

Avatar 1611

Chapter 1611: Unable to Play Dirty

The sudden Teleport surprised quite a few of the viewers. But to a pro player, Teleport was pretty much considered a required skill for Mages. Thinking about it more closely though, since One Autumn Leaf had Teleport, he could have easily combined it with the burst of speed that Dragon Breaks the Ranks provided and chased Fang Rui down. It didn't seem at all necessary to save it and use it at the last second. So did that mean he didn't use it just to as a set-up, a set-up where Fang Rui mistook his skill build to not have Teleport, and thus lure him to let his guard down against it?

A normal player would not have given a second thought after observing this move. But to a pro player, there was often a deeper layer to things.

A competition of endurance?

From the start, this was only in the eyes of the average viewer. None of the pro players considered it to be that simple. It would be looking down on them if you expected a pro player to make a basic blunder like this.

Up until they saw this Teleport!

This skill has lost its element of surprise because too many players added it on their weapons. However, in this situation, it had gained a brand new element of surprise. Many spectators felt a whole new level of respect for Sun Xiang.

Everyone who had played against Sun Xiang, and even those who once called him teammate, clearly felt changes from him. Had he been enlightened during his time at Excellent Era? Had he learned during his time at Samsara? Perhaps both? Whatever it may be, this new generation player did his utmost to continually move towards perfection.

Nice Teleport!

The spectators all praised to themselves. Because Teleport could only be level one, One Autumn Leaf could only move so far with it. But this Teleport finally put One Autumn Leaf directly beside Boundless Sea.

Sky Strike!

One Autumn Leaf used the fastest skill in the Battle Mage's arsenal. Evil Annihilation was thrust out the exact same moment that his body appeared.

Roll!

Boundless Sea rolled sideways.

"He dodged it!" Pan Lin cried out in shock. The pro players also all felt that it was odd. Such an unexpected Teleport and such an unexpected attack. Yet Fang Rui managed to react to it?

“The fact that he could react proves he was still prepared!” The statement came from Ruan Yongbin, the Cleric player from Wind Howl, Fang Rui’s former teammate. He clearly had a good understanding of Fang Rui.

“We gotta give it to the king of dirty plays. He always expects his opponent to have the worst intentions eh?” Misty Rain’s Li Hua said.

This didn’t sound much like praise, but it was spot on.

Everyone watching felt like if they put themselves in Fang Rui’s shoes, they would have let their guard down against Teleport after seeing Sun Xiang’s plays. However, Fang Rui himself was still on guard against it, and that could only be because of his personality and playstyle.

Sky Strike missed, but Sun Xiang didn’t look like he was going to be discouraged this easily. At least he had an opportunity right now and was in close range; One Autumn Leaf unleashed another attack straight away.

Draconic Crusher!

Evil Annihilation, which was swung up from the Sky Strike, crashed down and unleashed a Draconic Crusher.

This skill had a knockdown effect and had extremely high priority. It was not possible to answer it with another skill. Boundless Sea had no time to get up after dodging the Sky Strike, and had to quickly roll again.

The magical energies of Draconic Crusher bombarded the ground and immediately smashed out a small crater in the ground. Evil Annihilation shot up once again, not giving Fang Rui any time to catch his breath. Dragon Tooth!

Boundless Sea used the momentum from the roll to take a sideways step. He barely managed to dodge and at the same time, slapped out a palm.

Cloud Pushing Palm!

A low level Qi Master skill. This tiny window was nowhere enough for Boundless Sea to even think about using a strong skill with cast time. He could only use a quick, weak skill to try to disrupt his opponent’s relentless attacks. Cloud Pushing Palm had low damage but also had a knock-back effect. This was a natural skill choice for Boundless Sea in his current predicament, who needed to create some space for himself.

Circle Swing!

He didn’t expect One Autumn Leaf to not dodge and instead directly use this skill. The grab effect of Circle Swing would send him crashing into the ground. Even though Boundless Sea’s Cloud Pushing Palm would still land and send One Autumn Leaf backwards, it was still unfavorable for him.

Helpless, Fang Rui could only abandon his attack. Boundless Sea flipped backwards to dodge again. But he didn’t expect Boundless Sea to not respond to his input. When Fang Rui suddenly realised why, Evil Annihilation had already pierced his chest, and flicked him skyward.

“What happened?”

The normal players saw it as a whiffed dodge, resulting in him being hit. But in the pro players' eyes, not dodging this attack was inexcusable. Something unexpected must have occurred to cause it.

“Boundless Sea ran out of stamina!!” Someone realized it and yelled it out, no one knew who.

Everyone started. Then their minds were blown. They realised that the answer to their speculation over Sun Xian's intentions were far simpler than they thought.

Sun Xiang was not trying to set up for a successful Teleport earlier. His main ploy was to whittle away Fang Rui's stamina.

Because of Fang Rui's playstyle!

A dirty playstyle meant the player will never seek direct confrontation with his opponent. He would use all sorts of tricks to gain a slight advantage by avoiding bad positions and moving into good ones, meaning a lot of movement would be used. Sprints, rolls, jumps, these common movements are all stamina-hungry. The vast majority would never feel that their stamina limited their movements, except for when they sprinted without a break. These movements were seldom used so frequently that they caught up to stamina recovery.

Fang Rui's dirty playstyle would use these movements far more frequently than a normal player. Even so, his stamina had never limited his play. Stamina recovery was very quick, and it was usually more than enough to handle Fang Rui's pace of play.

But in today's match, Sun Xiang and Fang Rui participated in a chase that wore down his stamina. Battle Mages had slightly more stamina, but Qi Masters spent slightly less. In the end, it was One Autumn Leaf who ran out first. Thus, Sun Xiang launched his attacks at that moment. Dragon Breaks the Ranks and Teleportation were used in succession to let him get within melee range. Even though he didn't hit Boundless Sea, he managed to seize the initiative.

Thus began the close combat attacks. Fang Rui dodged continuously, naturally using the dirty playstyle that he was so used to. After consecutive rolls and sprints, he managed to wear down all of One Autumn Leaf's stamina, while not having much left himself. As the Circle Swing came, Fang Rui had Boundless Sea forcefully cancel Cloud Pushing Palm.

A forced cancel was an action that expended stamina. Here, it finally depleted Boundless Sea's stamina. The next roll that was meant to dodge Circle Swing had not been executed because he was out of stamina.

Stamina!

Stamina, which seemed to never run out in a real battle, was depleted by this intense pursuit. The high paced battle that followed meant that his stamina could no longer sustain Fang Rui's dirty playstyle.

If you were to say before that what everyone felt in Sun Xiang was a sense of growth, you could say that now that what everyone felt in Sun Xiang was a sense of formidability.

He was no longer the kind to rely purely on superior technique and skill to overwhelm his opponent. He had started observing and analyzing his opponents. Fang Rui's dirty playstyle had brought years of

misery and headaches to many pro players. But today, Sun Xiang actually found a way to completely suppress him.

Even though stamina recovered quickly, Fang Rui's dirty playstyle also expended it quickly. When his stamina bar was near zero, the recovery really wasn't enough. Sun Xiang just needed to maintain a tight offensive to make Fang Rui constantly feel his stamina deficiency.

Slam!

Boundless Sea crashed into the ground after being swung around by Circle Swing. In these few moments, the pro players have already finished analysing Fang Rui's predicament. The players who used to be on the receiving end of his dirty playstyle were getting a healthy dose of schadenfreude right now. When the dirty playing Fang Rui couldn't play dirty, then what would he do? Everyone was about to find out.

Tyrant's Destruction!

One Autumn Leaf once again swept Evil Annihilation at Boundless Sea, who was currently flat on the ground. Boundless Sea rolled to dodge. Again, he used what little stamina had recovered in the last few moments.

Dragon Tooth!

Another attack followed closely. If it was the regular Fang Rui, he would roll once to dodge, and roll again to end up on One Autumn Leaf's flank. But right now, he couldn't even roll consecutively. Boundless Sea's stamina bar flashed repeatedly as if someone installed a red blinker light under it.

Chapter 1612: One Second Sandbag

Sky Strike!

Dragon Tooth followed by Sky Strike, a plain and simple Battle Mage combo. Sun Xiang didn't do anything fancy after sealing shut Fang Rui's dirty methods. He used this ordinary but very effective combo to knock Boundless Sea into the air.

Seeing Boundless Sea launched tumbling into the air, Fang Rui's heart turned ice-cold.

Stamina...

He had indeed overlooked this aspect. His playstyle was quite stamina-heavy, but over his six years of pro play, stamina had never been an issue for him. If you had no mana, you couldn't do anything. If you had no health, you would be dead. If you had no stamina, you just had to wait a bit for it to recover.

It had always been this way.

So it couldn't be said that Fang Rui had been careless. He had never thought that stamina would ever be an issue. However, in today's match, he hadn't been paying attention, while his opponent had. The issue of stamina now limited what he could do.

Sun Xiang...

Fang Rui never had any rivalries with Sun Xiang. In Season 7, Sun Xiang had just been a rookie. In Season 8, he had joined Excellent Era midseason and then was relegated alongside them. In Season 9, he had been in the Challenger League. Sun Xiang had never been a player that Fang Rui had particularly cared about. To Fang Rui, Sun Xiang was just another player competing in the pro scene.

Up until this season. Fang Rui's professional career suddenly took a huge turn, and Sun Xiang brought One Autumn Leaf with him to Samsara. Because of the complicated relationship between Happy, Excellent Era, Ye Xiu, One Autumn Leaf, and so on, Sun Xiang became a rather special existence to Happy.

Apart from him, the rest of Happy had played in the Challenger League. At that time, Su Mucheng had been Happy's enemy as well, but her relationship with Sun Xiang had always been quite unpleasant. Fang Rui quickly got along with the team. As a result, there was no way he would have a good impression of Sun Xiang. What's more, the two had fought 1v1 in the regular season, and at that time, he had lost to Sun Xiang.

Their next encounter was today in the finals. Happy had lost the first game. If they lost the second game, their run would be over.

Fang Rui beat Du Ming, and he knew that his next opponent would be Sun Xiang. He didn't care who his opponent was. He would beat him. Happy still had a player left, but that didn't weaken his resolve. If he won, Happy would go into the team competition with a two point lead. As the away team, this two point lead would be very precious. Fang Rui had performed rather mediocre throughout the playoffs, and he really wanted to be useful to Happy. Starting from the previous round against Du Ming, he had been determined to win Happy this two point lead.

But right now, Sun Xiang was suppressing him, using such an ordinary combo to send Boundless Sea spinning into the air.

What am I doing?

Fang Rui was angry, not at Sun Xiang, but himself.

Stamina had never been a problem for him before, so he had never considered that it could ever be one. Fang Rui was furious at himself for being so careless.

But I haven't lost yet.

He may be out of stamina, but stamina recovered quickly. It didn't matter if he was taking damage. As long as he didn't do anything that required stamina, it would continue to recover.

Fang Rui stared closely at Boundless Sea's stamina bar.

His health was dropping, but he couldn't care about that right now. What he needed was stamina, only stamina!

His stamina was recovering bit by bit. Fang Rui felt like it was recovering at a snail's pace. In the past, he had never felt like he had to wait so long for his stamina to recover.

How much stamina do I need?

Fang Rui was calculating in his mind, when Boundless Sea suddenly dropped down.

He stopped the combo?

Everyone was astonished. One Autumn Leaf's comboing had been perfect. He could have easily continued it. Why did he suddenly stop?

A mistake? The people who thought that felt surprised because it would be a very low-level mistake.

Boundless Sea fell towards the ground. Out of reflex, Fang Rui did a Quick Recover, but just when he was about to act, he stopped himself.

So that's it!

Fang Rui instantly figured out what Sun Xiang's motive was. Sun Xiang had intentionally broke off his combo because he wanted to keep him at zero stamina. Juggling Boundless Sea in the air wouldn't be enough to kill him. During this time, Boundless Sea would recover stamina, which would let Fang Rui respond and counterattack.

As soon as Boundless Sea's stamina recovered just a little bit, Sun Xiang intentionally stopped his combo to give Fang Rui an opening to react and use up what little stamina he had.

Boundless Sea crashed to the ground.

Quick Recover?

Usually, that was the right call, but if Boundless Sea used Quick Recover to get up, One Autumn Leaf would certainly be ready for him. Fang Rui's usual methods required stamina, and he would quickly exhaust what stamina he had left. Once his stamina was gone, he would once again be in a passive state. Then, once his stamina recovered a bit, Sun Xiang would give out another opening, so he would use up his stamina. The cycle would just repeat endlessly until he died.

I can't let that happen. I have to recover enough stamina before I act, even if it means I take more damage!

Bang!

Fang Rui didn't Quick Recover, and Boundless Sea fell straight to the ground.

Sun Xiang immediately grasped Fang Rui's intentions. He couldn't force Fang Rui into action. If Fang Rui insisted on trading his health for stamina, then he could only oblige and deal as much damage to him as possible.

Tyrant's Destruction!

Evil Annihilation swept towards Boundless Sea.

The people who had figured out both side's goals thought that what came next would be a one-sided beatdown. The Happy fans couldn't help bear to watch.

But Evil Annihilation missed. Boundless Sea suddenly rolled, dodging the Tyrant's Destruction.

He was using what little stamina he had left? What is he thinking?

What is he thinking?

The people who thought they understood were now completely puzzled again.

If Fang Rui hadn't noticed Sun Xiang's goal, then he would have Quick Recovered before. If he had noticed, then he shouldn't be using his stamina, instead trading his health for it.

And where was he rolling to? What is he trying to do?

No one understood. Sun Xiang didn't either. He had already been ready to treat Boundless Sea like a wooden stump, a sandbag. He was planning on using everything he had to deal as much damage as possible within a short period of time. But Fang Rui unexpectedly moved. Boundless Sea rolled away to dodge One Autumn Leaf's Tyrant's Destruction.

What's the meaning of this?

Sun Xiang didn't understand either. But since Fang Rui made a move, he should force him to use up his stamina and pull him into a cycle of death.

Then...

Then what?

Sun Xiang suddenly blanked. He discovered a problem. After the Tyrant's Destruction, any other attack he made seemed awkward. It seemed as if no skill he chose would be able to perfectly accomplish his goal.

Sun Xiang figured it out. After seeing the ending lag from One Autumn Leaf using Tyrant's Destruction, the pro players also figured it out.

Fang Rui, that bastard was too dirty!

Everyone thought that his only choice was to trade his health for stamina. Sure, so he pretended like that was his plan. Boundless Sea crashed into the ground like a sandbag. However, this sandbag wasn't an obedient one. Sun Xiang was determined to give this sandbag a fierce beating, but when he attacked, the sandbag suddenly dodged.

When attacking a defenseless sandbag, what mattered was dealing as much damage as possible. There was no need for defense or for combos. But Fang Rui wasn't a defenseless sandbag, which meant that you needed to make adjustments depending on the situation. Attacking Fang Rui and attacking a sandbag were two entirely different things.

Fang Rui had Boundless Sea pretend to be a sandbag. For a second, he displayed his dirtiness. Sun Xiang saw that his target was a sandbag, but in the next instant, his target became a dirty Fang Rui. Attacking Fang Rui required a completely different mindset than attacking a sandbag. Sun Xiang needed to make the switch, but he wasn't ready for it. The fluidness of his offense instantly vanished.

Fang Rui was waiting for this moment, and it was more than enough for him to turn things around. Even if Boundless Sea didn't have enough stamina, what he needed to do next was to use attacks that didn't require stamina.

Spiral Qi Kill!

He had narrowly escaped from a crisis. Recover stamina? That wasn't the goal. Fang Rui only had one goal: to win! Whether he had stamina or not, he needed to win!

Chapter 1613: Forever Dirty

Air and qi whirled together and blasted towards One Autumn Leaf.

Sun Xiang realized that he had been wrong. He had thought too little of Fang Rui. Whether it was thinking of him as a sandbag or attempting to force Boundless Sea to use mana, he had completely overlooked the possibility that Fang Rui could counterattack.

After his Tyrant's Destruction was dodged, he lost control of the tempo. Immediately switching to a defensive stance would be his best option, but he had forgotten that Fang Rui could be an offensive threat. Boundless Sea didn't have any stamina, but that didn't mean his skills were all on cooldown.

Spiral Qi Kill!

Not a single bit of qi was wasted. All of it struck One Autumn Leaf's chest. The powerful twisting force of the qi warped One Autumn Leaf's leather armor.

Team Happy's characters couldn't compare to characters on other teams, especially those on top teams. Even Lord Grim was no exception. It was mainly his transforming weapon and unspecialized that made things troublesome. In terms of actual stats, Lord Grim had no class advancement bonuses or armor proficiencies. His stats didn't come close to the stats on other pro characters.

Happy only had two characters that could compete with characters on other top teams.

One of them was Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain. When the level cap was raised to Level 75, Excellent Era hadn't given Dancing Rain their full support. However, after transferring to Happy, that gap was quickly mended. For one, the leader of Happy's R&D team, Guan Rongfei, had come from Excellent Era, so he was already very familiar with Dancing Rain. In addition, while Happy's low-end material reserves couldn't compare to other top guilds, they had accumulated quite a lot of high-end materials during Ye Xiu's time playing in the game.

Dancing Rain's equipment was upgraded from Level 70 to Level 75, and most of the materials were Level 75 materials. Everyone had started the race for these materials at the same time. During this race, not only did Happy not fall behind, due to Ye Xiu's participation in the race, Happy had a significant lead over the other guilds.

Dancing Rain's strength quickly caught up to the other top characters. As for Happy's other strong character, that would be Fang Rui's Boundless Sea.

Boundless Sea had been Glory's number one Qi Master. Even if the character had been in the low-tier Team Seaside, the team had poured in all of their resources to maintain this title of number one. In Season 9, Zhao Yang announced his retirement. For Team Seaside, maintaining this number one title became their team's burden. As a result, the team gave up on Boundless Sea and sold it to Happy.

Boundless Sea had been number one when the level cap had been 70. Once the level cap was raised to 75, he had the same advantage as Dancing Rain. Happy didn't lose to any of the powerhouse clubs in Level 75 materials. Although Guan Rongfei had never touched Boundless Sea's equipment before, a Qi Master had been a main part of Excellent Era's force for many years. Thus, Guan Rongfei was no stranger to this class. Boundless Sea just wasn't as convenient for him to upgrade as Dancing Rain.

Boundless Sea's equipment was soon upgraded to Level 75, and the character kept the title of Glory's number one Qi Master. The only problem was that his new owner was Fang Rui, who had switched classes from Thief to Qi Master. This new dirty Qi Master playstyle was very unconventional. For a time, neither Qi Master players nor Fang Rui fans liked it. Boundless Sea falling out from the All-Star roster was unrelated to its stats.

Boundless Sea was not weak, not even close. This was another big reason for why Fang Rui was very concerned with his performance in the playoffs.

He was Happy's highest-paid player, and he possessed one of Happy's strongest characters. But his performance in the playoffs was only so-so. He felt like he wasn't living up to his pay or his character.

I have to win!

Fang Rui's desire to win had never been stronger.

The powerful Boundless Sea fired an enormous blast of qi towards One Autumn Leaf, towards the Battle God. At its peak, the Battle God had stood at the top of Glory, overlooking everyone else.

Go!

The whirling qi scattered. One Autumn Leaf's leather armor looked as if it was about to warp. The hair on his head rippled from the intense winds.

Spiral Qi Kill. Depending on how the qi was used, the attack would have different effects. If the qi rotated clockwise, it would send the target flying. If the qi rotate counterclockwise, it would suck in the target.

The spiralling qi was whirling counterclockwise. Fang Rui didn't want to send One Autumn Leaf flying away, because he wanted to win! Boundless Sea had enough stamina now, but he didn't need it. He just needed to get close and attack with all his might, pouring out as much qi as possible into One Autumn Leaf.

The spinning force from Spiral Qi Kill locked One Autumn Leaf into place. As soon as it dispersed, Boundless Sea fired out another blast of qi with his other hand.

Flash Burst!

Another powerful attack. The qi violently surged around One Autumn Leaf as if it were trying to rip him apart.

Taking advantage of the fact that One Autumn Leaf was stunned, Boundless Sea retracted his other hand and pointed with his two fingers, gathering qi around them.

Pulse Break: Break Intelligence!

Battle Mages were considered Mages. Their Strength stat was higher than other Mages, but their Intelligence wasn't low either. Due to their Leather Armor Proficiency, their equipment would usually have bonus Strength and Intelligence.

Battle Mages had high Intelligence, and the Battle God One Autumn Leaf would be on an even higher level. Facing the killing power of another top character, Boundless Sea, One Autumn Leaf's Intelligence decreased the damage from the qi attack by a considerable degree. After all, qi attacks were considered magic attacks.

However, Fang Rui seized this opportunity to use Pulse Break, lowering One Autumn Leaf's Intelligence by a large amount, which in turn, would lower One Autumn Leaf's magic resistance.

Boom boom boom!

Explosions one after the other.

Fang Rui was planning on using all of his Qi Master's instant qi attacks. Right now, he didn't care about cycling through his skills. Qi continued to flood into One Autumn Leaf's body and explode. The shockwaves produced were more powerful than what any other class could create. This dirty Qi Master wasn't holding anything back, attacking with a reckless violence.

Because I'm going to win!

Spiral Qi Rush!

The roaring qi carried along Boundless Sea, pushing One Autumn Leaf forward. After this Spiral Qi Rush, he would have to gather qi for his other skills. It was time for the finishing move.

Qigong Blast!

The finishing move was the Qi Master's strongest attack, the Level 70 Qigong Blast. Even with the addition of the Level 75 Pulse Break, Qi Masters didn't have a stronger attack.

The Qigong Blast struck One Autumn Leaf, knocking him back.

The qi exploded as One Autumn Leaf slid back. The series of qi attacks seemed to erupt all at once. Blood blossomed from One Autumn Leaf like a crimson flower, blooming and withering in an instant.

55%

The system showed how much health One Autumn Leaf had after this combo. He had lost nearly half his health.

Fierce and aggressive!

The crowd could feel their blood racing as they watched Boundless Sea's wave of attacks. It was almost hard to believe that this was being done by that dirty Fang Rui. But after the wave passed, it was hard not to be worried. He had used all of his instant-cast skills. Although the combo had been immensely satisfying, it would likely be very difficult for him to hold off One Autumn Leaf's counterattack with his other skills that had cast times.

They quickly discovered that they had been too worried. They unexpectedly forgot that the player who performed this crazy combo was Fang Rui, that dirty Fang Rui.

Boundless Sea had recovered quite a bit of stamina during that combo. The dirty Fang Rui was back!

Roll, climb...

When Sun Xiang's One Autumn Leaf counterattacked, Fang Rui's Boundless Sea began playing dirty again, sneaking around and scurrying about like a Thief.

Dodging, not running.

Fang Rui patiently kited around Sun Xiang. Whenever there was an opening, he would harass him using fast low-level skills.

Qi Bullet!

The cast time was extremely fast. It was practically no different from an instant-cast. The Qi Bullet went straight for the eyes, blocking Sun Xiang's view. Fang Rui had used this trick who knew how many times. It didn't create any particularly good opportunities, but Fang Rui never got tired of it.

Countercurrent!

A knock-up skill used when his back was turned away. One Autumn Leaf narrowly walked right into it.

Qi Blade!

When you lost sight of Boundless Sea's hands, you didn't need to think about where he was hiding them. Nine times out of ten, what came next would be a Qi Blade. But you also had to be careful, sometimes when he hid his palms, what came out wouldn't be a Qi Blade, but a Cloud Pushing Palm. Sun Xiang had fallen for it many times and was hit by the Cloud Pushing Palm. The damage wasn't much, but he would be sent flying back.

Endless tricks and endless hidden attacks.

It was annoying, frustrating, and nauseating.

Many players in the pro player group felt triggered recalling these unpleasant memories. It had happened when Fang Rui was a Thief, and when he was a Qi Master. Times had changed, but Fang Rui's dirtiness never would. Even if he seemed heroic and flashy, in the next moment, he would be dirty again. He never disappointed.

Sun Xiang was a young player, one who had been extremely arrogant. This sort of player was the easiest to tilt. But today, he had held back his emotions. After Boundless Sea knocked him down to 55% health, he told himself not to think about Tang Rou's battle. Right now, beating Fang Rui and keeping one point for Samsara was much more urgent. Winning the next round might not even happen at this rate. He needed to give everything he had to win the current one.

Keep calm and search for an opening!

Sun Xiang sucked in a deep breath. He calmed himself down and carefully contended with Fang Rui.

However, constantly telling himself to stay calm was also a form of distraction. Seeing the careful One Autumn Leaf, Fang Rui seemed to see victory waving her hands at him.

People who played cautiously would always be thinking more things. However, Sun Xiang wasn't that type of player. Even if he knew that it wasn't his strong point, even if he was purposefully telling himself to be careful, Sun Xiang was Sun Xiang. He wasn't Zhang Xinjie. It was a crucial moment, and Sun Xiang wasn't doing what he was best at. In Fang Rui's eyes, it wasn't wise. In contrast, it was easier to find an opening against this type of Sun Xiang.

Fang Rui kept making feints, releasing smoke, sending himself messages, all to make Sun Xiang think and decide until those thoughts and decision became hesitation...

Sun Xiang lost his resolve, his drive. He himself didn't realize it. He thought that he was calmly and effectively dealing with Fang Rui's dirtiness. However, the pro players watching could tell that Sun Xiang had fallen into Fang Rui's pace. Fang Rui was leading him by the nose.

He was waiting for Fang Rui to let out an opening, but he didn't know that Fang Rui was gifting him the opening. This gift definitely wasn't candy either, but poison wrapped in sugar.

I'm coming!

Sun Xiang's eyes lit up. He had been patiently waiting for this opening for a long time. Finally, it was time to harvest the fruits of his labour.

Charge!

One Autumn Leaf charged towards that lie of an opening.

"Let's get ready for the team competition..." Samsara's Jiang Botao sighed.

Victory had been decided.

Group arena, Happy 5-3.

Chapter 1614: Historic Team Competition

"We won! 5 to 3!!!" Chen Guo was excited. Although the match wasn't over yet, they had a 2 point lead going into the team competition. It was an incredible result, especially since this was Samsara's home stadium. Samsara had clearly practiced with the map, Dripstone Cave, and put it to good use, yet Happy had still been able to win 5 to 3. It was definitely worthy of being happy about.

Everyone knew the importance of this two point lead. The fans in the away team seats started cheering loudly, while the home stadium Samsara fans were disappointed. Today's group arena had been vexing. Their captain, Zhou Zekai, lost in the first round, putting everyone in low spirits. Jiang Botao was able to bring things back, but Lu Boyuan lost disastrously. Du Ming's exceptional playing made them overjoyed, but their spirits were immediately dampened by the dirty Fang Rui.

Then, Samsara only had Sun Xiang left. Their hopes of winning the group arena were rather low at this point, but Sun Xiang's confidence made them think again. But the result...

Everyone had been hopeful, but in the end, Sun Xiang wasn't able to beat even a single opponent. Samsara's fans weren't at all pleased with Sun Xiang's performance. When the group arena ended and the players came down from the stage, there were even boos towards Sun Xiang from the crowd.

Sun Xiang lowered his head, silent and embarrassed. His teammates sympathized with him though because his loss hadn't been as bad as Lu Boyuan's. In contrast, Sun Xiang had his glimmering moments. Unfortunately, Fang Rui wiped it all away.

Fang Rui...

He had essentially done a 1v2, successfully earning Happy a two point lead. It was a result worthy of him being the highest paid player and having their strongest character. Fang Rui was satisfied, and the booing towards Sun Xiang was just heaven to his ears. Fang Rui wasn't polite. He grinned as he waved his hands towards the crowd as if they were cheering for him.

Samsara's fans weren't happy with Sun Xiang, but they weren't going to just let the opposing team laugh at them. The look on Fang Rui's face made them stop booing towards Sun Xiang. Then, they started sending their boos towards Fang Rui. The players on Samsara, including Sun Xiang, couldn't help but look towards Fang Rui. Their gazes were filled with gratitude. Nice job pulling that aggro!

But Fang Rui didn't care about that. When he returned to his team, he was in high spirits.

"What do you think? Just say it! How'd I do!" Fang Rui asked Ye Xiu.

"Good job, good job," Ye Xiu clapped his hands in praise.

"I appreciate your honesty!" Fang Rui said. The gloom that he had been holding in throughout the playoffs was finally let out today. Fang Rui felt like he was playing great, his Golden Right Hand was on fire. He couldn't wait for the team competition to begin. He couldn't help but look towards Samsara, but they noticed him and immediately looked at him with hostility.

"Where's that cup of water? Hand it over to him to cool off," Ye Xiu called out.

Fang Rui had asked Su Mucheng for the water when he went to the stage. After Su Mucheng got back, she really did get him a cup of water. After Fang Rui got it, it seemed that he had forgotten about what he had asked for because he immediately gulped it down in one go.

"The water's still hot!" Fang Rui yelled, "Have you guys heard the story 'Warm Wine, the Killing of Hua Xiong*?'"

"We've heard of it. Let's talk about the match," Ye Xiu quickly replied.

"Okay okay, the match," Fang Rui calmed himself down. He didn't let the joy get to his head. He was the master of playing dirty, an expert at switching up the pace, no?

The two teams didn't return to their prep rooms. They stayed at their seats, discussing the upcoming team competition.

A while later, the referee called for the two teams. The lineup for the team competition had been decided beforehand, which the large screen in the stadium displayed for the audience to see.

Team Happy: Ye Xiu, Su Mucheng, Fang Rui, Qiao Yifan, An Wenyi, Steamed Bun.

Team Samsara: Zhou Zekai, Jiang Botao, Sun Xiang, Lu Boyuan, Fang Minghua, Du Ming.

There were some small adjustments to the lineup compared to their first game.

On Happy's side, Tang Rou wasn't playing in the team competition. Qiao Yifan took her place. On Samsara's side, their Assassin Wu Qi was on the bench, while Du Ming was the sixth player.

Every player hoped to be a part of the participating lineup especially on a grand stage like the finals. Du Ming's position in Samsara wasn't as stable as a core player's. Being able to play in the team competition in the finals was a rare opportunity.

Even so, Du Ming couldn't help but hope for a bit more, but after seeing that Happy's lineup didn't include Tang Rou, his hopes were immediately extinguished.

How unlucky!

Du Ming really wanted to let out a sigh, but he suddenly noticed that his teammates were looking at him and hastily swallowed his sigh.

It's just not right!

It was a rare opportunity for him to play, but he was still a bit sad about it.

Du Ming thought to himself as he collected his emotions. With his head held high, he marched forward, the first one to head towards the stage.

"How unfortunate, Tang Rou isn't playing," Behind him, Jiang Botao and Fang Minghua stood close to each other, whispering.

"Yeah, we miscalculated," Fang Minghua said.

"But then again, Du Ming's playing really well today," Jiang Botao said.

"Like I said, the power of love," Fang Minghua said.

"But his love's not even on stage!" Jiang Botao retorted.

"But his love's watching him off stage!" Fang Minghua said.

"If we knew, we should have put someone else as the sixth player," Jiang Botao said.

"We can make adjustments during the match!" Fang Minghua said.

Soon afterwards, the players on the two teams lined up at the center of the stage, giving their pre-match greetings to each other.

Zhou Zekai wasn't a talkative person. He pretty much just smiled to the players on Happy as a greeting. The first to say something from Samsara was their vice-captain, Jiang Botao.

"You guys played amazing in the group arena," Jiang Botao shook Ye Xiu's hands.

"You're about to see something even more amazing," Ye Xiu smiled.

“I hope you won’t be as scary,” Jiang Botao said.

“You scared?” Ye Xiu said.

“A bit, but I still have to play even if I’m afraid!” Jiang Botao replied.

“Why force yourself?” Ye Xiu grinned.

“You two... are you done chatting?” Su Mucheng couldn’t help but interrupt them. The pre-match greeting was just a formality. Usually, the two teams would line up and then shake hands, starting from the captain. But instead, Ye Xiu had just gotten to Samsara’s second player, Jiang Botao, and the two were chatting up a storm. The two of them were holding up the line. The others behind them were looking at each other.

“Ha, Sis Su, don’t be anxious,” Jiang Botao could chat with anyone. After letting go of Ye Xiu, he immediately started making small talk with Su Mucheng.

Every match had its formalities. No one really cared what happened during them. Soon, the two sides finished their greetings, and under directions from the referee, each side went to their respective player booths.

Cheers erupted from the crowd.

Although Samsara had lost in the group arena, the outcome of this match depended on the team competition. It was very common to see a team win a team competition by more than two points. As a result, neither Team Samsara nor their fans were too worried.

Who cares if we’re losing by two points? As long as we gain it back in the team competition, it’s fine. If we gain the points back, we win today’s match and the finals. We’ll be the champion’s! It’ll be the start of a new reign!

A historic moment could happen today, giving Samsara’s players and their fans endless motivation. It allowed them to keep calm despite being behind.

As for Happy, they were facing a match that they could not lose. Even if they had a two point lead from the group arena, it wasn’t enough. They had to win the team competition, so they could get another chance for a third game tie-breaker. If not, their journey this season would be over. No one on Happy wanted to see this outcome.

“Good luck!” The players on the two teams gave each other one last round of encouragement before heading into their player booths.

The referee looked at the time.

For this potentially historic match, everything needed to be handled perfectly.

Time was ticking. At 21:25, the referee announced the start of the team competition!

The map and characters loaded. The loading bar seemed to be carrying killing intent, a battle between the two sides.

Lord Grim finished loading.

Cloud Piercer finished loading.

Dancing Rain finished loading.

Empty Waves finished loading.

...

At the end, the map finished loading, and the team competition was officially underway.

The map was Selkie City Warehouse.

The map was a city map, but because of the enormous size of the warehouse, the map had a large indoor area. As a result, it didn't feel like there were many layers to this map compared to maps in the wilderness. There were all sorts of commodities piled up inside the warehouse, creating a maze. Some of these commodities could be used in battle too. Teams that weren't familiar with the map would probably have a hard time utilizing it well.

Pan Lin and Li Yibo introduced the map to the audience, while the two teams spawned at the east and west side of the map.

This map was an actual part of a city in the Heavenly Domain. The Selkie City Warehouse was asymmetric. There were areas that could be utilized on both the east and west sides of the map. However, as the away team, Happy needed some time to observe the map. On the other hand, Samsara immediately set out as soon as they spawned. Instead of heading straight for the center, Samsara moved in the southwest direction.

At the top of the warehouse in the southwest area, there was a tall chimney, which was the highest point in the map.

Samsara was heading towards it. However, the chimney was actually closer to Happy's spawn point, and it was quite conspicuous too. Happy quickly noticed it.

Chapter 1615: High Ground

"High ground?"

"Obvious!"

The communication going on in Happy's chat was short and concise.

Su Mucheng had asked about the high ground. It was common knowledge that Launchers with the high ground could more easily provide support to the team. The height of the chimney was neither too high nor too low. It was the perfect height for a Launcher. If a Launcher player saw this high ground and didn't have any thoughts about it, then the player wasn't suited to be a Launcher.

But Ye Xiu quickly replied back with an "Obvious".

The chimney was easy to notice. Samsara knew what Happy's team composition looked like. Samsara had also chosen this map, so how could not know what the chimney meant for Happy. Since they knew,

why would they choose this map if it gave their opponent an advantage? It was unlikely. This obvious advantage was more likely to be bait.

“Closer,” Fang Rui quickly typed.

He judged that they were closer to the chimney than Samsara was. Happy could take advantage of this fact. If Samsara had left the chimney there as bait, then they must have a method to deal with a Launcher holding the high ground. What was that method?

“Check,” Ye Xiu ordered. Happy set out. Their destination was the high ground.

A total of five words had been said, but it was enough for them to get the message across. Even the average viewer could understand Happy’s intentions from these five words: the high ground is bait, so don’t rush over. Instead, check how Samsara plans on dealing with it and then search for an opening.

The team advanced. Ye Xiu’s Lord Grim moved faster than the others, leaving the team behind. He planned on scouting ahead by himself.

Happy had the advantage in distance, and Ye Xiu had left the team to operate on his own. With Ye Xiu’s experience, even if he wasn’t too familiar with this map, he would likely find the key to this map soon. However, the viewers, who could see everything, saw Ye Xiu’s movements and started lighting candles for him.

Because Samsara had also split up to get there as fast as possible. It wasn’t just one person either, but three.

Zhou Zekai, Cloud Piercer.

Sun Xiang, One Autumn Leaf.

Jiang Botao, Empty Waves.

The three characters were in a triangular formation. After setting out from their spawn point, the other two were left behind. Lu Boyuan’s Chaotic Cloudy Mountain was left behind to protect Fang Minghua’s Cleric, Laughing Song.

Happy didn’t rush towards this obvious high point rashly. However, their caution approach was within Samsara’s calculations. They had predicted that Happy would send someone to scout ahead, so they sent out their trio as a counter. Was Ye Xiu’s Lord Grim going to be killed in one go, just like this?

The broadcast showed a bird’s eye view of the map. Four blinking lights were quickly moving towards the chimney.

Ye Xiu was holding nothing back though, using whatever movement skills he had on him. As a result, even though Samsara had left their healer behind to rush over, their speed couldn’t compare to Lord Grim’s. Samsara had started off farther away too, so Ye Xiu would definitely arrive first. The question was how long he would stay around.

The blinking indicators grew nearer and nearer towards the storeroom with the chimney on top.

Selkie City Warehouse was composed of numerous large, medium, and small storerooms. This storeroom was a small one. It was no more than three meters tall. Even so, it wasn't a height that a character could make in a single jump. However, this height wasn't a problem for Ye Xiu. Rotor Wings and his umbrella's ninjato form could easily overcome three meters. Lord Grim had transformed his Myriad Manifestations Umbrella into its ninjato form. After two jumps, Lord Grim climbed onto the roof of the storeroom. The chimney was already in sight. It looked to be around 15 meters tall. Along with the storeroom's height itself, it was approaching 20 meters. It was indeed a very suitable location for a Launcher.

With a distance and movement speed advantage, it was impossible for Samsara to have arrived there before him. Lord Grim rushed straight for the chimney. Along the way, he looked around to check his surroundings.

Storerooms everywhere. Selkie City Warehouse consisted of storerooms of different sizes and heights. The storeroom to the left of him was a small one, about 7 meters tall. The storeroom to the right was connected to the one he was on, and was 5 meters tall as well.

7 meters on the left, 5 meters on the right. There were numerous places where the enemies could situate themselves to force the Launcher down.

That would have been the case in the past.

After the level cap raise to 75, Launchers had a new skill, Mounted Gun, which Su Mucheng had employed effectively in today's group arena. When this skill was activated, the Launcher wouldn't need to worry about knockback from attacks. During the duration of the skill, she would be able to provide even stronger support for Happy. Of course, it would also be at the sacrifice of her health. Whether or not the exchange was worth it depended on the situation. Ye Xiu didn't think that Samsara's method of dealing with the chimney would be so unreliable. It was true that Zhou Zekai would be the one dealing with this high ground, but banking everything on him would be too naive. Samsara hadn't won two championships through blind trust.

What else could there be?

In the blink of an eye, Lord Grim reached beneath the chimney, which had stairs that could be climbed. Ye Xiu had Lord Grim climb up to the top. When he looked around, he noticed that the view was indeed extremely good. If the two teams fought here and Su Mucheng was positioned on top of the chimney, she would have a very easy time helping the team. It might even be impossible for Zhou Zekai's Sharpshooter to obstruct her.

If before, Ye Xiu had felt like it depended on the circumstances, then now, after getting an understanding of how effective this high ground was, Ye Xiu felt like having support from up here would improve Happy's chances of winning a fight enormously.

In that case, where was Samsara's confidence coming from? Was there some sort of dead angle, or could it be...

Ye Xiu looked down towards the bottom of the chimney.

The chimney was emitting any smoke, but if there was a way to get it operating, then the Launcher at the top of the chimney probably wouldn't be able to see through the dense smoke.

Was Samsara confident in their control over the high ground because of the chimney itself?

Lord Grim crouched and jumped down into the chimney. A height of 12 meters was enough to induce fall damage. However, Lord Grim's umbrella was still in its ninjato form. After dropping down for a bit, he swung his ninjato to safely land into a pile of garbage. He looked around. Then, his eyes lit up. He struggled out of the garbage and into the storeroom. He had come out from a huge furnace. Scattered all around the storeroom was a bunch of discarded junk. It seemed like this place was for burning trash.

Ye Xiu quickly found power switch. After pulling on it, the furnace began to burn, and the conveyor belt started up, sending trash into the furnace.

As expected.

Ye Xiu was certain now. Because the chimney was still operational, it couldn't be used as a high ground.

"There's smoke!"

The efficiency of the furnace was astonishing. It had only just been turned on, but the chimney was already letting out smoke. Both teams noticed the smoke.

"It turns out the chimney can be used," Pan Lin said.

"It's a good thing Ye Xiu found it ahead of time," Li Yibo said.

"The two sides haven't come across each other yet, but it looks like a battle of wits has already begun," Pan Lin said.

"But it looks like Samsara has thought farther ahead!" Li Yibo looked at the info he had and smiled.

"Oh?" Pan Lin asked.

"Look at the entrance to this storeroom," Li Yibo reminded Pan Lin, while also reminding the audience.

The storeroom entrance.

The broadcast gave a close up of the entrance. However, only a portion of the audience members could see it. The other portion couldn't rely on the screen to understand the peculiarities behind the entrance. This was because everyone was seated in different locations, so they saw it from different angles. The entrance to the storeroom was facing to the east, so the audience members on the east side saw it clearly, but the audience members on the west were at a loss. Fortunately, the projection technology in the stadium could change depending on the situation. Previously, the projection only showed the area surrounding Lord Grim, but now it extended to the entire storeroom, allowing everyone to see Lord Grim's movements inside the storeroom.

After being able to see the entrance clearly, the audience members quickly caught on to what Li Yibo meant.

This storeroom only had one entrance, facing to the east, which Samsara was coming from. If Lord Grim wanted to leave the storeroom, he only had one exit to choose from. But Samsara's trio was getting

closer and closer to this entrance. They could stop Lord Grim from coming out. The smoke coming from the chimney was a signal to them to rush in.

But they didn't see Lord Grim.

After Ye Xiu looked around the storeroom, he had noticed that the entrance was facing east and immediately realized the problem. Thus, he didn't go towards the entrance and instead turned off the furnace.

Then, he tried to go into the furnace, but ended up losing health!

The furnace's temperature was too high, dealing damage to him. Going back the way he came through the chimney wouldn't work.

There were piles of garbage scattered everywhere around him. Ye Xiu found a random one to hide in, while typing out: "Fight for the high ground!"

Chapter 1616: Storeroom

High ground? Fight for the high ground?

The audience was puzzled.

Ye Xiu had turned off the furnace, and his Lord Grim was guarding it. However, Samsara had three people, while Ye Xiu was alone. He probably wasn't enough to hold down this place, no?

But the people with this opinion soon realized something. They had an omniscient spectator view, so they could see that Samsara had three players there. On the other hand, Ye Xiu never exited the room, so he had no idea what Samsara's arrangements were. As a result, his order to fight for the high ground was actually a good decision. The furnace was in his grasp right now. Even if he discovered that three people had come and he couldn't defend the furnace, it wouldn't be too late for him to tell Su Mucheng to give up on the high ground.

Happy's other four players were approaching. After receiving Ye Xiu's message, Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain immediately sped up. She left the team behind and rushed towards the storeroom.

The storeroom entrance.

Zhou Zekai, Jiang Botao, and Sun Xiang had surrounded the entrance, but they didn't see any enemies.

Zhou Zekai's Cloud Piercer was standing farther back because he was long-ranged. As a result, he could see the top of the chimney. He quickly noticed that the smoke was gradually getting sparser.

"Turned off." He typed in the team chat.

The others immediately understood that the furnace had been turned off.

Turned off. That meant the high ground could be taken. However, Samsara didn't go for it.

"Enter!" Jiang Botao said.

Sun Xiang's One Autumn Leaf led the way. Jiang Botao's Empty Waves followed next, and then Zhou Zekai's Cloud Piercer. The three didn't split up, and headed into the storeroom together.

One to the left, one to the right!

One Autumn Leaf and Empty Waves moved orderly and nimbly. They were clearly very familiar with the interior of the storeroom. The two split up and immediately searched the piles of garbage in the back, but they didn't find anyone.

'Forward!' Jiang Botao messaged again.

The three of them split up again, each taking their own path. All of them moved slowly and quietly, pressing forward together. Step by step, they grew closer to the furnace. When they reached about halfway to the furnace, Zhou Zekai's Cloud Piercer suddenly stepped on a pile of trash near him and jumped twice to get on top. He looked around and immediately noticed the hiding Lord Grim.

Boom boom boom!

But Lord Grim's Myriad Manifestations Umbrella was the first to flash. He had been looking in that direction, waiting for a target to come into sight.

Zhou Zekai reacted extremely fast though. Cloud Piercer immediately rolled backwards, disappearing from Lord Grim's view. Anti-Tank Missiles rained down, exploding the trash pile that Cloud Piercer had been on. The trash consisted of a bunch of worn-out rubbish. The missiles sent the rubbish flying into the air, which then pitter-pattered down like rain.

Zhou Zekai's Cloud Piercer rolled backwards to dodge the attack. Then, he rolled forward twice, leaning on the pile of trash. His pristine windbreaker lay crumpled on the dirty trash. To the fans, it made their hearts ache.

Bang bang bang bang!

Cloud Piercer took out his two guns and pointed them towards Lord Grim, firing at him. But Lord Grim was no longer there. The bullets splattered against the trash.

The exchange of gunfire had attracted Sun Xiang's and Jiang Botao's attention. When Zhou Zekai fired back, he also gave out Lord Grim's coordinates. Sun Xiang and Jiang Botao made their own choices on what to do with the information. They continued to go deeper into the storeroom to block off Lord Grim's escape path.

"Gone!" Zhou Zekai saw his target disappear and messaged again. The two received the message and put up their guard. Where would Lord Grim come out from?

Some of the viewers couldn't see and started getting anxious. The projections were already showing the storeroom as translucent. Turning the trash piles inside translucent would only make things more confusing. This had been tested before.

As a result, some members of the audience couldn't see Lord Grim's hiding spot. Since they couldn't see, they could only rely on the big screen and then compare it to the projections. When they made the comparison, they only became more anxious! Lord Grim was crouching at a spot, while Sun Xiang's One Autumn Leaf was getting closer, one step at a time. At this rate, he was going to get ambushed!

Just when One Autumn Leaf was two steps away, he suddenly stopped. On the other side, Jiang Botao's Empty Waves suddenly sped up and rushed out.

Their eyes met.

Bang bang!

Gunshots. In the end, thanks to Ye Xiu's fast reactions, he was able to get off two shots as soon as he saw Empty Waves.

But One Autumn Leaf's Evil Annihilation shot out at the same time.

Furious Dragon Strikes the Heart!

The spear pierced through the trash with ease.

Ye Xiu was saved by his good instincts. The moment he fired two shots at Empty Waves, Lord Grim also rolled back in case there was a possible counterattack from the other side. It was a defensive habit of his, and it let him dodge the attack. Seeing the familiar spear narrowly miss him, Ye Xiu thanked the gods for his luck. He hadn't noticed anyone near him.

Cloud Piercer, Empty Waves, One Autumn Leaf.

There were three people. Was there a fourth? Maybe even a fifth? If there was a fifth, then Samsara didn't have a healer. A healer couldn't have gotten here so quickly. If there was five, then they had gone all out on the aggression. There should be no reason to take such a risk just for this high ground. Just these three players alone showed their aggressiveness. If he had been the one making the calls, he would have only sent two people to go past the team, while leaving two to protect the healer. In that case...

"Storeroom three people, intercept healer!" Ye Xiu quickly gave out an order.

Deciphering these five words would require a bit of thinking.

Intercept the healer, sure, but go where to intercept him? Ye Xiu had provided information that there were three people in the storeroom. Happy was closer to the storeroom than Samsara, but three people had already reached there. Why? Because they had left the healer behind. Thus, the healer was behind them, en-route to the storeroom from the spawn point. There was one healer and another one protecting him. Who was the one protecting him?

"Cloud One Empty," Ye Xiu quickly typed.

Cloud – Cloud Piercer, One – One Autumn Leaf, Empty – Empty Waves.

The information was thorough and clear. It was either Lu Boyuan or Du Ming protecting the healer. In any case, Happy's healer was completely safe. He wouldn't be under attack any time soon, and he could be left behind on his own.

As a result, Fang Rui's Boundless Sea and Qiao Yifan's One Inch Ash sped up. Previously, it had only been Dancing Rain that had gone ahead. Now, she had reached the storeroom. Even though Ye Xiu had told her to get to the high ground, with three of Samsara's players inside, having the high ground wouldn't

be much help. The high ground was rather far away, if she wanted to intercept Samsara's healer. As a result, Su Mucheng gave up on it. She used the recoil from her cannon to leap onto a nearby three meter high storeroom before heading towards that storeroom entrance.

This was a moment where players needed to decide on their own what was the right call according to the situation. Ye Xiu had just given the order. However, it was likely that it wasn't suitable anymore because of a change in circumstances. The other players needed to decide for themselves whether it was the right choice and act accordingly.

Inside the storeroom, Ye Xiu was facing against three of Samsara's figureheads. There was naturally no way he could face them head on. By a fluke, he had dodged One Autumn Leaf's Furious Dragon Strikes the Heart. He sent out information to Happy, while throwing a grenade at the corner of a trash pile.

Sun Xiang's vision was blocked by the trash, so he didn't know a grenade had been thrown. The Furious Dragon Strikes the Heart had unexpectedly missed. He immediately had One Autumn Leaf rush out. But even though he couldn't see it, Jiang Botao could.

"Dodge!"

Warning, grenade, One Autumn Leaf's right foot, all of them came out at the same time.

Boom!

The grenade exploded the moment Sun Xiang saw Jiang Botao's warning. How could there be any time for him to dodge? One Autumn Leaf was thrown back. Jiang Botao's Empty Waves rushed forward, but Lord Grim had already hidden himself behind another trash pile.

Jiang Botao's Empty Waves specialized in Wave Slashes, but he had learned Wave Formations too. He stopped and swung his shortsword, Divine Chains, to gather magic. But just when he swung his sword, Lord Grim suddenly popped out again. Ye Xiu had predicted that Jiang Botao would set down a wave formation, so he came out to interrupt it.

Jiang Botao smirked.

You predicted what I would do, but I predicted that you would predict what I would do.

Divine Chains chopped downwards!

It wasn't a Wave Formation, but a Ghost Slash.

The emblematic purple light of the ghost god crackled as it passed through the air. This slash wasn't towards Lord Grim, but rather to the right a bit, towards the pile of trash that he was hiding behind.

Ye Xiu saw that the attack would miss, but he didn't capitalize on it. Lord Grim immediately jumped back. The Ghost Slash fell and sliced through the pile of trash. The pile of trash instantly crumbled. If Ye Xiu hadn't jumped back, the trash would have swallowed him.

"Tricky!" Lord Grim turned around to run. Ye Xiu didn't forget to leave a bit of trash talk for Jiang Botao.

One reason was to taunt at Jiang Botao, the other was to notify his teammates that he could handle the current situation. If not, he wouldn't have taunted Jiang Botao and asked for help instead.

He turned around and ran away again. Ye Xiu tried his best to keep Lord Grim as low as possible. This slimy crawling and rolling gave the audience a sense of déjà vu. This was clearly how Fang Rui moved!

“What can’t this guy do!” Zhang Jiale couldn’t help but sigh from the spectator stands. He had known Ye Xiu for nine years, and he knew that his title as the Glory Textbook wasn’t just for show. Ye Xiu had innovated many of the playstyles and techniques used in Glory, but not everything. For example, Zhang Jiale’s Hundred Blossoms Style, or Fang Rui’s dirty playstyle, those were all their own original creations.

These became their symbolic playstyles, but that didn’t mean that they were the only ones who could do them. People could learn. But Ye Xiu used to be a Battle Mage, not a Spitfire or a Thief, yet he seemed to have grasped these playstyles too. Then, he used his understanding of them to find their weaknesses. There was no one more annoying than him.

“They have three people, and they can’t deal with him. Fight my ass!” Huang Shaotian shouted. The pro players were getting worked up as if something had hit a nerve.

Chapter 1617: 1v3

Jiang Botao’s Empty Waves stepped on the trash that he had just struck down with Ghost Slash in pursuit of Lord Grim. Sun Xiang’s One Autumn Leaf continued forward, hoping to pincer Lord Grim with Jiang Botao’s Empty Waves. At the same time, Zhou Zekai’s Cloud Piercer continued to head over from atop the trash piles. Despite having the higher ground, he couldn’t see any sign of Lord Grim. Ye Xiu had used Fang Rui’s shameless crouching position to move and prevent Zhou Zekai seeing him from above.

However, this map was still Samsara’s map. Though they might not be able to see Lord Grim, the three from Samsara had an idea of where he was heading from the direction he had run in. Jiang Botao on the left, Sun Xiang on the right, and Zhou Zekai above. Samsara wasn’t just doing a pincer from two sides, but closing in from three different directions.

Here!!Jiang Botao and Sun Xiang had the same thought as the two’s characters closed in at the same pace. Once they both got to the corner, they glanced over at Cloud Piercer above.

Great!

Cloud Piercer had managed to keep up with their pace as well, taking the high ground and surrounding Lord Grim from three sides.

Earth Wave Slash!

Tyrant’s Destruction!

One swung out from Empty Waves’ shortsword Divine Chain, while the other swept from One Autumn Leaf’s spear Evil Annihilation forwards. As soon as Empty Waves and One Autumn Leaf charged out from this corner, they were already using their attacks to defend themselves and guard against the possibility of Ye Xiu lying in wait to ambush them.

However, the two had over thought things. Ye Xiu’s Lord Grim wasn’t there, waiting in ambush. Instead, he continued forward, crouched. That was when One Autumn Leaf’s Tyrant’s Destruction swept out,

blocking his path. Turning around, he saw Empty Waves' Earthquake Sword fly at him, sending trash flying. Above came the sound of Cloud Piercer landing on the trash heap.

Lord Grim jumped back!

After dodging the Earthquake Sword and twisting his body as he did so, Lord Grim attempted to climb up the trash heap behind him. However, Jiang Botao had been anticipating this. Empty Waves' Divine Chain flicked up, and a Light Wave Sword cut off Lord Grim's plan before he had a chance to enact it.

Sun Xiang's One Autumn Leaf was already approaching and saw Lord Grim rapidly form hand seals.

Shadow Clone Technique!

Sun Xiang immediately thought. One Autumn Leaf stopped his approach, quickly turning to look around.

No one was there!

He quickly turned back, but there was still no one there.

What on earth?

Sun Xiang was shocked, but then heard a noise from above.

Underground Tunneling Technique!

Ye Xiu had actually made Lord Grim use a different Ninja Technique, burrowing underground. Yet when he reappeared, he had surprising done so at the top of the trash heap. Zhou Zekai's position hadn't given him a good enough view to see Lord Grim so he didn't know what the other was doing. Lord Grim erupted from the trash heap right in front of him, ninjato striking!

Luckily, while Zhou Zekai didn't know Lord Grim's exact position from above, Ye Xiu wasn't certain of Cloud Piercer's position either. His Underground Tunneling Technique had sent him right in front of Cloud Piercer, and a little ways away as well.

This gave Zhou Zekai enough time to react.

Cloud Piercer quickly jumped back, dodging Lord Grim's imperfect strike. His dual revolvers glinted in the light, Shattered Frost and Wildfire, their mouths dark before gunfire sprung from them as one.

Bang bang bang...

Bullets flew. With only two steps between them, they were certain to hit.

Lord Grim was shot, but no blood appeared, his form suddenly dissolving like a broken shadow.

Shadow Clone Technique!

Whoosh!

A swift sound flickered past Cloud Piercer's neck, drawing a splash of blood.

Cut Throat!

Lord Grim had used Shadow Clone Technique to dart behind Cloud Piercer, striking swift. Next, the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella folded into two parts, turning into tonfas. With a grab, he caught Cloud Piercer and then threw him forward using Fling!

It had all happened in a split second. It was like Lord Grim had been pincered by Empty Waves and One Autumn Leaf the previous second, and in the next, he had appeared on top of the trash heap, darted behind Cloud Piercer and thrown him out, blood still dripping from his neck.

So fast!

There was no other word for it but fast. It was like lightning, and it felt like chopping up the word fast was the only way to really give it a description worthy of that speed.

If it didn't reach that speed, how could it catch even Zhou Zekai?

Jiang Botao and Sun Xiang only just heard the noise above, about to investigate, when they saw Cloud Piercer thrown off. But it clearly wasn't the time for greetings. The two didn't need to think or discuss. They each took a path, one left, the other right, heading up the trash heap in pursuit.

But just as Sun Xiang's One Autumn Leaf's head peeked out, he saw a grenade land in front of his eyes. There was no time to think. Sun Xiang subconsciously flicked his mouse, One Autumn Leaf's spear stabbed forward right towards the grenade.

Boom!

In the rush, he wasn't able to control the force of this stab very well, but the grenade still exploded and it counted as a parry. The explosive force didn't throw him back, so One Autumn Leaf aimed to leap up again. But who would've thought that while the explosion didn't affect One Autumn Leaf directly, it did blast away the trash he wanted to land on. With that foothold gone, turned into a pit by the grenade, One Autumn Leaf's jump failed and his form plummeted again...

Sun Xiang over here just seemed a little silly, but Jiang Botao over there was the one in trouble. As soon as Empty Waves peeked out, he saw the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella descend down onto him, like a meteorite.

Star Fall!

An Exorcist skill, one Jiang Botao obviously knew the priority of. In that moment, he had given up in his heart. An airborne character didn't have that much freedom. Jiang Botao hurriedly had Empty Waves Guard. Star Fall slammed him straight down, and he didn't have any footholds in reach.

Zhou Zekai, Jiang Botao and Sun Xiang, three of the Glory scene's top ten players, had all been thrown off the trash pile by Ye Xiu in a 1v3.

Though it was only a few moments, though it was clear how Ye Xiu had taken advantage of the situation, this scene was etched into people's minds.

The commentators Pan Lin and Li Yibo didn't know how to comment on this scene. Ye Xiu's thought process and methodology were simple, even a normal player in the same situation could think of such a tactic. However, the problem was that the opponents Ye Xiu was facing were Zhou Zekai, Jiang Botao and Sun Xiang. Three top players. It was easier thought of than done.

Yet Ye Xiu had done it, so the entire venue went silent, and even the TV broadcast lacked the voices of the commentators.

Everyone watched, lost for words, as Lord Grim turned and left.

In the end, he didn't dare face the three head on. However, this small victory was already miraculous.

Before, the other pros had all thought that a 1v3 was sure to get rid of Lord Grim. If they couldn't, then that would just be plain embarrassing. But in this moment, they all fell silent, too. After putting themselves in Samsara's shoes for moment, they all felt that, in that moment, Ye Xiu was unstoppable. The three on the field couldn't stop him, they couldn't stop either, and neither could anyone on this earth.

"Fuck..."

All these thoughts and words whirling around in their minds ended up expressed as one single short curse. It was a sigh, a shock, but more than that, it was admiration.

They couldn't blame this on Samsara's three not being up to par, they could only blame this on their opponent being too strong.

However, Samsara's three didn't plan on staying shocked and silent with the audience.

Cloud Piercer, who had been thrown off the trash heap with a Fling by Lord Grim, had been knocked down due to the grab's effect. However, after being knocked down, he got back up as quickly as was possible.

Cloud Piercer's movements were also stunningly swift. To most, it was almost like he had been knocked down onto a trampoline before being immediately thrown back onto his feet.

Fire!

He activated Rage Firing, but used it for Aerial Fire. The stronger recoil shot Cloud Piercer onto the trash heap, his body already twisting in midair. Zhou Zekai's control of the attack's recoil, his own jump, and whatnot was extremely precise. After leaping up with help from the recoil, he turned, landing right down onto the trash heap in front of him in one smooth motion.

Bang bang bang!

The gunshot sounds never stopped, and the bullets were already heading Lord Grim's way.

Ye Xiu was shocked. He had never thought that it would Cloud Piercer to recover and pursue him first, what with the forced knockdown. Zhou Zekai's reaction speed was far beyond his expectations, and he wasn't far enough just yet for Lord Grim to take cover. This trash heap was nowhere near as reliable as solid ground, and moving along it would sometimes cause your foot to sink in. It was a plague on movement speed.

Rolling to avoid the hail of bullets, Ye Xiu managed to return two shots. The dodged bullets lodged themselves into the trash heap, splashing bits of trash everywhere and sending them dancing around Lord Grim.

Bang bang bang!

Clink clink clink!

Cloud Piercer never stopped firing, but amidst this, there was a strange noise.

Thwack!

Lord Grim's shoulder was hit by a bullet, much to Ye Xiu's disbelief. He was certain he had dodged out of the path of Zhou Zekai's bullets...

The trash...

Ye Xiu quickly realized what was going on.

Zhou Zekai had actually used the trash that the bullets had thrown into the air, making his bullets collide with them to not only increase damage, but also to alter their paths slightly, making them unpredictable.

In this time, Lord Grim was hit thrice more. Twice by the flying trash and once by a bullet.

His movement was slowed and on the end of an attack like this, his rhythm was completely destroyed.

With no other choice, he opened up the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella...

Twack thwack thwack....

Like pouring rain, bullets and trash bombarded the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella's shield form.

Ye Xiu couldn't stay under the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella's protection forever. With the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella's current durability, it wouldn't be able to last for too long under Cloud Piercer's assault.

Opening the umbrella merely gave him a chance to catch his breath. In the next moment, the umbrella closed and gunfire erupted from the tip.

Gatling Gun.

A shoot out!

Chapter 1618: Unbelievable Control

With just the Myriad Manifestations Umbrella's rifle form, Lord Grim couldn't hope to contend

Bullets swept across the ground, launching trash up into the air. Zhou Zekai's Cloud Piercer moved to the side to dodge, but all he could see was trash flying around everywhere. The bullets chasing after him began colliding with the airborne trash as well, making it difficult for Zhou Zekai to figure out their trajectories.

He could only do what Ye Xiu did before: keep Cloud Piercer moving and try to get as far away as possible from the chaos.

The two fired at each other, getting hit by each other's attacks. Blood, bullets, trash...

Everyone was dumbfounded. No one had expected to see another fierce confrontation between these two right after a brilliant match between these two in the group arena.

Gun Fu!

This was Zhou Zekai's famed Gun Fu, but Ye Xiu wasn't losing to him. The two were even.

The broadcast provided a slow-mo of the battle for everyone to enjoy. With the speed slowed down, the viewers could see how the bullets were bouncing off the trash, allowing them to realize that there was another layer to the fight.

"This is... Delivery Gun?" After watching the slow-mo, Pan Lin was able to see everything clearly, but he wasn't certain what exactly he was seeing.

"This is..." Li Yibo's voice was filled with uncertainty as well because he had never seen anything like this before.

Delivery Gun was a technique, where the gunner used the knockback from bullets to send the target to the desired location. Zhou Zekai had once used Delivery Gun to juggle a character to death in the air as part of an exhibition match. Even today, this play was still widely discussed.

Of course, an exhibition match was completely different from a competitive match. Zhou Zekai had never performed it in an official match. Oftentimes, Delivery Gun was used in the team competition to control where the target landed. By pairing it with the grabs from Lu Boyuan's Grappler, it was a very powerful control tool.

When talking about Delivery Gun, it was impossible not to mention Ye Xiu because he was the one who had developed the technique. Although to many people, it sounded more like a legend than a fact. Most people couldn't wrap their heads around how he could have developed Delivery Gun. From what they knew about him, he had always been a Battle Mage player. Nowadays, many of the Glory players didn't know the history behind the technique. When they heard Delivery Gun, their first thought would be Zhou Zekai.

Li Yibo had come from an older generation. How could he have forgotten that Delivery Gun had been Ye Xiu's innovation? He just wasn't sure if what he was seeing could be considered as Delivery Gun. He couldn't quite grasp it.

"This... I'm not sure if it's Delivery Gun, but what I can say for certain is that anyone who can do what they're doing has reached great heights with Delivery Gun!" Li Yibo finally concluded. His words sounded evasive, but his reasoning wasn't without logic. To do what they were doing, their shots needed to be extremely precise, and precision was a fundamental part of Delivery Gun. However, in contrast to the traditional definition of Delivery Gun, the two were not fixed on specific target. The two were aiming to hit the pieces of trash flying around. Perhaps this was just a form of Delivery Gun.

Li Yibo had his own opinions on the matter, but he didn't say them. He had been taught a lesson by Ye Xiu far too many times. Zhou Zekai had slapped his face numerous times today too. He didn't dare say more than what he needed to say.

“But Ye Xiu can’t keep this up for long, no?” Pan Lin asked.

“It’s not that he can’t, but his character can’t,” Li Yibo said. The only reason Lord Grim could compete with Cloud Piercer in this firefight was because he was using Gatling Gun. However, Gatling Gun had a duration. It would eventually run out of bullets.

“Even if his character could keep this up, the circumstances won’t permit him to,” Li Yibo added. He saw that Jiang Botao’s Empty Waves and Sun Xiang’s One Autumn Leaf had started moving. The two didn’t rush towards the garbage heap again. Instead, they circled around to the left and right of Ye Xiu’s retreat path. They knew that Lord Grim wouldn’t be able to keep this up forever. He would have to retreat sooner or later.

One to the left, the other to the right. The two dashed along the outside of the garbage heap. Ye Xiu couldn’t see them from up above, and the sound of gunfire covered their footsteps. The two quickly made their way behind Lord Grim and were now heading towards him. Zhou Zekai’s Cloud Piercer pressed harder. He had calculated that Lord Grim’s Gatling Gun would be over soon. There were only a few bullets left.

Ta!

The Gatling Gun suddenly stopped. Ye Xiu cancelled Gatling Gun ahead of time. His character jumped up and slashed out with his sword!

Sword Draw!

Sword light swept towards the ground, leaving a clear mark. A circular arc in the shape of a crescent moon was carved into the garbage heap.

Hua!

The piled up trash suddenly started sliding down like a rockslide. Jiang Botao’s Empty Waves and Sun Xiang’s One Autumn Leaf had rushed towards this area. The two of them saw Lord Grim jumping from the garbage heap. Just when they were about to throw an attack at him, the garbage heap next to them collapsed, showering them with trash.

The two struggled, but weren’t able to stop the incoming flood of trash. In an instant, they were swallowed by the garbage, and Lord Grim disappeared from their sights amidst this surging sea of trash.

“?”

“?”

Sun Xiang and Jiang Botao both put out question marks in the team chat. They had lost sight of their target, and their characters were currently struggling to free themselves from the collapsed garbage heap.

“?”

A third question mark soon followed. When Zhou Zekai’s Cloud Piercer arrived, he didn’t see Lord Grim. He looked around, but didn’t see anyone.

Bang bang bang bang.

Cloud Piercer immediately fired at the garbage heap that had collapsed, sending trash flying into the air. But he failed to dig out Lord Grim. Jiang Botao's Empty Waves and Sun Xiang's One Autumn Leaf finally freed themselves from the prison of garbage and climbed out.

It was a 3v1, yet they were losing?

They had chosen this map, yet their opponent was giving them this much trouble?

What was being injured wasn't their health, but their pride. As soon as One Autumn Leaf climbed out, he immediately leapt into the air.

Shattering the Land!!

Sun Xiang vented, creating a huge explosion. Magic erupted, blasting the garbage heap apart. If Lord Grim was hiding underneath it, his cover would be blown away. But he wasn't...

The Samsara fans sent their regards to their three generals. They had seen that the moment Ye Xiu's Lord Grim toppled the garbage heap, he had run away with a Shadow Clone Technique.

With cover from the garbage heap, he was able to instantly vanish out of sight with the Shadow Clone Technique. Lord Grim's real body had slipped away, going around Cloud Piercer and towards the exit.

Zhou Zekai, Sun Xiang, Jiang Botao.

Three famous names, three top 10 All-Stars, facing a single Ye Xiu, and all three of them had been duped. Ye Xiu hadn't truly been fighting against them. He had been doing everything he could to run away, but it was still a 1v3. Being able to escape was a huge success on his part. None of the three had taken much damage, but in everyone's eyes, they had been the losers. The more loyal the Samsara fan, the more deeply they felt this.

The three continued with the same pace. One Autumn Leaf's Shattering the Lands had confirmed that Lord Grim was no longer hiding there. Zhou Zekai's Cloud Piercer jumped onto the garbage heap up ahead to see if he could find any traces of Lord Grim. Jiang Botao and Sun Xiang then split up to the left and right, continuing their search.

They had the advantage.

No one needed to remind them. They were very clear about it. Even though they hadn't succeeded yet, this was a fact that hadn't changed yet. However, they were taking longer than they thought, so they needed to warn their other two teammates who hadn't arrived yet.

"Be careful of snipes!" Jiang Botao warned.

"We've been careful," Fang Minghua replied.

Fang Minghua and Lu Boyuan didn't receive any other info from the team. All they got were those three question marks. They could tell that things weren't going well on that side. According to their initial plan, no matter who it was on Happy, he or she would check the garbage disposal room. Zhou Zekai, Jiang Botao, and Sun Xiang should have been more than enough to deal with whoever that was. In this

way, the other side would be forced either to rescue or trade for that person. They would first kill whoever was in the storeroom, and then go back and help Fang Minghua and Lu Boyuan. They felt that chances of success were quite high. Happy ended up only sending one person – Ye Xiu. However, after this much time, Ye Xiu still hadn't been caught by their three players. This became Ye Xiu stalling the three of them, which spelled trouble for Fang Minghua and Lu Boyuan.

Thinking of this unfavorable possibility, Fang Minghua and Lu Boyuan had made adjustments long ago. They stopped going along the direct path that the other three went along, instead taking a roundabout route that couldn't be seen from up on the chimney.

Su Mucheng didn't go for the high ground, but by circling around, they were able to avoid Happy's intercept.

"They circled around," Fang Rui judged based on the time, so he didn't continue searching.

"How's it going there? If you're still holding on, type 1," Fang Rui messaged.

"1111111111," Ye Xiu typed a line of 1s, showing that he was doing great.

"Wow, amazing! What are we even here for?" Fang Rui replied. He was actually very shocked. That was Zhou Zekai, Jiang Botao, and Sun Xiang! Ye Xiu was just by himself, but he was doing so well that he could type that many 1s? Even Ye Xiu's teammates found it hard to believe how well he was pinning the enemies down.

Chapter 1619: Once in a Blue Moon

Zhou Zekai, Jiang Botao, Sun Xiang.

These three top players were being held down by a single person. It was inconceivable, and it also meant a once in a blue moon opportunity.

You needed to be aggressive facing these kinds of opportunities. If you missed it, wouldn't that be a tragedy?

Fang Rui was thinking about the pros and cons, when he saw Su Mucheng type out in the chat: "Scatter!"

That's my line! Fang Rui saw that Su Mucheng had come to the same conclusion. He no longer hesitated.

Samsara didn't go along their original route, likely because Ye Xiu was holding down three of their players. Nevertheless, they would come across them at some point. No matter which route they took, their general direction would remain the same.

However, Samsara had many options available to them. Searching through all of them with just three people might take too long.

Narrowing down these options required intuition and courage. Samsara did not take the most direct route. That was a reality. What would they be thinking when making a choice? If they took a route that was too far, they would be too cut off from the others on the team. Both parties would have trouble

helping each other. However, this choice would also prove the most troublesome for Happy. A simpler route wouldn't result in the team coming apart, but Happy would have a relatively easier time intercepting them.

Which choice was Samsara more likely to take? Answering this question required careful thinking. If Happy took the wrong turn, there would be no room for regret.

"Checking nearby!"

Fang Rui was still trying to figure out what Samsara might be thinking, when Su Mucheng made the choice. Then, he saw Dancing Rain climb onto the roof of a nearby storeroom and check their surroundings.

No one.

As expected, Lu Boyuan and Fang Minghua didn't choose an overly conspicuous route. But by moving along the rooftops, Dancing Rain would be able to see more than the others, while also being at a convenient high point if a fight broke out.

"Me left, you right," Fang Rui messaged. He went to the left, while Qiao Yifan went to the right. They started inspecting what simpler routes Samsara might have taken.

But soon afterwards, Fang Rui saw Su Mucheng's Dancing Rain moving along the edges of the storeroom near him and waving her hands at him.

Fang Ming understood her gesturing. She had already checked this area. Fang Rui could move farther to the left and expand their search area.

Fang Rui had Boundless Sea immediately make adjustments. He moved farther to the left before moving on.

We have to be fast!

All three of them had the same thought. Even though Ye Xiu had replied back confidently with numerous 1s, he was certainly under a lot of pressure. It wasn't like they could hope that Ye Xiu could kill the three on Samsara on his own. They needed to hurry and seize the opportunity that Ye Xiu had given them, so they could pull the carpet from under Samsara!

This was what it meant to be an ace player!

As Boundless Sea scouted ahead, Fang Rui felt deeply moved by Ye Xiu. It was true that he was the highest paid player on Happy, using their strongest character. However, if he were in Ye Xiu's position, he felt rather terrified thinking that he could stall those three on Samsara by himself. He didn't have any confidence that he could do it.

Ye Xiu was Happy's true ace player. There was never any doubt about that. Su Mucheng's firm decisions had touched Fang Rui as well. Although he had been thinking the same as Su Mucheng, Su Mucheng had been the one to make the call. This was a huge difference. This was a show of her confidence and her courage in taking risks. Fang Rui had lost to Su Mucheng in this aspect.

Sure enough, my fate is to be a supporting character!

Fang Rui sighed. Even though he didn't have any grand ambitions, every pro player longed to be the core of a team. Because of Fang Rui's playstyle, he was never suitable to be the symbol of a team, and he felt wronged by it. But through Ye Xiu and Su Mucheng, he realized that he wasn't suitable to be an ace player. His playstyle wasn't the only reason.

It's okay though, I'm used to it!

Fang Rui knew how to console himself and quickly discarded those thoughts. He had never cared much about it in the first place. He was just a bit sensitive after feeling unhappy about his performance in the playoffs.

After discarding those useless thoughts, Fang Rui's focus quickly returned back to the match. Boundless Sea continued to move forward. He was currently between two storerooms. The entrances of the storeroom weren't on this side, so it was a rather narrow path. The storeroom to the right of him was longer than the storeroom to the left. He soon reached the end of the left storeroom and arrived at the beginning of a new storeroom. He was at a T-shaped intersection. He looked ahead, but didn't see anyone, so the left then?

Fang Rui hesitated slightly, but he recalled the resolve that Su Mucheng had before and admonished himself.

To the left!

To the left it is!

Boundless Sea took a left turn at the T-intersection. He wasn't letting his emotions affect his decision. Fang Rui had estimated how fast their targets were moving. If they had continued forward, he should have seen them up ahead. However, they hadn't. Su Mucheng and Qiao Yifan hadn't found anything either. If he continued heading to the left, he would have a higher chance of finding Fang Minghua and Lu Boyuan.

The path to the left was narrow. Only one person could fit through it at one time. As Boundless Sea ran along it, Fang Rui would look behind himself ever so often. During this process, Fang Rui inadvertently noticed that there was a window at a height of three meters, every few meters along the walls of the storeroom to his right.

This...

Fang Rui could sense that something wasn't right.

These sort of details were difficult for away teams to notice ahead of time. By utilizing these windows, Samsara could check outside without needing to stand out in the open on top of the roof, making it much harder for Happy to find them.

Fang Rui looked around again. The storeroom behind him and to his left weren't as tall as the one on his right. The view from those windows were quite good. At the very least, they would be able to see Dancing Rain jumping across rooftops.

Then, what about his Boundless Sea? If Fang Minghua and Lu Boyuan were watching from those storerooms, they would have noticed his movements long ago!

Thinking of this, Boundless Sea sped up. As an expert at ambushes, Fang Rui was aware of how dangerous his location was. He was in a long and narrow path that could only fit one person. The walls to his left and right were too tall for him to jump over. If he were pincerred, he would be in a very bad situation.

Not good!

Not good!!!

Samsara had chosen this map. The loading screen gave some information on the map though. For example, the locations of the support zones. Fang Rui's current location was quite close to the support zone at the center. If he were in Samsara's shoes, he would probably...

Bang bang...

Two gunshots. Fang Rui's thoughts were interrupted. The crowd burst into cheers.

While Fang Rui was thinking about what his opponents would do, the viewers could see Lu Boyuan's and Fang Minghua's movements. They moved towards Fang Rui's area and then went into one of the storerooms. Then, they went to the windows. From these windows, they soon noticed Dancing Rain jumping across rooftops, looking for them.

The two couldn't see Fang Rui's Boundless Sea because he was blocked by a storeroom. However, the two seemed to somehow know that Boundless Sea was heading towards them. Fang Minghua's Laughing Song ran over to the support zone and switched with Du Ming's Moon Luring Frost. Samsara had five attackers on the field now.

Then, Fang Rui arrived at the T-intersection. While he was figuring out which direction to go towards, the Samsara fans gripped their seats in the suspense. They knew that Lu Boyuan and Du Ming were hiding to the left, waiting to ambush him. But what if Fang Rui didn't go left?

Fang Rui's Boundless Sea ended up going to the left. Their hopes were fulfilled...

Bang bang.

Two windows were broken. Lu Boyuan's Chaotic Cloudy Mountain and Du Ming's Moon Luring Frost each broke through a window and jumped down. Their ambush had begun. Samsara's fans had been waiting for this scene to happen.

Fuck!

Fang Rui clenched his teeth. He wasn't surprised by the ambush. But his opponents had truly been cunning. When they saw that Fang Rui had been caught in their trap, they didn't immediately attack. Instead, they held their positions and waited. They hadn't waiting for Fang Rui to move, but for Su Mucheng and Qiao Yifan to move. They were waiting for those two to move farther and farther away. As for Fang Rui? Until he was 100% sure that he was ambushed, he couldn't ask them for help. If it turned out that there was no ambush, a false alarm would destroy Su Mucheng's and Qiao Yifan's pace.

And now the ambush had come.

"XXX, XXX!"

Fang Rui had his coordinates already typed into the chat. When he saw Du Ming and Lu Boyuan arrive, pinching him from the front and the rear, he immediately pressed enter.

In front was Lu Boyuan's Chaotic Cloudy Mountain.

Behind was Du Ming's Moon Luring Frost.

Fang Rui didn't hesitate. He immediately turned around and charged at Moon Luring Frost.

The exit behind him was farther away than the exit in front, but in this narrow space, Blade Masters were easier to fight against than Grapplers. As a Grappler, all Lu Boyuan needed to do was activate Reinforced Iron Bones, walk over, and grab him. Fang Rui didn't think he had any chance of getting past him. On the other hand, Blade Masters had their movements restricted by the narrow space. Many of their skills couldn't be used. Fang Rui could take advantage of that!

Charge!

Boundless Sea sprinted towards Moon Luring Frost. His palms were already gathering qi, but as Moon Luring Frost fell, his hands grasped his sword, and his gaze directed at Boundless Sea!

Downwind Sword Slash!

A sharp sword light fell. Du Ming knew that this terrain was unfavorable for his class. He knew that Fang Rui would certainly choose to get past him. As soon as he broke the window and leapt out, he had started his attack. The sword light from the powerful Downwind Sword Slash filled the entire path. There was no escaping it.

Chapter 1620: Trapped

The space between the two storerooms was so narrow that it could hardly be considered a path. It was more apt to describe it as a crack between two storerooms.

In this crack, there was only forward and backwards. There was no left or right.

Lu Boyuan's Chaotic Cloudy Mountain blocked the rear, while Du Ming's Moon Luring Frost's Downwind Sword Slash blocked the front. Under the shadow of the cold light, Boundless Sea didn't seem like he had anywhere to run to. At least, that was what everyone thought.

The only one who disagreed was Fang Rui himself.

The fierce sword light was dazzling, but it didn't steal away his calm. He had already decided that he would break through from Moon Luring Frost's end. There was no room for hesitation.

Sword light flooded his vision, but he saw a tiny opening where there was no sword light. He didn't know if he could make it through, but he didn't have any other choice.

Charge!

Boundless Sea continued to sprint. The moment the sword light descended, he dove forward.

Fang Rui didn't roll. Instead, he put himself parallel to the ground and borrowed the momentum from the dive to slide forward. Fang Rui had pressed Boundless Sea as low to the ground as possible. He couldn't go any lower.

Can he dodge it?

Du Ming was confident in his attack. Even if Boundless Sea was laying flat, he didn't think his attack would miss. But when the sword light came down, Du Ming suddenly discovered that he might be wrong!

His Downwind Sword Slash had a tiny opening. Was it because he hadn't executed it perfectly enough?

Spiral Qi Kill!

Boundless Sea was still flat on the ground when he fired a blast of qi. Moon Luring Frost was still in the air. The spiralling qi struck his two legs.

Bang!

Moon Luring Frost was flung to the side. His head slammed into the wall.

The crawling Boundless Sea jumped up, his hand placed on Moon Luring Frost's shoulder.

Grab, twist, throw!

Fling!

Moon Luring Frost shot towards Chaotic Cloudy Mountain like an artillery shell.

Du Ming was at a loss. He didn't know how his Downwind Sword Slash had missed until he was thrown. As he flew through the air, he looked at the ground and noticed that the place where Boundless Sea had dove towards was very distinct. The ground there was sunken down (凹).

This was just a crack between two storerooms. No one was going to do any maintenance here. As a result, the ground was bumpy. In that instant, Fang Rui had noticed a depression in the ground in front of him. He saw it as a potential safe area and dove towards it.

The slightest difference determined life and death, and it was what allowed Boundless Sea to dodge the Downwind Sword Slash.

That's the reason?

Du Ming had no choice but to accept it. He hadn't noticed it. When he used Downwind Sword Slash, he hadn't thought that the bumps (凹凸) would create holes in his attack.

Moon Luring Frost flew towards Chaotic Cloudy Mountain. Fang Rui had obviously planned for the two to collide.

But Chaotic Cloudy Mountain didn't retreat.

His arms trembled, Reinforced Iron Bones!

Bang!

Moon Luring Frost crashed into Chaotic Cloudy Mountain. However, due to the Super Armor, Chaotic Cloudy Mountain didn't budge. Moon Luring Frost fell to the ground, while Chaotic Cloudy Mountain jumped over him and continued forward.

Lu Boyuan's reaction looked merciless, but the spectating pro players knew that wasn't the case.

Since Moon Luring Frost wasn't able to block Boundless Sea, a reversal had happened.

The crack was too narrow. Even if Samsara had two people, without a pincer, the two of them were no different than one person. Both were close-ranged classes. They couldn't attack at the same time in this narrow path.

As for Fang Rui's Boundless Sea? After breaking past Samsara's pincer attack, he was no longer in danger. On the contrary, this narrow terrain was extremely favorable for his Qi Master. Qi Master attacks were AoE attacks. If he let out qi attacks in this alleyway, how was the other side going to dodge them?

Lu Boyuan had thought of this point, which is why he didn't have time to slow down. Chaotic Cloudy Mountain activated Reinforced Iron Bones, knocking Moon Luring Frost away so he could immediately launch his attacks.

Sure enough, Fang Rui's Boundless Sea had started gathering qi, but Lu Boyuan's extremely quick response had caught him off guard. The Moon Luring Frost that he had thrown at him unexpectedly wasn't able to slow him down.

There was time for him to finish using the skill that he had been casting. However, Chaotic Cloudy Mountains had activated Reinforced Iron Bones and now had Super Armor. His qi attacks would push him. All Lu Boyuan needed to do was tank the attack, and Chaotic Cloudy Mountains would close the distance with Boundless Sea. Then, he could use any grab skill he wanted, and Boundless Sea would be caught in a pincer again.

No matter how reluctant he might be, Fang Rui's only choice was to give up on this attack!

Boundless Sea cancelled the skill. He activated Cloud Body and then turned and ran.

Chaotic Cloudy Mountain stopped. He raised his two hands and grabbed the air.

Cloud Grasping Fist!

The skill that Lu Boyuan had chosen had truly been put to great effect today. In the group arena, he had caught Su Mucheng off guard with the sudden long-range grab, although he wasn't able to fully take advantage of it. This time, in this narrow alleyway, Cloud Grasping Fist seemed to be very difficult to dodge. If Boundless Sea was grabbed, he would meet his end.

Fuck!

Fang Rui kept looking back as he ran away. When he saw the Cloud Grasping First from Chaotic Cloudy Mountain, he suddenly panicked.

Cloud Grasping Fist was a Qi Master skill, so Fang Rui was very familiar with it. But because he was familiar with the skill, he knew that dodging it in this terrain would be extremely difficult. Crouch? Roll?

In this narrow passageway, none of those would work. The only area with enough space to dodge the Cloud Grasping Fist was above him. But there was only so much he could control while in the air, far from the control his opponent had with the skill.

But even so, what other choice did he have?

Boundless Sea stopped and turned around.

To dodge this Cloud Grasping Fist, he would need to time it perfectly and be extremely precise with his movements. Fang Rui didn't think he would be able to do it while running and looking back.

By this time, Moon Luring Frost had gotten back up from the ground.

Fang Rui had no energy to spare for him. His gaze was fixed on Chaotic Cloudy Mountain's two hands.

Because Chaotic Cloudy Mountain was a Grappler, the equipment that he wore wouldn't have the preferred stats for a Qi Master. His Cloud Grasping Fist would take longer to gather up the required qi. However Fang Rui wasn't trying to predict when the attack would come. He was locked onto the movements of his hands.

It's coming!

Chaotic Cloudy Mountain's ten fingers tightened. His two hands made a clear pulling motion. Fang Rui jumped into the air. But Lu Boyuan had predicted that Fang Rui would jump. His two hands shifted up slightly.

From the start of the move until it landed, Cloud Grasping Fist could be controlled by the player. This was one of the reasons for why it was so hard to dodge under these circumstances.

Boundless Sea pushed out with his palm, Cloud Pushing Palm!

Pa!

He hit the wall. Boundless Sea immediately dropped towards the ground. He curled into a ball and then laid himself flat to the ground...

Fang Rui was like a fish in the water. He had no reserves about how shameful it might look for him.

The jump had been a feint. He wanted Lu Boyuan to move up. Fang Rui's true goal was the ground.

Boundless Sea hastily tried to make adjustments. Chaotic Cloudy Mountain's two hands pressed down. But it was too late. The qi was only able to rustle the top of his hair. Apart from that, it wasn't able to grasp onto Boundless Sea.

"Hahahaha!"

Fang Rui was overjoyed. His dodge had been shrewd and technical. He felt like he was a genius.

"I might only be a supporting character, but don't think I'm easy pickings!" He boasted. Everyone was baffled. Where'd that come from?

Du Ming's Moon Luring Frost jumped onto the roof of a rather short storeroom. Even though it wasn't a tall one, it wasn't possible to get onto it with a normal jump. Du Ming's Moon Luring Frost jumped and

then jumped again off the wall. He followed with a Rising Dragon Slash in order to get to the right height.

Colliding Stab!

Triple Slash!

Moon Luring Frost didn't hold back and used his movement skills. Fang Rui had been delayed a bit in order to dodge the Cloud Grasping Fist. The increase in movement speed from Cloud Body wasn't as explosive as his movement skills. By chaining these two skills, Moon Luring Frost was already in front of Boundless Sea. He stepped out and then twisted his body while in the air. He fell towards the ground, his blade descending. This time, he made sure to take note of the terrain. He wouldn't let Fang Rui get through because of neglect on his part.

Falling Phoenix Slash!

Sword light descended. This time, Fang Rui had nowhere to run to. Helpless, Fang Rui could only have Boundless Sea put up a Qi Wave Shield to reduce the damage. Behind him, Chaotic Cloudy Mountain was closing in. Moon Luring Frost's sword had cut off his path forward. Despite a few complications, Fang Rui wasn't able to escape from their pincer.

Suddenly, an enormous explosion sounded. Fireworks seemed to burst forth from the falling Moon Luring Frost. The flames engulfed him, and the resplendent sword light lost its luster.

"YES, SIS MU! PERFECT TIMING!! I LOVE YOU!!!"

Fang Rui was practically incoherent from his excitement. Just when it looked like his life was over, Dancing Rain arrived. Fang Rui almost wanted to cry out how perfect the timing was.

"Charge!" Su Mucheng didn't have time to share his joy and reminded him.

Fang Rui put away the rollercoaster of emotions he had experienced. Boundless Sea ran for his life. Moon Luring Frost had been blasted out of the air. His Downwind Sword Slash had been interrupted, and his balance had been broken. Even so, Du Ming was able to get a sword slash out. Unfortunately, it had been too forced. Boundless Sea was able to dodge it with ease.

Not good!

From behind, Lu Boyuan had no choice but to re-examine their situation. It had originally been a 2v1. Through the terrain, the two thought they could easily take care of Fang Rui's Boundless Sea. But they hadn't expected him to be so slippery. To think he could find a way out from such a dire situation. Now, his backup had arrived. A Qi Master and a Launcher. He and Du Ming had practically no room to dodge their attacks. How were they supposed to fight against them?

This time, the ones trapped was Samsara.