

Tech System 211

Chapter 211 Mapping Complete

"Wow"

A unified gasp of surprise escaped from his parents' mouths after they got off the boat which had brought them to the island and saw the massive and brightly lit port. There were thousands of people moving to the trains since they were the new batch of trainees who had come from those freshly recruited, while others boarded the boats and departed the port as they were heading to their stationed locations to take over the positions of the people who were had been there till now and needed to come for their training as well.

As for Henry, the young boy was still asleep, enjoying the privilege of sleeping in the car and would be waking up on the bed since he was being carried by Aron who at the moment seemed as if he was carrying nothing but cotton candy.

But that gasp was nothing but a mere start of a surprise marathon for his parents as they were surprised once again as they boarded the trains. As they started moving, they saw the brightly lit, beautiful-looking road, saw the grand building rising from the horizon, thinking if it was a wall, they realized it was indeed a building when they got closer and saw the size of the building

As the train came to a stop, they were amazed to see the Reserves, of people going in and out of the building, later they got onto the elevator and were shocked by its size.

As they entered the house they would be staying at they weren't much shocked after seeing its luxury, his parents had finally become used to the surprises they had come across one after the other in such a short period of time and had almost numbed to any surprise now.

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The following day in Esparia.

The first batch of mercenaries had already started arriving at Esparia, the only difference they have from any regular soldiers is that they are mainly intelligence and tactics specialists with some of them even being training specialists.

They were welcomed by high-ranking soldiers of Esparia and were immediately escorted to the central command of the country's military for allowing them to immediately begin their tasks since they had less than one month to do the job assigned to them. Their objective was to act swiftly and not give Eden enough time to prepare a counter against them since Eden seems to expect Esparia to attack them.

When they arrived at the military headquarters, they wasted no time and immediately got to work, starting by analyzing the intel they had gathered from Esparia and coordinating with the spies in Eden to gather the crucial intelligence for devising a more sound plan.

At the same time, those specialists acting as trainers started doing targeting training with the special forces batch of soldiers, officially marking the start of the plans and preparations for their upcoming war against Eden.

This was just the first batch of mercenaries and more of them were expected to arrive within the week, totalling to more than a thousand of them and all of them were going to be using their expertise in their specific fields to bring up a grand plan for victory during Esparia's second round against Eden.

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For the past four days, a plane resembling a dot was spotted in the sky by numerous people. Being seen by many people in many cities and villages in the country, it had attracted their attention and became quite a topic of conversation between people, but as always it didn't take long before they forgot about it as well.

[Sir, the mapping has been completed and we now have an extremely detailed map of Eden] Nova reported to Aron, who had just woken up early in the morning and finished freshening up.

"Good, let's take a look at it," Aron said, putting on his glasses and taking a seat on the sofa as Nova immediately logged him into the universal simulation.

In the VR simulation, Aron found himself in an open field with Nova standing at his left, looking as beautiful as always.

"Show me the results of the mapping," Aron said after he enjoyed the view of the surroundings for a few moments.

Nova said nothing and created a miniature version of the entire map of Eden, with various of its regions being highlighted in different colors with the information of what each color indicated, which displayed different minerals and other resources the mapping plane had managed to detect.

The map had incredible details, going as deep as thirty kilometers underground, meaning that every small bit of information from that depth to the ground and water was scanned and mapped with the accuracy of nanometers, making Eden as the most accurately mapped country in the world. And with the military now having access to the most detailed map of a country to date, this would allow it to be uploaded in a simulation and conduct various training based on the cities and villages and everything with unprecedented accuracy, perfectly matching the real world one-to-one.

"Wow, I didn't know they were this blessed," Aron remarked, surprised when he saw the vast reserves of the highlighted regions, this indicated that there was something valuable in every highlighted parts of the map.

[Yeah and although I expected them to have many minerals, thanks to how the earth was in the universal simulation this exceeds my expectations by quite a large margin] Nova answered expressing that she too was surprised by these results.

Mineral Wealth (Deep Ground Reserves) :

Iron Ore Reserves: Reserves 500 billion metric tons

Copper Deposits: Reserves 350 million metric tons

Gold Reserves: Reserves 25,000 metric tons

Uranium Resources: Reserves 2 million metric tons

Rare Earth Elements: Extensive deep deposits

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Aron silently read through the list of resources found and the reserves they had, the list even included the reserves, arable land, river, lakes, underground water reserves, timber resources and one of the hottest resources: oil and gas reserves, which were within their Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ), with the reserves being about 30 billion barrels of oil equivalent, which immediately rose them to the 12th country with the most reserves of oil in the world right behind America and on top of Qatar.

[Do you plan to buy the spots that have minerals and use them for yourself?] She asked Aron when she was sure that he was done with reading the information.

"I'm stuck with two options, one is to buy these locations and own the mines. The second is to inform the government about the reserves and make an agreement with them for revenue splitting, this would give me the right to mine the resources and since I can mine them at a very cheap price, I can create a great amount of profit from them without having to spend any money from start," Aron answered after a short thought.

"Which one do you think is the better option?" Aron asked followed by a brief moment of pause, wanting to know what would be her opinion.

Chapter 212 Nova's Suggestion.

"Which option do you think is a better one?" Aron inquired, his voice trailing off after he asked, wanting to know what would be Nova's opinion.

[Regarding some of the resources, I suggest option one and for the resources, I recommend going with option two] Nova responded before pausing for a brief moment after which she continued by elaborating the reason behind such a recommendation from her.

[Starting with the resources that I believe option two is better suited for, the oil and gas reserves. Firstly, these resources are usually developed through the collaboration between the governments of the countries that have these resources and the private companies that will be responsible for extracting them. The arrangements of such a deal will involve revenue sharing between the two parties through the drilling rights of these resources. It is done this way to allow for the country to reap continuous benefits without being forced to invest heavily, making that resource a country's income stream]

[The next reason I suggest you do it this way other than precedent is so that the citizens can sense the direct benefits from the amount of investments the government would be doing by using the profits generated through this venture. These benefits could include universal health care, tax cuts and much more of such public initiatives. And given that you can extract the resources with what could almost be considered as little to no cost at all, the profits resulting from this venture will be substantial, far surpassing any of those oil and gas exporting country's profits margins by several magnitudes higher, allowing those countries to have massive funds for investing them in the public.

[The third and final main reason is that, although I can manipulate and steer the public opinion in any direction you want, it would be very difficult to justify to the public for handing over a massive amount of profits to a private company that has been trying to infiltrate every part of their country. This could lead to dissatisfaction between the citizens and us, potentially harming your reputation. And while you could make them sway from it after a long time of persuasion, it still wouldn't erase the negative opinions they might form about you] Nova paused after that long, detailed explanation, allowing Aron to digest the information before she resumed shortly.

[Regarding the other minerals and resources, you can simply choose the second option, just buy the locations that have the significant deposits while leaving the rest of them in the hands of the government. This aligns with the already established precedents where companies buy mines and profit from them. However, you will have to make it known that you are buying them after you release to the public about the potential existence of minerals in those locations. This transparent approach will facilitate a rightful price from the government and save you from any public outrage that might happen if you publicize the existence of minerals in those locations after you have bought the lands for cheap]

With those words, Nova finished her explanation, letting Aron have some time of silence to contemplate on his decision.

After an extended period of silence, Aron responded, "Start formulating a plan regarding it for the acquisition of the locations based on your suggestions. We should hold off on the announcement of us being the ones discovering oils until our second round with Esparia. It will serve as a good revelation during a victory speech and should make Alexander's government's approval rate to break the ceiling since the announcement will coincide with the announcement for the preparations of the first presidential election of the country in three months, after that announcement, his win will be secured to the point where the election results would resemble those from North Korea," Aron had managed to maintain a serious look on his face throughout the time he said all those words but ended cracking a smile as he delivered the last few words.

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While Aron was having a pivotal conversation with Nova that could remold the shape of the entire country, at the roads on Avalon island, a name that Nova had opted to give to the island based on the public thoughts about the island being shrouded in mystery due to the constant brown clouds covering most of it.

Right now, one could even witness some unconventional sights that were different from any usual sights that one could expect to see in their whole lifetime on a normal road. Fifteen massive cargo airplanes could be seen parked on the road, having already been loaded with their cargo and doing their final taxiing before they started the run for a takeoff.

Named as Titan, nicknamed as Paradisemovers, these planes were definitely not like any normal plane, each of the planes had a size that was comparable to the Ukraine's An-225, while also being capable of carrying twice the weight of the AN-225, yet having the ability to fly faster and longer than it. The aircraft itself exhibited a high degree of intricacy and reflected rigorous craftsmanship and even though there were fifteen of them, each carried an undeniable power and utmost technology of its time. With the fiercely sculpted bodies of these aircrafts, it's sweeping wings and

angular tail radiated an aura of power and technical sophistication, enough to instill fear in even those who were used to seeing such warplanes.(image here)

These extensive logistic movements were planned to continuously take place in the upcoming days, for a team of humans to come up with an efficient plan, a week or two would have been easily used up. So, Athena, recognizing the urgency and complexity of the situation, simply asked her mother to build Hermes, an AI capable of overseeing the military's entire logistics, for her and made it responsible for the entire logistical planning and movements. Hermes, in turn, generated smaller versions of herself to assist in the task, ensuring as much efficiency as possible.

With the cargo planes now ready and prepared for takeoff, the pilots asked for permission to take off, to which they received swift approval and without wasting any time, they immediately commenced their departure. With a massive surge of power in the thrusters, the first plane gained speed and went down the runway. After traveling for a remarkably short distance for such a massive cargo plane, the plane's front wheels started rising, indicating that it had gained enough speed to start the final process of takeoff. This was soon followed by the rear wheels leaving the ground as well, followed by the plane starting to gain a stable altitude as smoothly as possible, without the risk of rattling the cargo within since it was something quite sensitive.

In a span of less than a quarter of an hour, the remaining fourteen cargo planes took off similarly, each heading off and veering in different directions from the other, disappearing into the early morning darkness.

Occasionally missing content, please report errors in time.

Chapter 213 The Developing Situation (1)

In succession with the disappearance of the planes that had been on the road not long ago, another set of similar-looking cargo planes started taxiing out of the printer building and heading to the patch of the road that was suitable for planes to take off during peacetimes due its elevation being flat, as for wartime, the planes can take off from anywhere, thought that would just require a little longer maintenance or they could simply be disassembled and printed once again.

This subsequent batch of planes also carried a printer each and after they took off, they also went to new directions that were different from their predecessors.

This sequence repeated itself several times, with each round fifteen new planes would come out of the atomic printer then take off and head to a new direction that was different from their previous batches. This continued until ten batches of planes had already taken off, with the planes going to a total of one hundred and fifty different destinations, each of them had an atomic printer that took the complete space of the massive cargo bay, these were destined to arrive ahead of the soldiers who would be stationed at those locations.

Subsequently, they were soon followed by the appearance of a fresh batch of the same looking cargo planes, this time they were serving as specialized tankers, carrying rare materials in their atomic forms and sending them to where the printer carrying planes went, for them to be used in tandem with the materials that could be found from the constructed bases surroundings to print things for the soldiers and allow them to accomplish their tasks.

"I really can never get used to this." A man wearing a stylish navy blue colored uniform commented as he marched in a parallel line with a group of a hundred fifty soldiers on each line, all of them carrying a military bag on their backs as they made their way to the train station to be taken to the port to be sent to their stationed bases. He observed as the massive cargo planes were taking off one after another in short intervals.

"This is going to be our new normal, so you better start by getting used to it," replied a comrade who was walking beside him in the line jokingly and at the same time seriously since from the moment they were logged inside the universal simulation they knew that their world view was never going to be the same again based on what they had experienced there.

"I know, I know," he acknowledged the truth of the statement while adjusting his glasses which at the edge of his lens displayed pertinent details such as his name, age, military position and much more, indicating that these were VR glasses. However, the man who had just responded to him didn't have any such glasses, rather he had an earpiece on him fulfilling the same task.

These devices were given to every soldier who had successfully completed graduation from the Athena's training as a participation reward, these were specifically designed devices that allowed the soldiers to log in into the universal simulation when they were not on duty. However, during their time of duty, they were required to put these devices in their secure lockers and don their official military gear since the military ones had permission to access things that even their gifted devices didn't.

These soldiers weren't the only ones on the move, as a contingent of fifteen thousand personnel would be leaving that day, heading to the same path those cargo planes that had taken off to before them. Their destination: the various military bases where they would have to fulfill their duties.

As for those from the intelligence department, they were already being briefed for their missions. About a hundred of them were about to be discreetly smuggled into Esparia, while two of the best among the graduates of the intelligence branch were preparing themselves to get ready to head for a mission to Russia.

This marked the official start of soldiers trained and approved by Athena to be entering the service of the military en masse. It also marked the dawn of a corruption less and a theftless military. During their knowledge assimilation, a subtle suggestion had also been added into their subconsciousness over the course of the entire week, it was done as gently as it could be, which rendered it impossible for them to be able to discover these changes. For them, these changes had happened to them gradually and had taken over a period of three months, making them realize and consider these changes as the result of the brutal training they had received.

As a result of this process being completed successfully, it had now become impossible for them to even consider exploiting the military resources needlessly or even think of using their position to coerce the lower-ranking workers into doing something against their acknowledgement or exploit them had become completely inconceivable.

Issues like sexual harassment of female soldiers, rape, trading sexual favor in return for underserved promotion and many other reprehensible behaviors which were difficult for the current world's militaries to completely eradicate, had completely been removed from the minds of Eden's soldiers.

While all the soldiers who had come out from Athena's training other than those from the intelligence still had their previous personalities and everything coming with it, but all of their corrupt and negative tendencies had been completely removed, leaving them as forthright and sincere human beings who had been given the strength of a machine and an unwavering conviction to follow all the orders given to them by their commanders to the T, regardless of the cost, as long as it was an order from their leaders.

They were perfect soldiers, as perfect as one could be without resorting to destructive mind manipulation which Aron had no intention of subjecting them to.

As for those from the intelligence department, they were conditioned differently. For the women, most of the focus went on increasing their beauty to monstrous standard, with their proportions reaching a divine level. As for men, they too experienced huge changes on their body shapes and face, being developed to a very handsome face and although all soldiers who went through genetic strengthening had become somewhat handsome and somewhat beauty, those from the intelligence department still held one against the rest, with their minds being strengthened further and being assimilated with everything both a spy and intelligence analyst would need, making them ahead of the world standard by several miles even if you don't include the technological advantage they come with.

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The following days of the week were followed with the unfolding of a similar pattern, marked by substantial soldier movements and the constant activity of the cargo planes. The massive cargo planes returned and repeatedly carried the same cargo-loading routine they did in the past and embarked once again on a journey to a new destination across the Avalon Island and different parts of the country.

The already-graduated soldiers were already sent to replace their counterparts in the many bases that were adjacent to civilian settlements. Additionally, the new bases that were already built during the past months had been refurbished by the atomic printers that were sent there during the previous days.

As for the negotiations between Esparia and Eden, they were not going well at all and faced significant challenges with both sides not agreeing on a few key concessions. At the same time, both countries started bringing their massive military movements near the shared borders, each accusing the other side for forcing them to escalate even further amidst the negotiations, forcing them to respond to their movements.

At the same time, Esparia had started trying to rally the international watchers to urge the foreign countries to exert pressure on Eden who was using the captured soldiers as hostages and as means to accomplish their needs. At the same time, they had also started the talks for buying some country's fourth generation aircrafts, the talks also seemed to be going in a very positive direction since most of those countries were also planning on replacing their long active fighter jets with new ones of the same gen as they waited for the F-35 program to start rapid production after the testing phase was carried out.

And with the support of the Morgans behind them, many of Esparia's negotiations were going very positively. As for the matter of the shortage of pilots to fly these aircrafts, the Morgans promised to handle that problem by simply hiring the pilots who had left the military and those negotiations

were carried out well, they were on the verge of buying about 30 to 50 new fighters within a month and since the countries having already planned to have their aircraft retired, they would also be immediately delivered after these fighters received their final maintenance.

They chose to announce their acquisition efforts openly, aiming to boost the morale of their citizens. This served as one of their publicly stated ultimatums which they intended to use for pressuring Eden into a compromise, persuading them for the release of the war prisoners. This was the opinion they sought to create within the minds of their citizens.

Chapter 214 The Developing Situation (2)

Two weeks passed by since the cargo planes had started sending the necessary materials to the borders that were shared between the two countries, Esparia and Eden.

In the two subsequent weeks, nothing much had changed other than the arrival of a new batch of recruited soldiers at the island. Simultaneously, the graduating ones had left the island for their posts, starting their military service once again.

During this time, the atomic printers sent to all the military bases had been working non-stop, churning out equipment in continuous batches, ensuring that all the graduating soldiers were equipped with the gear they had trained with during their training in the VR environment.

Meanwhile, Eden had taken a humanitarian step during the negotiations and released a list of the names of the soldiers who had unfortunately died in the conflict so that their family members could start mourning earlier and not continue clinging to a false hope about their loved ones' survival, only for it to be crushed later on.

As for the negotiations between the two nations, nothing had changed much other than the continuously escalating tensions between Eden and Esparia. The prisoner negotiations weren't going very well since Eden wasn't budging on demanding the remaining of the shared island border as the final condition for the release of the captured soldiers. And together with Esparia's successful acquisition of twenty-nine aircrafts escalated the situation even further. Esparia was now using those aircrafts to breach Eden's airspace repeatedly and forcing Eden's air force to mobilize their aircraft in response which would be followed by those Esparian fighters returning back to their borders the moment they noticed Eden's aircraft on their radar.

They were doing it constantly at times even reaching up to fifteen times a day for the known four aircraft of Eden or so they thought. Esparia's tactic involved sending two fighters every time before allowing their planes to rest for maintenance while sending the next batch, this tactic served as a refreshment training for the hired pilots and at the same time, making it so that the pilots of Eden Air force were not given enough time to rest due to the constant sorties they had to make due to Esparia's unlawful breach in their airspace, at the same time increasing their anxiety in worry that any of these sorties might as well be a real mission from Esparia where they would come in hot and just start bombing, forcing a dog fight out of them, or so was the Morgan's intention.

Many international observers excused this as actions simply as a protest of Esparia for the release of their soldier and nothing more. However, this action of theirs acted as nothing other than a way of increasing the anger of the majority of Edenians, who demanded the government to further increase the conditions for the release of the captured soldier or if push comes to shove, they should simply duke it once again since they had won the first fight, the citizens believed they could win the second confrontation too.

Throughout the negotiations, Esparia continued to maintain the negotiations as public as possible, showcasing their commitment to securing the return of their soldiers. This strategy was a means to sustain the high morale of the remaining of their hundreds of thousands of soldiers and the trust of the citizens in the government as a means for avoiding an uprising from the inside, in case a dissatisfaction arose if they didn't show that they cared about the captured soldiers that much and were preparing themselves for another round with Eden.

Thanks to them putting on this show, Esparia agreed to many of Eden's demands withholding only a few of them which they argued that they couldn't agree to.

One major sticking point being the concession of land. Esparia argued against it, citing that land concession was against the international agreements while also voicing their concerns that once the country agrees to the concessions it would just mark the start of a losing precedent. They feared that every argument or a fight between them in which Eden came out victorious would result in further land concessions and would start eroding their country's sovereignty over time.

This decision of theirs sparked a division within Esparia.

One side being the family members of the captured soldiers, arguing that their loved ones who had already fought, risked and sacrificed their freedom for the country and now called for the nation to reciprocate by sacrificing a part of its territory for their freedom as a repayment for their commitment towards their country.

While the other side consisted of the family of the soldiers whose death had been confirmed, along with many of the citizens of the country who felt dissatisfied for losing to Eden. They believed that they could triumph over Eden in not just military might, but also many aspects, including economically and wanted their country to not agree to any deals.

Instead, they urged the country to fight with Eden once again, this time with ample preparations and win the war to avenge their loss of both life and of their pride.

With the second narrative gaining the support of most of the people in the country, it reached a point where the government was compelled to make an announcement that they would do their very best to bring their soldiers back home and had already started compensating the families of the confirmed dead, this was thanks to funds provided by the Morgans and acted as a means to make Eden seem like a greedy monster. Simultaneously, the government also announced that in case the negotiations failed, they still retained the right to declare war to fight against Eden and ensure the rescue of their soldiers.

This strategy worked since the compensation provided to the families of dead soldiers had managed to temporarily suppress their eagerness for revenge, leading to a movement which wanted the war to slightly calm down while at the same time garnering the support of both factions to the government, demonstrating that the government's concerned for all of its citizens.

Thanks to their well-orchestrated act and the support of the Morgans, who had kept running the narrative that Eden was trying to exploit their lucky win and with the use of their massive political power, the Morgans had made a few countries to subtly condemn Eden internationally, just enough to make sure that Eden knew that the world was watching the situation but not enough where Eden

would end up giving up all the war prisoners since the Morgans wanted the war to happen no matter what.

This tactic wasn't used to intimidate Eden, but rather to increase the morale of the Esparians. As they saw that the world was having their backs, the citizens became even bolder finding themselves in the same situation as when you were having an argument with someone, then you would have someone trying to stop you, this resulting in filling you with confidence causing you to start using stronger language.

This resulted in the happening of many bad things within Esparia, such as mass arrests of citizens that were of Edenian descent, having their businesses vandalized, together with beating those known citizens of Eden who were living in Esparia. The only thing holding them back was the worry that if they kill any of them, they would lose the support of the world, which at the moment was very necessary for them. Thanks to that, other than being heavily injured, most of the Edenian citizens were rescued by the police and a few sane citizens before that threshold was crossed.

In response to their citizens now being prosecuted, Eden responded by adding the clause of having their citizens released and be compensated for the damage inflicted on their citizens who are residing in Esparia and were facing prosecution. They also demanded the reopening of the borders for the return of their citizens to their country after they had received their compensation packages for the damages they were inflicted upon during the prosecution, increasing the tensions between the two countries even further.

For those who were observing how things happened from the outside, they could see that either the negotiations would be agreed upon or they would really be duking it out against each other for the second time. And from the looks of it, it seemed that the citizens had already moved into wartime readiness as most of them wanted the war to happen, and both country's citizens were sure that their country could win.

Edenian citizens were sure of it because they had already won the first encounter, as for the Esparian citizens, they believed their military was more powerful and their previous loss was only thanks to Eden attacking them by surprise, resulting in quite aggressive arguments between the two countries citizens on the internet.

As for the individuals who had the unfortunate circumstance of encountering each others on foreign lands, their interactions escalated beyond mere disagreements. In fact, a subset of them proceeded to engage in physical altercations, much to the amusement and disdain of onlookers who didn't forget to record and post it, further solidifying the hate between each other.

Chapter 215 Escalating Tensions

"This is what has been causing the formation of those brown clouds!?" Obama inquired as he examined the images on the table that were collected by the Global Hawk they had deployed for the second reconnaissance mission.

"Yes, they were engaged in a large-scale and rapid construction, using the construction effort as a form of strength training for their soldiers," answered the Secretary of Defense, his tone revealing the disappointment it had caused him after he saw the images and realized that it didn't show any significant development, contrary to what he had anticipated.

"So, what exactly led to the formation of those clouds?" Biden asked, trying to seek an explanation as to how a normal construction site would result in the appearance of those clouds which also remained for a very long time.

"After the return of the drone to the base, we analyzed the particles that were still attached to it, we discovered no unusual composition apart from the dust and ground particles within them. This confirms that it was indeed the construction activities that had been the reason behind it and there was no evidence of any advanced technology involved, like what we had thought," clarified the Secretary of Defense.

If one looked at the images on the table, one would notice that those images didn't have even a slight resemblance to what was actually going on on the island, rather, the images only depicted a few large but different ongoing construction sites and a vast open field that contained thousands of tents arranged in rows, showing that it was what would be serving as the living quarters of the soldiers that were sent there to do the construction under the guise of training.

The same discrepancy applied to the other satellite images of the country that were captured daily where there were no images about the Paradisemovers that could be seen among them at all.

This discrepancy arose due to the Americans sending drones instead of a manned surveillance aircraft like the U-2 to allow for human observation while at the same time, taking the pictures of the island. However, the drone, controlled by a satellite connection, was susceptible to Nova's interception, which had access to all the radio signal stations within the country.

This allowed her to intercept the signals that were being sent to the drones control base and edit the images that were taken before transmitting them, with her massive computing power in action there was not even a slight delay between the interception, editing and transferring of the data the drone had captured.

This covert manipulation allowed Aron to keep what was happening on Avalon as a hidden secret, while the world, or precisely the American government, thought that nothing important was going on. Rather than trusting Eden's words, they would trust their own military hardware information more, causing them to gradually lose interest in the ongoing events on the island.

"Anyway, what is your assessment of the situation going on in the Pacific?" Obama asked, shifting the matter of what is happening on the island aside since the information had made him remove it from his consideration anymore.

"I believe that Esparia is likely going to emerge victorious during this second confrontation, although not with an overwhelming landslide victory, among the reason of why is the theoretical existence of those powerful bombs they had used in their first fight in store, as they could just send it to the capital of Esparia and take a few thousands of people with it if push comes to shove," answered the Secretary of Defense, handing the people in the room the documents that contained their analysis of what was going to happen in case the two countries were to engage in a conflict for the second time.

"They have truly gone all out," Biden commented as he read the document that outlined the procuring of weapons that had been done by Esparia in the last three weeks, which totalled the

amount to billions. And notably, each of these acquisitions required at least half of their payment to be done upfront, with the remaining sum to be settled soon after.

"But why hasn't there been a response from the opposing side?" Obama raised the question, seeking a reason as to why Eden remained quiet, not them particularly but their backer "Rothschild", who seemed to not be doing anything to counterbalance the massive arms race that was instigated by the Esparians, led by the "Morgans".

"There are only two possibilities for this: either they have already given up or they are already prepared for it beforehand. The reason behind that can be found after referring to page thirty-five," the Secretary of Defence responded and paused for a moment to allow the others to open the specified page and start reading the contents before he proceeded to explain.

When he was certain that everyone in the room had opened to the designated page, he continued, "As you can see, this section delves into the detail of our analysis concerning the response of each country when the other side further escalated the conflicts. And when you look carefully at their response in every Esparia's escalation, you will find that Eden has always responded just enough to be able to counteract the escalation and nothing more than that."

"This implies that they have some astute and competent decision-makers who are guiding Eden's response, alongside those, they have a moderately competent leadership in their military to make sure that those given orders are precisely executed, as envisioned by their think tanks while making those plans. This is rather surprising, given that even Esparia, despite having the support of the mercenary groups who had been sent to help them prepare for the second round, appears to have fallen short of having their plans completely and successfully executed in their real world execution, and a long time will be needed to train them for that as well."

"But based on the escalation trajectory, they don't have enough time to solve that, so the Morgans' side is forced to blanket the planning, which factors in the likelihood of their plans being brought to life by the incompetent army."

"Due to the scale of those plans being big, it would be necessary for their plans to take longer time to be implemented compared to Eden's efficiently executed strategies, which is weirdly always efficiently executed to our amazement, though not on par to our level yet." He explained.

"Let's observe and assess. The more they engage in fights outside America's borders, the less trouble America will face," Obama commented, placing the document down and pinching his temples, clearly fatigued by even thinking about them.

The THEM, as they had come to be known, would always cause trouble for America when they were in conflict. A notable example of it was the 2008 financial crisis, which stemmed from the culmination of their discord. The Rothschilds won but forced the entirety of America to bear the loss along with the Morgans. Due to their deeply rooted influence, the government could not even think about holding them accountable, leaving them seemingly untouched, giving them the feeling of an ant facing a boot.

Their conversation shifted as they started speculating on the potential outcome of the war and how they could leverage themselves by choosing which side to support to maximize the amount of benefits they will be able to reap based on the forthcoming outcome.

A week later, in Esparia.

As the week commenced, officially marking the fourth week since the onset of the negotiations and escalation between the two countries, a different kind of atmosphere could be sensed, compared to the other weeks.

Since the start of the week, Esparia had started a large-scale mobilization of its military forces.

Troops, equipment, and resources were being openly prepared and organized, hinting at the possibility of the upcoming combat operations.

Simultaneously, several countries that had diplomatic ties and embassies within both Eden and Esparia had started the evacuation of their personnel, temporarily closing their embassies.

This was followed by Esparia starting public awareness campaigns during the same time, informing the population regarding the prevailing situation, potential risks of a war and recommending many national security measures.

Throughout this period, Eden's response always remained a step behind. A fact that was acknowledged by the whole world was akin to the calm before the storm, however, no one wanted to be the first to say it, waiting for either of the two countries to burst the bubble and just set the events into motion.

Tensions had reached their zenith as the world collectively held its breath, observing what could be considered as the first official war declared between the two countries while also being one of the wars to be fought in the modern era and was a clash between countries with comparable military might, raising the expectations of it not completely being one-sided beatdown like the many other wars fought in the twenty-first century.

With each passing day, the tension in the atmosphere continued to increase, culminating in the arrival of Friday, when Esparia announced an upcoming press conference that would be taking place in a few hours.

When the appointed hour came, the press conference's live feed started being broadcasted worldwide. The background didn't show the customary conference room, but the serene presence of trees in the garden, indicating that the conference was taking place in the palace grounds. This was due to the overwhelming attendance of reporters that were attending the event, forcing them to hold the conference on the open grounds of the presidential palace.

This time, however, instead of the usual presidential spokesperson, the President of Esparia, Emanuel, had taken over the podium, showing that whatever he was going to address was going to be important.

"Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed citizens of Esparia," he said, starting his speech by extending his greetings to all the viewers watching the broadcast worldwide, though primarily it was being watched by the people of Esparia and Eden.

Continuing his address, he articulated, "Today, we gather on this somber occasion, marking the passage of a month filled with arduous negotiations aimed at securing the release of our unjustly imprisoned compatriots. These individuals have become tragic victims of an unwarranted and

merciless assault, driven solely by the insatiable greed of Eden." He paused slightly after saying that before he continued

"Throughout this challenging journey, we have steadfastly extended the hand of diplomacy, seeking a peaceful resolution to this distressing ordeal."

"However, despite our unwavering commitment to finding common ground, we have witnessed the unrelenting growth of their voracious demands." He paused as his hand crumpled the paper he was having difficult reading from, due to anger as he continued with difficulties, "Every concession we made, every compromise we reached, has only continued to fuel their insatiable hunger for power."

"As we engaged in these negotiations, we have observed their appetite for dominance intensify, akin to vultures feasting upon our desperation. Our efforts to reach a fair and just agreement have been met with ever-increasing rapacity, leaving us with no choice but to reassess our course of action."

"With a heavy heart, and after careful consideration, I hereby declare that the hour of negotiations has come to an end," he stated, pausing for a moment before continuing, "We have explored every avenue for a peaceful resolution, yet the scales tip relentlessly towards conflict."

"Today, I bear the weight of the trust and support you, the citizens of our great nation, have placed in me. It is with this solemn authority that I make this proclamation: We shall no longer engage in such fruitless parleys." He paused once again, allowing for tension in the compound to grow, followed by continuing his speech, however this time became as calm and as confident as possible as he said "Instead, we hereby declare war Eden." while his eyes were looking straight at the camera to project confidence.

The moment he said that, the entire compound seemed to have frozen for a moment, even the constantly flashing cameras stopped, causing a slight dimming in the compound, together with the utter silence spreading throughout the entire press conference, silencing the attendees for a few seconds before the flashes on cameras started to reappear, now so frequently that they formed a continuous burst of light, illuminating the president's face brightly.

He then continued, "This declaration is a testament to our unyielding dedication to justice, our commitment to safeguarding the lives and dignity of our people, and our resolve to confront those who think that they can bully us and threaten us."

"In the face of adversity, we shall unite. In the presence of challenge, we shall stand firm. And as we embark on this difficult path, may history remember our resilience, our courage, and our unwavering pursuit of a just and equitable future."

"May our determination shine as a beacon of hope, even as the drums of conflict echo in response to the encroaching destruction."

"Thank you, and may our nation find strength and unity in the days that are to come. God bless Esparia" With those words, he concluded the address and left the compound, making his way back to his presidential palace.

Helicopters could be seen arriving at the palace which was closely followed by trucks filled with soldiers and armored vehicles starting to enter the compound as well. All of the cameras

broadcasting the press conference continued to roll, capturing the scenes, but not for too long since the feed was shortly cut after around a thousand soldiers had arrived, with more of them en route.

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Moments after the press conference concluded.

The skies had started to be filled with the screaming sounds of jet engines, courtesy of five of Esparia's newly bought planes— fifty in total – a feat in itself, and had started donning the sky on patrol to make sure that nothing passed through their airspace. At the same time, the remainder of the fighter aircrafts that were stationed at different bases took off for the sky too, heading in the direction of Eden.

This marked the first action of the war, with forty-five planes preparing to face off against four of Eden's fighter jets which they were sure that the pilots of them were tired after having spent the entire previous three weeks in constant sorties against the Esparians due to their airspace violations.

The Esparian pilots forged their way to Eden's airspace with confidence, trusting in their pilot training and the experience they had received from their previous militaries before they were hired by the different mercenary companies owned by the Morgans.

Each pilot carried the dream of earning the chance of gaining the coveted ACE designation before their name if they got the chance of shooting down Eden's underserviced fighter jets which they were bound to encounter today.

Chapter 217 Quantum Firewall

"What the fuck have they done to their system?" exclaimed a person in anger and disappointment, his bloodshot eyes, an obvious hint for the watchers to tell that he had been typing on the keyboard continuously for more than three hours without having any decent break during that period.

However, he wasn't the only one, the room he was in was filled with more than one hundred people doing the same task which he had been doing.

"They shouldn't have gotten enough time to completely overhaul their entire system within just a month, right?" questioned a man nearby who had given up just a few moments after the first person had resigned in frustration.

"While it is theoretically possible, they shouldn't have been able to make their system operate seamlessly like the way it is running right now. Even if all of those things are working in their favor, their system shouldn't have been upgraded to such a significant degree as such an upgrade would need a very long time to accomplish. We've been trying to breach their defenses for more than five hours but nothing can even latch onto their firewalls. How the heck did they go from being completely vulnerable in cyberspace to having an impenetrable wall in just a matter of a month?" He finished his words with a mix of a few words of self-doubt, logical reasoning and amazement at the transformation of their former victims who had now become formidable opponents.

"They couldn't have intentionally allowed us access during the first attack, right?!!" he asked his neighboring colleague.

"As much as I would want to deny that assumption, I also find it hard to disagree with it. The level of firewall we were met for the second time doesn't seem to simply take a month to accomplish the change. All of those anomalies could be explained if they had just allowed us the access during the first time and then blocked us out of it during the second time. Alternatively, it might also be possible that during our first assault, they were still building their security infrastructure, meaning that over the last month, they completed making it and replaced it over with their previous, shitty firewall," replied his colleague, trying to make sense of what they were experiencing during the current predicament.

"But which company is capable of doing such a significant project without using it as a means to brag about their capabilities? And why choose to start it at Eden as their testing ground in all of the places?" he pondered, this time trying to give a reason as to why his colleague's second theory doesn't seem to make much sense.

"Oh, I think I might know who could be the one behind this new firewall," his colleague responded, the guy's tone carrying excitement as if he had finally found a missing piece of the puzzle.

"Well, go on then. Who is it?" he asked impatiently, annoyed with the fact that his colleague had mentioned who it was but didn't reveal the name.

"GAIA Technology," answered the colleague in excitement, not trying to hide that he was a fanboy of the company— the makers of BugZapper, GAIA OS and the renowned game as their products.

"If it is truly them, then we might as well give up on this commission," the first guy declared with a sigh after hearing the name mentioned by his colleague. The mere mention of that name carried a dreadnought presence in the realm of technology, with most of their influences in the fields of security, OS and the gaming world.

Every product they released held an unparalleled level of standard and with more than three of their released products already reigning as industry-leading products in their specific fields, people had started expecting that their upcoming products would be of the same standards.

As for the man, he felt admiration for the company because of a single product from them, the BugZapper, a product that almost single-handedly sent the hacking world to the shadow realm, pushing it to redefine its limits.

He had personally tried the product and had nothing but praise for the one who had created it. The program would always manage to identify any vulnerabilities that would have gone unnoticed by most humans. Still, due to its emergence, the hacking world wasn't completely obliterated, rather the BugZapper had just raised the level of sophistication required to be able to hack the systems. Whenever a new way of hacking came up and succeeded in passing the program, in just a couple of hours a patch for it would be released, making it a continuous game of cat and mouse between hackers and Bugzapper, always keeping the hacking community excited as the GAIA technology always generously rewarded those who managed to get past their systems after they had patched it up, giving the community incentives for doing so.

"I will go and inform the boss about this. I hope he agrees with your assessment and decides to cancel the commission. If not, we will be spending days typing without any solutions," he remarked as he stood up from the chair and made his way to the office of the hacking group's leader, which

was weird in itself since most hacking groups operated remotely, even when they were working as a team.

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In the Eden airspace.

The four fighters of the Angels squadron could be seen maintaining a formation as they took to the skies, starting from the moment the Esparian press conference had initiated.

In an instant, the headgear of Angle One-One, piloted by James, shifted from green to red in his peripheral vision a few minutes after they had taken flight. The pilots who had graduated from Athena's training program knew that, their headgears turning red was a stamp of approval to shoot down any unverified or unidentified aircraft within their airspace, without even giving them any warnings.

Taking a look at the multitude of enemy bogies that had been detected by Sky Eye 0, a country scale scanner & radar like machine that had collected the information and integrated it into their aircrafts computers and their headgears, making their powerful radar(Henry's eye) to have no need of being on while they were still within Eden's airspace since Sky Eye 0 had the ability to capture every bit of information about their enemies that entered its scanning radius and it had a scan area that covered the entire airspace of Eden.

James the squadron leader, transmitted "This is Angel One-One. As you know, there are forty-five of them. Each of you can have ten each, as for the remaining five, they will be chosen by our computer randomly. Let's wrap this up as soon as possible and show them a performance for the the history books"

"Copy that," echoed the responses of Angel One-Two, Angel One-Three, and Angel One-Four.

Followed by the headgears of each pilot marking ten out of the forty-five enemy bogies that were on the way to Eden, and the squadron wasted no time as their planes' ailerons synchronously came to life while the aircraft rolled to the right with one of their wingtips pointing to the sky and the other pointing to the ground moments after that they pulled their control stick toward themselves, making all the four fighter jets to pull an aggressive turn to the right, changing their direction and heading towards the incoming bandits.

After flying for a few seconds in coordination, each of the fighters started heading in different directions, despite they were maintaining their collective trajectory due to the enemies having divided themselves into a squadron of five aircraft each, meaning that now there were a total of nine squadrons for them to take out.

However, even without having any visible missiles on their hardpoints, none of the pilots of the Angel's squadron seemed to have any worry regarding the upcoming faceoff. This meant that it was going to be a showdown of four against forty-five, with the underdogs having nothing other than guns at their disposal, while their enemies came fully loaded with an array of both long-range and short-range air-to-air missiles.

Chapter 218 The Performance For The History Books

A squadron of five aircrafts could be seen soaring through the expansive sky, with a few clusters of islands being visible beneath them on the ocean's surface as they moved forward at a very high

speed with the eyes of the pilots being fixed on their screens, hoping to find any target in their radar and see if their squadron was lucky enough to have all the four Eden's aircraft come to them or if they were simply unlucky and would just end up bombing some military bases until the enemies surrender in fit of fear.

"Looks like luck isn't on our side," remarked a pilot designated as number twelve as he glanced at his screen and found that there was nothing that was caught in the radar. Feeling disappointed knowing that he would not be finding an opportunity to shoot down a fighter plane.

"I understand, but that doesn't necessarily mean that others are luckier than us. Maybe the enemy pilots ran away? I mean, there are forty-five of us against four of them. I will not be flying an aircraft if it means that I will be going to a guaranteed death," replied his wingman, who was designated as fourteen, trying to boost his comrade's morale.

"I would have," an unidentified voice chimed in. However, they failed to identify the source of the voice, unfortunately, they were not given enough time to even try to find out from where the mysterious voice had come from since it was quickly overshadowed by an aircraft suddenly revealing itself under their formation, matching their speed, after which the aircraft immediately pulled its nose up executing a Pugachev's cobra maneuver, bleeding its speed before the nose automatically returned at a level putting him behind the moving Esparian planes whose pilots started panicking and breaking the formation while still wondering where the fuck had that Bandit come from.

"BRRRRRRRRRR" Rapid gunfire started erupting from Angel One-Three's plane, targeting the aircraft designated as twelve, riddling it with bullets, shredding its wings and control surfaces into pieces.

"MAYDAY! MAYDAY! MAYDAY! MAYDAY!" The pilot number twelve urgently shouted at his radio but he didn't wait for a response as he simultaneously pulled out the handle for his ejection seat. The seat was quickly ejected and he was propelled out of the plane that was now dropping like a brick.

As he continued to descend to the ground, the parachute on the seat finally opened, slowing down his fall, allowing the pilot to calm down.

Calm down enough to be able to regain his composure and think of raising his head to see what was the thing that had shot him down and wasn't even caught in their radars which were actively scanning for something in the sky.

And to his horror, the pilot twelve saw something that no amount of therapy in the world could heal. He watched as a single fighter plane messed with his fellow squadron members that were being plucked from the sky as if a grown man was fighting against a group of children, by using nothing but the gun on the aircraft.

The maneuvers the bogey was executing were something that he could never think of pulling while being under the pressure where four enemies were trying to kill him using missiles and guns, at least not without worrying about making a mistake and causing his own death.

However, the bogey in front or rather above him pulled all of such maneuvers with the perfection and calmness of an experienced fighter which was something quite scary in itself.

With a series of perfectly executed maneuvers, Angel One-Three found himself behind one of the four aircrafts and without any hesitation, he pulled the trigger, bathing the plane's body in metal, breaking it apart and forcing the pilot to eject and letting him join number twelve in becoming a spectator as the he continued to inflict a lifetime of PTSD on the two of them.

Although the remaining three planes that were chasing him fired their missiles after they got a lock on him, the pilot of Angle One-Three didn't release a single flare to divert them and simply pulled some ghostly maneuvers causing all the missiles that were following him to lose their locks on him before they headed into some random directions, damned to fly for eternity until the missiles propellant got empties and fall from the sky under the curse of gravity.

With now two spectators watching him, he put on a show so as to not embarrass his airforce. Angel One-Three kept his word since within exactly a thirty seconds period, he had completed shooting down the remaining aircrafts, the proof of it being the number of parachutes that donned the sky as the pilots who had successfully ejected themselves from their shot-down fighter jets.

After having downed all five of the planes within two minutes, Angel One-Three didn't waste any time by lingering any more as he immediately veered into the direction where two of the missiles he had evaded earlier had gone, speeding and catching up to them within just thirty seconds followed by him shooting them down from the sky.

If the missiles had continued on their flight trajectory, they would end up falling in populated areas in one of the cities that were closest to Esparia.

After unleashing a barrage of bullets on those two missiles, Angel One-Three swiftly headed for the next squadron that was designated for him to shoot down as soon as possible.

However, this time, it won't be a surprise attack and would be met with a prepared group who were anticipating the fact that someone was coming for them.

But, for the pilots who had ejected, they were somewhat relieved that they were alive, but were still suspended in disbelief with the aftermath of the unprecedented events they had experienced. Even with them being equipped with missiles, in a span of just two minutes, someone came and just by using gunfire, had shot them down.

Then just as he had appeared, the pilot had left them and went to shoot down two of their missiles, followed by him leaving without even giving them a second look, before heading to a direction which they knew their fellow fighter squadron was at and couldn't help but feel bad for them.

Everything that had transpired had left them deeply astounded, the astounding aerial command their enemy had displayed, made them struggle to comprehend reality.

As concern for their fellow fighter squadron rose, all they could do was use their radios to transmit warnings to their comrades about the monster they had encountered and was heading their way.

They recommended them to be prepared for an impending face-off but also suggested that running off would be the best option.

As they landed at the ocean's surface, they lost all hope of any rescue coming for them. They knew that nothing was going to be passing through Eden's airspace to come for them, rendering any assistance from the outside to be highly improbable.

This was further substantiated when they saw a helicopter they had never seen in their lives, quietly coming to them while generating a sound so low that they would have thought that it was a helicopter that was passing very far away from them if not for seeing it approaching and getting closer.

The helicopter came near them and continued to hover about thirty meters above them and did nothing other than hover, making them wonder what it was doing if it wasn't here to rescue them.

But their questions were soon answered as a boat approached them at a very high speed, clarifying that the helicopter was only acting as a marker of their location so that they would be rescued by the boats.

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While all of this was going on, something else was going on in the city that was about to become the victims of those two rogue missiles' that were shot down, if they hadn't been shot down by Angel One-Three.

At the moment, perched atop an elevated mountain on the outskirts of the city, a group of three people could be seen standing behind a tripod-mounted camera. This elaborated setup featured a camera with a super long lens on it, indicating its ability to capture distant scenes with extreme clarity.

The expressions on the faces of these reporters were filled with excitement and amazement at what they had managed to record.

They had come to the mountain hoping to have the chance of recording the incursion of Esparian fighters as they invaded Eden's airspace before the bombers so that they could clear Eden's airspace.

However, what they saw was beyond even their wildest dreams, something even the movies would have difficulty in making people believe that something like that could happen. T

he unfolding spectacle was nothing other than a pilot's dream, to be so calm and dominant that despite being outnumbered five to one and yet still coming out victorious without having even a single damage done on his own plane or even reporting any casualties of the enemies soldiers, who were now being taken by a mysterious looking massive helicopter that appeared out of nowhere, and taking the enemy pilots away after they were rescued from the ocean by a fast-moving medium size marine vehicle, which itself didn't resemble anything that had ever seen either.

The trio of reporters knew that the world would soon be talking about their footage and how it was going to impact the war after they had released it.

And since no deaths had occurred throughout the whole dogfight, they could upload the entirety of it without having to worry about any censorship at all.

Chapter 219 Archangels: The Birth Of Aces.

"This is Esparia's Central COM, all the aircrafts must return to base immediately. I repeat, this Esparia's CENTRAL COMMAND, all airc....." This urgent announcement resonated three times across all the radios of Esparian pilots right after the twentieth fighter jet was shot down.

While this might seem like it had taken a very long time for the central command of Esparia to come to a decision and order the retreat as their fighter jets were being plucked from the skies and turned into bricks, the reality was quite the opposite. The time it had taken Eden's air force to shoot down a total of twenty of their fighter jets had barely lasted for a span of two minutes before the Esparian central command realized what was going on and ordered a mass retreat.

This meticulous synchronization and the timing of the attack also played a very crucial role because although Angel One-Three had reached his designated squadron earlier than others, he just remained patient under them and monitored their communication for fun as he waited for the arrival of other Angels at their designated squadrons before they could start the orchestrated massacre, they knew very well that the moment the number of casualties was realized, it would trigger the order of a mass retreat, after which they would have to chase them, which was quite wasteful when they could have their enemies in a bundle.

As for the remaining twenty-five Esparian fighter jets, they wasted no time in initiating a mass retreat, worried of being shot down at once if they returned in a group if all of the pilots were ordered to solo it, hoping that they are not the unlucky ones to meet those monsters which at the moment was considered a completely assured ejection, as it looked like the enemies were messing with them or toying with them by just shooting down the fighters, leaving the pilots alive as a witness for their brilliant piloting.

The jubilant Edenian pilots, who were racking in to gain more kill numbers of their enemies wasted no time as they started to chase after them, claiming a few more scores in the sky.

This relentless cat-and-mouse chase continued until they reached the airspace borders of the two countries. With that, all the headgears of the Angel squadron returned back from the red color it had to the original green marking the end of the hunt, followed by Athena's voice which echoed by their ears, saying.

[Archangels, return to patrolling following the highlighted flight path]

Addressing them with their new moniker of "Archangels" signified that they were finally being upgraded from Angels to a higher position of Archangels after they had shot down an average of six aircrafts each, a distinction of them becoming ACE on their very first air-to-air face-off against an enemy aircraft.

This marked them becoming the members of the ACE Pilots club which had very few people within the twenty-first century, but they weren't just any random aces but the fabled members of the "Ace In A Day" club, a rarity which no one other than them could join it in the twenty-first century other than them. Because to join it, one needed to shoot five aircraft within a single day, the four Archangels had just joined such a rank at once and that too in a span of just two minutes, a record that was likely to never be broken, unless broken by the very same pilots.

Following the command, the Archangels didn't waste even a second to shoot down the ones in front of them as they pulled their joysticks up, making a ninety-degree vertical drift which didn't last for a long time as their hands still maintained their grip on the joysticks, causing the aircraft to do another ninety-degree turn but this time it turned them upside down which was immediately solved by the pilots as they rolled their aircrafts, returning them to a normal level before they started their afterburners once again, making their way to return to their designated patrol flight paths.

This inaugural encounter between the Edens and Esparians which ended with a decisive victory for the Edenians, established a one-sided dominion in the skies.

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"What the fuck just happened?" Emanuel's voice boomed with anger as he stood in front of the Air Force General.

All the things he had imagined, winning their first air-to-air face-off which he could use for raising his approval ratings and raising the morale of their soldiers to win the war where his gain would rise in magnitudes, had crumbled into a disastrous loss.

Now they had lost more than twenty aircraft which they had acquired after negotiating a bad deal- a debt which they would have to pay back to the Morgans once they had won the war. Yet, at the moment, that victory seemed to be slipping away from his hand at the speed of light. His once confident face now had paled, even paler than a powdered baby's face, showing the weight of his dismay.

He just couldn't believe that they had lost the usefulness of their aircrafts in a matter of a few minutes, even after having greatly outnumbered Eden's air force by more than nine to one.

"I still don't have a comprehensive answer as to how but from what little information we have received from the ejecting pilots before they were rescued and lost their radios, it appears that they were taken down by monstrously skilled pilots," reported the Air Force Commander who was sweating from his forehead, knowing very well that he would be taking most of the fall if he were to fail to find someone to ditch the blame onto.

"But, I think there is also a possibility that they did it knowingly, maybe Eden had bought the pilots even before they started working for us. With a little amount of money, they were able to sabotage our air force which could be the only explainable reason as to why the Edenian pilots didn't go for the kills even when they shot down the aircrafts. And given that we can't see how they were shot down, they can attribute all of it to them being lucky, but luck can't be happening to all of them, with the same result of all of them surviving," he added, giving a very solid reason as to what might have happened which allowed the Edenian pilots to shoot down more than twenty of their aircrafts in just a matter of two minutes, this was something he managed to come up within the little time he had before reporting it to the President.

"Hmm.. that theory makes more sense. Because if that is true, then all of it could be explained with them ejecting in sequences with Eden pilots just shooting the planes that had already been abandoned by their pilots. Or there can be another explanation, they weren't shot down at all but just made those sounds before heading to Eden and giving them free aircrafts which WE HAD PURCHASED AT EXORBITANT PRICES!" Emanuel grumbled in frustration as he hit the table by the time he reached the last words of his assumption of the given idea.

"Indeed, Mr President, I think so too. Such an act would only require them to pay a fraction of the price of the fighters we had paid to buy and yet they would be profiting substantially. Normally such things are not anticipated to occur by other nations since they nurture their own pilots, resulting in them fostering a sense of assurance that the pilots won't be betraying their country. However, our pilots who were shot down on this mission were all guns for hire, which means that

they can be easily bought with money, making them susceptible to turning against us if they are given enough convincing," Air Force General, Dickson added, doubling down with the President's additional ideas, which gained more credibility the longer he spoke of it, this was something that could happen if they trusted their multimillion-dollar aircrafts to the pilots who were given to them by the Morgans to operate the fighters for the country they had no connection at all.

"Inform the Morgans about this. Should this be found true, tell them that they will be held accountable for the bill of the aircrafts we had lost. They should reimburse us for the loss and the humiliation they inflicted upon us due to the negligent due diligence they did while hiring the pilots," Emanuel said to his assistant who would be doing the talk to the Morgans spokesperson in Esparia. Lamentably, he wasn't deemed important enough to warrant being given access to direct communication to the upper echelons of the Morgans, resulting in this inefficient spokespersons to spokesperson communications.

Emanuel's frustration was obvious, his desire for accounting this incident on someone and getting compensation for rectifying this blunder so that he could regain control over this unfolding chain of events.

Chapter 220 The Aftermath Of The Declaration

The populace's reaction to the war declaration was not good at all. In Eden, a sense of panic started spreading like wildfire, causing them to frantically rush to the shops to start mass purchasing the things they deemed essential when in the face of an impending war.

As for the rest of the world, they heard the news which seemed to be spreading even faster than light.

However, they were all astounded as Esparia had chosen to go with the option of declaring war, instead of a surprise attack. This choice of theirs hinted that they were assured of their victory, resulting in them taking their time and efforts on trying to convince the world of their righteous cause and following the rules and their alignment with the principles that would garner more global support.

This display of confidence that Esparia had shown with their declaration of war had divided the netizens into two groups. One group thought Esparia would really be winning the war while the other thought that they were just being overconfident.

They argued that throughout Esparia's weapons' purchases, Eden wasn't just watching its enemies getting trained for the sake of beating them and instead must have already prepared themselves to endure the fight for not a complete one-sided beatdown.

Meanwhile, high above in the sky, the fighter jets of Eden patrolled, following the flight path that was arranged for them by Athena, during which they ended up passing through many cities.

The soaring of the aircrafts reminded the citizens that just a few minutes ago Esparia had declared war against their nation and they were now officially at war.

Although the citizens thought that their air force was just patrolling to calm them down and remind them that they were being protected, they still remained oblivious to the fact that the air patrol had only commenced after they had taken down a little bit more than twenty of Esparia's fighter jets.

The jets that were meant to attack some of the very important infrastructures in Eden, but were thwarted in their attacks, resulting in their very own downfall.

In response to the Esparian press conference that had ended with the declaration of war, Alexander personally took to the podium and directly addressed the nation. He promised that they were sure of winning the war and causing as little as possible disruption to people's daily lives. However, he acknowledged that a few certain cities that were nearest to Esparia and were only separated by the water between them, such cities would be entering martial law and that state would continue for the next two days of the weekend, as to whether or not it will continue to be the same on Monday or whether they will be evacuating those cities will be more dependent on how the ongoing fight was going to develop.

As Alexander's press conference continued, thousands of troops rapidly started converging upon those cities and started executing swift and coordinated takeover, securing the cities, wasting no time at all since they were already stationed near the cities after anticipating the escalation.

They immediately started by taking control of the city's security from the police, delegating them to public control. Some streets were barricaded, other security measures were increased, and the navy vessels started appearing from the ocean horizons, coming from the nearest Navy ports.

These vessels also started patrolling the maritime borders of the two countries, giving assurance to the people after witnessing how the government was already prepared and had even started responding, this resulted in people cooperating with the soldiers to the best of their abilities, trying to cause as little interruption to the soldiers as possible.

This proactive response served as a hope of reassurance to the citizens. After witnessing the swift and organized mobilization of the military, the faith in their country rose after understanding that their government had already been prepared for this, leading to the swift response with precision right after the declaration of the war and was quickly responded with the dispatch of soldiers for their safety.

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"How long are you planning to let this fight continue?" Rina asked Aron during their virtual meeting, a meeting which she had specifically asked for minutes after the declaration of war.

"No longer than a week. My family is here as well and the longer I let it drag on, the more convincing would be needed as to why I still live here, as they would suggest of going to some other country which would be safe for both me and my younger brother," Aron answered, revealing how long he was willing to let Esparia continue messing with him.

"Good. However, I believe that the Morgans have misunderstood something based on the amount of investment they are putting in," Rina added after hearing his response, not showing even a hint of distrust in his capabilities of being able to end the war whenever he wanted to. What she had seen from him throughout the months they had known each other was more than enough to let her have complete trust in every word that came from Aron, even if it was a joke as even his jokes always carried a hint of truth within them.

"Yes, it seems like they somehow learned of your visit to Eden and also about the talk you had with Alexander, which made them think that you are behind some of the large investments in the country

and they believe that you are acting as a helping hand in preventing the country's economy from collapsing and thwarting them from profiting from the country's economic collapse. Thus they decided to side with Esparia, causing a war with Eden so that it would force Eden to divert its resources from development to war, which would result in a faster collapse of Eden's economy, than it would have ended with them benefiting from the aftermath" Aron explained, chuckling as to how a mere misunderstanding had caused the Morgans to make some huge investments in Esparia.

"Sorry about that" Rina said in slight embarrassment, remembering how she had insisted on visiting and bringing the Tritium to Eden personally, which inadvertently triggered the misunderstanding to occur, resulting in the sparking of an all-out war between the two countries and a slight delay to some of Aron's projects.

"No need to worry about that. A fight with Esparia was bound to happen soon anyways given their provocations since the downfall of the previous government, and they weren't able to receive any benefit with the change of power. Right now, I plan to use the Rothschilds as a cover to use some of my tech in a way that can explain having an advanced tech so soon without even having any news of extensive research by the country and to justify being forced to release the tech for the public to see to those familiar with your family's beef."

"Although this had accelerated the timeline for some of the plans and even delayed some, everything else is still going to happen according to schedule, unless the Morgans manage to force the US military to intervene," Aron replied and when he reached the last part of his words, he initiated and maintained an eye contact with her.

"You don't have to worry about the possibility of such a thing happening. For such a huge move to happen from our side, it will need an acknowledgement from both families and a few small ones, which is almost impossible due to us always not agreeing on the same thing, so you can be rest assured, the US government won't be swayed into intervening by the Morgans on my watch," Rina replied, promising to handle that matter and also make sure something like that doesn't happen at all.

"Then I will consider that to be done and plan accordingly. Also, a few days later, a cargo should be arriving to you, it should help you with moving Ava to the glasses," Aron said giving her something that would change the topic of their conversation and remove the weird atmosphere that they had entered in after he had mentioned the reason for the larger than usual investment done by the Morgans in Esparia.

"Thanks. Based on her brief explanation, Ava told me that she should gain at least three times an increase in efficiency compared to when she is on the private network, which in itself is unbelievable since I had witnessed one of the servers where our private network is being hosted. And it was really massive and having it being out beaten by a computer inside glasses is similar to something from the dreams"

Aron said nothing but just smiled as he knew that Ava's transition to the glasses wasn't just going to amplify her operating efficiency by more than ten folds, but it would also trigger an evolution in her capabilities due to a part of her code that will be coming online after having found a suitable and sufficient computing power for it to operate with everything she was made with. As for why Ava was not sure of how much efficiency she will be gaining, it was because she didn't have complete information about the quantum computing technology at the moment since Nova had deemed it to not be among the required knowledge during the time she was making her.

