

Avatar 831

Chapter 831: Rookie's Block

The role given to Team Happy in this article was a foil to the real main character, no more than a sentence. It was submerged in the reports of the Pro League matches, struggling to stand out amongst the other information present.

For a team from the pro league like Everlasting, the amount of attention they received would greatly decline after they were eliminated last year. As for Happy, the attention they received was atypical at best. Most of those who paid attention to them did so with the hopes that they would lose. If Happy really did lose embarrassingly, then they would definitely rail and yell about it. However, with the victories that Happy had to its name recently, they were as silent as the grave. No one would come out to discuss them.

Most players didn't purchase the issue of Esports Home to read about the Challenger's League.

Last Saturday, the third round of the Pro League had come to a close, but the anticipatory air for the new season had not yet subsided. The one who drew the most attention was, once again, the youngest pro player, Blue Rain's Lu Hanwen. During the Blue Rain home field match against Royal Style, Lu Hanwen's ability shocked everyone to the core again. He managed to consecutively defeat two members of Royal Style as the first player for Team Blue Rain in the group arena. His fighting spirit showed no signs of faltering in the third round against the ace of Royal Style, Tian Sen and his ancient god-level account, Peaceful Hermit. Though he lost to Tian Sen in the end, he had already taken the spotlight. Some even thought that, had Lu Hanwen not had to fight two others and lose a good deal of health, he would've beaten the god Tian Sen in a fair one on one match.

No one even cared about the resulting points of the match anymore. Everyone's focus was on the group arena and the tactics that Blue Rain had used these three rounds.

Dual Blademasters.

Huang Shaotian's Troubling Rain and Lu Hanwen's Flowing Clouds appeared together in the line-up for the Team Competition. The important position of main attacker that once belonged to Yu Feng was given so confidently to this young rookie.

Lu Hanwen's account wouldn't be weak in any way. If Team Blue Rain could armor Troubling Rain, then, so long as they had enough materials, they wouldn't have any problem getting Flowing Clouds the exact same set of equipment either. However, pro characters had to be adjusted to each player, so there were rarely any two same characters for different players.

Flowing Clouds' equipment hadn't copied Troubling Rain's, but the 10 pieces of Silver equipment on him were not a single bit worse than Troubling Rain's. Out of these, four pieces were different, the most eye-catching being his weapon.

Troubling Rain held the lightsaber, Ice Rain, which was covered in a flickering blue light; Flowing Clouds' Silver weapon was a greatsword: Flame Shadow.

Greatswords and lightsabers were two opposing extremes among Blademaster weapons. Lightsabers were the lightest and fastest swords, while greatswords were weighty and slow. However, greatswords were superior in physical attack.

Blademasters with lightsabers had a completely different playstyle compared to Blademasters that used greatswords. In the current pro circle, or even the entire Glory circle, lightsaber users were the majority, or maybe even taichi users. Either way, most depended on speed, preferring to fight with quick strikes. Yet, Lu Hanwen's Flowing Clouds was atypical. He gave up the speedy and light lightsaber for the heavy but powerful greatsword.

This problem was something people had been discussing ever since Lu Hanwen had debuted with Flowing Clouds. Now, after the third round, Lu Hanwen's fierce performance had shut up all those who doubted him. Although, many experts had pointed out that, since he was a rookie with an all new character, Lu Hanwen and his greatsword Blademaster Flowing Clouds would be a surprise for all.

If Lu Hanwen could keep up his current pace, as the competition continued and other teams started to understand his playstyle, it was hard to say if he would be able to maintain his current performance.

This problem was something that was very common to the Alliance, called the Rookie's Block.

What it referred to was when talented rookies drew attention with their great performance, they slowly lost their pace as other teams became more and more familiar with the way they played. This situation was the so-called Rookie's Block.

As for what happened to rookies after that, it differed between each player. Some would hit the block hard and were thrown back equally as hard, slowly having to rebuild their style and get used to pro matches again. Others would be able to make the necessary adjustments to continue performing stably. However, their performance after hitting the Rookie's Block would never be as eye-catching as it used to be. In the history of the Alliance, there were only two people who managed to break through the block without faltering, excluding the first generation of pro players who were all rookies anyways.

The first was the current captain of Team Tiny Herb, Wang Jiexi, who debuted in the third competitive season of the Alliance; the other wasn't currently in the Alliance, but struggling to fight his way through the Challenger's League with Excellent Era: the seventh season Best Rookie, Sun Xiang.

Only these two managed to completely avoid the Rookie's Block. Apart from them, everyone, even the golden generation, Zhou Zekai, Tang Hao, and last season's Best Rookie Zhao Yuzhe, had all been affected by the Rookie's Block.

The Rookie's Block existed subjectively. That was why each team would always take extra caution in understanding how each talented rookie would try to deal with it. For example, Team Tiny Herb's genius Gao Yingjie hadn't been sent out into matches immediately after his contract was signed. He started out as a backup player, slowly getting used to the pace of pro matches. Since his chances of getting onto the field were quite limited, he had to give up the opportunity of becoming Best Rookie, but this gradual accommodation allowed Gao Yingjie to slip past the Rookie's Block without too much trouble. Now, in this season, Gao Yingjie had enough experience and had managed to become accustomed to the pace of pro matches as a second year player. If he encountered any sort of problems, it wouldn't be as serious as it might've been had he still been a complete rookie.

Different players had different ways to overcome the Rookie's Block that suited them.

Gao Yingjie had quite a soft personality, so his team chose this steady method of helping him past the Rookie's Block. Though it was rather unfortunate that he wouldn't have a chance to get the Best Rookie award, it was still good for Gao Yingjie's development in the long-term.

As for Team Blue Rain's Lu Hanwen? He had been protected in the opening round, not appearing at the press conference, but after the second round, he walked onto the stage with Team Blue Rain's captain Yu Wenzhou and ace Huang Shaotian.

The reporters were, naturally, very interested in this rookie, but after meeting him face to face, they all thought that Team Blue Rain's protection in the first round was overly excessive!

This young man was optimistic, energetic, open, and cheerful, unafraid of the offense these reporters were mounting. He was brave enough to say anything, opening up about everything. He was able to express himself clearly, though his words lacked the slippery edge of a veteran. He was only a fourteen year old teenager; if he had learned how to structure and smoothen his words, it would be a total blemish on his image. In comparison, Team Tiny Herb's Gao Yingjie was more than a year older than Lu Hanwen and had a year's worth of experience in the pro circle, yet wasn't nearly as neat as Lu Hanwen when it came to interviews.

With the third round over, there was no way Lu Hanwen could stay hidden from the public after drawing such attention.

This budding young boy not only triggered the touting of the fans, but also became the favorite of the media. At Team Blue Rain's press conference, not many people even bothered with Huang Shaotian anymore. That guy wouldn't stop with his nonsense once he started, so most would rather listen to Lu Hanwen's occasional clumsy slips in speech.

In this issue of Esports Home, Lu Hanwen had taken the cover story and the headlines. There was no doubt that he was the brightest star in this round of matches. However, Esports Home was still an all inclusive media. Their reports wouldn't tilt too much towards any team, so, they pointed out the problem of the Rookie's Block even as they praised Lu Hanwen.

As for the local newspapers in the areas around Team Blue Rain, they weren't nearly as clear headed.

These media channels weren't focused on eSports, but all had section for sports. They, of course, couldn't lack the continuously popular eSports, especially not Glory. For these local media, their favoritism and biased opinion was obvious. The local media in Team Blue Rain's area described Lu Hanwen as invincible. Rookie's Block? In their opinion Lu Hanwen would no doubt become the third person after Wang Jiexi and Sun Xiang to avoid the Rookie's Block. Of course, they wouldn't put this down without coming up with a reasonable analysis for it.

Wang Jiexi's style was everchanging to the point of extreme success. The incredibleness of the Magician playstyle wasn't someone that had ever appeared before, so for Wang Jiexi, it was the powerhouse teams that had hit a Rookie's Block, and had been hitting it hard over the course of the season. By the time they managed to make some headway into countering it, the season was over and Wang Jiexi managed to retain his halo all throughout that season.

As for Sun Xiang, he was a God coming from a small team. No matter how strong he was, his team would be holding him back from what he could truly achieve. All the powerhouses aimed to defeat teams, not just specific people, so they wouldn't put too much effort into researching someone like Sun Xiang who was from an inconsequential team. That team would pose no threat anyways! Since Sun Xiang was very strong, this limited research wouldn't be able to give him much trouble, making his debuting season smooth going.

These two Rookies who managed to avoid the Rookie's Block had reasons behind how they did it. Pro-Team Blue Rain media was now saying that Lu Hanwen could do the same, so they had to back themselves up with some form of evidence. To do so, these media channels found a relatively reasonable explanation. That was Lu Hanwen's personality.

Though he was young, he also had no fear, just like how a newborn calf didn't fear a tiger. What these media channels believed was that, with such a personality, Lu Hanwen wouldn't falter no matter what difficulties lay ahead of him. Wang Jiexi didn't give his opponents the chance to build a Rookie's Block and Sun Xiang's Rookie's Block wasn't strong enough for him. As for Lu Hanwen, many people believed he would be the first to completely shatter the Rookie's Block.

Chapter 832: The Alliance in Chaos

Chen Guo obviously wouldn't get any local papers that reported on Team Blue Rain, so she only had an issue of the Esports Home. As for City H, the local papers would report eSports and even Glory news, but Chen Guo was too lazy to go out and buy them. Even if she bought them, she would be too lazy to read them.

It was similar to how the local papers for Team Blue Rain would just be praising the team. In City H, the local papers would just be praising Team Excellent Era instead.

Once Team Excellent Era was relegated last season, the team practically stopped being covered by national papers, but in the City H local papers, Team Excellent Era would always be talked about in the eSports section. Team Excellent Era was described with having an air of suffering patiently, but still firmly set on getting their revenge.

Chen Guo had initially thought about how Team Happy was a City H team too. Would Team Happy be covered by the local media?

During their period of infamy, Chen Guo had bought a City H evening paper. When she skimmed over it, Team Happy had been introduced, but they were treated like a joke and a disgrace.....

In the eyes of the City H local papers, Team Excellent Era was City H's flag in Glory. You're just some upstart Internet cafe team and you claim that you're going to topple Team Excellent Era? To them, Team Happy was a traitor within their ranks.

Chen Guo had been furious at the time. She threw it into the trash can. From then on, she refused to buy any local evening papers and would only look at unbiased news sources that didn't discriminate against any team.

In this week's issue, Chen Guo didn't see any content related to Team Happy, making her somewhat disappointed. As for all the hype in the pro scene, Chen Guo wasn't as passionate about it anymore now that she no longer supported a pro team. From time to time, she would dream about Team Happy reaching the pro scene and becoming a part of the wind and rain covered in the news. She couldn't help but feel moved during those moments.

"What? We have to wait for next week's issue?" With no news related to them, Chen Guo threw this week's issue onto the table.

"Tot put it more precisely, it would be the next next issue. The Friday issue comes out before our match." Ye Xiu corrected Chen Guo, while grabbing the newspaper off the table.

"F*ck, let me see." Wei Chen wanted to see it too, but he was farther away. When he reached over, Ye Xiu had already snatched it up, so he glared at Ye Xiu disapprovingly.

Ye Xiu didn't look at him. He took a page out and gave it to Wei Chen. Wei Chen looked over it and threw it back: "F*ck, this senior doesn't watch *Interstellar Journey*!"

Interstellar Journey was currently the most popular RTS game around. It also had a pro scene, but it wasn't nearly as popular as *Glory*. It did have a fair amount of fans though, so the eSports section also did some coverage it. Ye Xiu had given Wei Chen a non-*Glory* page. Other eSport games like *Fighting God*, *Interstellar Journey*, etc. were squeezed onto this page. Everything Wei Chen didn't want to see was on there.

"Ah, *Interstellar Journey*! I can play that. Let me see!" *Steamed Bun Invasion* happily picked up the page that Wei Chen had thrown away as if it were trash. This guy had played many different games before. Tang Rou was new to gaming. She only knew how to play *Glory*. It could be said that his talent partially stemmed from his experience from all the other games he had played. It looked like *Interstellar Journey* was one such game.

"It seems like this season's quite chaotic!" Ye Xiu skimmed over the news and then flipped to page with the *Glory* Alliance point rankings.

Only three matches had been played, so the relative ranking between the teams weren't too different from before, but because a total of ten points could be obtained for each match, after three rounds, the difference in points between each grouping was quite obvious.

The powerhouses were still as strong as ever. Team Samsara and Team Blue Rain continued their outstanding performance from the previous, and because of the Four Heavenly Kings of Team Tyranny, their dominating strength placed them at the very front of the point rankings. Apart from these three teams, Team Wind Howl had also managed to start off strong. Tang Hao's addition to the team, as well, the rookie Zhao Yuzhe's steady performance, and their old guard Fang Rui's dirtiness made Team Wind Howl appear very strong. Compared to the other big names in the leading group, it was their first in the history of the team.

After them, Team Tiny Herb, Team Misty Rain, and Team Void had good records too, but they weren't as outstanding as the aforementioned teams.

The others were in the middle or were pacing back and forth between relegations. The one team that made people the most conflicted was Team Hundred Blossoms.

After three rounds, Team Hundred Blossom's Dual Blossoms had returned, but their performance disgraced the name of the original Dual Blossoms that had consisted of Zhang Jiale and Sun Zheping.

Yu Feng wasn't in form with his new Berserker, Falling Scattered Flowers.

After Dazzling Hundred Blossoms was sold, Zou Yuan obtained a new Spitfire character: Blooming Blossoms. As the core of the team, Team Hundred Blossoms easily created a new set of powerful equipment for it, similar to how Team Blue Rain equipped Flowing Cloud. Blooming Blossoms' strength wasn't weak, but Zou Yuan still hadn't left his slump from last season. This was quite disappointing for many fans of Team Hundred Blossoms.

Team Hundred Blossoms was currently in 17th place. They were just two steps away from entering the relegation zone. A three-time championship contender to have declined to such a state was way too sorrowful. No one knew if Team Hundred Blossoms would be able to get back up from this.

"Okay, it's time for practice." Ye Xiu only cared about the final point rankings reported on the paper and then put the paper aside.

But Chen Guo knew very well that it wasn't that Ye Xiu didn't care. It was just that the analysis done by the author wasn't any use to him. After leaving Team Excellent Era last year, Ye Xiu practically watched every single match that was played in the Pro League and even organized them all into a file. The new season was the same. Early in the morning last Sunday, Chen Guo had gone to get a drink of water, when she noticed Ye Xiu sitting in front of the computer, quietly watching the third round of matches that had just finished Saturday night.

Ye Xiu wasn't currently in the pro scene, but Chen Guo was certain that he still knew the pro scene inside and out like before.

Everyone on Team Happy needed to practice everyday. This week's practice was more specialized than it had been the past few weeks. With an 8.5 to 1 lead, Team Happy still didn't dare to be negligent. Having direct experience fighting with Team Everlasting, Ye Xiu organized more focused practice this week. This week, they would be facing Team Everlasting with a home field advantage. Ye Xiu wasn't planning on setting their goal at just winning two points.

With a huge 8.5 to 1 lead, you could say that you wouldn't be careless, but subconsciously, it was hard to completely rid yourself of those thoughts. In this situation, if you set your goal at only winning two points, you might indulge yourself in laziness. In a single-elimination tournament, there was no room for negligence.

Three days soon passed. In the blink of an eye, Thursday came. Ye Xiu asked Team Heavenly Swords to borrow their equipment temporarily.

"God..... I don't think we can keep doing this." Lou Guanning lent the equipment to Ye Xiu, but he couldn't help but voice his complaint.

After all, Team Heavenly Swords was still participating in the Pro League too. Lending equipment in this way would certainly affect them too. Once or twice didn't matter too much. In any case, Team Heavenly

Swords didn't have any ambitious goals for this season, but doing this repeatedly would only magnify the effects.

Team Happy played in the Challenger League every Friday, so they borrowed the equipment on Thursday to get used to the equipment, but by taking these equipment away, Team Heavenly Swords lost two days of practice. Team Heavenly Swords had their match on Saturday too. Even if the equipment was returned on Friday, they only had half of Saturday left to get their practice in. Before a match, no team would conduct any intense practice. Adjusting their mind set was what was more important. Two days of practice without equipment would add up and impact Team Heavenly Sword's practice.

Lou Guanning was certain that God understood this reasoning, so he didn't think God would be so indiscreet, but Ye Xiu borrowed the equipment so naturally and calmly. Lou Guanning couldn't help but complain, hoping to remind him.

"Mm, I know. It's just because of special circumstances this time. If not, we wouldn't have inconvenienced you. We have to do our best to get our own equipment too!" Ye Xiu said.

"Oh? God, you have ideas for Silver equipment?" Lou Guanning was suddenly interested. This was an important resource! For a new team like Team Heavenly Swords, they lacked this resource. They had to start their research on Silver equipment from scratch. Their wastage of rare materials was very large. If there was a reliable method to produce Silver equipment and create one in a single try, then he would naturally be interested in it.

Lou Guanning knew that no one would give him this sort of information without good reason. He had tried trading with Clubs before, but which Club would easily sell this information? If they had to sell, they would just sell equipment. Unless they could no longer keep the team operating, no one would even think about selling their creation methods. Lou Guanning had gone full circle, but was only able to purchase either the outdated or unnecessary equipment from other teams. He obviously hoped to have a reliable long-term method. As soon as he heard that God had this kind of resource, his eyes lit up.

"I have a few ideas, but I'm still in the process of organizing my thoughts." Ye Xiu replied.

Lou Guanning was excited: "Then... are there any suitable ideas for us to use?"

"That... I'll have to think about that in the future. Right now, I'm mainly focusing on our team's current classes." Ye Xiu said.

"Please God! If there's anything suitable for us, please come to us. The price will be easy to negotiate." Lou Guanning said. He had the money, but the problem was that no one was willing to sell! If the other side didn't want to sell, but you insisted on buying, then the price would just be raised sky high. No matter how rich Lou Guanning was, he didn't want to spend so much money without good returns. A character could equip a total of thirteen pieces of equipment, including the weapon. If he had to throw away his money for everything, his pocket wouldn't be able to take it.

As a result, Lou Guanning first bought twenty pieces of equipment. The rest would depend on the situation. As soon as he heard that this God, who he had a very good relationship with, might be creating equipment, of course Lou Guanning would be excited.

Chapter 833: Control

"Even if it's sound, it'll also depend on if you have the materials to make it." Ye Xiu said.

"We'll have enough." Lou Guanning was quite confident. In the Heavenly Domain, their wild boss hunting was becoming more and more prosperous each day. They had a stable harvest. In the normal servers, Guild Heavenly Justice had established their power a long time ago throughout all ten servers, so their competitiveness was high. What's more, there may only be one Heavenly Domain, but there were ten normal servers. Even though wild bosses refreshed every week, the total output from the normal servers was ten times greater than that of the Heavenly Domain. In terms of the number of accumulated materials, there were much more normal server materials than Heavenly Domain materials.

Guild Heavenly Justice wasn't founded just on a whim. They had started accumulating materials in the normal servers early on. If God Ye Qiu had a mature concept in mind, there wouldn't be an unnecessary consumption of materials. Producing a piece of Silver equipment at such a low price was no different from a pie dropping from the heavens.

"Okay then. I'll help take a look for you guys. If you have enough materials, my side needs materials too. Help us out too!" Ye Xiu said.

"That's not a problem!" Lou Guanning happily replied. This trade wouldn't be a bottomless pit. If they could create a piece of Silver equipment in one attempt, that sort of capital was nothing for a guild like theirs. Ye Xiu had to work on his Myriad Manifestations Umbrella alone, which was why it had been so difficult. If it had been a Club, with already completed blueprints, producing it would only take a few minutes.

After Lou Guanning reached an agreement with Ye Xiu, he bid goodbye in high spirits. He once again experienced the advantages of being on good terms with God Ye Qiu. This wasn't something money could do for him. If he could get it with money, Lou Guanning also hoped that his side would have such an all-around talent.

Ye Xiu once again borrowed equipment from Heavenly Justice and distributed them to everyone. Everyone had the same equipment that they had last week. Following afterwards, they would need to start getting used to their new equipment.

That night went by quietly. The next day, they did some adjustment practice before the match. Team Happy would now be officially starting their fourth match, so Ye Xiu no longer needed to walk everyone through the practice routine by the hand. Everyone had already grasped the routine and would finish it every day on their own accord.

Eight o'clock that night, the second round of their second match officially began. For this round, Team Happy would have their home game. Thus, the maps would be chosen by Team Happy.

In Team Everlasting's practice room, their boss personally showed up to supervise the match. Everyone had solemn expressions. After the end of the previous round, Team Everlasting's boss had given a

bottomline to the players: if Team Everlasting was eliminated in the second round, the team would have difficulty surviving.

After all, Team Everlasting wasn't just some grassroots team formed by normal players. In those grassroots teams, it was just a bunch of good friends getting together to have some fun. Pay didn't need to be considered, but for Team Everlasting, apart from the players, the Club also had other employees. The wages for these employees as well as the bills for electricity, water, etc. wasn't a small expenditure. Despite Team Excellent Era residing in the Challenger League and their hopes of breaking through to the pro scene was miniscule, as long as they could hold on until the offline matches, they would be able to survive the entire season.

Once the offline competition started, the Challenger League matches would be streamed, and there would be advertisements and sponsors for the matches. The participating teams would earn a portion of that money. Even though it wasn't nearly as profitable as the Pro League, with the help of this revenue, Team Everlasting could still survive the season. As for those grassroots teams, if they could actually reach this stage, it could be considered as a fair amount of money.

As the offline matches continued and teams began to get eliminated, the bonuses would continue to increase. For Team Everlasting, which had come from the pro scene, even if they couldn't beat the final boss, Team Excellent Era, they thought that as long as they didn't meet Team Excellent Era or any other former pro team in the early rounds, they would easily be able to walk into that elimination stage. But now, they were only at the second round and they were close to being eliminated. It was way too early. Team Everlasting's boss didn't have the money to support the team for another season without any revenue.

Team Everlasting's boss notified the team about this matter. The current Team Everlasting had a mindset of desperately fighting for survival. With a life and death crisis approaching, every player practiced extremely diligently. This week, their practice quality was very high. After a final period of adjustment before this match, the moment that would decide their fate had finally arrived.

How would Team Happy arrange their line up? What maps would they choose?

Team Everlasting studied Team Happy day and night. Each player in Team Happy was studied carefully and repeatedly. They formulated their strategy according to the strengths of these players and their guesses towards Team Happy's line-up.

The preparation phase of the match began. For this time's life and death battle, there were actually fewer spectators than before. The vast majority of the crowd this time consisted of actual Team Everlasting fans who wanted to cheer for their team in this crucial moment. As for those waiting to watch Team Happy burn, coming to this match didn't make much sense. With an 8.5 to 1 lead, was a comeback going to be so easy? With the face slappers not coming, those with a slight interest in Team Happy wouldn't come either. Most of those who came to watch Team Happy were there to watch the face slappers choke and laugh at them. If the face slappers weren't coming, they weren't going to come either. As for the others, the point difference was too wide, so they were too lazy to come out and watch too. This once again proved how the current tournament format could potentially kill the suspense of a match too early, reducing the next round to be of little interest.

The only ones who wouldn't think in this way would be the two participating teams and Team Everlasting's fans.

In the preparation phase, Team Everlasting's fans tried their hardest to support their team. Chen Guo was very easily absorbed into this type of mentality and accidentally started to sympathize with these fans. Team Everlasting would certainly be defeated by them. There would be no miracle. Chen Guo was incomparably confident about this point.

In the preparation stage, the two sides arranged their lineups and the home side chose the maps. After everything was finished, the match officially began.

When the map was announced for the first match of the individual competition, Team Everlasting's side suddenly exploded into an uproar.

Map: Ring.

Yes, Ring. In the game's Arena, it was the most commonly used map, but in the pro scene, very few chose this map.

This map was very simple and made matters easier, but it could be considered as a huge waste of the home game advantage. The home game advantage came from the maps. Choosing a map that the team was familiar with and often practiced in would strengthen a team, but Ring? It was a flat rectangular platform without any sort of terrain.

Choosing this map was equivalent to throwing away their home game advantage. This choice left Team Everlasting perplexed, but the match had already started. The starting players leapt into the competitor position. Team Happy - Steamed Bun Invasion. Team Everlasting, Dawn Rifle.

The first players to go on stage were the same tow as in the first round. However, in the first round, Team Everlasting had wanted to show the other side their might. However, in the second round, their thoughts were now that they could not lose. They had to win this point no matter what.

As a result, Team Everlasting's captain Wu Chen, their most reliable player with three years of professional experience, once again came out.

Dawn Rifle stood on the competitor spot. Wu Chen sucked in a deep breath of air and watched the clock countdown: 3, 2, 1. Start!

Attack!

As soon as the match loaded in, Wu Chen attacked. The Ring was a small map without anywhere to hide. The cannon on Dawn Rifle's shoulder boomed and an artillery shell flew towards Steamed Bun Invasion.

Wu Chen did not underestimate Steamed Bun Invasion. Even though he won the first round against him with ease, winning because of such a strange reason made him puzzled. From the other data on Steamed Bun Invasion, as well as from their team competition, Steamed Bun Invasion didn't seem to be a stupid player!

All out!

The current Wu Chen completely forgot about Steamed Bun Invasion's embarrassing performance in the first round and only thought about defeating his opponent.

Steamed Bun responded nimbly. Attacking him from such a distance wouldn't pose a threat to him. Steamed Bun Invasion twisted and dodged past the artillery shell. That was just the overture though. Wu Chen's following attacks continued to arrive. On a simple map like the Ring, even Steamed Bun wouldn't get lost. While dodging these attacks, Steamed Bun Invasion gradually grew closer to Dawn Rifle.

In a fight against a long-ranged class like a Launcher, the health on both sides would rarely closely follow the other. While the distance between them was far, the Launcher could continuously suppress and deal damage to the opponent, but as soon as the opponent successfully closed in, a large chunk of the Launcher's health would usually instantly disappear.

The health of the two characters would often fall through these trades. The final victory depended on which side made the most of their situation when they held the dominant position. Apart from technical skill and decision-making, a certain level of calculating prowess was needed. For someone like Steamed Bun, that wouldn't be easy. In an even playing field, Steamed Bun Invasion eventually fell in the end after a few exchanges.

Steamed Bun's technical skill was no worse than Wu Chen's. His loss could mainly be attributed to his lack of control over the situation. The health on the two sides continued to drop through their exchanges, but Wu Chen actually had a grasp on the pace of it. Steamed Bun was just charging in recklessly and missed many opportunities.

"Oh oh oh oh!!!" With the first round of the individual competition won, the Team Everlasting fans among the crowd surged. Even in Team Everlasting's practice room, everyone had smiles on their faces. Even though winning one point didn't make much of an impact on their overall situation, a good beginning made them feel like luck may be in their favor.

The second round. Map - Indigo Temple. Team Happy - Windward Formation.

When they saw this name, Team Everlasting's heart jumped. Everyone looked at their chosen player and their expressions became very complicated.

Chapter 834: Training

As soon as the veteran made his move, the outcome became very obvious.

Windward Formation's ruthlessness was deeply felt by Team Everlasting that round. In the eyes of Team Everlasting, Windward Formation was second only to Lord Grim as their most troublesome opponent.

He had now appeared in the second round of the individual competition. As for Team Everlasting? Their second contestant was their Sharpshooter, a half-main roster seventh player. Asking him to take down Windward Formation was asking too much of him.

If Team Everlasting lost two points, they would be eliminated from the Challenger League. The group arena and individual competition didn't need to be mentioned. Both competitions were worth more

than two points each. They could not lose a single point here. As a result, they sent out their strongest line-up to face the challenge. Ensuring that their team won at least two points in the individual competition was a difficult issue, because the Sharpshooter seventh player was slightly worse than the six players of the main roster.

Team Everlasting puzzled over it for a long time. In the end, their line-up was the exact same as in their previous round. They entrusted their fate to the heavens.

But Team Happy made a change in their line-up and placed Windward Formation second. On paper, it looked like Team Happy had a much higher chance of winning. However, Team Everlasting didn't seem particularly worried.

They had been prepared for their Sharpshooter to lose this point. If this point was lost to Windward Formation, it would be similar to Tian Ji's horse race (accepting one loss to ensure two wins). It was the exact situation that Team Everlasting had been hoping for. Now it had really happened.

3, 2, 1. And the match started.

Wei Chen had picked Indigo Temple himself. It was undoubtedly his most familiar 1v1 map. In an official match, Wei Chen withdrew his intentions of toying with his opponent and unscrupulously wiped the floor with his opponent. Wei Chen utilized the characteristics of his character and the map to the maximum. Team Everlasting's side was their slightly weaker seventh player. In the second round, Wei Chen easily took the match without any suspense.

Even though Team Everlasting had expected this outcome, the result still made them nervous. The following third match would decide their fate in this life and death match.

Because they had anticipated this result, Team Everlasting sent out an Elementalist player with a strong mentality, who appeared on the competitor seat for the third round. This battle would determine Team Everlasting's fate. Someone without a strong mentality wouldn't be able to bear this sort of pressure.

Even this player was constantly breathing deeply to adjust himself. He wanted to get rid of that last thread of nervousness in him.

But at this moment, Team Happy sent out a player that had never appeared before last round against Team Everlasting: Concealed Light.

Team Everlasting stared foolishly.

For the entire week, apart from improving themselves, they thoroughly studied Team Happy, but this Concealed Light wasn't within their range of investigation. Even though he was registered as a team member, there was no information on him at all.

And now this completely blank character was actually going to fight. Team Everlasting suddenly panicked. Even their mentally strong Elementalist player was starting to seem troubled.

While his hands were trembling slightly, Luo Ji was already so nervous that he couldn't even keep his mouse steady. He felt like his hands and feet had turned numb. His heart was beating so fast that he didn't need to feel it to feel it. Sweat covered his forehead.

"Experience needs time to be accumulated." Ye Xiu said to him, when he called him onto the stage. Even though Luo Ji wasn't at City H, the match took place, so he could still participate from school.

Experience might need to be accumulated, but was directly having him go into such an important match to accumulate it a bit too excessive? Luo Ji cried in his heart. He was often bullied around in the in-game Arena. Now he needed to face a player from a former pro team. It was just too frightening for him.

Even though it wasn't good to relax just because they had a big lead, giving a new player a chance to feel the pace and atmosphere of an official match was necessary. They couldn't just keep training him forever until a critical moment in a match appeared before pushing him onto the stage. There were certainly players who astounded the world with just a single brilliant feat, but Luo Ji's personality and skill level didn't fit into that category of players. As a result, with an 8.5 point lead, Ye Xiu arranged for Luo Ji to give it a try. In fact, Ye Xiu had wanted to do it in the first round. Throwing in Chen Guo to fulfill the quota was a bit of a waste. After all, Chen Guo didn't have much potential. She wouldn't be actually be a part of Team Happy's line-up. Unfortunately, last Friday, Luo Ji had important business to take care of, so he couldn't participate in it. As a result, in the second round, Ye Xiu wasn't going to let this training opportunity go and put him in the individual competition.

3,2,1....

No matter how nervous Luo Ji or Team Everlasting's Elementalist player was, the system mercilessly started the match as soon as the countdown ended. This match wasn't a Ring, but a map that Luo Ji chose himself. In terms of utilizing a map's advantage, Luo Ji's skill in that aspect was above Steamed Bun's.

But being panicked, it was hard to say if he could utilize the map properly. As soon as the match started, Luo Ji immediately began summoning. He should be familiar with this, but because he was nervous, he appeared all over the place. His summoned creatures started automatically started wandering around. For a moment, there didn't seem to be any control over them.

Summoning a bunch of creatures all at once was also somewhat of a noob move. Summoners relied on their summoned creatures to battle, but their summoning skills had cooldowns. By letting out a huge swarm of them, he was practically using up all of his skills, making his pace of the battle seem lacking. However, against an experienced player, such a lack of pacing was devastating.

Team Everlasting's Elementalist entered the match with a thread of fear against Concealed Light, but as soon as the match started, he saw the other side summon one creature after the other. Then, these summons ran around randomly. It was a magnificent sight, but... it didn't make sense!

Is this a trap?

In a life and death battle, this Elementalist didn't dare to be careless. He naturally played very cautiously. A very unprofessional move would need to be analyzed as if it were dangerous. As the say went, there can never be too much deception in war. Trusting what was in front of his eyes would simply be too naive.

The Elementalist carefully neared. Halfway there, Luo Ji finally summoned everything at his disposal. He swiped his mouse in a circle and clicked ahead. All of his summons began marching over. During this

process, Luo Ji began adjusting the formation of his summons, while also calming down. His playing became smoother and smoother. Not long afterward, the summons were lined up in an orderly fashion.

The Elementalist saw that the orderly formation and didn't dare to advance any further. He maintained his distance, waiting for those summons to get closer, so he could rely on his range advantage. The Elementalist threw out a probing spell.

When Luo Ji saw his opponent attack, he didn't stay idle either and immediately ordered his summons to retreat. However, no player's offense would just be a single skill. After casting a spell, players would know ahead of time how to follow up. While observing the situation, the Elementalist continued to attack. As a result, Concealed Light's summons slowly began to become more and more and more and more disorderly.

Luo Ji couldn't keep up with his opponent's pace, and he insisted on a specific counter against his opponent's attacks. He was being haunted by his pursuit for perfection, but because his skill wasn't good enough, the more he sought perfection, the less perfect it became. In the end, the Elementalist could finally tell that this brother wasn't some expert.

He saw it. Everyone in Team Everlasting obviously saw it too. Suddenly, the practice room seemed to be filled with celebration. They had won two points in the individual competition. If the match had three obstacles to pass through, they had passed through the first one. However, even passing through all three obstacles wouldn't determine their victory. The individual competition ended with 2 points to 1. Even if Team Everlasting won both the group arena and the team competition, their point total for this match would be 8.5 to 1. The two sides would be tied and they would need to participate in an additional tiebreaker match.

But in any case, Team Everlasting at least still had hope.

The third round of the individual competition ended without any suspense. Team Everlasting easily took the win. Luo Ji was naturally very disappointed.

"Compared to that you who wrote guides, you've been improved a lot." Ye Xiu messaged.

Luo Ji knew that too, but he also knew that Ye Xiu was just consoling himself. He replied back with a forced smile emoji listlessly.

"For the current you, you don't need to worry too much about winning. Cherish every battle and continuously work on improving. As you slowly build up confidence and experience, victory will naturally come to you." Ye Xiu said.

"I will." These words lifted Luo Ji's spirits. He knew that Ye Xiu wasn't consoling him, but giving him guidance. It might not have been the first time that Ye Xiu said this argument before, but when it was time to implement it, it was easy to forget. A good teacher who gave sincere advice kept this in mind.

When the individual competition ended, the group arena began after a short break. Because neither side had too many players to choose from, it was clear who would be appearing in the group arena.

Team Happy's side would consist of Ye Xiu, Tang Rou, and Qiao Yifan.

Team Everlasting's side would continue to have their experienced ace He An as the general, leading their Warlock and Qi Master in their fight to the death.

Chapter 835: Helpless

The first in Team Everlasting's line up was their Warlock. In the last round, he had been the the player sent out in the third individual competition and ended up losing badly with a disadvantage in cast range against Windward Formation. After a week, everyone had composed themselves and Windward Formation, the one who had left a scar on his heart last round, had already gone up the individual competition. The last bits of worry in his mind faded, and he brought his Warlock, Leopold, confidently into the arena.

For Team Happy, the first one to fight in the group arena was Tang Rou and her Battle Mage, Soft Mist.

The preparation Team Everlasting had done in the past week was, first and foremost, analyze the reason why they had suffered defeat in the first round.

There was a method to this. Analyzing their defeat was with the goal of obtaining victory in the next round; it was to energize their team. When they analyzed the reason for their defeat, they had to find a way to solve that problem as well.

In their eyes, they had underestimated Team Happy's strength. Though they had prepared, but both the skills and the equipment of Team Happy were far beyond what they had originally estimated. Especially how some information was useless, like the info they had on One Inch Ash, who had managed to crush one of their team members.

What defeat brought them was priceless experience. In their battle against Team Everlasting, Team Happy was no longer able to wipe the floor with Team Everlasting like they had with their challengers. In a high-end exchange like this, Team Happy's performance and skill was far more evident.

After their week of preparations, Team Everlasting felt like they finally had an in-depth understanding of themselves and their enemies.

It was through these adjustments that Team Everlasting didn't fall into despair at the gap between scores. They had to close the gap and retained their competitive spirit.

Now, the individual competition was over. They had lost a point, so this meant that they could, at most, tie with Happy. However, this start was enough to boost their morale.

Soft Mist? Seeing the character on Team Happy's side, Team Everlasting's Warlock quietly ran over everything they had dug up regarding Soft Mist in this week.

Passionate, ferocious, abnormally aggressive, a definite offensive character with technical skill that wouldn't lose to any pro player. However, it was clear from the details that Soft Mist wasn't a veteran at the game. So, although she had the hard mechanics down, she wasn't so familiar with other techniques. Her style relied on using her mechanics to overwhelm her opponent, but she didn't have much awareness for the situation of the match. On Team Everlasting's tactical notes, that was the analysis they had given to Soft Mist. Of course, there were parts about the player behind the character, but since

they didn't know Soft Mist's real name, they used her character name. As for Soft Mist's equipment, it also shocked Team Everlasting to the core. They could only get a vague idea of the Silver equipment from one match, but the other Orange equipment she wore had already been thoroughly analyzed. This information was also jotted down clearly in their tactical notes.

Team Everlasting's Warlock knew how he should deal with Soft Mist.

After the three second countdown, the group arena officially began and both characters spawned into the map. Though Happy had the home field advantage, it didn't really mean much since they had newbies like Tang Rou and Steamed Bun. There probably wasn't a map that Tang Rou and Steamed Bun would know better than Everlasting's players.

Steamed Bun's map had been chosen as the Ring, because any other map and they might be handing the map advantage over to their opponents.

Everyone thought that this choice of Team Happy's was giving up their advantage, but in reality it prevented them from being put at a disadvantage.

However, since the group arena only used one map, Team Happy would struggle to take into account both their extremes. So, Team Happy chose Red Flower Pavilion for the group arena. It had some special terrain, but it was definitely not complicated.

After the match began, Soft Mist and Leopold were placed into two opposing corners of the map. In the very center stood the pavilion and around it, red flower petals danced distractingly through the air.

Yet, who would bother to pay attention to the scenery in such an important match? As soon as the match began, both characters started charging towards the center, where the pavilion stood.

Tang Rou, as always, wanted to go head to head in the most direct manner with her opponent. For someone like her, the Ring was a great map. As for Team Everlasting's player, he might look like he was charging fiercely towards the center, but his mind was as calm as the surface of a mirror. He wasn't planning on having a direct exchange with Soft Mist; that was something he knew not to do from their analysis.

In an offensive exchange, Soft Mist would only become fiercer no matter if she had the advantage or not. So, against Soft Mist, Team Everlasting had three words: drag it out.

Intentionally dragging it out, both the length of the match and the contents, from the smallest of actions, and finally completely neutralizing Soft Mist.

This was another tactic they had come up with in their tactical notes after their week of prep, written under all the analysis on Soft Mist. If they didn't execute it, then wouldn't that be a waste all their efforts this past week?

So, when the characters came into the proximity where Leopold could cast, Leopold stopped his movements decisively.

His casting range wasn't as far as Windward Formation's, true, but against a Battle Mage, it was more than enough. This was an exchange between a ranged class and a melee class. Wu Chen's victory in the first Individual Competition was a prime example of this sort of exchange. Team Everlasting planned to

use this same method of taking control of the pace of the match to defeat Soft Mist. Curse Arrows! It seemed to early to fire a low stage skill like that, but this was all a part of the tactic that Team Everlasting was using. The dark ball of light hadn't been charged much before streaking over, splitting into a row of a few black arrows. Yet, at this distance, Soft Mist easily sidestepped.

Whereas he had been charging just as fiercely as Soft Mist before, Leopold immediately started retreating after the skill had been cast. Whichever direction Soft Mist charged, he would retreat in the same direction.

Tang Rou wasn't too surprised. When a ranged character faced a melee character, they would often kite around them like this. She had enough experience to know that.

No hesitation, Dragon Breaks the Ranks!

This powerful Battle Mage skill had become a way to increase movement speed under Tang Rou's control. Soft Mist sprinted, spear in hand, instantly closing in like expected. However, just as Dragon Breaks the Ranks ended, hexagram lights flashed and a Hexagram Prison was released under Soft Mist's feet. Team Everlasting was a professional team. After analyzing Tang Rou's simple and direct playstyle, her use of Dragon Breaks the Ranks to gap close on her opponent was within their expectations. Seeing Soft Mist raise her spear, Everlasting's Warlock was clear on what he had to do. Where Soft Mist's Dragon Breaks the Ranks would take her, under the circumstances, was something that was naturally noted down in their tactical notes.

Hexagram Prison had begun casting the moment Tang Rou raised her spear to charge.

As Dragon Breaks the Ranks arrived, the skill was unleashed. It was as if the two sides had planned it. The rising pillars of light instantly trapped Soft Mist within.

A skill like Hexagram Prison was mostly used as a zoning method and rarely struck a direct hit. If someone was really hit by a skill like that, then they would be in big trouble.

Without hesitating, Leopold immediately began to cast a powerful skill, summoning Death's Door. Soft Mist couldn't possibly escape while encaged by Hexagram Prison. She could only look on helplessly when the dark energy from Death's Door caught her. Corrosion Curse, Soul Strike, Soul Slice, Soul Devourer, Surrender Life...

A string of skills activated in quick succession with a hint of vengeance. In the first round, Leopold had gotten the same treatment from Windward Formation after being caught by Death's Door. Now, this combo of offensive skills had been reenacted on Soft Mist by Leopold.

As Death's Door ended, a storm of Chaotic Rain was summoned.

Warlocks focused on control and Leopold showed off that trait spectacularly in this match. Chaotic Rain fell from the heavens and Soft Mist couldn't escape, having just been released by Death's Door. She immediately fell into confusion, losing control of her actions. Leopold continued to fling all sorts of spells, holding the advantage tightly in his hand. The Soft Mist that had managed to break through to the third player of Team Everlasting was now completely helpless.

The audience's chat instantly became more active.

Not many of the faceslappers returned to watch this match, but there were still some. They were very discreet though, very cautious, not daring to be too openly mocking and afraid that their words would be shoved back into their faces. Yet, in this match between Soft Mist and Leopold, the Warlock was able to display his talents beautifully, stably maintaining the upper hand. The faceslappers had been holding back for a long time. When they saw the Chaotic Rain masterfully link with the previous skills, giving Soft Mist no chance of escape, they couldn't endure it anymore and erupted!

"Nicely done! A flawless victory!" Someone predicted.

"This is more like it! This is more like it!" Someone madly expressed their impatience to see such a scene.

"Don't give her any openings! Wipe her out!"

"Well played! Continue this! One versus three!"

It was clear that their eruption wasn't too crazy. At the very least, no one could clearly tell them apart from Team Everlasting's fans with their wording.

Tang Rou was, of course, rather depressed at the current situation. From the Hexagram Prison onwards, her mechanical skill and hand speed became meaningless. She had no way of dealing with the situation at hand. Even now, under the Chaotic Rain, she was still completely helpless.

Chapter 836: Still Need to Practice

It had been a long time since Tang Rou was put in such a difficult state. Within her short experience in Glory, she had only felt this powerless when she fought against Ye Xiu in the beginning and when she had gone up against Wang Jiexi, who had once invited her to join Team Tiny Herb.

However, Tang Rou clearly knew that those two people were far more skilled than her. Her skill level had been low at that time too. Fighting against them was like Tang Rou bullying a normal player.

Until now, as Tang Rou improved and accumulated experience, she thought she wouldn't be as powerless as before if she fought against the two Gods again. But now, this player from Team Everlasting who she didn't even know the name of and was toyed around by Wei Chen in the last match, which resulted in Wei Chen laughing at for half an hour, was able to suppress her.

Completely suppressed.

It was like facing Ye Xiu's unspecialised, or Wang Jiexi's Magician in the beginning, Tang Rou felt powerless.

Of course, Tang Rou knew the Warlock class was strong at controlling. But if her opponent's class was the only reason she was being beaten up so badly, wouldn't this make the Warlock unrivalled? In the professional circle, there were various classes that could oppose Warlocks, including the Battle Mage she was using. Wouldn't this mean that everyone would be have no power to retaliate when facing a Warlock?

Of course it wasn't. She needed to find the reason on herself. The reason was because she didn't fight well in the beginning, which caused her to fall into the opponent's pace.

Tang Rou was no longer the rookie from before. She had learned to analyze the problems in her matches, and she was pretty accurate in her analysis.

But even if she felt regretful, she couldn't return to the moment from before. She needed to face her current situation. But after she was drenched with Chaotic Rain, she could only watch helplessly. Her equipment played as a factor in this. The characters in top pro teams would pay a lot of attention to their resistance against abnormal statuses. If they were going against classes like a Warlock, they would definitely adjust their equipments accordingly.

Team Happy didn't have such conditions, so Soft Mist's resistance was mediocre. When she faced the Warlock, the skills were already enough to affect her greatly. Now that she was under an abnormal status effect, she was unable to resolve the situation for the time being. For example, when one was facing class based on physical damage, then one would need physical defense; when one was facing class based on magical damage, then one would naturally need magical defense; similarly, when one faced a Warlock, an abnormal status resistance, which was affected by Spirit, was important. Soft Mist didn't take any precise and directed actions, so part of this played as a reason for her difficult situation. This was why Warlocks used to be thought of as an OP class that broke the balance in the game. But as more people paid attention to their resistance towards abnormal statuses, many players understood that every class simply had their own advantages and could mutually restrain one another.

Tang Rou wasn't able to think so much at the moment, so she could only find the reasons from herself. When the confusion status effect finally seemed to come to an end, Leopold had already prepared another control skill in advance.

After Soft Mist was trapped by a Binding Curse, another dark, murky wave arrived.

The spectator chat became increasingly lively. Between the two characters, one character's health line dropped at a rapid pace, while the other character's health didn't move a fraction. The face slappers no longer held any reservations or restraints. Some people even started to call out for their companions. A satisfying face-slapping circumstance like this was too good to miss.

The Warlock player from Team Everlasting was also immensely excited. This week's preparation was timely indeed, the feeling of having everything under his control was great! The more the Warlock player played, the smoother he played, his mind was clear, his technical skill was nimble, and his ability to grasp opportunities was accurate. Among all of this, it felt as if his breathing and heartbeat became one. At that moment, he felt as if he was Leopold, as if he was standing under Red Flower Pavillion while he casted his dark curse.

Under the opponent's excellent performance, Tang Rou wasn't able to turn the tables around, Leopold achieved a perfect victory. When Soft Mist fell, what the cheering in the audience's channel was like goes without saying. The spectators that came to face-slap immediately took over the channel. They were even able to best the fans of Team Everlasting.

All sorts of in-the-face insults and taunts like "The east wind blows, the battle drum sounds, who should Soft Mist fear?" started to overflow the channel.

As for Happy, the atmosphere there was quite nervous.

Everyone had experienced Tang Rou's eagerness to win. Now that the opponents had gotten a perfect victory out of her, how much mental damage did she take? It was obvious that Tang Rou wouldn't have a smile on her face. It was as if the word 'gloomy' was written on her face. The way she pushed the keyboard back and let go of the mouse showed her unwillingness.

Chen Guo walked over in attempt of comforting her. But... it was true that she lost in an unsightly manner, what good things could Chen Guo think of to say?

At this moment, Ye Xiu opened his mouth to speak. He only spoke five words: "You still need practice!"

So heartless!

Wei Chen nearly failed to restrain himself from reprimanding! The gloomy expression of a beauty losing a match was rather heartbreaking. You b*stard, is that how you comfort people?

Before Wei Chen could ridicule, Tang Rou already made her response. Her reply was very simple, with only one word. "Mm!"

After she spoke, her hands returned to the keyboard and mouse. Chen Guo already turned to her side, preparing to comfort her, but she saw Tang Rou log out of the match. Chen Guo was startled. "What are you planning to do?"

"Practice!"

Chen Guo was between laughter and tears. If she didn't really know Tang Rou, she would have thought Tang Rou was angry at Ye Xiu's blunt "you still need practice ", and was peeved to do it.

"The match isn't finished yet!" Chen Guo said.

"We have to win!" Tang Rou rose her hand and called out loud.

"You don't say." Ye Xiu replied concisely.

The second to enter the match for Team Happy was Qiao Yifan with his One Inch Ash. His character was already standing on the match's seat. Tang Rou had left behind a full-health opponent for him, so he felt a bit pressured. However, after hearing the blunt and simple conversation between Tang Rou and Ye Xiu, who had yet to play his round, it was as if he gained courage again.

The second round of the group arena soon began.

Qiao Yifan, One Inch Ash.

Since Chang Xian's interview had yet to appear in the papers, aside from Team Excellent Era, no one knew that One Inch Ash was played by Qiao Yifan, who had been a part of the pro circle. In addition, he barely came out to fight before, so in the first match, Team Everlasting had little to no information about One Inch Ash. They only knew that this character completed Heavenly Challenge and entered Heavenly Domain at Level 55. Judging from this point, this person shouldn't have started from the new server.

After the first match of the competition, Team Everlasting only had one conclusion towards Qiao Yifan: Deceitful, very deceitful.

How should they face deceitful players? They would naturally have to be careful, very careful.

Through their analysis, Team Everlasting came out with a beneficial point: One Inch Ash was a Phantom Demon.

Phantom Demon and Sword Demon's style was completely different, so their basics were something that could be told just by seeing. Phantom Demon would lean towards the team's support, so their fighting strength in duels was slightly weak. As for this point, it immediately became an important part in dealing with One Inch Ash.

All these were what they knew that were relevant. The Warlock player from Team Everlasting, who defeated Tang Rou just then, was in a stage where his confidence was surging. When he saw One Inch Ash coming out, he silently revised in his mind about this player's character and characteristics. He already came up with a plan in mind. They weren't able to predict every opponent they were up against beforehand, so they needed to prepare in advance for any possibility of every encounter. Whether it was dealing with Soft Mist, One Inch Ash, or even Windward Formation and Lord Grim. Throughout the week, every player in Team Everlasting already analysed and discussed about how they should respond. Their preparation for this round was truly adequate.

Three, two, one.....

After the countdown, the match started. The map was still Red Flower Pavillion. Both players controlled classes of the dark powers, Ghostblade and Warlock.

Although both were closing on towards the map's centre, Qiao Yifan wasn't as simple and straightforward like Tang Rou. One Inch Ash already started to use any possible covers on the map to his advantage. In the eyes of Team Everlasting players, this was being deceitful!

Qiao Yifan wasn't proactive in getting closer to his opponent, so the Warlock player of Team Everlasting also didn't come up proactively. Were they kidding? The sharpshooter of Team Everlasting in the first round fell into One Inch Ash's trap because he was too proactive. How could they make the same mistake twice?

In reality, such traps would be ineffective for teams made up of normal players. There were too many normal players who lacked integrity. There were no supervisors online, it was very likely that they would be using the bird's eye view to warn and call out for one another. However, Team Everlasting was strictly following the rules. Until now, the only exception was when He An was fighting in the group arena, someone wasn't able to refrain and called out once. As for this incident... After that round, no one brought it up again. Team Everlasting ended with their loss in that round, so if they really won, that cry of warning would make them win with an unfair advantage. Even if they were happy about their victory, there would be a shadow in their minds.

Even though the second round of the match was a matter of life and death, from the single matches till now, Team Everlasting didn't do anything that violated the rules. They only earnestly prepared for a whole week and never thought about using any cheating methods to help them get through that difficult stage.

One Inch Ash and Leopold haven't confronted for a long time, even the audience found it difficult to restrain themselves. Those who were nervous at this point, were mostly the spectators. The bird's eye view was able to let them clearly grasp onto both side's activity. Both side's various ways of walking and positioning was twisting and turning, so they never encountered. Finally, Leopold quietly turned to One Inch Ash's side, One Inch Ash was already exposed within Leopold's area that could cast spells.

"Get rid of him!!!" Many spammed in the spectator's chat.

Chapter 837: Having the Upper Hand

Was it close enough?

Team Everlasting's Warlock player was more nervous than anyone right now, because according to their research, One Inch Ash was a very cunning person. He had successfully managed to close in on his opponent's side, but could it be trap?

Leopold didn't continue to close in or start to cast. Team Everlasting's Warlock wanted to observe a little more, but Red Flower Pavilion didn't give much cover. One Inch Ash turned suddenly and Leopold had nowhere to hide, becoming fully exposed in the other's range of vision.

The spectating members of Team Everlasting all let out sighs of regret. They could clearly see, from their omniscient view, that One Inch Ash hadn't been laying a trap and Leopold had really stumbled on a great opportunity to take the upper hand. However, he was overly cautious, so he missed it.

Upon turning his body, One Inch Ash immediately noticed Leopold was at his flank and hurriedly started to move away. Directly charging at a ranged character wasn't a good idea, especially ones like Warlocks that had powerful control skills.

His chance was gone. Seeing One Inch Ash's hurried retreat, Everlasting's Warlock knew he had missed his chance at grabbing the initiative and was very frustrated. But, he had to be cautious! He then recalled the important points that were repeated brought up on the tactical notes for One Inch Ash. So, he started to wonder again, was this retreat the next step in some scheme?

So, not only did Team Everlasting's Warlock not pursue him immediately, he even changed direction and took a longer route to close in on One Inch Ash.

The spectating members of Everlasting exchanged looks. They could tell that Leopold was being a little too cautious this round. With this attitude, he would become overly suspicious of his opponent's actions.

After a while of cautious movement from both sides, their paths crossed once more.

Under the dancing petals of the Red Flower Pavilion, the two characters, both in control of the powers of darkness, noticed that they had somehow come into such proximity with a single turn of the head.

This competition had already been going on for eight whole minutes....

The audience was exhausted to the point where they didn't even have the energy to cheer any longer. Team Everlasting's Warlock was being extremely cautious, but Qiao Yifan was the same. However, Qiao

Yifan's caution was reasonable. It was better to be close when against a dangerous class like the Warlock. It could be seen from the delight Wei Chen had towards Death's Hand, which had a cast range bonus of +4, that the increase in this range meant a lot to a Warlock.

Under this background, it wasn't as if they hadn't come across each other before. It was just that they both didn't think it was a good opportunity and retreated.

So, they had traversed the terrain through their own paths for a whole eight minutes. This meeting was coincidental. For the audience, it was even kind of funny, like two people backing up to look for each other, only to back into each other.

Of course, what actually happened wasn't so absurd. But they were surprised to notice the other, and at such a close distance too.

A chance!

A trap!

That was what each of the players immediately thought.

At such proximity, Qiao Yifan definitely had the advantage.

His cautious movements were simply to find a chance to close in on the other. Now that it had happened out of coincidence, why would he wait instead of taking this chance?

As for Team Everlasting's Warlock, he had no idea that Qiao Yifan was just as surprised as he was. As soon as he saw that the situation gave the other the upper hand, he immediately believed he had fallen for the other's trap.

Was his eight minutes of careful circling useless?

The Warlock couldn't help but freak out a little. He didn't even know when he had started singing the other's tune.

One Inch Ash was already charging over.

Moonlight Slash!

A graceful arc of light sped out in a 216 degrees curve. The dark Phantom Power was already heading straight at Leopold.

Although Team Everlasting's Warlock was anxious, his hands didn't slow, hurriedly sidestepping the attack. A Full Moonlight Slash after the Moonlight Slash was a combination both Sword Demons and Phantom Demons were familiar with using. The current One Inch Ash was no exception, apart from how the 360 degrees attack came out at an angle instead of parallel to the ground like with normal players.

This was using one's mechanics to change the angle of the attack. This execution had its own fan-given name, "Slanted Moonlight Slash."

The name was just a nickname made up by players. The damage and other effects of the skill had no change. However, with this slant, the angle of attack would be changed. Leopold may have dodged Moonlight Slash, but he was struck full by the Full Moonlight Slash.

Full Moonlight Slash also had a blow away effect. Leopold was blasted back as the attack landed. On the other side, One Inch Ash raised his sword towards the sky and a purple light flashed. The sky above the sword tip seemed to rip open, and continuous thudding sounds rang out. Several tombstones of varying lengths and heights had fallen from the heavens in this Ghostblade skill: Death's Tombstone.

This skill was purely a damage dealing skill, but if you were hit by these tombstones, you would be briefly stunned. This was something all attacks did.

The current Leopold was still soaring through the air. How could he possibly dodge the falling tombstones? He was quickly smashed to the ground by a falling tombstone. In the current situation, Death's Tombstones' situation control was greater than its damage. After the tombstone that knocked Leopold to the ground, more were still falling. This skill would continue for a while. The knocked down Leopold couldn't dodge out of range.

Then came a performance of setting Boundaries. He kept chanting, so by the time Death's Tombstones had ended, One Inch Ash had sent out two Ghost Boundaries already.

Ice Boundary, which did the best in limiting movement, was obviously set. The other boundary was a Plague Boundary, which reduced the defense of the victims inside it.

Leopold was first slowed by the shards of ice that clung to him from the Ice Boundary. Then, the Plague Boundary reduced his defense. Characters that were affected by Plague Boundary took on a hunched over and frail look, struggling to move out of the boundary. It was then that the third Ghost Boundary fell.

Sword Boundary!

Something that enhanced the strength and intelligence of characters on one's own side.

Strength and Intelligence were two stats that directly influenced damage output. With his opponent slowed and their defense weakened, while his own character had a boost in Strength and Intelligence, it was the perfect time to strike for a Ghostblade.

Without hesitation, One Inch Ash's blade fell towards Leopold.

Leopold had no chance of fighting back with the Ghost Boundaries. Even if they weren't there, the level 55 One Inch Ash had once made things very difficult for the level 70 Windward Formation. Warlocks really weren't good at close combat.

The power of the Phantom Ghost swirled around the blade that continuously flashed and hacked away at Leopold's life. The three Boundaries disappeared one after the other, but new Boundaries were already there to take their place. When the Ice Boundary disappeared, a Flame Boundary was set. When the Plague Boundary vanished, an Ash Boundary appeared.

The Ash Boundary was a very interesting Ghost Boundary. A character under the effects of an Ash Boundary would have the weight of all the objects on them increased in proportion to the level of the Ash Boundary. A full levelled Ash Boundary could double the weight on a character.

As the weight a character had to carry increased, the direct effects included reducing a character's jumping power and movement speed. The effects on attack speed wasn't very important to normal

players, but at a pro level, not paying attention to these changes and effects could result in losing the match.

Team Everlasting's Warlock didn't have the time to calculate this. Having been closed in on by One Inch Ash, he was struggling with or without the Ghost Boundaries. In the first eight minutes, both had been cautiously moving about. They would even part after seeing each other. Yet, this wave of attacks had brought Leopold's health down, all the way to half in a minute. As for One Inch Ash? Leopold didn't have the chance to counter. He had just won a flawless victory against Soft Mist, yet now it seemed he was going to be flawlessly beaten by One Inch Ash.

Team Everlasting's Warlock was definitely displeased. They had managed to make it 3 versus 2, but having the opponent so easily close this gap wasn't something they could accept. Thinking of this, he suddenly realized something.

That's right! This was a group arena. Though it was a one on one match, there was an element of teamwork to it, too. He could lose this match, but he had to try his best to create an advantage for his teammates first.

Victory didn't require the first match to be won, but definitely required the first player to do their best.

Maybe he should've been a little more brave in the beginning?

Team Everlasting's Warlock was a little frustrated. With a three versus two advantage, there had been no need for him to play it so safe! If he had taken the initiative, then maybe the situation would be different.

There might still be a chance, if he tried his best now.

Team Everlasting's Warlock suddenly calmed, while Qiao Yifan's performance was, naturally, not to the point where he could mount an offense completely without openings. Soon, Team Everlasting's Warlock managed to grasp the moment between two attacks. He rolled to dodge the strike and immediately began to cast.

Before, he probably would've thought his proximity was too risky, but now his attitude had changed. He had to deal as much damage as possible to give his remaining teammates the best advantage.

Soul Slice!

After that instant cast skill, Curse Arrows were fired without any charging.

Soul Strike, Decaying Curse, Control Curse...

Offensive and control skills were cast by Leopold indiscriminately. Team Everlasting's Warlock immediately found that feeling he had in the last match, getting better and smoother as he attacked. Having taken that small opening, he instantly counterattacked.

Chapter 838: Apologies are Unnecessary

The sudden wave of counterattacks caught Qiao Yifan off guard. Although he had been a part of the Pro League for a year, he hadn't had any real battle experience there. He had seen a lot in the Pro League, but he barely had any true experience. With his abilities as a foundation, normal players didn't stand a chance, but Team Everlasting's players weren't so easy to deal with. This opening wasn't something that a normal player could take advantage of.

In the end, what Qiao Yifan lacked was battle experience from this sort of high-end match. Even in-team matches, letting him practice against the members of a champion level team like Tiny Herb. Yet, practice was still very different from a real match.

Qiao Yifan became anxious and hasty after his opponent got the better of him; on the other side, Team Everlasting's Warlock was doing better and better. He had originally been closed in on by One Inch Ash, but now he was pulling apart their distance as he attacked. But this time, Team Everlasting's Warlock no longer retreated to an overly cautious distance. After coming to a fair distance away, he stopped moving back. If he stayed relatively close, his attacks would be harder to dodge. Team Everlasting's Warlock decided to keep the initiative in his own hands, furiously attacking and discarding the caution the tactical notes said he should have when dealing with One Inch Ash.

On the field, tactics and strategy were important, but sometimes it was better if a player did what they felt was right. That was what Team Everlasting's Warlock was doing right now. He was using his own judgement to create a critical turning point to the match.

On the other hand, Qiao Yifan was unable to steady himself after having the tables turned against him. The more he wanted to take back the upper hand, the more his performance slipped.

Of course, the public chat channel had become extremely active by now. When Leopold was being suppressed by One Inch Ash, no one spoke, but now that the situation had turned, those clenched fists could finally start waving.

Leopold received waves upon waves of encouragement. Even though the players on the field couldn't see it, the audience could tell that Leopold was linking his moves more and more smoothly, while One Inch Ash's actions were becoming mechanical, unable to keep up with the pace.

Originally, the audience had the same attitude as Team Everlasting's Warlock. He didn't need to win this match, but he at least needed to deal some damage so that the next players could use the advantage. Yet now it seemed that he could use this counterattack to completely wipe out One Inch Ash!

Qiao Yifan had also thought of this. If he lost, then that would mean his opponent had wiped out two people, bringing the situation to a one versus three match. This situation would be the reverse of what had happened in the last round. And in the last round, the one who smiled to the end was Happy with their three to one advantage.

He couldn't let that happen!

Qiao Yifan became anxious, but he didn't have enough experience to calm his emotions. His performance was slipping. Instantly, Leopold caught another opening and brought on another wave of attacks. What was even worse was that this opening left him exposed to the Warlock's control skill. To escape this sort of control, he had to sacrifice a lot, and the cost was something One Inch Ash couldn't afford.

He.... He lost

One Inch Ash fell.

Under extremely favorable circumstances, his opponent had taken a chance to unleash a wave of counterattacks, catching Qiao Yifan off guard and messing up his pace. He never managed to turn the tides again.

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Two of Team Happy's players had already been defeated. As for Team Everlasting? Warlock Leopold still had a third of his health remaining. This advantage was even greater than what Tang Rou had managed last round.

"S... Sorry...." On Happy's side, Qiao Yifan stood with an expression of shame and didn't look at anyone as he spoke.

He was an inconsequential member of Team Tiny Herb, an errands runner. Apart from to his best friend Gao Yingjie, he was a person whose existence didn't matter. Yet, in Team Happy, a team that couldn't compare to Team Tiny Herb, he felt special.

This feeling made Qiao Yifan wake up smiling, and he was set on not wasting the attention and care everyone gave to him. Unfortunately, he had slipped up in such an important match. After their opponent had gained a flawless victory against Tang Rou, he should've been the one to stabilize the situation since he had more experience than her. Especially under such favorable circumstances, losing the upper hand due to a wave of counterattacks that wiped him out, he couldn't forgive himself and he didn't have the hope that his team mates would either.

"Apologies are unnecessary." It was then that he heard that voice. At the All Star Weekend, when he was at his lowest, preparing to give up his career as a pro player, it was this voice that rebuilt the foundation of his confidence.

"Victory is never certain. If you apologize every time you lose, that would be too troublesome," Ye Xiu said.

Victory was never certain, but losing at such a critical moment, wasn't that a waste of the expectations everyone had in him?

"I did terribly..." Qiao Yifan said.

"Then do better next time," Ye Xiu replied. He was very calm and didn't seem to mind at all. This manner often pissed Chen Guo off, but here, it helped the worry in Qiao Yifan's heart disperse.

"Good luck, boss!" Steamed Bun suddenly came out of nowhere with that yell. That was when everyone came back to reality. The competition wasn't over; they still had Ye Xiu and Lord Grim. If they could pull off a one versus three...

"One against three, can you do it?" Chen asked bluntly.

"Haha." Ye Xiu laughed.

"What are you laughing about?" Chen Guo was pissed off again.

"How is it one against three?" Ye Xiu replied, "It's just one against two and one third at most."

"Alright then..." Chen Guo admitted that she was wrong. Leopold only had one third of his health left.

"We can do this step by step!" As Ye Xiu said this, his Lord Grim had already entered the arena. As for Team Everlasting, they had just finished a round of victorious cheering. Team Everlasting had been like the audience. They hadn't hoped for any sort of victory, only that Leopold could deal as much damage as possible. In the end, Leopold manage to win beautifully, and they were elated.

"Nicely done!"

"Absolutely wonderful!"

Between matches, no one would stop the players from communicating. Everyone from Team Everlasting had crowded over with all sorts of praise.

"Continue to do well!" In end, this sort of more serious talk was left to their boss, who had personally come to watch.

The third match of the Group Arena soon began.

Unspecialized Lord Grim and Warlock Leopold entered the map after the countdown.

Lord Grim!

This was, without a doubt, the focus of Team Everlasting's preparations. Lord Grim was rather well-known, but unfortunately, recordings of actual matches between him and others were few and far between. In the end, they could only rely on the experience He An, the only one to fight Lord Grim one on one, could share with them.

120 low end skills were what they had to familiarize themselves with when going against Lord Grim. Being who they were, they weren't unfamiliar with these skills. They could manage to list them out without thinking if you gave them a piece of paper. However, a character with all 120 skills and all their possible combos was something no one had ever seen.

The difference between different classes was mostly shown through the skills. This sort of all new combination was like an entirely new class in itself. In a single week, was it possible to easily familiarize themselves with and figure out how to deal with a new class?

Even without the class, this player...

Although the media said that the person who applied with Lord Grim wasn't Ye Qiu, the applicant and the actual player was not necessarily the same person.

Violating the rules like this was common in the Challenger League. Ye Qiu was from the Pro League, but who was to say he would be willing to scoop as low as this? Who was to say he wouldn't?

Team Everlasting didn't dare, so they had to prepare for the worst.

If this was before, hearing a name like Ye Qiu would probably make their hands cramp up. Now that they were fighting with their backs to the wall, they were all encouraging each other. Those who had willpower promised to topple this god, those who didn't silently use "that's not Ye Qiu" to try and delude themselves.

They would, of course, exaggerate the flaws Lord Grim had.

Especially his low damage output, which was something clear from when Lord Grim went up against He An's Go Forth.

"So, even if it is Ye Qiu, we still have a chance. Don't forget, our goal is to defeat Excellent Era."

At times like this, Excellent Era had to be mentioned. When compared to this powerhouse, Ye Qiu alone seemed brittle. This comparison was something Team Everlasting was used to making and had lots of practice in making in the Pro League.

"If you perform like you did just now, you won't have to fear even Ye Qiu. This a competition, and Ye Qiu doesn't have certainty for victory." Just as the match started, Everlasting's players gave their Warlock one last round of encouragement and quietly backed away.

As for the Warlock, he in an optimal condition. He decided to continue to use the same tactics as the latter half of the last match, actively challenging his opponent. Even if he lost, he had to take out an equal amount of health from his opponent.

Bring it on, Lord Grim!

Team Everlasting's Warlock thought to himself, letting Leopold shoot forwards. Soon enough, Team Everlasting's Warlock saw Lord Grim amongst the dancing red flowers of the map center.

"Lord Grim, do your worst!"

The Warlock player shouted in the chat, feeling his blood pumping and igniting a round of cheers from the audience.

"Coming." Lord Grim's reply was simple and brisk, because he planned to let his actions speak for him.

Three Anti-Tank Missiles were already soaring over.

Do you think you can hit me from that distance? The Warlock player had Leopold easily sidestep, but following that was the continuous noise of a gun firing. Lord Grim closed in even as he shot. The fast movement seemed to have no effect on his accuracy.

Leopold could only keep dodging, while Lord Grim attacked as he closed in.

Yet, on Team Everlasting's Warlock's face, there was no anxiety, only the hint of a triumphant smile.

Chapter 839: To Show the Wolf Into the House

Team Everlasting's Warlock had learned his lesson from the last fight. He wouldn't face this fight with extreme caution. With a huge lead, he decided to be braver.

Lord Grim closed in quickly?

Of course. He hadn't put in all of his efforts to stop him. He intentionally let Lord Grim get near. When his opponent reached a satisfactory distance away, he immediately switched up the tempo to catch him off guard.

As for Lord Grim, he was closing the distance while attacking. To the Warlock, none of that mattered. Even if you weren't attacking me to stop me from escaping, I wasn't going to push you away anyways!

Team Everlasting's Warlock closely followed Lord Grim. Every step forward was another step towards his ideal scenario.

That's about right.

Finally, the distance between Lord Grim and Leopold had reached a value that the Warlock was satisfied with.

At this distance, he could attack or retreat. When he cast his curses, it wouldn't be easy for his opponent to dodge.

Let's start with a Bind!

The Warlock had been waiting for this moment, so he naturally had a plan in mind. His attack sequence rolled out without much more thought. He tapped a key and waited for his Bind to be cast, when he heard a gunshot.

D*mn.....

The Warlock saw Lord Grim's gun let out a tongue of flame and cursed to himself.

Even though it was just a normal attack, it was timed during his casting, so it would interrupt his Bind.

Warlock control skills were frightening. As soon as you were hit, you would be in their control for a few seconds. If their cast times were instantaneous, they would be too overpowering. As a result, Warlock curses had cast times or required preparation. At the very least, they wouldn't come out as quickly as Blade Master or Striker skills.

Bind had a cast time. Even though the cast time wasn't long, it couldn't be faster than Lord Grim's bullet. Helpless, the Warlock had Leopold avoid this shot.

By moving, his casting would naturally be interrupted. Mobile Cast was a special Elementalist skill. Warlocks couldn't learn it. Being hit by a bullet would have interrupted the casting as well. Moving would too, but at least he would avoid that bit of damage. Anyone would choose to dodge.

After learning his lesson, the Warlock player didn't choose to cast another curse. Curses that didn't require cast times had fairly long starting lag, but they could at least be used while moving.

But this time, before he could complete the inputs, a gunshot rang. And this time, it wasn't just one gunshot, but several in a row. Lord Grim directly let out a Gatling Gun. The bullets flew in a straight line. Dodging wouldn't be so easy. How could the Warlock have any time to complete his skill?

Dodge dodge dodge dodge dodge.....

The Warlock player adjusted Leopold's position, frantically moving his hands to avoid the endless stream of bullets. It put him in a disadvantageous position.

His opponent was controlling him too well. It seemed like not a single bullet of Gatling Gun's rapid firing was wasted. This level of skill was above even their team captain Wu Chen!

The more surprising part hadn't even come yet. When the last bullets of Gatling Gun fired, Lord Grim had already switched his umbrella's form and began using another skill. It was a skill that the Warlock was incomparably familiar with: Curse Arrow.

A ball of dark energy instantly congealed. The Warlock couldn't tell if it had been charged or not. From what he could tell, as soon as Gatling Gun ended, a Curse Arrow flew straight towards him.

The dark arrow moved slightly slower than the bullets from Gatling Gun. However, the arrow seemed to be linked together with the Gatling Gun bullets. Even if the Warlock player wanted to block it with his own Curse Arrow, because of the distance between the two sides, he didn't have enough time to cast it.

Not good!

The Warlock player had already realized that the situation wasn't good.

This feeling of being unable to deal with incoming attacks because of the distance had been what he had planned to give to Lord Grim, not now, it seemed to be the other way around.

First, Gatling Gun. Then, Curse Arrow. Because of the distance, avoiding them became much more difficult.

Retreat first? Or should I avoid them and hurry to counterattack?

The Warlock player originally had everything planned for, but at this moment, he had to make a choice.

The incoming Curse Arrow wouldn't wait for him though. As soon as the ball of light burst open, the skill could be considered as complete. As the Curse Arrow flew, Lord Grim didn't slow down and continued to close the distance, following behind that arrow.

This isn't good!

The Warlock player didn't hesitate anymore. He needed to maintain a distance away from Lord Grim. As a result, he dodged, while having his Leopold retreat.

Bang!

Before the Curse Arrow was completely released, Lord Grim actually fired a bullet to add to the attack.

There was also a bullet alongside the Curse Arrow.....

Besides unspecialized, no other class could accomplish this. The Warlock had been caught off guard and was hit by the bullet. The attack induced a brief hitstun, causing Leopold to also be hit by the Curse Arrow. These were low-level skills. And because Lord Grim's Myriad Manifestations Umbrella had low attack, the damage dealt wasn't actually much, but it still struck a blow to the Warlock's confidence.

The first fight had progressed smooth like butter, all according to plan.

In the following fight, he was like fire and beautifully completed a comeback.

In this Warlock's Glory career, he had played his very best today. His confidence had reached its peak, so even when facing the suspected to be God Ye Qiu, he didn't waver or play cautiously. He courageously thought of dealing as much damage as possible to help the players behind him.

But now, he was in at a complete disadvantage. He felt as if his hands were tired. His mind was wavering. It was different from his confrontation versus One Inch Ash.

In that match, his Leopold had accidentally gotten close to One Inch Ash. Being on the disadvantage was normal. But in this match, Lord Grim had come from far away and pushed him into a corner in a very direct manner. Moreover, he was in this situation despite his careful planning and preparation. And now? If he said he intentionally let Lord Grim get closer so he could deal some damage to his opponent, who would believe him?

After their distance closed, he was clearly at a disadvantage! His actions were the same as showing a wolf into the house!

And now the distance between them was still closing.....

"Shadow Clone Technique!"

In the match's public chat, these words suddenly popped up. Despite Lord Grim's tight pace, he unexpectedly had time to type out these words.

When these four words came out, the Warlock jumped up in fright. At their current distance, a Shadow Clone Technique would be able to reach him. Shadow Clone Technique was an under Level 20 Ninja skill, so an unspecialized would definitely have it.

The Warlock player frantically turned his viewpoint left and right, but all the spectators could clearly see that the instant Leopold turned around, Lord Grim used Shadow Clone Technique.

Too despicable!

The spectators were having a hard time keeping still. You actually blurted out the name of the skill to bother your opponent. Do you think you're Huang Shaotian?

Even the players in Team Everlasting looked in disapproval! The other side is clearly blurting out the skill name to distract you! You should be paying attention to his movements. You can see when he uses Shadow Clone Technique. What are you looking around for?

That was easier said than done though.

Leopold had been forced back by Lord Grim's closely linked attacks, so it was hard not to miss something done by Lord Grim. When he suddenly saw Lord Grim suddenly blurt out a skill, he was very worried that the Lord Grim in front of him was a clone.

But naturally, when the Warlock player discovered that there was no one around him, it happened.

Dragon Tooth, Sky Strike, Double Stab, Falling Flower Palm.....

This Battle Mage combo was something that Ye Xiu could perform with just one finger. But after Falling Flower Palm, he utilized the unspecialized's feature. After being hit flying away, Leopold was struck by a sword into the air. A sword wave revolved around him at the center. Spellblade skill: Wave Wheel Slash.

After Wave Wheel Slash, the follow ups continued.

24 classes. 120 base skills flowed out from Lord Grim's hands, shocking everyone. At this instant, the majority of people had forgotten about the outcome of the fight. A single thought popped up in their minds again and again: F*ck, that can be done too?

No player had ever seen such a combo before. Right now, it was being performed by Lord Grim, making them feel fascinated at the novelty of it. At the same time, they hoped to see what more new tricks could be brought out. This lasted up until Leopold's health bar changed color. Everyone returned to the match.

This was a match. Victory and defeat mattered. Leopold's health bar was already red. He only had a tenth of his health left. He was going to lose! Ah! You can follow up like that!

Everyone became distracted again.

In comparison, Team Everlasting wasn't like them. After all, they cared about the outcome of this match. The outcome affected their team and their future. No matter how shocking the scene was, it wouldn't erase their concerns.

He's lost.....

Everyone was already certain.

After Lord Grim closed in, he unleashed the frightening continuity of an unspecialized's offense. Even though the combo count was sometimes broken according to the system, in the eyes of real players, some of those attacks that weren't recognized by the system were still combos because they couldn't be dodged or blocked due to the situation. These types of false combos were even more terrifying than normal combos. Normal combos could be forcefully interrupted. However, false combos relied on the opponent being unable to react in order to connect the attacks.

Chapter 840: Lord Grim's Flaw

Leopold fell.

At this moment, the spectators felt like they had woken up from a dream. Afterwards, they felt incomparably disgusted because they had actually been enamored by the combo performed by a player that they had determined to reject. For the face slappers dedicated to watching Team Happy fall, it was too disloyal.

The instant that Team Everlasting's Warlock player saw his Leopold fall, he wasn't too shocked. He was more puzzled.

He suddenly felt like that fight seemed unrelated to him, especially once Lord Grim closed in on him. Leopold was like a sandbag whose purpose was to get pummeled unable to put up any resistance. He became support for the performer to show off on.

When his character fell, he hadn't been able to deal a single bit of damage to Lord Grim with his third of his health. This two and a third or three versus one situation looked as if it had been kicked aside easily.

The other Team Everlasting players consoled the Warlock. Next up, the two who would be fighting next used this brief break between fights to discuss ideas. The group arena was also fought as a whole.

Team Everlasting's second player in the group arena was their Qi Master. He An and his Spellblade Go Forth would act as Team Everlasting's anchor and trump card for the third fight.

After the two players strategized briefly, He An saw that their Warlock player was still staring into space blankly. He went over and patted his back with a smile.

"You've already done a great job." He An's smile was sincere.

The Warlock player was even more at a loss. He was unable to deal any damage to the opponent. How was that a great job?

He An continued to smile: "In our current situation, Lord Grim's biggest issue can be fully utilized."

"What is it?" The Warlock player didn't understand.

"Mana." He An's smile began to reveal his confidence.

"Mana?" The Warlock player checked his screen. He had already withdrawn from the group arena. His Leopold could not stand on the competitor spot anymore, which automatically placed him in the spectator view. And here, he could clearly see Lord Grim on Team Happy's side as well as Lord Grim's health and mana.

Lord Grim's health was full, but he had used a quarter of his mana.

The Warlock player suddenly realized something.

Even though Lord Grim's skills were low-leveled skills with low mana costs, but because the damage was low as well, if you look at his total mana consumption for a complete fight, he doesn't have it better than any other class.

"From the data retrieved from our first round and other simulations, the attack power of Lord Grim's Silver weapon should be quite low. Even though he has other stats from his other Silver equipment, from an overall perspective, Lord Grim's attack power is lower than other equipment at his level by a third." He An continued.

The Warlock player nodded his head. In their preparation this week, they had included their conclusions on Lord Grim during their strategizing. When He An once again emphasized this point, the Warlock player was even more clear about it. Lord Grim's mana consumption wouldn't be any lower than another class's. In fact, it would be even higher because his low damage output didn't only stem from his low-level skills, but also his weapon's low attack.

Low-level skills required less mana. High-level skills required more mana. There was a balance. However, if the weapon had low attack power, more mana would be required to make up for it.

The Challenger League's tournament rules were more lax than the Pro League's. Characters could also bring potions, but its usage was limited. Potions could only be used once. Right now, Lord Grim had used a quarter of his mana against a Warlock with only a third of his health left. Even if he drank the best mana potion in the game, it would only restore 20% at most. For the current situation, it probably wouldn't be of much use. Lord Grim needed to face two more opponents, who would both be at full health!

"Why did I forget this point!" The Warlock player now understood and became annoyed at himself, "If I had noticed earlier, I wouldn't have tried to deal as much damage to him and instead tried to waste as much of his mana."

"All of us forgot too, but it isn't too late to realize it now." He An smiled.

The reason that they hadn't thought about this point before the group arena was because they didn't think they'd be able to get such a huge lead. After all, even if Lord Grim consumed more mana than other classes, with the help of a mana potion, he had more than enough mana to last against an opponent with a sliver of health and an opponent at full health. Most group arenas were won by just a hair. Let alone a 1v3, a 2v3 was already very rare in the pro scene.

Team Everlasting had admittedly prepared well for this match, but don't forget that they had almost been 1v3ed by Team Happy, so they didn't have the confidence to believe that they would be able to obtain such a huge lead. As a result, not too much importance had been placed on Lord Grim's mana issues.

It was only until their Warlock player 1v2ed and started fighting against Lord Grim did He An suddenly remember.

The fight had already started though. He obviously wasn't so lacking in competitive integrity that he would remind the Warlock player. In his eyes, Lord Grim didn't have enough mana to deal with two full health characters. However much mana Leopold could force him to waste would be fine! In the end, Lord Grim had lost a quarter of his mana. It was equivalent to him using up his potion. It was already quite a good result, which was why He An smiled so confidently.

The Qi Master went onto the stage and walked to the competitor spot. He had already talked with He An before. For this fight, his goal wouldn't be to win, but to drag this fight with Lord Grim for as long as possible and waste as much of his mana as he could. Of course, if he could deal some damage to Lord Grim, that would be even better.

The group arena's fourth round began.

As soon as the match started, the Qi Master Heavenly Rage went on the attack. The reason was because every class would automatically recover health and mana slowly over time. Of course, during the brief respite between group arena rounds, the status effects on characters would be reset and the character's stats would be locked. No recovery would occur. But as soon as the match started, the automatic recovery would immediately begin to take effect.

He An was a very careful person. When he talked with the Qi Master, he wasn't willing to neglect even this small matter. In reality, the automatic recovery was extremely slow. Relying on that recovery rate wouldn't be enough to last a fight. However, He An was afraid that their opponent would be despicable enough and refuse to fight, so he could rely on his automatic recovery for an hour or two to recover his mana back to full.

Heavenly Rage charged forward.

He An immediately checked on Lord Grim through his spectator view. He discovered that Lord Grim was also running forward to face him head on. Lord Grim didn't seem to have any intentions on using such a despicable strategy. He heaved a sigh of relief. Once the match began, he wouldn't give the Qi Master any reminders. He could only quietly watch the match.

In terms of range, Qi Masters only had a few mid-ranged attacks. They weren't like gunners, who thoroughly relied on their long range. As a result, when he and Lord Grim encountered each other, the first person to initiate should be Lord Grim.

If this was in the past, the Qi Master would have felt troubled fighting such an opponent, but at this moment, the Qi Master was happy. Attacks from far away weren't easy to hit. If Lord Grim really started attacking from as far away as possible, he might as well not advance and pretend like he couldn't approach, so Lord Grim would waste more mana.

The Qi Master quietly made his decision. Gradually, he saw Lord Grim's figure. He approached and sure enough, Lord Grim started attacking from far away.

But the Qi Master wasn't excited at all.

Bang! Bang bang! Bang bang!!

Gunshots continued to fire, but there was never more than two in a row. Lord Grim was just using normal attacks, and normal attacks didn't consume mana!

The Qi Master pretended to have his Heavenly Rage dodge, but Lord Grim continued to bang bang bang with normal attacks.

F*ck, are you hunting a rabbit?

The Qi Master was somewhat angry. Lord Grim's gun was clearly a rifle, which could fire two times in a row. Lord Grim was standing there leisurely at a distance. He would constantly lift his rifle and then put it down. From time to time, he would fire twice for fun. It looked like he was out hunting.

Wouldn't dragging it out like this be the same as letting him recover mana? The Qi Master saw that his plan wasn't working out. He might need to continue approaching. However, if he did it half-heartedly, as long as Lord Grim mixed in a few skills with his attacks, he could definitely pretend like he was having trouble getting closer.

As a result, Heavenly Rage charged forward half-heartedly. Lord Grim didn't continue hunting and also rushed forward.

Skills! Use your skills!

The Qi Master repeatedly prayed. At this distance, Lord Grim should have plenty of skills to choose from!

Under this warped mentality, the distance between the two sides became shorter and shorter all the way until even the spectators were dumbfounded.

F*ck! Heavenly Rage, are you stupid? You're at this distance already! Why aren't you attacking? Are you planning on fighting Lord Grim at such a close range?

Qi Masters had some close-ranged ability, but it wasn't too outstanding. But for Lord Grim, he had a few long-ranged moves, but when he decimated Leopold from before, everyone could see how terrifying unspecialized characters were at close range. And now, this Heavenly Range could already attack from mid-range, but he was still swaying around like he was waiting to take a beating. This guy... had Team Happy bribed him?