

Avatar 891

Chapter 891: Unceasing Mischief

In Excellent Era's practice room, the team players were all looking at one another. They had also seen the newest system announcement. Happy's new record was ahead of them by a huge chunk. Their current dungeon run was pointless.

"How could that be?" Sun Xiang's One Autumn Leaf rolled after being blown away. When he stood up again, he didn't charge back in. This guy was already beginning to mutter to himself.

The reputation of pro players wasn't undeserved. Xiao Shiqin was startled at first, but after thinking back, he felt like there wasn't anything the team had done wrong. Perhaps Happy performed better or perhaps Happy's equipment was better than their current equipment, but such a huge gap in speed meant that the issue lay elsewhere.

Xiao Shiqin quickly found the issue.

The first boss!

Happy had definitely gotten rid of the first boss's signal flare, altering the dungeon's difficulty and allowing them to achieve such an extraordinary clear time.

"The first boss's signal flare? Yes, it must be that part." Sun Xiang responded soon after hearing Xiao Shiqin's words.

"There's no point continuing is there? Hurry up and call the guild department to send over another batch of accounts. We need to carefully study the first boss." Sun Xiang called out.

Xiao Shiqin heard the request. Wasn't this what he was most worried about? He was afraid that the team would raise Ye Qiu onto a pedestal and put all their energy into studying dungeons.

Dungeons were PvE, but pro players should be focused on PvP. The reason that Ye Qiu and his team ran these dungeons was definitely in order to improve their PvP capabilities, but if Excellent Era concentrated on doing this, it would result in the reverse.

"There's no hurry!" Xiao Shiqin immediately advised against it, "That's about it for this run. Let's finish it up first. There's still another ten-player dungeon, Gray Corner's Underground Market. Let's go do that one next! Ye Qiu's team will most likely go to that dungeon and improve that side's record."

Sun Xiang wanted to turn the tables, but it would be difficult in this dungeon. If they received another set of characters, it was just one more try. What's more, they needed to study the dungeon, meaning their run would be similar to a first attempt at a dungeon. They definitely wouldn't be able to achieve a good time. Plus, would they even be able to figure it out after just a few runs? Sun Xiang's proposal was too unreliable. A counterattack would also feel slow. As a result, Xiao Shiqin suggested to hurry and finish this dungeon and then run over to the last one. They would be the ones chasing Happy then. It would act as a motivator for them. Soon afterwards, he urged everyone to hurry.

After Ye Xiu's team set a record for Sealed Mountain Thief Hideout, they indeed rushed towards Gray Corner. Their goal was the same as their goal at Sealed Mountain Thief Hideout, take down the record and waste Excellent Era's time.

However, they hadn't found any shortcuts in Gray Corner's Underground Market like they had in Sealed Mountain Thief Hideout. Ye Xiu was still confident though.

Their team might not be as practiced or as coordinated as a pro team like Excellent Era yet, but if it was just for this dungeon alone, then Happy was definitely superior to Excellent Era.

They used this dungeon every day as their practice for teamwork. It was similar to having a home field advantage. Everyday gave them two attempts, and many days had passed since their first clear. Even if Excellent Era urged themselves forward, they wouldn't be able to catch up in familiarity and proficiency towards this dungeon so easily.

"Just do it like we usually do. There's nothing to be worried about." Before entering the Underground Market, Ye Xiu gave them words of advice. Even though Sealed Mountain Thief Hideout's record had frightened Excellent Era, Ye Xiu knew that it hadn't been a perfect run. Perhaps just having a direct competitor made them tense up. As a result, Ye Xiu specifically addressed this point. However, that was the best he could do. The rest was up to them.

They entered the dungeon. Their progress through it went swiftly like before. Mo Fan, who had never done any teamwork practice before, started following along everyday after this time's DPS lesson. However, they were currently running a new dungeon. For a moment, he wasn't able to adjust. In fact, this used to be a practice method in the past.

As Mo Fan assimilated into the team, the team's combat strength naturally rose immensely. Don't look at how the DPS of Mo Fan's Deception was still only better than Chen Guo's Chasing Haze and Luo Ji's Concealed Light. His integration into the team no longer made him an obstruction. In addition, by adjusting to the features of Deception's class, they could sometimes coordinate a higher DPS battle method.

41:37:11.

Happy was the first to set a new record. It was quite a bit faster than their previous record that they had intentionally held back on. Excellent Era had arrived to the dungeon one step later, so they were still struggling in the dungeon. Happy's new time gave them a clear goal as what to aim for.

"Hurry, faster! A bit faster!"

This voice belonged to Excellent Era's Sun Xiang. His leading was pretty much just urging everyone to hurry. The details of their tactics and team coordination was given to Xiao Shiqin to deal with.

When Happy's record appeared, Excellent Era subconsciously paid attention to when they first entered the dungeon and then let out a small sigh of relief. This time, the other side's time was faster than their current time at least. They still had hope.

As for how much hope they had.....

As the players battled and calculated in their heads, their conclusion wasn't too optimistic, especially for Xiao Shiqin. He was the most clear about their current situation, so he was the closest to the truth. From their current progress, if they continued using this stable strategy, Excellent Era would not beat Happy's 41:37:11, but if they didn't use this strategy, Xiao Shiqin didn't know where else they could improve. Even pro players needed time to study this kind of task. Xiao Shiqin hoped that everyone would remain calm even after losing this round. He hoped that they wouldn't stand up and get into an either you die or I die stance.

The events did not unfold the way Xiao Shiqin wanted. Before their final time came out, when the outcome became clear, Sun Xiang flew into a rage. He hated how his character didn't have three heads and six arms, capable of defending against a hundred and crush this dungeon with a point of his finger.

The end result was that, during the final boss battle, their time went past Happy's record. Their final time was slower than Happy's record by almost two and a half minutes.

Two and a half minutes sounded like a short amount of time, but for a speed run, it was a huge ravine. To fill up this gap, the amount of effort needed wouldn't be any less than figuring out how to stop the signal flare from Sealed Mountain Thief Hideout's first boss. Xiao Shiqin became even gloomier. This Ye Qiu kept on making trouble for them! The more he was afraid of something, the more likely it would happen.

Chapter 892: It Doesn't Need to Be Like This

Excellent Era ran two dungeons in a row for nothing. After seeing how p

racticed Happy was at these dungeons, Xiao Shiqin reckoned that the ten-player record recently set by them would be cleared out by Happy sooner or later.

In the future, when pro players set out, would the world be at peace?

On one hand, it had to be said that Excellent Era was very worried about Ye Qiu, but on the other hand, they were also very negligent towards Ye Qiu's companions. They kept on forgetting that Ye Qiu's side was a team as well. Ye Qiu had set his mind on forming his own team the day he had left Excellent Era.

In Excellent Era's eyes, this type of team couldn't be considered a pro team, but they seemed to forgot that eight or nine years ago, when Excellent Era had just formed, they were the same too. With Ye Qiu at the head, he led a bunch of grassroots players from the game and carried Team Excellent Era to the peak of Glory.

Perhaps it was because the pro scene was no longer the same as it had been before. It wasn't so easy for a black horse to rise from nothing. Even a wealthy team like Heavenly Swords was bitterly struggling in their first season.

However, nothing was absolute. Weren't miracles created by people?

Excellent Era had a conflicting mentality, fearful yet disdainful. Xiao Shiqin was powerless to do anything. The uneasiness in his heart became greater and greater. He was beginning to wonder if his decision to choose Excellent Era had been too careless of him.

His reason for coming to Excellent Era was the same as many numerous others. Excellent Era would return to the Alliance without question and bring with them a boundless future. He came to Excellent Era not for the present, but for the future. However, he was now realizing that the solid premise for this future was beginning to waver. Facing Ye Qiu, Excellent Era was even less confident than he was, perhaps because they only knew too well how terrifying Ye Qiu could be.

Now, they had suffered a complete defeat in the competition for dungeon records. Would this increase their lack of confidence even further?

Excellent Era's strategic plan could be considered one step wrong, every step wrong. What now? Continue to push forward, or hastily persuade them to correct their course of action?

Would he be able to persuade them though? A few days ago, he had a good discussion with Cui Li. He could tell that Cui Li had sincerely accepted his suggestion, but a few days later, as soon as Happy took the spotlight in the game, he couldn't remain calm.

At this moment, Xiao Shiqin truly felt like he was caught between a rock and a hard place.

His thoughts were no longer focused on the dungeon, how could the others not be the same? In the following section, their efficiency dropped drastically. Their progress through the dungeon even became rocky.

When Xiao Shiqin refocused his thoughts, he saw how the team's heart wasn't in it. His heart jumped. He felt like he had sensed something.

Sun Xiang was their team's captain. Not only was he not helping to establish a proper mentality for a team, he was taking the lead to push it off balance. He completely broke away from the team. His violent playstyle showed his anger. This scene....

Xiao Shiqin suddenly remembered. Last season, when Excellent Era collapsed and their team's condition took a devastating dive, didn't it resemble this very scene? The players weren't focused were unable to cooperate. They seemed to have no strength and confidence. Last season, could Excellent Era have suffered a setback? Was the setback due to Ye Qiu?

It can't be.... Xiao Shiqin had second thoughts. At that time, Ye Qiu was focused on the game. Excellent Era was focused on the Pro League. The two sides weren't direct competitors yet. Why would they waste any time fighting Ye Qiu?

Xiao Shiqin didn't continue to guess. He could get the answers by asking others.

Once the team finished the dungeon, Xiao Shiqin urged everyone to take a break. Even if they wanted to break Happy's records, it would take awhile.

Once the emotions of everyone began to stabilize, Xiao Shiqin immediately looked for Cui Li.

Cui Li had clearly received the news. No one in Excellent Era was more aware of the events occurring in the game than Chen Yehui, and Chen Yehui had a very close relationship with Cui Li.

When Xiao Shiqin came to look for him, Cui Li reckoned that it must be related to what had just happened. Who would have thought that Xiao Shiqin would ask about Excellent Era's sudden decline in the last half of the season.

Why did Excellent Era suddenly collapse midseason? The media spoke of it as a mystery. Everyone had tried to analyze it left and right. In the end, they concluded that the newcomer-still-getting-incorporated-into-the-team was the reason. When Excellent Era's internal department examined the matter, apart from these reasons, they couldn't find anything else either.

"At that time, Excellent Era didn't do anything that could have affected their condition?" Xiao Shiqin didn't say it directly, but with this as context, it was quite obvious what he meant by "anything else". Cui Li listened to his question and understood. He shook his head though: "No."

But after saying no, he also went into a daze.

No? That's what he believed, but was that really the truth? Was there really nothing?

It seemed like he needed to consult Chen Yehui.

"Wait a second." After saying "no", Cui Li suddenly had a change of heart. He told Xiao Shiqin to wait and called Chen Yehui.

Cui Li didn't say anything in his phone call. He simply called Chen Yehui to come over immediately.

A few minutes later, a knock sounded from outside his office door. Chen Yehui had rushed over.

"Last season, after Ye Qiu left and went to the game, did anyone on our side run over to fight with Ye Qiu in private?"

Chen Yehui's heart thumped. This situation had happened before. He and Liu Hao were the primary instigators. Liu Hao had already been traded away by the team. If this bomb exploded, would he be shouldering the blame alone?

Chen Yehui started to panic. At that time, they had done it behind the club's back. After a bunch of stuff happened that even affected the team's performance, no one dared to say a word. When the club examined the reasons for their relegations, they didn't pursue this topic, so all of the participants let out a sigh of relief. Who would have thought that, half a season later, this topic would pop up again?

Chen Yehui saw Xiao Shiqin in the room. This guy was even further away from them back then. How could he know about it?

Chen Yehui fell silent and his expression clearly turned pale. He had already given them the answer. By the time he noticed his own actions, he realized that his slow response was enough of an answer. If he tried to cover up the truth, he would be challenging his boss's intellect. Helpless, Chen Yehui could only tell the truth. As for who to blame, he obviously pushed it all onto Liu Hao. He explained that it was all Liu Hao's idea. Liu Hao had told him about these ideas and since it wasn't too much trouble, he just gave him a little help like providing characters and what not.....

Bang!

Cui Li didn't allow him the chance to continue speaking. He slammed the table and suddenly stood up. He pointed at Chen Yehui and said "you you you" for awhile, but in the end, he wasn't able to say anything else.

There was no point to saying anything now.

If this was before and he had found out the truth that this matter had led to their team's downfall and poor performance, the participants would have certainly received severe punishment. For a staff member like Chen Yehui, he might even have been fired.

But a year had already passed since then. It was too late to settle the score now.

Chen Yehui retreated to the side pathetically. He didn't dare to breathe. Right now, only the manager knew. If the boss found out, what would the result be?

"It looks like even if this matter wasn't the primary reason for Excellent Era's sudden decline last year, it must have had some sort of effect." Xiao Shiqin said. Cui Li and Chen Yehui heard his words and felt moved at how reliable this person was. He was giving them a way out, helping them lower the weight of it!

Naturally, that wasn't Xiao Shiqin's main intent. He followed: "We need to learn from this mistake!"

The other two immediately understood. He was saying that Excellent Era was currently in the middle of reproducing last year's disaster!

"This... could I say something?" Chen Yehui carefully spoke up.

"If you have something to say, just say it." Cui Li wasn't in a good mood right now.

"Uh, I'm just saying in theory, this year's situation is very different from last year's situation. After all, this year, we're direct competitors with Happy in the Challenger League. Right now, Happy urgently needs to improve their character's strength so that they can close the gap between us. If we can limit their growth in game, we'll also be hurting them on stage. Since we have energy to spare, hitting them with a blow in the game could also be considered as preparation against them!" Chen Yehui said.

Xiao Shiqin forced a smile: "Guild leader Chen, the issue isn't whether we have energy or not, but rather in the game, it's hard to say who will be dealing that blow. Let's not talk about the past for now. Just take today for example. Guild leader Chen, I'm sure you've seen the contest for the dungeon records. I can be the representative for the team and say that our team put in their 100% in today's dungeons. I feel content with our performance, but there's nothing we can do about it. The reason that Happy's times are so much better than ours is because they spend all day in there. The game is their home stage."

"Even if our team's skill level is much higher, beating their records will require a certain amount of effort. That is the issue here. If we put in effort and we win, then that's great, but if we lose, everyone will receive a severe blow to their mentality. When match day comes, I don't know if this mental wall can be eliminated." Xiao Shiqin said.

"There is always a winner and a loser in a competition. If we're too afraid of the negative impacts of losing and don't even try, won't that be too passive?" Chen Yehui said.

"This isn't about being passive. This is about weight the pros and cons. You say competition, but what are we competing for? It's not like those rewards are necessary, nor does it matter much if Happy gets one or two extra rewards. So in this competition against them, we don't need to win. As long as we have a good enough time that puts pressure on them, so they cannot keep reaping rewards over and over

again, isn't that enough? Why have our team strike at their morale? Guild leader Chen, send me a few of your helpers. I'll bring them into the dungeons and practice. That's all we need." Xiao Shiqin said.

Chapter 893: Little Thing

As Xiao Shiqin's words fell, Cui Li and Chen Yehui couldn't help but glance at each other.

These two weren't idiots, and immediately understood the reasoning behind Xiao Shiqin's arrangements. At the same time, they also realized a flaw in the methods they used to deal with Ye Qiu before: they always wanted to take him down with one move.

Just like how they wanted to go in game now to compete with Ye Qiu and ruin their plans; was it really necessary? Hearing Xiao Shiqin's words, both of them realized that no, there was no need for them to invest so much time and effort.

The change in their expressions was all taken in by Xiao Shiqin, but he still added out of politeness, "How does my suggestion sound?"

"It's good." Cui Li nodded first, before saying to Chen Yehui, "Guild leader Chen, could you make the arrangements on your side?"

"Of course." Chen Yehui didn't argue any further. His debate with Xiao Shiqin was silently forgotten.

"I'll do my best." Xiao Shiqin smiled.

"Then I'll go ahead with the preparations." Chen Yehui left first after saying these words.

Cui Li once again sighed internally at how valuable Xiao Shiqin turned out to be. After a round of encouragement and praise, what was next was to deal with the personal feelings of the team members.

Apart from the first successful ambush, in the other two ten player dungeons that they had run, they were beaten by Happy, who managed to complete it before they did. In addition, there was a wide gap between their scores, causing everyone to feel defeated and down. They were currently all sitting silently in the training room, spirits low. Cui Li had arrived with Xiao Shiqin and the first thing they saw wasn't the group of pro players, but Su Mucheng standing outside the training room chomping on a pear.

They hadn't called Su Mucheng to come along when they were dungeoning, yet she was still here; was she here just to laugh at them?

Cui Li didn't bother with her, simply nodding in greeting. It was Xiao Shiqin, who was behind him, that slowed down to chat.

"What are you doing here?"

"Eating a pear."

"Why are you eating a pear here?"

"I'm not allowed to eat inside!"

Xiao Shiqin didn't know how to respond. She knew that wasn't what he meant, but she still gave him such a shallow response. She was messing with him! Xiao Shiqin had been informed of Su Mucheng's situation by the club. It was sad to know that she would be leaving after this season. However, Excellent Era had assured him they would find an equally skilled replacement that made up for her absence in the team; this made Xiao Shiqin relieved. After all, he didn't need a pretty girl here to be eye candy, but a strong teammate who could work with them. It didn't matter if it was Su Mucheng or someone else.

"What are you guys rushing around for?" Then, it was Su Mucheng's turn to ask, chomping on her pear as she craned her neck to look inside the training room.

"We're dungeoning!" Xiao Shiqin said. They hadn't informed Su Mucheng of their plans, so they didn't know if she knew or not. If he had been in-game just now though, she probably realized that they were dungeoning.

"Oh? How's it going?" Su Mucheng asked.

"You're asking even though you know exactly what's happening, aren't you?" Xiao Shiqin responded.

"Yup!" Su Mucheng nodded with a smile.

"I think we're done talking..." Xiao Shiqin was speechless, entering the room. As for Su Mucheng, she stayed outside since she hadn't finished eating her pear yet. It was a rule at Excellent Era that food wasn't allowed in the training room and, after Ye Qiu left, the training room also became nonsmoking.

In the room, Cui Li, who had personally come to deal with this mess, was talking, bringing praise and encouragement from the club.

"Not bad, everyone," Cui Li's smile seemed strangely sincere, to the point where it was extremely confusing to everyone present.

Not bad? Running a ten-player dungeon and not being able to beat Happy's record, you call that not bad?

"We just casually ran a few dungeons, forcing Happy to use all their ability to win back the records and preventing them from obtaining rewards by repeatedly breaking their own recordings. You all did very well." Cui Li wore an expression of approval and Excellent Era's pro players continued to be bewildered. This made Cui Li wonder to himself: was his overt praise a little too much?

But there was nothing further to it. He had already spoken and couldn't take back his words, so he could only steel himself and continue with the praise, "Now there's nothing more that we need to do; we can let Happy go and struggle to break those records now that they've set one with the best of their ability! We should continue to focus on training, on the competition, which are far more important than something like dungeon records. Next time, we can go and run some dungeons, and hopefully put pressure on Happy just like we did today."

Cui Li's speech came to a close amongst lost glances exchanged between the players. Seeing the lack of response, he couldn't keep it up any longer. He took a hasty glance at the time before saying, "Oh, I think it's almost time for daily training. I'll leave now to avoid distracting you all."

Cui Li turned, giving Xiao Shiqin a meaningful look, naturally asking him to continue soothing tempers. Su Mucheng was still chomping on her pear when he exited the room. He ignored her and left.

"Uh... So, let's start training, everyone..." Xiao Shiqin was a little anxious, lost as to what he should do. How bold of manager Cui, just coming up with a round of reasonless praises without any sort of hook, praising everyone until they were all completely and utterly bewildered!

And Xiao Shiqin had to be the one to clear up this mess. He smiled with an airy sort of joy, saying in a cheerful tone, "Surprised?"

Everyone nodded like mad. It was really too surprising.

"Haha, me too! I wanted to ask for some more time to research these dungeon, because we aren't as familiar with them as Happy. Yet Manager Cui turned out to be very satisfied with what we accomplished already. Do you know why?" Xiao Shiqin said.

Everyone shook their heads in silence.

"It's because none of this was about winning or losing from the very start. All we had to do was come over and leave a record. Because with this one record, we've already managed to cause a lot of trouble for Happy. As for winning and losing, we only need to worry about that during the competition itself."

Xiao Shiqin took careful note of everyone's expressions as he talked and noticed that his words had taken their hoped for effect. Xiao Shiqin had given them the reason they hadn't managed to run the dungeon faster than Happy; the following words told them that it wasn't that they couldn't or didn't do it, but because it wasn't worth their time. Finally, everyone recovered from the confusion of Cui Li's praise and entered a state of understanding.

"So that's how it is," someone said.

"Of course that's how it is," Xiao Shiqin smiled, "We've done enough dungeoning for today, so let's prepare for training!"

"Ok!" Everyone agreed, returning to their desktops for training. Su Mucheng had finished her pear by now, and walked into the room.

"Not bad!" Su Mucheng commended Xiao Shiqin.

"Don't cause trouble for me!" Xiao Shiqin had only just begun to relax when he had to put up his guard once more.

"You're too nervous." Su Mucheng smiled. "You're probably quite stressed, huh?"

"Of course, our opponent isn't so easy to deal with," Xiao Shiqin said.

"What plans do you have for now?" Su Mucheng asked.

"Hm?" Xiao Shiqin's alarm was written on his face. With Su Mucheng's current attitude towards Excellent Era, anyone would be suspicious of her stance. Xiao Shiqin was certain that Su Mucheng would continue to do her best on the field, but it was off the field that he was worried about.

"Seems like you guys have some big scheme going on," Su Mucheng commented.

"Not really." Xiao Shiqin shook his head. "I think what you said that day at the meeting was very true. If everyone could look at it from a better angle, then everything would be much easier. It's unfortunate that Ye Qiu's influence on Excellent Era is too strong, causing them to be incapable of facing these problems with a cool head!"

"It's not about his influence," Su Mucheng said.

"Huh?"

"It's because they have guilt on their conscience," Su Mucheng said.

"..."

"That's why they rush to use Ye Qiu's failure to prove themselves and cover up their own shortcomings. They aren't afraid of losing, but they're afraid of losing to Ye Qiu. It's too scary for them because their hearts are knotted with guilt," Su Mucheng said.

"..."

"Let's do some training!" Su Mucheng didn't continue the conversation, returning to her seat and beginning her daily training like usual.

Xiao Shiqin stared at her dumbly. Su Mucheng didn't turn her attention back to him. Instead, it was Sun Xiang who left his seat and went over to him.

"Captain Sun," Xiao Shiqin greeted. The emotions within this greeting were rather complicated. Sun Xiang was their captain, but Xiao Shiqin acted and was treated more like a captain than he was. For Sun Xiang, captain was more of a title than a real position.

Even so, they got along rather well. Sun Xiang not only didn't seem to mind, but seemed very satisfied with this status quo. Xiao Shiqin had a really hard time understanding this seemingly prideful prodigy. After all, how could an arrogant person bear having such a superficial captaincy?

"Hey, about that!" Sun Xiang spoke up.

"About what?"

"Are we really not going to dungeon anymore?"

"Yes!" Xiao Shiqin said.

Sun Xiang frowned, disappointed.

"Our efforts should be placed more on the competition and training, right? A little thing like dungeoning, we have time to do that any time. We can go if we're bored or it's necessary for us to go check on it again," Xiao Shiqin said.

"Yeah, it's just a little thing." Sun Xiang nodded, before suddenly pausing as if he suddenly realized something.

"Little thing? Xiao Shiqin?* Hahahahaha!" Sun Xiang suddenly started bawling with laughter, pointing at Xiao Shiqin.

The fuck, I think your focus is little off point! Xiao Shiqin had thought Sun Xiang had a sudden enlightenment, but all he had noticed was this homophone.

"Little Thing, Little Thing!"

Thus, this situation came to a close with the result of Xiao Shiqin obtaining a new nickname. However, Xiao Shiqin was the vice-captain, so how many would really dare to use this nickname to his face? It was only Sun Xiang who had no fear and, from that day forwards, Xiao Shiqin had become Little Thing to Sun Xiang.

"Heheh, Little Thing..." Even Su Mucheng sometimes used this nickname given by the person she didn't like.

Xiao Shiqin wanted to cry.

Chapter 894: New Opportunity

Happy had snatched two records away from Excellent Era one after the other, turning all of Excellent Era's hard work into nothing. Fortunately, the system existed. The system took its job seriously. Even though Excellent Era's efforts didn't show up on TV, their efforts still left a mark on the record boards. It was just that since they weren't in first place, the record could only be seen by clicking on the appropriate dungeon record list and looking at in detail.

After completing these two dungeons, Team Happy let loose another sudden strike in order to take down the record previously set by Excellent Era, but in this attempt, they made a few mistakes and ended up failing.

Even though everyone felt that it was a pity, they soon felt relieved. After all, setting records was a race against time. Even a slight mistake could lead to a slower time. These mistakes didn't need to be thoroughly examined. As long as everyone maintained their calm and concentrated in their next attempt, it would be fine.

"I really want to see the look on the faces of those guys from Excellent Era right now!" When Chen Guo made this remark, her gaze shifted to the window. Her thoughts wandered away. However, the scene outside of the window ruined her imagination. They were currently located in their residential practice base, not Happy Internet Cafe, where Club Excellent Era was right across the street from them.

"Haha." Ye Xiu gave a laugh at Chen Guo's comment, but in reality, he wasn't nearly as excited as Chen Guo was.

It was true that Excellent Era had been stepped on, but in order to take this step, Happy had to give up on many things. If Excellent Era hadn't interfered, Happy could have gamed the dungeon record rewards, but everything was over now. If Happy went all out, their dungeon times would be better than Excellent Era's, but the small difference between their times didn't allow for Happy to continue using their repeat method of farming Orange equipment.

As a result, Excellent Era had taken away quite a bit of potential equipment and material from Happy.

In this competition, Excellent Era had lost in spirit, while Happy had lost in material goods. From the direct results, Happy should be the one crying.

Ye Xiu didn't become depressed at these losses though. He didn't have time for that. An opportunity had slipped away, which meant that more opportunities were needed to make up for those losses. These opportunities were about to arrive.

12/25. Christmas was on Wednesday next week. On Monday this week, Glory would officially reveal this year's Christmas events.

The Christmas events every year never separated from presents. As a result, Christmas events naturally implied rich rewards. However, in order to obtain these rich rewards, there had to be some sort of challenge.

This year's Christmas event was no exception. It borrowed from the iconic features of the Christmas holiday. The main events for this year involved stealing stockings.

Stockings weren't presents, but stockings were a medium for Christmas presents. The concept for this year's Christmas event wasn't difficult to grasp. The more stockings you obtained, the more presents you would get.

These stockings weren't just thrown around all over the game world for players to pick up. To get stockings, you had to accept a quest and then move to a certain map.

This map wasn't a dungeon type map, but rather an Arena-type map. The "stealing" part of the event goes without saying. Each map only had a fixed number of stockings. Who would be able to collect the most? Just relying on being sharp-sighted and dextrous wouldn't be enough.

The entire event would last for three days, starting from midnight on December 25th. Players didn't need to treasure every single second and start accepting quests as soon as it hit midnight. The number of quests that could be accepted was limited. Every character could only accept a quest to snatch stockings three times every day. As a three day event, that meant a total of nine attempts. There was plenty of time, so there was no need to rush.

There were other details about the event. Once the information was revealed, everyone began preparing for it.

"50 players will do battle. 20 stockings will be scattered around randomly. Stockings are not bound to the player and can be dropped. After all twenty stockings have been picked up, the quest ends. I say, this year's event is clearly trying to have everyone kill and steal from each other!" Wei Chen read the event details and expressed his thoughts on it.

"You're teleported to a random map. Small parties can accept quests together, but no large teams. Haha, they're not letting large teams join. It's probably to prevent those big guilds from forming 50 player teams and entering together. If it's just small parties, then we'll have to split into two teams." Wei Chen continued.

"It doesn't say that a party must have five players, right?" Ye Xiu said.

"No." Wei Chen looked around, but didn't see any rules regarding that. He thought about Ye Xiu's question and immediately understood: if a small party entered, they would be fighting for 20 stockings. If an individual enters, it'll be a fight for 20 stockings too. So in theory, if Happy formed two parties, Happy would only be able to get a maximum of 40 stockings per quest. However, if each of them entered alone, that meant a maximum of 200 stockings possible. However, it was hard to say how many of those 200 stockings an individual could collect.

"Rankings! There are also rankings!" Wei Chen continued to read the event details and saw a ranking section. As expected, placing high on these rankings meant rewards and these rewards were, without a doubt, where the greatest rewards lay.

There were several rankings, an guild one, an individual one, and a party one. However, if you wanted to place on an individual or a party ranking, then for these quests, you couldn't change your status. In other words, an individual couldn't form a party with anyone. And for a party, whoever you teamed up would had to be the same people for all quests.

"We have to fight for these rankings!" Wei Chen said.

"Of course."

"Then I'd better hurry and ask for a leave from Samsara. They'll definitely want me to be there." Wei Chen said. His position as a spy hadn't been easily obtained. He didn't want to give up on it so easily either. It just happened to be time for challenging new dungeons. Wei Chen's outstanding performance in leading teams was much appreciated by Samsara. However, his spy character in Samsara was a bit embarrassing. It still wasn't Level 75 yet! Wei Chen didn't have time to level it and didn't want to hand it over to someone for powerleveling. He could only squeeze in some time to slowly level it up bit by bit. Even so, that didn't affect Wei Chen's ability to lead dungeon teams. He used this currently Level 72 Warlock account for these higher-level dungeons.

"One day, one account means three chances. You can still do both." Ye Xiu reminded Wei Chen.

"I'll just tell them in advance. We can see when the time comes!" At Samsara, Wei Chen played the role of a rough but very serious and responsible team leader.

"How are things going to be arranged on our side?" Chen Guo asked.

"Hm, everyone had two accounts on them, so it's best if we can complete those quests on both accounts!" Ye Xiu said.

"Then who will be forming a party and who will be participating as an individual?" Chen Guo asked.

"That... will need careful consideration." Ye Xiu said.

Chapter 895: A Night of Observation

The event announcement was released less than two days before the event officially started. Old players understood the importance of the Christmas event and responded immediately upon hearing the news. Those who wanted to form a party began looking for their friends. Those who wanted to challenge the event alone used these two days worth of time to improve their equipment.

The club guilds obviously wouldn't miss this event. For them, apart from participating in the event, they would be competing for spots on the leaderboard. The rewards from the rankings were vividly promoted.

But when they thought about how Lord Grim existed in the game, the guild leaders couldn't let out a smile. For this event, players would be teleported to random maps and only small parties could enter. As a result, their advantage of having more players could only be displayed in the guild rankings. In the individual or team rankings, no matter how many guild members they had, they wouldn't be able to gather all of them together into a single arena!

This competition would be a test of skill for elite players and teams. The top guilds would have been confident if not for the existence of Happy.... The new dungeon records dominated by Happy was the clearest indicator. That was also a competition between elite players and teams, but the result?

Only pro teams could contest against Team Happy. The Christmas event did not interfere with the Pro League though. The event lasted for three days starting from Wednesday and ending on Friday. After the event ended, Saturday would be the sixteenth round of the season. Pro players wouldn't be running to the game to have fun instead of preparing for their upcoming match though. Even if they were interested in playing, they might play around once or twice, but no hopes could be placed on them appearing on the actual rankings.

The club guild leaders were worried! These two days passed by in a flash. The Christmas event officially began. Because of the limited number of quests each day, there weren't that many players impatiently waiting for midnight to come. As for the club guilds? For now, they didn't immediately dispatch their elite teams. With the rankings as their goal, they would first have to observe the true circumstances of this event before shooting their arrows at the target.

Tonight, the club guilds studied this event, while actively taking note of the rankings.

Lord Grim? Happy? Would they appear on the rankings soon?

They did not. When the sun came up, no one from Happy had appeared on the rankings yet. Although the club guilds hadn't sent out their elites yet, their foundation was already reflected in the results. In this free-for-all situation, those on the individual or team rankings were held by the club guilds. The guild rankings didn't need to be mentioned. The first twenty placings were swept up by the club guilds. Some people compared these rankings with the Alliance rankings to see if there were any differences.

There were definitely quite a few differences.

For example, on the rankings, Guild Samsara was in first place. After their team became the champions last season, the guild had grown ferociously. The guild members were also extremely diligent. The traditional powerhouses Blue Brook Guild, Herb Garden, and Tyrannical Ambition followed Guild Samsara. Team Tyranny had a firm grasp on their first place spot in the Alliance, but their Guild Tyrannical Ambition didn't seem to be any different from the other powerhouses. Their tyranny over the Alliance wasn't reflected by their guild standing.

There was also Excellent Dynasty. Although Team Excellent Era had been relegated to the Challenger League, their guild wasn't going to collapse just because of that. At this moment, those who held the

most hope for Excellent Era were their most loyal fans. Guild Excellent Dynasty's performance in this event was extraordinary. Quite a few mid to low tier club guilds lost out to them.

The other large discrepancy was Guild Heavenly Justice. Their Team Heavenly Swords was teetering on the brink of danger. Their placing kept on pacing back and forth between the relegation and non-relegation zone. However, in this event, Heavenly Justice had an impressive placing: 7th. There were rumors that Heavenly Justice had put out rewards for this event in order to spark the enthusiasm of their guild members. Whether that was true or not would require further investigation.

These club guilds attracted countless eyes, but the guilds themselves were strenuously searching the rankings to see Guild Happy's placing and check if they were a threat or not. After looking up Guild Happy, everyone felt relieved. Guild Happy's strength was still too weak. For the guild rankings, only relying on a few elite experts was useless. It was a test of the entire guild's strength. Happy's Lord Grim and his team were mighty, but they would not be a deciding factor in these guild rankings.

After a night of careful studying, the various guilds discovered another problem.

Just like last year's event, the player rankings were divided by their levels. Usually, it was split for every five levels. In the normal servers, the separations were very detailed. Starting from Level 20 after the beginner village, there was a separate ranking every five levels up until Level 75.

But in the Heavenly Domain because players were all max leveled, there usually wasn't a separate ranking. However, this time, because of the new level cap, there were now two separate rankings in the Heavenly Domain.

One was the Level 70-74 rankings, while the other was the Level 75 rankings. These two rankings were further split into individual and team rankings. The team rankings were based on the highest level player in the party.

It had always been done this way. It was mainly to separate between those with Level 70 and those with Level 75 equipment. After studying these rankings for a night, the guilds discovered the problem: there were a lot fewer Level 75 players than Level 70 players.

The level cap had been raised on 12/3. Right now, it was only 12/25. Only twenty or so days had passed since the update had been dropped. The higher the level, the more experience was required to level up. The club's core characters trained non-stop as fast as possible and reached Level 75 in eleven days. Ye Xiu and co weren't as diligent, but their efficiency wasn't low either. A few days after these core characters, their characters also hit Level 75 and began sweeping the record rankings, but for the vast majority of players, how could they have so much free time? Players who only had a few hours each day to play were still struggling to grind levels! And this group constituted the vast majority of the playerbase.

Most club guild members were loyal fans of the respective guild's team. These loyal fans were also very passionate about Glory and were naturally more willing to spend more time on the game. As a result, there were quite a few players from the club guilds that managed to reach Level 75 during these 20 days. Consequently, among the current Level 75 playerbase, those from the club guilds took up a good portion. As a result, in random distribution, it was highly likely that players or teams from the same guild

would meet on the map. The distribution was clearly random. It didn't try and avoid having members from the same guild meet.

With this, players from the same guild could help each other, naturally giving them an advantage over others. This hidden phenomenon was finally grasped by the top guilds after a night of observation and understanding.

But if their guild had this advantage, so did every other guilds. This advantage needed to be used and guarded against. However, while some guilds had the advantage, others didn't, such as Guild Happy.....

The big guilds had placed spies in Happy a long time ago. Even if they couldn't get information from core players, they could still check the guild member list and check their levels, no?

Guild Happy clearly didn't have too many Level 75 players. During their early development stage, they couldn't be too picky, so they had good and bad players mixed into the bunch. There were always active players online every day, but there were also many that stayed offline for many many days. Guild Happy was still in the process of transitioning from a player guild to a professional guild, after all.

Facing Guild Happy, the big guilds held this advantage. Under this situation, if they happened to have a numbers advantage, might they have a chance at giving trouble to Lord Grim and Happy's other experts?

Even though Lord Grim had god-level might, the guilds could think of a way to deal with it. Apart from having more members, what other advantage did they have? It wasn't like they could find someone to compete with a God.

This event would originally have prevented having a numbers advantage, but because of this special occasion, this scene occurred. The club guilds would naturally think up a solution, but after thinking over it, even if two teams from the same guild, if they met Lord Grim's team, it would be a 10 versus 5... but could that be considered as having an advantage?

Thinking of this point, the guild leaders felt depressed at this 10 versus 5 conclusion. With the strength of Happy's experts, two or three times their still numbers wouldn't be enough. Even more would be needed. However, any more and it would be unlikely for the situation to happen. After this entire night, three teams appearing in the same map had only taken place a few times.

"Then, if one guild isn't enough..... What about multiple guilds allying together?" Someone couldn't help but bring it up.

In their guild leader chat group, people gradually began speaking up and discussing this topic.

"Samsara's doing quite well. They've gotten so many stockings tonight."

"Haha, your guild's doing well too!"

"Heavenly Justice isn't in this chat group yet? Their performance this event is quite impressive!"

"What's going on, Blossom Valley? You guys seem a bit depressed!"

The guild leaders spoke one after the other, discussing each other's results. At the bottom of their hearts, they all hoped that everyone else's achievements were negative numbers, so their own guild could come out on top. Everyone seemed friendly to each other on the surface though.

"Wow, Excellent Dynasty is fearsome too!" Someone seemed to have found a topic and spoke out.

"We're just trying our best!" Chen Yehui put on a fake smile like everyone else.

"Compared to you guys, Happy is so much worse. Where are they on the guild rankings? We can't even find them!" Someone began cutting into the main subject.

"Their guild has no hope of making it onto the guild rankings, but what about the individual and team rankings?" The main subject had finally been touched upon.

"If we don't put up some countermeasures, we'll probably lose to them, no?"

"How about we join hands and suppress them?" The guild leader speaking didn't seem to be very happy. In reality, for these guilds, more brain cells died from working together than fighting against one another.

Chapter 896: Two-Player Teams

The guild leaders were taking an indirect approach to figure out each other's intentions. In fact, Excellent Dynasty, which was Happy's most direct competitor, was very quiet at the moment. Apart from a few hahas in the beginning, Chen Yehui mainly watched from the sidelines.

Chen Yehui had more confidence than the others because Excellent Era didn't face any trouble in the Challenger League, so for this generous event, the club had encouraged the players to participate. Chen Yehui saw that these guilds wanted to ally together to cause trouble for Ye Qiu and laughed inwardly. While the others fought against Ye Qiu, his own guild would stay on the sidelines and peacefully clear their quests. How could their achievements not turn out well?

Unfortunately, Chen Yehui underestimated the intelligence of the other guild leaders. If he thought of it, the others had thought of it as well, which was why everyone approached the issue very cautiously. All of them spoke casually about an alliance. Evidently, everyone wanted to take advantage of the others allying together, so their own guild could scoop up all the fish from the fishermen for themselves.

If everyone wanted to take advantage, then it obviously it wasn't going to happen. Each and every one of them circled around each other slyly. After a long time, nothing came of it until everyone realized that everyone else wanted to do the same thing too. If this continued, it would never end.

As a result, more and more people chose to stay silent. In the end, the matter was left inconclusive, which disappointed the bystander, Chen Yehui.

However, he had the chess pieces in his hands, so he wasn't worried. The task for organizing the guild for this Christmas event had been handed over to his subordinates. On the other hand, he was busy preparing characters for the pro players. For this kind of interactive event, using pro characters would be too high profile. Who knew what might happen in a 50 player battlefield? Their own fans would be

good. They might just send over whatever stockings they got to them, but what if there were enemy fans?

Chen Yehui prepared these accounts meticulously and explained to them what he had learned about the event after a night of thorough research.

As for Happy? After everyone woke up, they started figuring out the event. They were ambitious and wouldn't waste their limited quests to probe it out. They obviously went to players who had already completed the quests to understand the situation.

After getting a grasp on the situation, Team Happy logged on. The higher echelons of the guild passed on fearful messages such as "the wolves are here." Some people subconsciously checked the rankings immediately as if once Happy came, these rankings would be completely swept by them.

In the current rankings, Guild Samsara was in the lead. The individual and team rankings were less obvious because each person and each team had three chances. Obtaining all of the stockings each round totaled to 60 stockings, so the gap between the rankings was still relatively small, leading to many individuals and teams with identical totals.

In the individual rankings, the most anyone had managed to collect was only 16 stockings. A huge number of players had this achievement.

The team rankings were more formidable. Most of the high rankings were held by club guild teams. The highest total was 30 stockings.

The above were for the Level 75 rankings. The top guilds were more concerned about this ranking because from common sense, the rewards and the levels corresponded to each other. Level 75 equipment and materials were what the top guilds desired the most.

Happy's people had logged on. Were heaven-defying records about to appear soon?

And at this moment, they were all in a predicament. Should they throw in their troops now and collide with Team Happy, or should they avoid them to let Team Happy reign freely, while they switched to a different time to try.

Due to no alliance forming to fight with Happy, the big guilds lacked confidence. After pondering over the issue, they grit their teeth and sent out their troops! They at least couldn't allow Happy to overthrow them so easily!

As for Happy, after two days of discussion, they finally came up with a plan.

Ten players. First, Wei Chen would lead Qiao Yifan, Chen Guo, Luo Ji, and An Wenyi to form a five-player party. Chen Guo and Luo Ji weren't at a pro level. In terms of their individual skill, they were no different than normal players. An Wenyi's Little Cold Hands was a healer, so he would undoubtedly need to be part of a team. As a result, the three might as well be put together. With Wei Chen leading and accompanied by the cautious Qiao Yifan, this team was quite formidable.

As for the other five, Tang Rou and Wu Chen were designated as individuals. For Mo Fan, no one ever made any arrangements for him in the first place. He hadn't considered himself as a member of the team, so he wasn't going to comply with Ye Xiu's orders.

Finally, Ye Xiu and Steamed Bun formed a two-player team.

Teams didn't necessarily need to consist of five players. Two, three, four players were fine. However, the system didn't give any advantage to teams with fewer players, so forming a team with less than five players was clearly considered disadvantageous, but thinking about student Steamed Bun's weirdness and carelessness, who knew what contribution he would make if he played alone. As a result, Ye Xiu might as well just run around with him.

Those in a party formed their party and those participating individually finished their preparations. They accepted the quest and teleported to the event map.

Snow was always associated with Christmas, so naturally, this year's Christmas map was a snow map. As soon as they were teleported in, everyone's screen was filled with a brilliant white cover of snow. Sunlight shone on the snow. The reflected light made the scene especially dazzling. Snow continued to fall at varying speeds. Ye Xiu and Steamed Bun happened to be caught in a snowstorm. Goose-feather-sized snowflakes filled the sky. For a moment, it was hard to tell which direction was what.

"Ah, the wind's so strong. It's even affecting our movement speed." After Ye Xiu had Lord Grim take a few steps, he immediately felt something. It was another part of what added complexity to the game. It wasn't only the terrain that affected fights. Sometimes, the weather had an influence as well.

"WHAT DID YOU SAY?" Steamed Bun shouted loudly. To Ye Xiu, it sounded just fine in the game, but everyone else could hear Steamed Bun's ear-piercing shout through the game's background sounds.

"What are you yelling so loudly for?" Ye Xiu asked.

"The wind's too loud. It's hard to hear you." Steamed Bun said.

"You're too engrossed in the game....." Ye Xiu was speechless. In this snowstorm, strong winds constantly screeched. Steamed Bun spoke as if he were actually inside the snowstorm and started yelling.

"Let's start looking for stockings!" Ye Xiu said.

"Which way?" Steamed Bun asked.

"It doesn't matter."

Stockings were scattered around the map randomly. No coordinates were given, so in the beginning, they could only search around randomly. The stockings weren't thrown out all at once. In the beginning, there would only be ten stockings. The rest of the ten stockings would be placed randomly within thirty minutes depending on the time and position of the players on the map.

The system gave notifications when these stockings spawned, so players wouldn't be completely caught unaware.

At the moment, the ten stockings had a display for them. After someone found a stocking, the number would update, letting players know the current status of the stockings. After all twenty stockings were picked up, the system would begin a 120 second countdown. Within those 120 seconds, if no change occurred, the quest came to an end.

In the event map, you wouldn't lose experience or equipment after dying, but stockings were guaranteed to drop. After 20 seconds, the character could revive at full health. However, as your death count increased, the time to revive increased at 20 second increments.

In order to spice up the event, apart from stockings, items would randomly spawn to assist the players. There were no-cooldown potions, invisible cloaks, fast-moving sleds, small boxes for carrying stockings, and so on. These items wouldn't be given a notice from the system.

The maps wasn't too big. If not, finding the stockings and items would prove to be too difficult. At Ye Xiu's and Steamed Bun's map, all 10 stockings were still there. No one had picked up any yet. The two quickly encountered a few players, but without any stockings found, there naturally wouldn't be a battle. Once a stocking was picked up, an announcement would be made indicating who had picked it up. There was also a clear list of who had how many stockings that updated immediately.

Ye Xiu and Steamed Bun still hadn't found anything yet. Finally, the first system announcement was made: Player Wooden Crate is in the lead and has obtained a Christmas stocking.

"Wooden Crate! Let's find him!" Steamed Bun yelled. In his eyes, finding a person was easier than finding a stocking, especially in this map, where there was such a huge snowstorm. The character practically needed to squat down in order to even see the ground clearly. Who knew where this stocking had been found. A part of it might have been sticking out in the snow. If that were the case, it was too easy to be ignored.

"We'll split up and search." Ye Xiu made this decision in the end.

"If you see the target, tell me. Don't act rashly." Ye Xiu said.

"Understood." Steamed Bun replied.

The two split up. Not long afterwards, Ye Xiu didn't hear it through the game, but from outside of the game: "The person in front, are you Wooden Crate? You're Wooden Crate, right? Yeah, I've been hunting for you. Hand over that stocking you just picked up."

"Position!" Ye Xiu wanted to cry. He sent a message to Steamed Bun. This guy actually said hi to Wooden Crate! He gave away his position to the target and greeted him! Only Steamed Bun would understand this type of logic.

Steamed Bun replied back with a coordinate. Ye Xiu looked at it. It wasn't far. He immediately switched directions and rushed over.

"Oh, you're not alone?" At this moment, Ye Xiu heard Steamed Bun say.

Of course he's not alone! The two of them had partied up in this event. The majority of players came into the event in parties of five. He was just on his own because they had separated to search for the stockings. How could he be the only one here?

"Careful." Ye Xiu reminded.

Actually, with Steamed Bun's current skill, he should be able to deal with 5 normal players, but Steamed Bun couldn't be surmised through common sense. Sometimes, he did things that not even a pro player would understand, but there were also times where he lost battles which he shouldn't have lost.

"Hm?" At this moment, Ye Xiu heard Steamed Bun express his surprise.

Chapter 897: Can't Hear, the Wind's Too Strong

Based on a pro player's hand speed, it was no trouble to type faster than one could speak talk. However, Ye Xiu couldn't be bothered to type. It wasn't because he was slow, but because he was worried that Steamed Bun wouldn't notice see his messages. As a result, he also asked as he raised his voice: "What are you so surprised at?"

"They're gone!" Steamed Bun immediately replied with an equally loud voice.

"It's Invisible Cloak, isn't it? Be careful!" Ye Xiu shouted.

"Understood." Steamed Bun's voice was loud and clear.

"Do you guys need to talk like thatis!?" Chen Guo slammed the table.

"The wind is too strong, we can't hear if we're not loud enough don't yell." Steamed Bun explained hurriedly.

Ye Xiu was speechless. That wasn't the reason why they needed to speak loudly. It was because they weren't in the same region, so they needed to deliver the sound from outside of the game! It was obvious that they needed to speak louder with their headphones on. What do you mean the wind is too strong so you can't hear? Ye Xiu realised that he was too careless. He should've sat next to Steamed Bun from the start. That way he could understand and communicate with him more conveniently.

"Punk, Invisible Cloak? I see you already! Come out quickly!" Steamed Bun spoke as he started to pressure and lure his opponents.

"Ah, it's an ambush! B*stards, let me fix you up!"

"Ah! There's another!"

"Yah, another one!"

"What in the world, there's still..."

Steamed Bun shouted nonstop. Even Chen Guo, who was in a completely different map, became nervous.

"What's the matter? What's the matter?" Chen Guo moved her head and tried to see the situation from Ye Xiu's screen.

Ye Xiu's Lord Grim was busy hurrying over. He hadn't yet reached the location, so how could he see Steamed Bun! He lifted his head and pushed Chen Guo's head away. "Focus on your side."

"What's the situation like?" Ye Xiu asked Steamed Bun.

"Five thieves!" Steamed Bun said.

At first, Steamed Bun only saw the player called Wooden Crate, but soon, Wooden Crate's companions came to aid him. They were a five-player team made up of friends, so they originally split up to complete different jobs. However, when Wooden Crate picked up a pair of stockings, the other four immediately hurried there to aid him. As a result, they ran into Steamed Bun, whom came to snatch away the stocking, so they immediately started fighting without uttering another word.

In reality, those players simply reached the destination one after the other. It wasn't an "ambush" like what Steamed Bun had described it as.

"Hey, there's a good man who's willing to give a hand!" Steamed Bun called again at that moment.

Ye Xiu gave it a thought. It wasn't a 'good man', they probably came to snatch Wooden Crate's stockings as well!

"Bro, we're on the same side!"

Ye Xiu heard Steamed Bun greet the good man warmly.

Even Ye Xiu felt bad for Steamed Bun, but he would never have expected that Steamed Bun's greeting caused the opponent to become at a loss in return.

This was because the group was a team from Tyrannical Ambition. Players from big guilds took up a large proportion of the current Level 75 players. Because everyone was randomly assigned to a map, it was possible to encounter players from the same guild. The guilds had previously given instructions to their members that if they ran into players from the same guild, they should work together and aim for a better score as a whole.

So when Steamed Bun popped up with: "Bro, we're on the same side." The opponent was extremely confused. They subconsciously replied with an "oh", and then viewed Steamed Bun as part of Tyrannical Ambition. They immediately brought people forward and shielded Steamed Bun. They even rushed straight to the front before immediately realising something. They turned around and checked his name: Steamed Bun Invasion!

What same side! That was a wolf from Happy!

As someone who followed Ye Xiu's Lord Grim starting from the tenth server, Steamed Bun was viewed as a super permanent member by the big guilds early on.

"He's from Happy. Attack!"

The team captain reacted at once. Without speaking a second word, he stopped going after Wooden Crate. He turned around and stabbed Steamed Bun Invasion with his sword.

"You even fight your own people! So shameless!" Steamed Bun yelled.

Such an unwavering voice put the few from Tyrannical Ambition to be at loss. This was because it was possible for a character from the Heavenly Domain to share the same name. In order to tell apart two characters with the same name, apart from looking at things like their class or equipment, the most reliable way was to check the character's ID number. Every character had a unique number, like their personal ID. The character's ID would never be the same.

They had never heard of such a strange name like Steamed Bun Invasion before, let alone someone from their own guild! However, Steamed Bun's confident voice managed to cause the few players from Tyrannical Ambition to freeze for a few seconds.

After that, they soon came back to their senses: "Nonsense! We don't have any Steamed Bun Invasions in our guild. Attack!"

Boom!

They were the ones who called for an attack, but it was them who were attacked first. When they were about to leap towards Steamed Bun Invasion, a cannonball was fired at them. Steamed Bun Invasion didn't have a scratch on him, and the players of Tyrannical Ambition were sent flying back by the explosion's blast. Ye Xiu's Lord Grim had finally arrived.

"Lord Grim!"

The players of Tyrannical Ambition cried with despair. The name Lord Grim wasn't rare, but Ye Xiu's Lord Grim was too easy to recognise. They didn't even need to check the character's information to see if he was unspecialised. Judging by the character's brightly colored appearance, there couldn't be another one in the Heavenly Domain.

"Retreat!"

The team captain showed his resolution. Seeing that a Lord Grim had arrived, he took the lead and ran without wanting Wooden Crate's stockings.

"You want to run after seeing my boss, what a shameless guy!" Steamed Bun's brick flew ahead, and the team captain successfully dodged it as he ran, without understanding how Steamed Bun's words worked. Everyone was an enemy,, so it wasn't rare to have someone spurting foul language, but there was no reason to call him a 'shameless guy'. He didn't even have the chance to be shameless!

"Steamed Bun, don't chase them." Ye Xiu called for Steamed Bun to stop. Wooden Crate's five-player team didn't want to fight at all, so when Ye Xiu turned his view around, they had already taken this gap as opportunity and escaped quite far away.

"Quickly chase here." Ye Xiu called for Steamed Bun.

"Hurry!" It was unknown whom Steamed Bun was calling for.

"Did you see them trade?" Ye Xiu asked.

"Hm?" Steamed Bun asked with a single word.

Ye Xiu firmly shut up, Steamed Bun wouldn't have noticed such a detail. There were in a team battle, so the ranking was listed with teams as units. The system announced who picked up the stocking, but if it was traded within the team, the system wouldn't be announced to the public. The ranking list would only show that their team had a pair of stockings, so it was hard to tell whether the stockings were on Wooden Crate, who had first picked it up.

This friend team didn't have any important figures, but they had a brain. When Ye Xiu looked, the other side had split up. He immediately realized that the stocking might have been traded to someone else. The stockings might not be on Wooden Crate anymore.

"You follow Wooden Crate closely, I'll pursue the others!" Ye Xiu quickly organised. He thought that the opponent could have purposely placed the decoys, so the stocking might still be on Wooden Crate all along.

Wooden Crate's luck was pretty good. He was the first to pick up the stocking in this map, and had picked up the item Invisible Cloak before that.

After picking up the stockings, appearing in the announcement, and encountering Steamed Bun, Wooden Crate decisively used the Invisible Cloak. Soon afterwards, his friends arrived. In addition, the players who came were no longer just Steamed Bun alone. Normal players weren't tyrannical enough to be press forward fearlessly and slay anything that blocked their path. All they thought about was how to keep their pair of stockings, so when they were given the chance, they immediately fled. The five players scattered in five different directions. After all, they wouldn't lose any experience or equipment when they died, so naturally, everyone was willing to sacrifice themselves.

Which character had the stocking?

Even someone rich with experience like Ye Xiu couldn't guess the answer to this problem. As a result, he let Steamed Bun continue to watch Wooden Crate closely, while he made the easiest decision: pursue the one closest to him.

The closest one was a Berserker. Ye Xiu's Lord Grim attacked while moving forward, which didn't affect his accuracy in the slightest. The Berserker player's skills was a lot rougher, so when he heard the cannon behind him, the character jumped without looking back. This was a thoughtless and subconscious action made by normal players because they felt the need to do something.

Due to this jump, along with the air blast created by the explosion, the Berserker player shocked himself: Ho! I can fly this high!

After that, he originally wanted to quick recover when he landed, but he didn't succeed. He was only able to complete a half-roll He landed in a crooked way, burying his head beneath a pile of snow.

Ye Xiu's Lord Grim arrived in front of him in the blink of an eye.

"Don't chase me. The stockings aren't with me!" The player saw that he couldn't fight with strength so he immediately used words.

"Oh? Then who is it with?" Ye Xiu asked.

"I don't know. He didn't trade with me." This person spoke, and a sword light suddenly shot up from under the snow. This sneak attack was rather sudden and abrupt. However, Lord Grim's Myriad Manifestations Umbrella was even quicker. When it was swung, it changed into its spear form, and the Dragon Fang managed to stun the Berserker.

This player only managed to clearly see, with astonishment, the name of the person before him at this moment. Lord Grim was the last to arrive, during that time, his team was already escaping, so no one paid too much attention.

"Lord Grim!" This person blurted out. Lord Grim was more well known than Steamed Bun Invasion.

"It's me." Ye Xiu replied without stopping. He needed to seize the moment and deal with the opponent to check if he had the stocking.

"I've watched your matches. You're amazing..." The opponent called out.

"Is that so? Which match did you see?" Ye Xiu asked casually.

"The match with Everlasting."

"Really? Why didn't I see you?" Ye Xiu asked.

"Uh..." This person was speechless for a moment. This was because one could watch the Challenger League by squeezing into the arena's room. The names of the audience would be listed, so if someone came to watch, their name could be seen. This person couldn't come up with an answer in time, so he obviously hadn't watched it, which was why he was so lacking in confidence.

Ye Xiu laughed, but he didn't mind. Whether he watched it or not wouldn't stop him from continuing to kill him. Stockings. The most important thing was stockings.

The Berserker obviously couldn't rival Ye Xiu, so he was dealt with in less than a minute. Ye Xiu took a look. His luck wasn't good. He didn't drop any stockings. No wonder this person was so talkative. He might have been wanting to divert Ye Xiu's focus to drag the time.

Ye Xiu spun Lord Grim's view around to look. The other players couldn't be found. Their viewing distance was quite bad in this windy and snowy map.

"Steamed Bun, have you caught up to him?" Ye Xiu could only continue the 'I can't hear because the wind's too strong, so I must speak louder' conversation.

"I've caught up, I'm fixing him up right now." Steamed Bun replied.

"Position!" Ye Xiu didn't have any target on his side, so he decided to support Steamed Bun.

Chapter 898: Stocking Robbery

Steamed Bun was more than skilled enough to handle normal players. When Ye Xiu's Lord Grim arrived, Ye Xiu didn't see anyone named Wooden Crate.

"Where did he go?" Ye Xiu asked.

"I killed him!" Steamed Bun had Steamed Bun Invasion wave his fists around.

"Stocking..." Ye Xiu was about to ask, but he realized that Steamed Bun definitely didn't have it. If not, the system would have announced that Steamed Bun had picked up a stocking.

"It looks like the stocking is with the other three." Ye Xiu said. At the same time, he checked the current totals. Only this stocking had been found so far, and it was in the possession of Wooden Crate's team.

"When you ran into them last time, was there an ambush waiting?" It was only until now that Ye Xiu had an opportunity to ask this question. When he heard Steamed Bun's description, he immediately knew that this "ambush" was just Steamed Bun's understanding of the situation.

"Come over here." Ye Xiu's Lord Grim figured out which direction to head towards and started moving.

"Are we going to continue splitting up?" Steamed Bun Invasion was eager to go in the opposite direction.

"We'll stick together for now." Ye Xiu called after him.

"From the way they do things, this team is rather cautious. They're very attentive towards their coordination with one another. Even though they split up, they weren't far from each other, so if something happened, the other four could quickly arrive to rescue him. We just killed two of them. They'll certainly choose to revive. The other three will probably head towards the revival point to continue to provide support and then continue helping each other out."

Ye Xiu didn't know whether Steamed Bun would understand what he said or not, but he still explained his reasoning in detail. He hoped Steamed Bun could be more normal and think more logically.

"How insightful! You really deserve to be called the boss. Let's go." Steamed Bun expressed his respect towards Ye Xiu and immediately had Steamed Bun Invasion chase after Lord Grim.

Every map only had one revival point. Ye Xiu and Steamed Bun were more skilled and had better equipment than normal players, so they moved quite a bit faster. Not long after hurrying in this direction, they saw three figures heading towards the revival point in the snowstorm.

"That's probably them. Hurry!" They were a bit far, so Ye Xiu couldn't clearly see their names. After calling out to Steamed Bun, he consumed more stamina to close in quickly on them until he could confirm their names.

"Stay low!" Ye Xiu was afraid Steamed Bun would "greet" them again, so he hastily warned him.

"Hm?"

"We can't let them run away again." Ye Xiu said.

"Yes!"

The two quietly and quickly crept up on the three players. The noise from the heavy snowstorm concealed the noise of their footsteps. The three were unaware of any enemies nearby and continued forward.

"You take the one on the right. I'll take the other two."

Ye Xiu said once they were close enough. Steamed Bun wasn't the only one who heard him. The three players ahead jumped in fright. By the time they turned around, Lord Grim and Steamed Bun Invasion had already started attacking them.

The three clearly didn't want to fight. They tried their usual tactic and split up to escape. This time, Ye Xiu was ready and had launched a sneak attack at such a close distance. He wasn't going to give them a chance to escape again.

If running away wasn't an option, then fighting back was the only option they could choose.

There were no penalties for dying, so it freed them of many worries, but even with a different mentality, normal players couldn't suddenly become pro-level players. The three planned on putting their all into the fight, but by the time they set their hearts and steeled their resolves, their characters were already on the ground. From then on, they were unable to get back up all the way until they died.

In the end, Ye Xiu didn't know which character had dropped the stocking.

"Good!"

Once Ye Xiu picked up the stocking, the system announcement came out. Ye Xiu and Steamed Bun once again had no targets in sight. The progress was going so slowly. Perhaps it was because of the nasty weather that affected everyone's ability to search for stockings. The others in Happy had started the event at around the same time as Ye Xiu and Steamed Bun. At the moment, their maps were all bustling with activity. In the other maps, at least five stockings had already been found. None of them were like Ye Xiu's situation.

Just when Ye Xiu was grumbling about it, a system announcement came out. The player Orange Jasmine had picked up a stocking.

From the name, Orange Jasmine seemed to be a player from Herb Garden. In reality, not all Herb Garden players had herb names and not all players with herb names were Tiny Herb fans. This Orange Jasmine wasn't an Herb Garden player. He was part of a team with his friends, similar to Wooden Crate's team. As soon as he picked up this stocking, he started to panic because last time the system announcement came, quite a few players inside the map knew Lord Grim was here too. Lord Grim had just stolen a stocking too.

"Mm, Orange Jasmine. Let's look for him...." As a result, Ye Xiu and Steamed Bun once again split up and searched all over the map. This time, Ye Xiu was the one to find the target. The entire team was together. Ye Xiu didn't know if they had traded the stocking to someone else, so he didn't act rashly. He stealthily lied in wait nearby and then called for Steamed Bun to come over.

In just that brief amount of time, the third and fourth stockings had been found. Ye Xiu could only note down their names for the time being.

Steamed Bun rushed over quite swiftly, but this time, beating their opponents wouldn't be as easy. Ye Xiu gave Steamed Bun two targets, while he took three. Once an opportunity arrived, they pounced.

The opposing five players reacted quickly and immediately engaged in battle, but as soon as Ye Xiu saw them fall into formation, he immediately saw that they were defending a single target.

Orange Jasmine!

They were protecting the player who had picked up a stocking. As a result, Ye Xiu's Lord Grim charged decisively towards Orange Jasmine.

Orange Jasmine was a Sharpshooter. He immediately attacked, while moving backwards with Aerial Fire. The other four in his team prepared to stop Lord Grim, but with their pitiful skill level, how could they hope to block Ye Xiu? Even less likely with Steamed Bun assisting him.

Orange Jasmine saw that the situation wasn't looking good and Aerial Fired away. Ye Xiu's Lord Grim didn't chase after him. With a Shadow Clone Technique, his real body suddenly flickered to the enemy team's Paladin.

Lord Grim caught the Paladin completely unprepared and struck the Paladin down. The other three impatiently rushed over even more zealously than when they had protected Orange Jasmine. At this moment, Orange Jasmine suddenly stopped. As soon as he saw that the situation had changed, he immediately ran back.

The stocking clearly wasn't on Orange Jasmine, but rather this team's Paladin.

Who was Ye Xiu? He was a God of Glory with top-notch awareness, tactical skills, and experience. After a quick exchange, he quickly saw through the other side's strategy. They were using Orange Jasmine was bait. Their true target of protection was this Paladin.

Reality confirmed Ye Xiu's deduction. After telling Steamed Bun to ignore the other four and focus on beating up this Paladin, this healing class soon fell. As expected, the stocking dropped. He quickly picked it up. Lord Grim was once again announced by the system.

Lord Grim's strength was terrifying, but in this map, dying didn't incur any penalties. The remaining four did not have any stockings and did not need to be protected. They had nothing to lose, so they decided to surround Ye Xiu and try to fight him to the death.

"To the next one!" Once Ye Xiu picked up that stocking, he didn't plan on tangling with them and ran. Lord Grim flew backwards with Aerial Fire. Steamed Bun Invasion accompanied him and the two quickly vanished into the snowstorm. The four players were furious, but they were powerless to do anything.

Third, fourth, fifth pair....

Lord Grim kept on appearing on TV. Every time he went on TV, the number of stockings wouldn't change, but the number of stockings every other team had would decrease.

Ye Xiu and Steamed Bun didn't know what type of luck they had. They had yet to find a single stocking, but they managed to find all of the players that had found a stocking and scooped up the whole lot.

These two had undoubtedly offended those five. Normally, Lord Grim's fame was beyond them. Normal players didn't dare to challenge him, but just like Orange Jasmine's party, they didn't have any stockings and wouldn't receive any penalties for dying, so why should they be scared of Lord Grim? Who cared if they lived or died. Might as well try. If they actually killed him, then that was five stockings collected in one go!

As a result, to these fearless players, Lord Grim was not seen as the suspected God Ye Qiu, but rather a moving stocking. Everyone wanted to try and take it.

Ye Xiu didn't fear these normal players, but there was no need to waste time fighting them, so he tried to evade them. During this time, stockings spawned and stockings were picked up. The players who picked up the stocking had their misgivings. They didn't dare to provoke an expert like Lord Grim.

But even if they weren't going to provoke Lord Grim, Ye Xiu wasn't going to let them go.

When a total of 15 stockings had spawned, 12 stockings had been picked up. Of these 12, Ye Xiu and Steamed Bun had 9. They hadn't found any of these, but stolen them all from others.

At this moment, they flagged down a team. Tyrannical Ambition's team saw Lord Grim and tried to go around, but they were still caught.

"Sigh, I feel like... whether it's finding a player or a team, it's easier than finding a pair of stockings." Ye Xiu sighed and acted.

In the eyes of normal players, this team consisted of experts from a powerful guild, but in front of Ye Xiu and Steamed Bun, they were no different from the other mediocre teams made up of friends. In the end, of the five players, three died and two escaped. The stocking just happened to be on one of the three who had died. Lord Grim and Steamed Bun Invasion took their tenth stocking, half of all the possible stockings.

But in the eyes of others in Team Happy, such a dazzling achievement was being mocked.

"Ha, you two still aren't done yet!"

Wei Chen and his team were the first to finish a round of the event. In the end, they took 18 stockings for themselves, a complete sweep. Following afterwards, he delightedly went over to laugh at Ye Xiu.

Chapter 899: Strike Back When the Time Is Right

"Nice." Ye Xiu replied casually. He didn't have the time to bother with Wei Chen's provocation. Even if he was currently fighting against normal players, these normal players had no fear. They were exceptionally brave and fierce towards this stocking present bag. Ye Xiu needed to be careful too. He had thought of transferring over his stockings, but seeing that his partner Steamed Bun, Ye Xiu got rid of that thought. It was best if the stockings were kept in his possession.

In this situation, even Ye Xiu found it a challenge. It was no surprise the records on the individual rankings were so low. There were only 20 pairs. Even if these pairs were evenly distributed with one stocking to one player, there would still be thirty fearless barefoot players.

For the team rankings, the combined total stockings of the entire team was counted. The stockings could be rotated around between the five members, giving the team numerous strategic options. However, for an individual, the individual could only rely on himself to carry all the stockings. If the individual was surrounded and killed, all of his efforts from before would instantly go to waste.

From this, it could be seen that the three individuals participating in the event, Tang Rou, Wu Chen, and Mo Fan didn't have it easy either. Their skill surpassed that of normal players by a huge margin, so once they acquired a bunch of stockings in the initial stages, they were in the same predicament as Ye Xiu. They had become stocking present bags. Anywhere they went, players would attack them.

Wei Chen went around in a circle, observing everyone. He discovered that the others were also in a difficult situation. He completely ignored the troubles of an individual participant and laughed loudly.

"You'd better protect them well. If you die at the end, the situation will instantly turn around!" Wei Chen said. He reached a conclusion relying on his experience and intuition and instantly grasped the main point of this event. The system would update the scoreboards with the number of stockings possessed by each party. Because of how the event worked, more than half of the players would not have any stockings by the end. Going full force for stockings in the beginning definitely wasn't a wise choice to make. If you stood out among the crowd flying against the wind, still wanting to soar through the skies was too difficult.

Just as Wei Chen gave his advice, he heard Tang Rou cry out in surprise.

"What's wrong? What's wrong?" Wei Chen immediately rushed over to check. Afterwards, he held a face filled with pity and sympathy: "See, you weren't careful and died! You've got to stay low profile!"

Soft Mist, who had 6 stockings, died. Much of it had to do with Tang Rou's personality. She didn't like hiding, so if she ever saw someone, she would fight!

After several fights, Tang Rou couldn't guarantee that her character took no damage. Right when she was recovering after killing a few players, someone ambushed her. In a panic, Tang Rou made a few mistakes. The several players, who she had just killed, revived and allied together to kill her. Then, from her ghostview, Tang Rou saw those guys looting her dropped stockings. Helpless, she could only choose to revive.

"What a pity...." Wei Chen shook his head and sighed. Then, he went to take a look at Mo Fan's side. Wei Chen didn't have a good impression of this cold and detached guy, so he hadn't paid much attention to his side previously. When he took a look, this guy was actually having quite an easy time. He carried 7 stockings on him and was still searching the map for targets. Every time he bumped into an enemy, he was always able to escape.

"A true professional..." After watching for awhile, Wei Chen couldn't help but sigh. Mo Fan was worthy of someone who had once been a top tier scrap picker. He was just too professional with this task. It was as if this quest was made for him, like a fish in water.

Wei Chen stopped watching Mo Fan and went to take a look at Wu Chen's side. When he glanced over, he suddenly went into a daze. Then, he gave Wu Chen a big thumbs up and sighed with unfeigned emotion: "Bro, how decisive of you."

All 20 stockings had spawned on Wu Chen's map. When Wei Chen took a look, the players had found a total of 15 stockings so far. Of those, Wu Chen's Dawn Rifle possessed 6 stockings. He was currently being chased crazily as a target by those guys without any stockings. When Wei Chen went around in a circle and returned, on the live-updated scoreboard, the number of stockings picked up by players had actually decreased to 11. When he took a look at Wu Chen's Dawn Rifle, his 6 stockings had actually become only 2.

Wei Chen stared blankly. He suddenly understood that perhaps when he had become everyone's target, he threw down 4 stockings of his own accord, so among those with stockings, he no longer stood out. With this mighty decision making, who would be so stupid as to pick a fight with him!

"Advance by retreating. You really do have some skill." Wei Chen praised. Wu Chen obviously wasn't satisfied with 2 stockings. He simply got rid of his awkward status as a present bag for now, allowing the opponents take the initiative and then strike when the time was right. Daring to relinquish already acquired stockings was rather courageous.

"Look at him! You should learn a bit!" Wei Chen admired Wu Chen's strategy and then turned to look at Ye Xiu's side. But when he took a look, he was astonished: "Wow, you respond fast! You've actually thrown a bunch away already. Child, you show promise!"

Ye Xiu was even more thorough. He had decided to throw away all 10 of his stockings. Right now, his team had zero stockings. The number of stockings possessed by players became two. The progress was so slow that Wei Chen wanted to cry.

Wei Chen continued to walk around and observe the others. When he glanced at Steamed Bun's screen, he exclaimed in surprise: "F*ck, you're so despicable!"

Steamed Bun Invasion was hiding in a pile of snow. His gaze was locked onto a single spot. That place had no one there, just a bunch of stockings. Ten stockings to be exact.

Ye Xiu had thrown all ten of his stockings, but he had sent Steamed Bun to guard them. Wei Chen's remark wasn't aimed at Steamed Bun, but Ye Xiu. He was certain that Ye Xiu had set this arrangement up.

"Steamed Bun, you can't keep on staring at these stockings. Pay attention to your surroundings." Wei Chen reminded Steamed Bun.

"Boss told me to stare at them like this." Steamed Bun didn't move a single inch.

Ye Xiu confirmed it: "You're doing beautifully, Steamed Bun."

"Of course." Steamed Bun was delighted.

At this moment, several players appeared in Steamed Bun's line of sight. They came through the snowstorm. The closer they came, the clearer Steamed Bun could see them.

"People are coming. Hurry up and move the stockings." Wei Chen hastily warned Steamed Bun. This guy was just sitting there as if he were asleep. He didn't budge and just kept staring at the stockings.

In the end, Steamed Bun didn't move.

"HEY!" Wei Chen pushed Steamed Bun.

"Stop bothering me!" Steamed Bun glared at Wei Chen in condemnation.

"They're almost there. Why are you still sitting there doing nothing!" Wei Chen shouted.

"You're so annoying! Go lead your team!" Ye Xiu spoke out.

During that exchange of words, that team approached and suddenly discovered a pile of stockings laying there. They were clearly overjoyed at the turn of events and dashed over.

Steamed Bun kept still. He quietly watched as those guys snatched up all ten stockings in one swoop and began discussing with each other: "What's going on?"

"Mutual destruction?"

"It must be!"

"Haha, lucky us."

"How amazing!"

When they picked them up one after the other, the system announced their team name over and over again. The team immediately left after picking up the stockings. Steamed Bun finally moved, maintaining a distance from them, slowly following them.

After Wei Chen stared blankly for awhile, he finally understood Ye Xiu's intent. Wu Chen had simply given up on a few of his stockings temporarily, but for Ye Xiu, Wei Chen thought that he had thrown them all out and then left Steamed Bun there to guard them. Now he knew that Steamed Bun wasn't guarding them. He intentionally let someone else carry the bomb for them and had Steamed Bun follow them closely. When the time came, a siskin would swoop by and take all of the stockings all at once. Compared to Wu Chen's strategy, Ye Xiu's strategy was much more proactive.

"Shameless, despicable, immoral!" Wei Chen rushed over to denounce Ye Xiu.

"Shut up!" Ye Xiu dismissed him.

Everything developed just as Ye Xiu had expected. The team that took ten stockings instantly became everyone's target and was chased by everyone else. The stockings circled around several times. No matter who took the stockings, Steamed Bun Invasion was always nearby, following them like a ghost.

As for Ye Xiu? He roamed around killing people. One stocking after the other came into his hands. Then, these stockings would always miraculously appear nearby whichever team held the most stockings. Thus, that team would have more and more stockings. Of the 20 stockings, 19 had been picked up. Among those 19, one team had 16 stockings, causing all the other teams to howl and search crazily for the location of that one team.

That team was scared too! They somehow managed to find 16 stockings. They felt like they were dreaming. Once another stocking was picked up, the countdown would begin for the quest to end. Darkness came before dawn. It was always hard to endure.

It wasn't easy for them to last this long. Now that the final stretch had come, they had to make a gamble.

The team gathered together and after a serious discussion, they handed all 16 stockings to a single player and then scattered.

When a character completed a trade, there would be a movement from the character indicating it. Ye Xiu had told Steamed Bun that he must identify who completed the trade. Steamed Bun didn't betray Ye Xiu's hopes. Hiding nearby, he clearly saw who among the five he needed to follow. He didn't need instructions for that. Steamed Bun locked onto the one carrying all 16 stockings and reported back to Ye Xiu.

"Ah, so that's what they ended up doing! That makes things easier for us. Go ahead and attack!" Ye Xiu said.

Steamed Bun, who had been in hiding for so long, finally erupted. He suddenly rushed out from the snow. Along with the falling snowflakes, he charged towards that stocking present bag determined and decisive. That player didn't think that the lucky them would end up with such bad luck in the final stretch. As soon as they scattered, he was found by someone.

Steamed Bun didn't know if that player had asked for help. He only knew that his target was very easy to deal with. He easily killed him off.

A tidal wave of announcements poured out from the system. Steamed Bun Invasion's name appeared again and again. That old target disappeared and what replaced that target was a team with 19 stockings now. Ye Xiu and Steamed Bun were originally in the lead, but then they had "accidentally" slipped up. Afterwards, they were extremely "unlucky" for a long time, not encountering the fat present bag, leading to Lord Grim's team only holding 3 stockings, but in the very last stretch, they instantly snatched away the fat present bag.

"No one pick up that last stocking!" Someone shouted in the map's public chat.

The first to reply to him was Lord Grim, who replied: "Haha."

Then, Ye Xiu lit his cigarette and clicked his mouse, picking up the final stocking right next to Lord Grim.

System announcement: Player Lord Grim has picked up the 20th stocking. If no change occurs within the next 120 seconds, the quest will end.

Chapter 900: Grand Slam

"How many stockings did you guys get again?" With a cigarette in his mouth, Ye Xiu turned his head and asked Wei Chen amicably.

Wei Chen's expression was rather twisted. 18 stockings had been their record. When he saw Ye Xiu and Steamed Bun in a predicament earlier, he repeatedly blabbed about his achievement to Ye Xiu. Eighteen stockings was shocking enough to most. The current team in the lead on the rankings only had 31 stockings total, which had been acquired over the course of three events.

But now, Ye Xiu and Steamed Bun had taken all 20 stockings for themselves. Hearing Ye Xiu's question, Wei Chen was certain that, if he was in that map, he would definitely sell out Lord Grim's position.

"Don't be so happy. It's not over yet." Wei Chen said.

"You don't think I'll be able to last for 120 seconds?" Ye Xiu smirked.

Wei Chen was unable to respond.

With Ye Xiu's skill level, surviving for 2 minutes wouldn't be a problem. Even though the other players were searching frantically for Lord Grim and Steamed Bun Invasion, everyone was spread out. It wasn't

two people fighting against forty all at once. In this situation, so what if they managed to encounter Lord Grim or Steamed Bun Invasion?

"Steamed Bun, position!" Ye Xiu was much more worried about Steamed Bun. For the previous task, Steamed Bun had beautifully completed it, but there was still 120 seconds to go. Hopefully, nothing would happen to him.

After getting Steamed Bun's current position, Ye Xiu took a look at the distance between them. It would take some time before he could reach him. Lord Grim immediately flung open his Myriad Manifestations Umbrella. He utilized Gatling Gun and shot his gun crazily.

There were no players inside Lord Grim's field of view, but the loud gunshots from his Gatling Gun couldn't be masked by the snowstorm. At this moment, apart from Lord Grim or Steamed Bun Invasion, who else would be fighting?

As a result, the noise quickly attracted the attention of all surrounding players. Ye Xiu hoped that normal players wouldn't be good enough to deduce his position, so after Gatling Gun went on cooldown, he flipped through his skill list and chose skills that produced extremely loud noises. Finally, a player appeared in his field of view. Lord Grim took the initiative to welcome him.

"Over here!" The instant that player saw Lord Grim, besides being excited, he immediately called over his teammates.

But he soon realized that against Lord Grim, would their team of five be an opponent?

Five against one. Under normal circumstances, it was an infallible advantage, but Lord Grim as the opponent definitely couldn't be considered a normal situation.

The team of five discussed for a moment. In the end, the excitement didn't go over their heads. They decisively reported Lord Grim's location in the public chat.

The 120 second timer displayed by the system continued to count down. Unable to find the target, the players were going crazy. When they saw someone suddenly giving out Lord Grim's location, without thinking too much about it, they hurried over to that location.

"Steamed Bun, make sure you hide well!" Ye Xiu yelled. Even though he had attracted everyone's attention, he couldn't guarantee that no one would encounter Steamed Bun Invasion as they made their way over.

Steamed Bun was no longer only staring in a single direction. He was constantly looking around for any signs of movements. After tailing someone for so long, he was quite used to this map and knew how to use it to his advantage. He had grasped the distance needed to see someone's figure and the distance needed to see someone's name clearly.

In this kind of situation, when everyone was single mindedly focused on reaching Lord Grim, it was very easy for him to hide. Everyone was in a hurry. When they saw a figure far far away, they might not consider taking a closer look to see who it was.

Staying safe for Steamed Bun was practically ensured. As for Ye Xiu's side? All of the players were rushing enthusiastically in his direction. They weren't coordinating with each other, so the encirclement

wouldn't be very precise. He easily found an opening and led the players away from Steamed Bun Invasion's location.

More and more players appeared behind Lord Grim. The countdown continued to tick. If they only chased, the problem wouldn't be solved. They needed to intercept him to restrict his movements.

The players predicted Lord Grim's movements and began cutting across diagonally and circling around to the front.

But could three or five players blocking be much of an obstacle for Ye Xiu? Ye Xiu didn't even bother fighting them and directly blew past them.

0!

When the countdown hit zero, the characters stopped receiving commands from the players and stood still. The system announced the final results. At the same time, a system announcement appeared in the Heavenly Domain: Congratulations to Lord Grim and Steamed Bun Invasion for achieving a grand slam in the Christmas event.

"We're on the TV!" Steamed Bun was excited.

Ye Xiu didn't know that this hidden mechanism existed. After all, ever since the event began, no team had ever managed to acquire all twenty stockings in a round.

A grand slam wasn't easy. Seeing a customized announcement by the system, Ye Xiu felt like there should be a reward for it. When Ye Xiu clicked on the Christmas envoy next to the map exit, sure enough, a grand slam came with rewards. Unlike how stockings could only be accepted at the end of the event, these rewards could be received now.

Ye Xiu clicked confirm. Following after, a system announcement appeared again: Player Lord Grim has achieved a grand slam in the Christmas event and has been rewarded: Apocalypse Star.

Everyone impatiently checked the reward. A pleasing Orange necklace appeared. Apart from the basic Magic Resistance, this necklace did not increase any of the four main stats. However, it increased stunning Physical Attack and Magic Attack by a stunning 10%.

As a game that paid particular attention to combat, players valued attack extremely highly. An item that increased attack was always welcome. +10% Physical and Magic Attack was absolutely huge. Thus, apart from these two bonuses, there were no other attributes. From this, it could be seen just how incredible these two bonuses were.

Who knew how many people were drooling, seeing this necklace. Ye Xiu also nodded his head in approval: "Mm, this is quite good." After saying that, he equipped it. The increased stats could be seen at a glance.

Steamed Bun also accepted his reward. Just after Lord Grim appeared on TV, Steamed Bun Invasion's name followed. Who knew if his reward was a coincidence, but it seemed to be related to Lord Grim's reward.

Lord Grim's reward was Apocalypse Star. Steamed Bun Invasion's reward was called "Sundering Apocalypse".

Everyone naturally went to take a look at it. It once again brought a storm of envy from a portion of players. Sunder Apocalypse was a Claw, the most popular weapon among Brawlers.

Sundering Apocalypse.

Level 75 Claw.

Weight: 2.2, Durability: 22, Attack Speed: 5

Physical Attack: 771

Magic Attack: 767

Strength +40

Intelligence +31

Weapon Attack +10%

Attack Effects +5%

Attack Speed +3

Street Riot Skill Level +2

Attacks have a 5% chance of inflicting Bleed on the target lasting ten seconds

The weapon stats were also exceptionally powerful. It didn't specify Physical or Magic Attack, which meant it increased both. However, there was a difference between "Weapon Attack +10%" and Apocalypse Star's "Physical Attack +10%".

Weapon Attack 10% meant that it only increased the equipment's attack. In other words, it would only increase Sundering Apocalypse's 771 Physical Attack and 767 Magic Attack by 10%.

On the other hand, Apocalypse Star's "Physical Attack +10%" meant the character's overall physical attack stat would be increased. A character's stat was based on the character's base stats as well as all other equipment equipped. Thus, from this perspective, Apocalypse Star's Physical and Magic Attack +10% was much more valuable than Weapon Attack +10%.

That wasn't Sundering Apocalypse's only stat bonus though.

Attack Effects +5% was another very powerful bonus. This description indicated that all effects from attacks would be increased. Brawlers had many skills that inflicted statuses such as Dizzy, Bleed, Poison, etc. The all-around buff by Attack Effects +5% didn't need to be mentioned.

In addition, Attack Speed +3 was a top-tier bonus stat for classes that didn't cast spells.

Street Riot was the new Level 75 Brawler skill. The current evaluation of it was that it was a lazy attempt at a skill because all it did was increase the power of low and mid level Brawler skills, but in actual combat, its might was worthy of a Level 75 skill.

And then the 10 second bleed. That might not be considered too powerful, but it couldn't be ignored. It was a very annoying effect and was a boon to the player's DPS.

When these two pieces of equipment appeared, countless players coveted them. Some even asked if they were willing to sell them in the global chat. There were many players who didn't lack money.

Ye Xiu and Steamed Bun obviously ignored these requests. After Ye Xiu had Lord Grim equip Apocalypse Star, he stood up and walked around in a circle just like when Wei Chen had finished his first round of the event.

Tang Rou, Wu Chen, and Mo Fan's first round had ended as well.

Among the three, Mo Fan did the best. He obtained 11 stockings alone. Next was Wu Chen, who picked up 9. However, part of that was because Wu Chen had switched strategies a bit too late. If he had followed this clear strategy from the beginning, he might have done better. As for Tang Rou, because of a big death in the middle, she only ended up getting 6 stockings before her map ended.

In this first round for Happy, Ye Xiu and Steamed Bun did the best. Wei Chen's team nearly got a grand slam. As for the other three, for an individual, Mo Fan and Wu Chen did quite well.

But after this first wave, everyone at least understood something: standing out was no good.