucheng was a bit confused, but quickly realized that someone must have said something similar to Fang Rui, and she knew who that someone was.

“As if there was any need to collude,” Su Mucheng chuckled.

Fang Rui was speechless.

True. It was pretty obvious that Du Ming was playing really well today. How could Ye Xiu and Su Mucheng not be able to tell? The two were just reminding him and also worrying for him.

“Relax,” Fang Rui smiled at Su Mucheng, “I, Fang Rui, am worthy of my name!”

“Haha,” Su Mucheng laughed.

“Haha, what haha. You’re becoming more and more like him, you know that?” Fang Rui cursed.

“Good luck!” Su Mucheng didn’t bother bickering with Fang Rui.

“Do you mind grabbing me some hot water? I’m going to need a drink after I beat him,” Fang Rui waved his arms. Then, he turned around and continued to walk towards the stage.

He entered the player booth, sucked in a deep breath, swiped his account card, and loaded into the game.

The seventh round of the group arena. Happy’s fourth player, Fang Rui, versus Samsara’s fourth player, Du Ming.

“Don’t block my way!!” As soon as the match began, Fang Rui immediately yelled out into the chat.

“Don’t block my way!” Du Ming wasn’t going to be outdone. Moon Luring Frost rushed out.

“Come!” Fang Rui shouted. Boundless Sea ran around in a circle twice and then crouched down, hiding behind the closest stalagmite.

The crowd went into an uproar.

That was the Fang Rui that everyone knew. Saying such bravado and doing something else wasn’t a feat that just anyone could accomplish.

Du Ming’s Moon Luring Frost didn’t use the terrain to hide himself as he moved this time. He went straight for the center of the map. As for Fang Rui’s Boundless Sea, he just crouched down behind a stalagmite as if he were bored to death. From time to time, he would type into the chat: “Are you here yet?”

“Why are you so slow?”

It had been such an intense match so far, but now that the lazy Fang Rui had come, it was like an eggplant wilting from the frost. The Samsara fans felt like their energy was being sapped. Fang Rui had completely ruined the tense atmosphere in the stadium. The peak-level match had suddenly turned into an in-game 1v1 in the Glory Arena.

“I’m here. Where are you?” After Du Ming’s Moon Luring Frost reached the center of the map, he replied in the chat. It looked like he was quite familiar with Fang Rui’s personality. You could never believe Fang Rui’s words. Moon Luring Frost looked around and then continued forward towards Happy’s spawn point.

“I’m too tired to move. I’m waiting at the spawn point!” Fang Rui replied.

“Just wait there, so I can hurry up and finish this,” Du Ming said. Moon Luring Frost continued to push forward. However, this time, he didn’t move in a straight line. Instead, he did the same as when he played against Su Mucheng. He chose to use the terrain to move around covertly.

“If you’re in such a hurry, why not just GG?” Fang Rui asked.

The crowd went in an uproar again. Enough of this bullshit. Can’t you be more serious? A lot of people didn’t like how unprofessional Fang Rui was. Samsara started mass booing for the first time, all towards Fang Rui.

Fang Rui couldn’t hear them. He continued to talk nonsense. On the other hand, Du Ming’s Moon Luring Frost was getting closer and closer. But because Fang Rui hadn’t done anything since the start of the fight, Du Ming had no way of knowing where Fang Rui was. Was Boundless Sea hiding behind one of these stalagmites?

Du Ming didn’t move rashly. The home team players knew better than the away team players on how to use the map. Moon Lure Frost quietly moved towards a stalagmite. He didn’t overlook the possibility that Boundless Sea would happen to be hiding behind it. As a result, he put up his guard as he charged towards it.

There was no one there.

His lightsaber, Lingering Ice, hit nothing but air. Du Ming wasn’t concerned. He went towards this stalagmite and suddenly jumped.

One jump, two jumps, three jumps, four jumps.

He went up and down four times before finally reaching the top of the stalagmite.

But it wasn’t like the stalagmite was that tall. If he couldn’t see anyone before, he still wouldn’t be able to see anyone.

Du Ming’s Moon Luring Frost didn’t even look around. He stared straight at another stalagmite that was closeby.

Jump!

Moon Luring Frost jumped towards that stalagmite.

Chapter 1606: You Shouldn’t Have Tried to Play Dirty In Front of Me

This distance!

The audience felt their hearts jump. The stalagmites scattered around the cave weren’t arranged densely together. Most of the time, the distance between them was too far to cover in a single jump. Du Ming had chosen two relatively close stalagmites, but it seemed a bit sketchy. Was he going to make it?

Moon Luring Frost fell from the air. It didn’t seem like he would make it. The Samsara fans had already started crying out in alarm. Then, they saw Moon Luring Frost take a step in the air. His foot landed on the stalagmite, and with a push, he was able to bring his entire body over onto it.

Applause!

Even though it had just been a normal jump, that final step made it seem like he had just barely made it. The fans couldn't help but cheer out of joy.

With a new view of his surroundings, Du Ming quickly looked around, but Boundless Sea was nowhere to be seen. In the meantime, the viewers also took a look, paying attention to any nearby stalagmites. Apart from going back the way he came, it didn't seem like there was any other stalagmite he could jump to. Moon Luring Frost could take a step in the air, but he couldn't take two steps, could he?

The normal players could tell that this time, there was no way he could jump to any other stalagmite. However, Du Ming didn't seem to have noticed. Moon Luring Frost turned and went for a stalagmite that was clearly too far away.

This time, not only did their hearts jump along with Moon Luring Frost's jump, the crowd went straight for cries of alarm. There was no way he would reach it. He would land in front of it, and his view would then be blocked. Moon Luring Frost faced the stalagmite squarely, showing his determination...

But in the game, jumping power was a number. Determination wouldn't change anything!

Then, they noticed that although Moon Luring Frost was facing the stalagmite, he was jumping slightly off center.

This is?

The audience able to immediately figure out Du Ming's goal using their omniscient view of the map. There was a stalactite hanging down from the ceiling. He wanted to jump off this stalactite to make a second jump, which would make it possible for him to reach the intended stalagmite.

That was exactly what happened. Moon Luring Frost went for the stalactite first. He pushed off of it and then jumped gently onto the new stalagmite.

After seeing this jump, the audience immediately started paying attention to the stalactites, realizing that there were actually a lot of them that he could use. This sort of jump might be a bit tricky for normal players to successfully perform, but there was no way a pro player would make a mistake at something as fundamental as this.

With a new view of his surroundings, Du Ming once again looked around, but he still didn't see Boundless Sea. However, the audience knew that if continued searching, he would find Fang Rui's Boundless Sea in the next try if he was lucky. By choosing the stalagmite where Boundless Sea was hiding behind, he would end up positioned right above Boundless Sea. Everyone was eager to see this ambush happen, particularly when the one being ambushed was the master of playing dirty.

Du Ming was looking for where to go next. All of the Samsara fans were filled with hope. At this point, the Happy fans were starting to question Fang Rui's inaction. How was he supposed to win if he just sat there doing nothing?

Du Ming finally picked a stalagmite. The crowd immediately started clapping excitedly.

Not only was Du Ming playing amazing today, his luck was out of this world. There had been four stalagmites that he could have jumped to, and he happened to pick the one that Boundless Sea was hiding at. If that wasn't luck, what was it?

Jump!

Moon Luring Frost jumped off a stalactite and then landed gently onto his destination. From start to finish, no sound had been made. He could already see Boundless Sea crouching behind the stalagmite.

As if afraid to startle Fang Rui, the stadium suddenly went silent. The Samsara fans seemed to have put themselves in Du Ming's situation. Du Ming had to be carefully and quietly make his move.

Coming!

Moon Luring Frost stepped off the top of the stalagmite and suddenly dropped down. His sword descended, leaving an arc of pale blue light.

As for Boundless Sea? Everyone quickly looked towards him.

Boundless Sea had moved the moment Moon Luring Frost had taken the step. Fang Rui's Boundless Sea suddenly got up and stepped away calmly, dodging Moon Luring Frost's attack.

Boundless Sea slowly turned his head to look at the sword light flashing in front of him.

Du Ming was alarmed.

He didn't think he had made any noise. He also didn't see Boundless Sea look up. How had Fang Rui known that he had attacked?

Du Ming's attack had missed, and now, Fang Rui could take advantage of it to launch an attack of his own. Qi Masters were a powerful mid-ranged class. They were quite threatening at close-range, but not in comparison to the other three Fighter classes. By pulling away, he would be able to effortlessly take advantage of the opening, and there was nowhere for Du Ming's Moon Luring Frost to run to. Boundless Sea had already started gathering qi, ready to attack.

I have to act before I land!

Even though he had no idea how Fang Rui had noticed him, it wasn't the time to ponder over it. His ambush had failed, and he needed to quickly do something before he got caught by Fang Rui's counterattack.

He didn't have many options though. All he could do was try to make it harder for Fang Rui.

As a result, Moon Luring Frost gently twisted his body. His movements needed to be very minute so that it looked natural. He also needed to do it before he landed on the ground.

Du Ming wanted to push off the stalagmite so that he could attack first.

But Moon Luring Frost had only just moved a tiny bit, when Boundless Sea pushed out his palms.

Dragon Wave!

The wave of qi was filled with killing intent. This skill could be controlled after it was shot out. Du Ming could no longer bother with making his movements subtle. Moon Luring Frost straightened his body in a panic and jumped off of the stalagmite!

His gaze was locked onto Boundless Sea. However, Du Ming discovered that he had no way to attack him. All the attacks that he could make were sealed off completely by Dragon Wave.

Everything had been within Fang Rui's expectations. Could he dodge this Dragon Wave?

Moon Luring Frost didn't have any place he could jump off of anymore. If he wanted to dodge while in the air, he could only rely on a skill. He saw the Dragon Wave roaring towards Moon Luring Frost. He had to act immediately.

Falling Light Blade!

Sword light flashed. Moon Luring Frost dropped straight down. The Dragon Wave wouldn't be able to keep up with Falling Light Blade.

But Boundless Sea could...

Noticing that Du Ming had his attention on Dragon Wave, Fang Rui had Boundless Sea rush forward. Dragon Wave? He had abandoned control over it. Boundless Sea gathered a new wave of qi. Not waiting for Moon Luring Frost's Falling Light Blade to land, he threw the qi at him. Du Ming finally had no options left.

Flash Burst!

Boundless Sea struck Moon Luring Frost with his palm. The Falling Light Blade was interrupted. Qi violently blossomed, sending Moon Luring Frost flying back. Du Ming lost control of his character, and the previous Dragon Wave hit him as well!

Fang Rui had chained these two skills to perform a pincer attack from the front and the back.

The damage dealt by Flash Burst couldn't be underestimated. Dragon Wave's effect was annoying. The target hit by it would have decreased attack speed and attack power for a period of time.

Moon Luring Frost flew back to where he came from towards that stalagmite. Boundless Sea didn't give chase. Instead, he began gathering qi again.

What was coming next?

Sky Piercing Strike!

Boundless Sea pushed out with his two palms. The gathered qi swallowed the airborne Moon Luring Frost. Du Ming couldn't attend to what was behind or what was in front. The Sky Piercing Strike made Moon Luring Frost crash even harder into the stalagmite.

The force of the impact was quite heavy. Bits of sand broke off from the stalagmite and fell.

Du Ming was stunned. He realized how Fang Rui had noticed him. It turned out that his silent jumping would still give off signs. The stalagmite seemed sturdy, but whenever he landed, bits of sand would shake off from it, which Fang Rui had unexpectedly noticed.

Fang Rui wasn't nearly as bored as he appeared. He had been very focused. Otherwise, how could he have noticed such a tiny detail? The shaking that he had produced from landing couldn't compare to when he crashed into the stalagmite due to the Dragon Wave. The bits of sand that fell off would be much smaller, yet Fang Rui had still noticed them.

"Your biggest mistake is playing dirty in front of me."

A message jumped out in the chat. His words were quite domineering, but when you thought about it more carefully, all of that loftiness seemed to disappear. Wasn't he basically saying that I'm dirtier than you are?

There was no such thing as appearing imposing when playing dirty, yet Fang Rui had made it sound that way.

Fang Rui... was indeed very dirty!

Chapter 1607: Everything Hitting

"Yup, you're dirtier than me," Du Ming unexpectedly replied back to Fang Rui immediately. He seemed quite eager and quite happy to acknowledge it.

"Fuck! You can't lose, even if it's in being dirty!" Lu Boyuan jumped out of his seat. He had been feeling rather unhappy because of his defeat in the group arena. Just when he was feeling particularly sad, he saw Du Ming admitting that he couldn't compare to his opponent and couldn't bear it. As for what was being compared, that wasn't the point.

"Um... well..." Fang Minghua coughed.

"From the way Tang Rou plays, I don't think she's very appreciative of people who play dirty," Jiang Botao said.

"Fang Rui hit him right where it hurts!" Fang Minghua said.

"That's why he immediately made things clear," Jiang Botao said.

"If that's all he's concerned about, how is he going to win?" Lu Boyuan was very dissatisfied with how Du Ming was letting his emotions affect the match, especially in one as crucial as the finals.

"Don't worry," Jiang Botao patted Lu Bouyan's back, "He's very focused right now. Even if he's thinking of Tang Rou, all that will be on his mind is to play his very best. Have trust in him!"

Lu Boyuan still wanted to say something, but when he saw a new development happening on stage, he was able to restrain himself.

After Du Ming replied back to Fang Rui, he immediately counterattacked. There was no dirtiness, only righteousness. He turned to face Boundless Sea, Downwind Sword Slash!

Sword light flew out. Moon Luring Frost had just crashed into a wall after getting hit by Dragon Wave. His entire body was shaking, making it very difficult for him to attack accurately. Even so, Du Ming let out an attack. The Downwind Sword Slash collided with Boundless Sea's qi.

Blade Masters dealt physical damage, while Qi Masters qi dealt magic damage. Physical against magical. It was much harder to calculate which one had higher priority. Boundless Sea had fired a Spirit Reaches to the Rainbow, a Qi Master Awakening skill. Its might didn't need to be said. On the other hand, Downwind Sword Slash was a Blade Master skill with very high priority. When the two skills collided, there was no interaction between them. The Downwind Sword Slash moved right past the qi, striking Boundless Sea. The Spirit Reaches to the Rainbow continued its journey forward, hitting Moon Luring Frost.

Hit!

Moon Luring Frost was hit again. Fang Rui had accounted for how far Moon Luring Frost would bounce back after crashing into the stalagmite. His attack had been extremely precise.

However, Fang Rui hadn't thought that Du Ming would send out an attack of his own in these circumstances. It was a Downwind Sword Slash, too. Unfortunately, Du Ming was just a bit too slow.

Because Moon Luring Frost had been hit by Dragon Wave. His attack speed and attack power had been reduced. As a result, despite beautifully executing the Downwind Sword Slash, it wasn't as powerful nor as fast as it should have been.

Even so, it wouldn't be easy for Boundless Sea to dodge it. The execution from Du Ming had been too on point. Fang Rui wouldn't be able to avoid it unless he used a skill. As a result, instead of dodging, he blocked!

Fang Rui was able to respond in time due to the attack's slowed speed. Boundless Sea pushed out with his palms. Qi gathered in front of him and then quickly enlarged, forming a Qi Wave Shield.

Pai!

Qi Wave Shield wasn't a material object. However, when the Downwind Sword Slash hit it, the collision still made a sound. The immaterial Qi Wave Shield was like a material object, and it shattered just like one.

He had blocked it, but Fang Rui still felt a bit of lingering fear from the attack. The Downwind Sword Slash had been slowed because of the Dragon Wave, which gave him enough time to form a Qi Wave Shield. The Downwind Sword Slash had been less powerful as well, which made it just weak enough for his Qi Wave Shield to resist it. If the Downwind Sword Slash had been faster or stronger, Boundless Sea would have taken a huge blow.

Although Boundless Sea was able to block the attack, because he had to deal with it, he wasn't able to continue his combo on Moon Luring Frost. As a result, one Moon Luring Frost recovered from the strike from Spirit Reaches to the Rainbow, he used Triple Slash to close in onto Boundless Sea.

Qi Masters had close-ranged capabilities, but close combat wasn't their specialty. Against a Blade Master, who specialized at close combat, most Qi Masters would choose to run away.

But Fang Rui was a dirty Qi Master. He seemed to be the type of person who would avoid these sorts of disadvantaged situations, yet he made a surprising move.

Spiral Qi Kill!

Boundless Sea didn't retreat. He stood his ground and let out a Spiral Qi Kill!

The spiralling qi instantly enveloped a large area in front of Boundless Sea. Du Ming didn't go into it. He just happened to be on his third slash of his Triple Slash, so he changed directions and slid past the Spiral Qi Kill. Without pause, he slashed with his sword, using the fastest Blade Master attack possible, the Level 75 skill, Meteor Form!

But this time, before the Meteor Form arrived, it lost its radiance. Moon Luring Frost's right hand was caught by Boundless Sea's left hand.

Empty Handed Blade Block!

It wasn't a Qi Master skill. This was the skill Fang Rui had chosen to put on his weapon.

Every player would take advantage of the extra skill that they had. Because not only was it another tool, it was an unknown to the opponent. When used correctly, its first usage in a fight would always shine. Ye Xiu was able to take advantage of this principle almost limitlessly because of his unspecialized character and his special weapon. He could use a total of 12 different skills for the first time...

Other classes were different. Everyone only had one opportunity, and because the range of possibilities was much smaller compared to an unspecialized, the opponent could sometimes guess what it was. It wasn't the case today though. Su Mucheng's Electronic Eye and Lu Boyuan's Cloud Grasping Fist had been used to great effect on their first use. Su Mucheng had used Electronic Eye to finish off Jiang Botao effortlessly. Lu Boyuan had used Cloud Grasping Fist to successfully close in on Dancing Rain, giving himself the upper hand at the start. Unfortunately, he wasn't able to convert that advantage into a win.

Now, Fang Rui had chosen Empty-Handed Blade Block, and it too was put to great effect. Fang Rui had predicted that Du Ming would easily dodge his Spiral Qi Kill and had used the Empty-Handed Blade Block in advance, which was how he had been able to block Meteor Form, the Blade Master's fastest attack.

It was a dismantle skill. Block and then throw. Even if it was only level one, this basic structure would always exist. Boundless Sea blocked the attack and then hit Moon Luring Frost's stomach.

If this skill was used aggressively enough, the throw would send the opponent flying back. However, Boundless Sea had punched very softly. Moon Luring Frost didn't move an inch after taking the punch. However, Du Ming's expression had already changed. Fang Rui had given up on the explosiveness of the throw to minimize the throw effect, so he could follow up with his own class's offensive moves.

Du Ming had no way of dodging because with the "throw", Boundless Sea's hand was already touching his stomach. The difference between Qi Masters and other classes when they attacked was that Qi Masters didn't need to make any arm or wrist movements to produce a force. Their attacks relied mainly on qi, which flowed from their inner body. Since his hand was already on Moon Luring Frost, he could immediately attack. The qi quickly traveled from his body to his hands far faster than Moon Luring Frost could swing his arms!

Pulse Break: Break Intelligence!

Break Intelligence lowered the opponent's Intelligence stat, which reduced the opponent's magic attack power and magic resistance. Qi Masters dealt magic damage. Thus, the purpose of this skill was to

drastically lower Moon Luring Frost's weak magic resistance even further so he could maximize his DPS towards him.

Once the Pulse Break went into effect, the real offense began. It started with a gentle Cloud Pushing Palm, followed by a Spiral Qi Rush. The combo was a very standard one. Not a bit of dirtiness could be seen. For the final blow, he ended with Qigong Blast!

After a standard combo, he finished perfectly with a Level 75 skill. Fang Rui didn't do anything new with his comboing. He ended it with a reliable Qigong Blast, pouring qi into Moon Luring Frost. The light armor worn by Moon Luring Frost trembled from the violent qi. As his body flew back, blood spurt out from Moon Luring Frost's mouth.

"Admit it, you can't beat me not just in dirtiness!" Fang Rui taunted arrogantly. His attacks had been extremely efficient. Apart from the Spirit Reaches to the Rainbow that missed, all of his other attacks had landed on Moon Luring Frost. All of it had taken place within one or two exchanges, yet Moon Luring Frost had already lost 54% of his health. He only had 34% remaining.

As for his Boundless Sea?

Fang Rui's Boundless Sea hadn't lost any health. He was at a perfect 100% health.

The entire stadium was dead silent.

That shameless and despicable bastard, who just sat there behind a stalagmite in the beginning, was somehow dominating Du Ming, who was playing incredible today? Du Ming had shown that he was in amazing form during his match against Su Mucheng. No... even in this match, that Downwind Sword Slash showed how well he was playing. Even so, Fang Rui was completely overwhelming him.

Moon Luring Frost climbed onto his feet after getting blown back by the Qigong Blast and immediately counterattacked. A trace of blood still hung from his mouth due to the damage from the qi.

Isn't he being too impatient?

Has he lost his cool?

It was hard not to think these thoughts seeing Du Ming's impatience. However, Fang Rui felt a shiver down his spine. He knew best that Du Ming immediately counterattacking was the biggest threat to him right now.

This bastard! He really is playing well today. Fang Rui couldn't help but admit it.

Chapter 1608: Too Honest

The comboing onto Moon Luring Frost used up many of the skills Boundless Sea had available. During a combo, both sides needed to pay attention to which skills were used. The side performing the combo wanted to leave as few openings as possible for his opponent to take advantage of. The side being comboed wanted to look for opportunities to break out of the combo.

Fang Rui didn't get so carried away that he would leave any huge holes for himself after finishing his combo. However, because he had chained together so many skills, he didn't have many skills left to use and his options were rather limited. If Du Ming counterattacked immediately, Fang Rui would be in greater danger.

Fang Rui clearly felt this danger.

Such a fast counterattack couldn't have been out of impulse. Du Ming had calmly calculated when exactly his counterattack would be most effective.

Du Ming was playing like he was on fire.

Boundless Sea had appeared righteous and grand just a moment ago. Within the next second, he became the reincarnation of vulgarity. He was rolling all over the ground, fleeing, and hiding, all to run away from Du Ming's counterattack.

"Du Ming is playing extremely well today," Ye Xiu once again brought up this point.

"But he's too honest," Ye Xiu sighed.

"So?" Chen Guo didn't understand.

"He lacks variation and finesse," Ye Xiu explained.

"Finesse as in... playing dirty?" Chen Guo asked.

"You could say that!" Ye Xiu thought about it carefully for a moment before nodding his head.

Du Ming knew the importance of making the first move and counterattacked immediately. But no matter how threatening he may be, Fang Rui had instantly seen through him. If he had mixed it up a bit, he would have made things much more difficult for Fang Rui. Playing dirty required one to pay particular attention towards controlling the pace of a match. The master of playing dirty, Fang Rui, was an expert in this area. Du Ming's counterattack was too straightforward and honest. Even though he had the initiative, the more time went on, the more feeble he seemed.

Blade Master skills had cooldowns too. Every attempt Du Ming made to land the first blow was making his available skill pool smaller and smaller. On the other hand, Fang Rui was only focused on running away. Boundless Sea occasionally took damage, but he always avoided any critical blows. His skills were gradually coming off cooldown. However, Boundless Sea continued doing whatever he could to run away. There didn't seem to be any indication that he was planning on counterattacking, and it was making Chen Guo extremely worried.

"Why isn't he attacking back?" Chen Guo asked Ye Xiu.

"Because Du Ming is asking the same question," Ye Xiu said.

Chen Guo was confused at first, but she figured it out after some thinking. Fang Rui was doing what Du Ming had been lacking previously. He was mixing it up by making Du Ming second-guess himself. It was a way of controlling the tempo. Du Ming felt like Fang Rui was going to start attacking back, but he wasn't seeing any signs of a counterattack. As a result, Du Ming had no idea what Fang Rui was planning on doing.

It was making him uncertain on what he should be doing. Should he continue attacking? Should he slow down the tempo? Should he let out an opening to bait his opponent?

His heart was wavering, and all of this could be seen from the way his character was moving!

An opening!

An obvious opening appeared in Moon Luring Frost's offense. Normal players might not have noticed it, but the spectating pro players immediately saw it. But Fang Rui didn't do anything.

Fang Rui still didn't act. Boundless Sea was still rolling all over the place.

What is he thinking!! Even the pro players were starting to get restless. As for Du Ming? He had immediately noticed the opening and panicked. In a fluster, he started thinking of how he could bring things back. However, Fang Rui didn't act on it.

Did he not see it? No way? What is he thinking?

In any case, I really got lucky that he missed the mistake I made. I have to focus. Du Ming thought to himself. Spiral Qi Kill! Whirling qi suddenly appeared in front of Moon Luring Frost.

Fuck!

The reaction from the pro players were even more intense than the normal players. After all, most of the audience hadn't noticed Du Ming's mistake, so they didn't understand how sudden the Spiral Qi Kill was.

It was as if Du Ming had fallen off a cliff and was climbing back up, but during this time, Fang Rui just stood there, not doing anything. Then, as soon as Du Ming climbed up, narrowly escaping death, Fang Rui ran over and pushed him off.

How dirty! How despicable!

"I can't even watch!" Thunderclap's Dai Yanqi cried out. Many of the younger pro players nodded their heads in agreement. They were all too inexperienced to deal with Fang Rui's dirtiness.

The spiralling qi surged. Du Ming had been completely caught off guard, but there was still time to dodge it!

Du Ming's condition today was godly. He had somehow reacted in time to this surprise attack. Moon Luring Frost stepped to the side, narrowly dodging the Spiral Qi Kill. Just when he was about to counterattack, he suddenly hesitated.

Why does this feel like deja vu? The last time he counterattacked after narrowly dodging a Spiral Qi Kill, hadn't Fang Rui caught him with an Empty Handed Blade Block?

Some of the more astute and experienced pro players noticed Du Ming's hesitation and had the same sentiment as Ye Xiu: "He's too honest..."

Fang Rui had numerous skills that he could have used to attack, but he had specifically chosen to use "Spiral Qi Kill". His aim was to bring up an unpleasant memory for Du Ming and make him feel a sense of deja vu.

Advance or retreat. The decision needed to be made fast. On the other hand, hesitation was exactly what Fang Rui wanted. The hesitation had only been an instant, but Fang Rui had been waiting for that instant!

Spiral Qi Rush!

It was an attack similar to Spiral Qi Kill. The difference was that Spiral Qi Rush carried the user forward as well, closing the gap created from Moon Luring Frost dodging the Spiral Qi Kill. Du Ming shouldn't have been hit by it, but he hesitated when he couldn't hesitate...

Hit!

The spiralling qi wasn't a quiet one. The moment Moon Luring Frost was hit, ear-piercing screeches sounded from the qi tearing through his light armor. The dirty Qi Master immediately looked bright and radiant again. Skill after skill followed. Wave after wave of qi struck Moon Luring Frost from close and from afar. The qi danced like a dragon, swallowing Moon Luring Frost's life.

Du Ming refused to give up!

It wasn't the last round yet. He hadn't come across the person he wanted to come across. How could he lose here?

Immortal Guides the Way!

Suddenly, Moon Luring Frost swung his sword, splitting apart the roaring qi towards Boundless Sea's chest. Empty Handed Blade Block? Let's see it! Du Ming was completely ready for Boundless Sea's Empty Handed Blade Block. But to his surprise, Boundless Sea's two arms didn't rise up. Boundless Sea stuck his chest forward and took a step towards him, prepared to take the blow.

Fuck!

Du Ming cursed. He had been completely focused on the Empty Handed Blade Block, but what came was Reinforced Iron Bones...

I guess that's it...

Immortal Guide the Way's knockback had no effect against a Super Armored target. Boundless Sea's qi wrecked havoc, destroying the last bit of Moon Luring Frost's health.

Happy's Fang Rui, won!

Chapter 1609: Directly Ignored

Fang Rui had obtained an outstanding win. Boundless Sea still had 77% health left. Du Ming left the stage downcast, but he received much applause from the crowd nonetheless. Even though he had lost quite badly, his win against Su Mucheng had been beautiful. His fans wouldn't be so easy to forget his brilliant performance.

Even so, Du Ming was dejected. After all, apart from winning, he had brought his personal feelings into the match. When he returned to his seat and he received comfort from his teammates, he couldn't help but glance towards Happy's seats first.

"There's no saving him."

"Might as well sell him to Happy."

"Haha, I was thinking, when we sell him to Happy, we should do it as a trade for Tang Rou. Wouldn't that be hilarious?"

It was the finals, and Samsara was behind, but Samsara's players could still joke around. It had to be said that the team had cultivated a healthy environment of trust and confidence. No matter what situation they were in, they always kept calm. Whether they were in the lead or falling behind, it was all a part of competing. They would face it with a hopeful outlook that they would win in the end.

"It's my turn."

Sun Xiang got up. He had a long history with Happy and with Ye Xiu. Two group arenas had passed in the finals. He hadn't fought against Ye Xiu in either of them, which made his fights somewhat less storied. Right now, he was Samsara's last player in the group arena. He would need to beat practically two challengers from Happy to win. It wasn't looking too good for him.

However, Samsara's fans seemed to be confident in this newly-joined member of theirs as they cheered excitedly for him. Brimming with confidence, Sun Xiang walked towards the stage and waved towards the crowd.

Group arena, deciding round. He would need to beat two opponents to win.

Sun Xiang was clear what situation he was in. Before he entered his player booth, he couldn't help but look towards Happy's side, at Tang Rou.

The meaning behind his gaze at Tang Rou was completely different from Du Ming's. Du Ming had been looking forward to playing with her. On the other hand, Sun Xiang was picking a fight, telling her "I'll be waiting". He wasn't a stranger to Tang Rou's fiery fighting spirit. Tang Rou was a rookie though, while Sun Xiang was a top God. Challenging a rookie to a fight seemed rather illogical. However, his challenge had another layer of depth to it. He was completely ignoring the 77% health Fang Rui.

Fang Rui was an All-Star player. He was the master of playing dirty. Just in terms of status, he was far more suitable target for Sun Xiang to challenge. However, Sun Xiang was completely ignoring him. In Sun Xiang's eyes, Fang Rui's defeat was a foregone conclusion.

The Samsara fans suddenly cheered and clapped even harder.

Everyone on Happy was looking at one another. Their teammate was being disrespected, but when they remembered that the one being disrespected was Fang Rui, who had no idea what was going on, it all seemed rather funny.

"I wish I could tell him," Su Mucheng said.

"How terrible. Let's all give him a moment of silence," Ye Xiu said.

"I kind of don't want to play in today's group arena." These words were quite rare coming from Tang Rou, who longed for a good fight.

"Yeah, that's what we hope every match," An Wenyi said. Tang Rou was usually placed as Happy's last player in the group arena. Her not playing meant that Happy would have at least a 2 point lead. It was an outcome that Happy always hoped for. An Wenyi was saying the truth.

"I always hope that boss can 1v5," Steamed Bun really worshipped Ye Xiu like he was a god. Even Ye Xiu embarrassed at times.

"Let's watch Fang Rui play," Ye Xiu hastily brought the subject back to the match.

The two sides loaded into the map, and the match soon began.

"Surrender!" Fang Rui started trash talking Sun Xiang. Unfortunately, poor Fang Rui didn't know that to Sun Xiang, he was already a dead man.

"Haha." Sun Xiang clearly had no interest in talking to a dead man. One Autumn Leaf rushed forward towards the center of the map. And to no surprise, Fang Rui's Boundless Sea was nowhere to be seen.

"Where are you hiding this time?" Sun Xiang asked in the chat.

"In a place where you're not expecting," Fang Rui replied.

"Is that so?" Sun Xiang said. One Autumn Leaf looked as if he were taking a casual stroll as he enjoyed his surroundings. He didn't seem to be in a hurry to find Boundless Sea.

Soon, One Autumn Leaf arrived at a stalagmite. The viewers suddenly felt a sense of déjà vu. Before they could recall where the déjà vu was coming from, they saw One Autumn Leaf jump, once, twice, thrice, four times.

Four jumps, and One Autumn Leaf stood at the top of a stalagmite.

Everyone suddenly remembered. Wasn't this what Du Ming did? Was Sun Xiang planning on reenacting the previous fight.

"What's the meaning of this? Doing the exact same thing? Is he trying to show that he's better than his teammate?" Chen Guo said disdainfully. Her dislike for Sun Xiang made her even want to fight for justice for Samsara's players.

"We'll see," Ye Xiu didn't make any hasty conclusions.

Chen Guo curled her lips and continued to watch the map.

One Autumn Leaf took the same route as Du Ming's Moon Luring Frost last round. His jumping was smooth. It seemed like all of Samsara had done practice in this area.

One Autumn Leaf...

Chen Guo always found the name particularly eye-catching. One Autumn Leaf was a character she loved to death. Who knew how many times she had cheered for him. Cheering for him also meant cheering for the player though. The owner of One Autumn Leaf had changed, but it was hard for fans to part with

their feelings for the character. Every loyal fan was used to seeing their familiar player and familiar character together on stage. A change in player or character was always painful for them.

One Autumn Leaf had switched owners, and the new owner was particularly irksome, who was also their opponent. It was unbearably uncomfortable for Chen Guo.

She couldn't say anything about it though because she knew that whatever she felt about One Autumn Leaf couldn't compare to what Ye Xiu felt.

In the finals of the Challenger League last year against Excellent Era, Ye Xiu had personally fought against One Autumn Leaf. Chen Guo felt her heart go sour just thinking about it. She had even cried a little bit in private. She dreamed of getting One Autumn Leaf over to Happy, so that Ye Xiu would be reunited with him. Even if Ye Xiu wouldn't be playing him anymore, even if Tang Rou was the one using him, One Autumn Leaf wouldn't be their opponent at least.

However, One Autumn Leaf ended up going along with the annoying Sun Xiang to Samsara. And once again, One Autumn Leaf had become an obstacle in their path to the finishing line.

One Autumn Leaf!

Chen Guo sword a silent vow. One day, she would definitely bring him over to Happy. Even if they wouldn't use him, even if he would just remain there as a memory, she really didn't want to see One Autumn Leaf as their enemy anymore, especially as an enemy to Ye Xiu. But whenever she thought of this point, she felt scared because she knew about Happy's financial circumstances clearly. Even if Happy was able to gather enough money to buy a top-tier character, it wouldn't be so easy. Sun Xiang was a young player, and he had integrated himself successfully into Samsara. This champion team wasn't going to give up an important asset on their team so easily.

Taking back One Autumn Leaf was perhaps a thought for the future. As the team's boss, Chen Guo had the patience and determination to wait until that day. But Ye Xiu? How much time did he have left as a pro player? Would there be a day where she could see him fight alongside One Autumn Leaf again?

Chen Guo knew that these hopes were small. All she could hope was for them to encounter One Autumn Leaf less often.

At least they didn't meet each other in the group arena, last round and this round. Chen Guo could only console herself in this way.

One Autumn Leaf jumped nimbly from one stalagmite to another, searching below him. But this time, Fang Rui didn't copy what he did last time. Boundless Sea didn't crouch behind a stalagmite, waiting quietly for his opponent to come. Instead, he was constantly switching between hiding places. Even though he had yet to see his opponent, he was playing very cautiously as if his opponent was right beside him.

There was no way Happy's players could use the stalagmites as cover as well as Samsara's players, who had practiced with this map. However, the dirty Fang Rui was doing everything to the utmost of his abilities. The broadcast had quite the experience by now, paying close attention to Boundless Sea's movements. The broadcast zoomed out and looked around from different angles to show the audience how difficult it was to notice Boundless Sea's movements.

However, this difficulty was constructed on the basis that he was on the same level as his opponent. Sun Xiang was jumping between stalagmites like Du Ming had done previously, but it didn't seem like Fang Rui had noticed. Boundless Sea continued to scurry stealthily across the ground, but Sun Xiang had finally located him from above.

One Autumn Leaf immediately changed directions towards Boundless Sea. At this moment, One Autumn Leaf was moving towards an area where Moon Luring Frost hadn't gone to before.

By jumping, One Autumn Leaf moved faster than Boundless Sea. Whenever Fang Rui reached a stalagmite, he would always crouch there for a bit.

Finally, One Autumn Leaf reached him. With a jump, he landed onto a stalagmite behind Boundless Sea.

What?

Fang Rui immediately noticed an abnormality. He realized that something had happened, but he didn't look above him. Instead, he stuck his head out from behind the stalagmite to look around.

Chapter 1610: You Wanted Me To See This?

Sun Xiang let out a smile, but this time, no one could see it. One Autumn Leaf didn't make any unusual movements. He simply leapt downwards.

Everything so far had been going the same as Du Ming's fight against Fang Rui. The differences began after One Autumn Leaf jumped down.

Dragon Breaks the Ranks!

One Autumn Leaf crashed down like a meteor. By borrowing the force of gravity alongside Dragon Breaks the Ranks, his fall speed was many times faster than when Moon Luring Frost dropped down!

Such a powerful force was naturally very noticeable, but Fang Rui still didn't lift his head to look up. Boundless Sea's movements weren't as unhurried as before though. He rushed forward, not to pull away, but to circle around the stalagmite.

Boundless Sea circled behind the stalagmite. The fierce One Autumn Leaf seemed to suddenly freeze at this moment. Then, One Autumn Leaf pushed off the stalagmite, placing his spear, Evil Annihilation, horizontally in front of him. It seemed like he planned on changing directions before he touched the ground. However, it seemed like his timing was a bit off. In the end, One Autumn Leaf touched the ground and turned around, but he didn't make a large enough turn. His body was bent over, and the momentum from Dragon Breaks the Ranks completely vanished. It almost looked like he was plowing the fields.

"Hahaha," Chen Guo didn't hold back her laughter, "You wanted me to see this?"

"Well..." Ye Xiu didn't know what to say.

From Sun Xiang's actions, if Fang Rui had done the same exact thing as he did last round, no matter how he mixed it up, the Dragon Breaks the Ranks from Sun Xiang's One Autumn Leaf would be able to deal

with it. His extremely technical right-angle turn in midair was truly quite brilliant. It wasn't something that just anyone could do, and as a result, that made it difficult for the opponent to predict.

Sun Xiang had fully utilized the information that he obtained from his teammate's fight against Fang Rui. He wasn't like what Chen Guo thought, using the same exact method to show his teammate that he was better than him. He was using the same method so that he could replicate Fang Rui's response to it. Since he would know what Fang Rui would do, he could come up with a way to counter it. It was a perfect example of a group arena team strategy, taking advantage of the knowledge gained from previous rounds.

Unfortunately, Fang Rui did something completely different than what he did last round. Boundless Sea circled directly behind the stalagmite. No matter how brilliant his turn was, it was impossible for One Autumn Leaf to circle around the stalagmite so quickly.

Sun Xiang had been caught off guard by it. The surprise made him react slightly too slow, and he ended up faltering on the extremely technical turn in midair. It was why One Autumn Leaf looked like he was a farmer plowing the field right now.

Since he failed to execute the move perfectly, there was a small opening. Boundless Sea circled back and shot out a blast of qi.

Sky Piercing Strike!

The qi flew rapidly, but it missed!

One Autumn Leaf seemed to know that Boundless Sea had attacked from behind him. He jumped up, leaping over the Sky Piercing Strike. Then, he twisted around in midair. Battle magic was already gathering around his spear, Evil Annihilation!

Crash down! Shattering the Lands!

Magic descended and then spread outwards. The surface of the earth swelled and then burst!

The magic condensed and exploded, sending dirt flying violently into the air. Fang Rui knew that the situation wasn't good and didn't dare contend against it. Boundless Sea immediately ran away. Sun Xiang had completely put a stop to Fang Rui's sneak attack. In this instant, Chen Guo hated to admit it, but... she seemed to see a shadow of the former Battle God.

Brandishing his spear, One Autumn Leaf chased after Boundless Sea. As Boundless Sea ran, he would turn his head back to check behind him. He looked like he was in a panic. Soon, he reached another stalagmite and immediately hid behind it.

Sun Xiang didn't hesitate. One Autumn Leaf rushed towards the stalagmite at a diagonal. The moment you circled around behind a stalagmite, there would be a slight opening. This opening was too small though, and to most people, it wasn't enough time to respond to a potential sneak attack. However, Sun Xiang had the confidence that he could.

One step!

There was no one behind the stalagmite. Boundless Sea had plans on making a sneak attack. After using the stalagmite to block Sun Xiang's vision, he continued to scurry away.

Sun Xiang sneered. One Autumn Leaf continued to give chase. However, so far, there hadn't been any opportunities for One Autumn Leaf to create any Neutral Chasers. As a result, he didn't have much of an advantage in movement speed, and the two maintained the same distance between each other. Sun Xiang wasn't in a hurry though. He just needed to keep close enough to Boundless Sea.

He might not catch up, but what about after his Dragon Breaks the Ranks went off cooldown?

Everyone realized it. The broadcast put a special countdown, showing the cooldown on Dragon Breaks the Ranks as if it was Boundless Sea's death timer.

Chen Guo couldn't laugh.

Last round, Fang Rui had looked dominant against Du Ming. This round, Sun Xiang was chasing him around as if he were a stray dog.

Is there nothing he can do? Chen Guo looked at Ye Xiu. Ye Xiu understood her intent and answered: "Don't worry. Fang Rui is still in control."

"In control?" Chen Guo looked at Boundless Sea. It looked more like he had completely lost control.

"If that's what Sun Xiang is thinking too, then that'd be great," Ye Xiu sighed.

"What's that supposed to mean!" Chen Guo replied.

"Haha..." Ye Xiu pretended like he didn't know.

"Okay! Dragon Breaks the Ranks is about to be off cooldown!" Pan Lin shouted, "3, 2, 1!!"

Pan Lin soon swallowed his words because Sun Xiang didn't do like he had imagined, immediately using Dragon Breaks the Ranks once it came off cooldown.

Sun Xiang wasn't in a hurry. He could see that Fang Rui wasn't in a panic. Fang Rui was still running away because he hadn't found any opportunities to counterattack. If he hastily made a move, he might actually be giving Sun Xiang an opening to attack him. A single Dragon Breaks the Ranks wouldn't be enough to fully close the distance between the two of them.

Sun Xiang had completely ignored Fang Rui and provoked Tang Rou, but that didn't mean he was underestimating his opponent. From the start, he had used all the knowledge that he had to gain the upper hand. This was more than enough to show that he had respect for his opponent.

Sun Xiang wasn't as young and naive as when he was captain on Team Conquering Clouds, nor was he as arrogant as when he was on Team Excellent Era. He had matured, using the appropriate behavior to face a match.

Are they just going to keep running until the end?

Seeing that neither side was doing anything apart from running, the viewers couldn't help but be puzzled. The finals was a grand stage to be on. It couldn't just end up being a contest of who was better at controlling their stamina, could it? That would be too boring.

Even though that was what most people were thinking, there really didn't seem to be anything apart from stamina consumption that would change the situation. The broadcast showed the stamina bars on the two characters, which was extremely rare to see in a pro match.

"It seems like Boundless Sea will last longer?" Pan Lin said.

"I doubt either side will have any problems controlling their stamina properly. However, there's an inherent disparity between their classes. Even though One Autumn Leaf has a bit more stamina, Qi Masters consume stamina slower. It's probably designed that way to show how the circulation of qi allows Qi Masters to more efficiently utilize their energy!" Li Yibo said.

"No one really cares usually though, no?" Pan Lin said.

"But right now... it's very important," Li Yibo refuted.

"To think he would take advantage of such a small detail, no wonder he's Fang Rui..." Pan Lin said.

"Yes."

"So he'll have a bit more stamina to use, which he can use to run a bit faster and move farther away from Sun Xiang. And after that?" Pan Lin said.

"After that he can use it to find an opportunity to counterattack..." Li Yibo struggled to explain. Pan Lin felt that it was a pretty unlikely justification as well. Such precise calculations, requiring perfect execution over a long period of time, all so he could get a bit farther away from his opponent. That didn't seem very logical.

Some words weren't meant to be said out loud, but in their hearts, they were thinking the same thing: I've already taken off my pants, and you want me to see this?

Once the race was over, it would just start again. This sort of development was too boring to watch. Pan Lin and Li Yibo had no way to hype things up. Stopping people from dozing off was the best they could do.

"One Autumn Leaf is out of stamina," Pan Lin said listlessly.

"Yeah," Li Yibo replied listlessly.

"Fang Rui should know, right?"

"He should know!"

"Do you think Sun Xiang has any ideas?" Pan Lin said.

"If he had any ideas, wouldn't he have used them by now?" Li Yibo answered.

"True..."

"He's out."

"Yup."

"So now..."

“Dragon Breaks the Ranks, fuck!!!” Pan Lin shouted. He couldn’t help but curse, and he hadn’t noticed it all. He was completely astonished. He hadn’t expected it at all. To think Sun Xiang would choose to use Dragon Breaks the Ranks once his stamina ran out.

It was truly surprising. Fang Rui must not have expected it either. That arrogant Sun Xiang was exceptionally calm. It was truly surprising.

Dragon Breaks the Ranks!

One Autumn Leaf rushed forward, and this skill’s speed was far faster than a sprint. But there was a bit of distance between them. Dragon Breaks the Ranks would take some time to close the distance, and that was where the issue lay. But who would expect a Dragon Breaks the Ranks at this moment? A slight hesitation may result in Fang Rui not being able to react in time.

But Fang Rui didn’t hesitate. He had unexpectedly thought of the Dragon Breaks the Ranks.

Boundless Sea moved horizontally, successfully dodging the Dragon Breaks the Ranks. Then, he responded with a Spiral Qi Rush. However, One Autumn Leaf didn’t immediately stop after Dragon Breaks the Ranks missed, like Fang Rui had expected. One Autumn Leaf continued right past him. As a result, the two seemed to swap places. One Autumn Leaf wasn’t able to close the distance, but Fang Rui wasn’t able to get his counterattack. However, Qi Masters were experts at mid-range. The skills that he had in mind couldn’t be used because of the distance they were at, but he had many others skills he could use.

Qi Blade!

The attack was inherently difficult to see. With Fang Rui’s sneaky methods, people who weren’t paying close enough attention probably didn’t even think Boundless Sea did anything.

The Qi Blade flew out. Boundless Sea’s palms continued to gather qi for the next skill. One Autumn Leaf had turned around, brandishing his spear, but he couldn’t make any attacks because of the distance. Suddenly, his body flickered. A trace of magic was all that remained in his original position. One Autumn Leaf had disappeared.

Teleport! The skill that One Autumn Leaf put on his weapon today was Teleport.

The first time using a bonus skill on a weapon would always be a surprise, but Teleport was a very common Mage skill that people chose. Even when it was spread to all classes, Teleport was the most commonly chosen skill. No other superclass had a skill that was so beloved by everyone.

Even if the Teleport distance was rather small at level one, it was an extremely versatile skill that could be used to escape or to attack.

Was Fang Rui caught off guard by this sudden change?