

Beautiful 531

Chapter 531 Cyber Slavery

"Can we spare us a moment?" Gu Yi asked as her eyes directed toward two operators watching the group.

Ling Qingyu followed her gaze and nodded. "Girls, please excuse us for a moment."

"Sure." The two operators smiled and left the room, leaving only four of them.

Tang Ziyi and Assistant Su weren't outsiders. They were core members in the ensuing discussions. Besides, Ling Qingyu wouldn't drive away her close sister just to fawn over her mother-in-law.

She wasn't that low to flatter others unless Gu Yi requested. Over-catering would be an appropriate word to describe the scenario, Ling Qingyu absolutely abhorred.

Gu Yi didn't take any offense at Ling Qingyu's refusal to send away Tang Ziyi. Although these small matters transformed into big problems usually in officialdom so that people were forced to exercise caution to minor details, she was more forgiving and understanding.

Of course, most talented officials would behave the same with smiles. As for what they were thinking inside, one couldn't fathom.

Besides, she herself didn't drive away her assistant—an easy message to decipher if Ling Qingyu was talented as rumored.

Ling Qingyue, who was labeled as a talent: ???

If Ling Qingyue heard Gu Yi's praise again, she would be speechless. She just acted more naturally than flattering others.

Staying true to herself was more relaxing. Considering others for benefits didn't ring a bell inside her mind. She needed not. She could achieve those easily.

The only weakness might be her network, which was what she was focused on. Connecting Gu Yi was also for this reason. Another reason was that she needed to warm up the relationship with her future mother-in-law.

From the looks of their conversations, Ling Qingyu was relieved. At least, there were no objections. As long as she could take down Yang family from the capital, Yang Qingyue was hers.

After the two operators disappeared, Gu Yi rubbed her head and sighed, causing Ling Qingyu to raise her brows.

Okay, a playwright had appeared. Ling Qingyu brought the office chair and let Gu Yi sit on it. Assistant Su and Tang Ziyi dragged the closest to sit as well.

Ling Qingyu sat the last and cooperated. "Aunt Gu, what's bothering you so much? You lost your smile suddenly."

"Please don't be so formal. Let's regard our discussion as pure conversation for an old woman like me to hear advice."

"You aren't old at all, Aunt Gu. Hey, if not for Qingyue's relationship with me, I might be attracted to you. You're still beautiful and charming." Ling Qingyu said.

"What a glib tongue. I don't know how much had you eaten out of my dear daughter." Gu Yi chuckled and patted her thigh.

"I'm serious." Ling Qingyu rolled her eyes and thought—she had eaten inside out and turned Yang Qingyue to her shame.

"Okay, now isn't the time to argue for my beauty." Gu Yi replied narcissistically, prompting everyone to roll their eyes at her jokes. "Actually, I wouldn't discuss this with you, if you haven't shown me your strength.

"Despite what might seem like an impromptu visit, today's trip is planned by me, not because I miss my daughter."

Ling Qingyu's eyelids twitched. Fortunately, you didn't say it in front of my dear Yang Qingyue. Otherwise, who knew what Yang Qingyue might do tonight to vent her depression? Ahem, though I'm looking forward to it.

On the other hand, Assistant Su had her eyes widened and her finger raised as if to speak but she controlled her mouth and gulped instead.

Obviously, she knew what Gu Yi had in mind. Her reaction naturally increased Tang Ziyi's and Ling Qingyu's curiosity.

"I'm listening." Ling Qingyu shooed away other unimportant thoughts as she saw Gu Yi's serious expression.

For a ministerial official like Gu Yi to pay attention and show thoroughness, Ling Qingyu also changed her face to resonate. What they might talk about next would become an opportunity to prove herself as well as the difficulties she would encounter.

"Good. Today, I've seen your strength and talent, expanding your business empire like a tycoon, which makes me admire you. At the same time, I can clearly see what your Spirit Fox operators are capable of. I believe, Assistant Su can attest to my statement." Gu Yi glanced at her assistant.

"I agreed, Madam Gu. What Ms. Ling and Ms. Tang show us today is an eye-opener. I thought I had overestimated your group but it turns out just the opposite." Assistant Su expressed her opinion.

"So, I have a sudden idea of handing over to you, the important matters, which is the real reason why I flew here so early." Gu Yi hesitated again as she decided on whether to speak.

Her hesitation almost annoyed Ling Qingyu to the point of scratching her head. She never misbehaved but whenever she understood a ladder to rise was about to be presented to her, her blood rushed fast.

Only Tang Ziyi remained calm, unbothered since she had no say in what was about to happen next. Unlike Xiao Yue who had strategic views, she was more suited to be a sharp sword.

Anyway, those brain-consuming matters should be handed over to Ling Qingyu. She didn't want to waste her energy on what she couldn't fathom.

"So..." Ling Qingyu leaned forward and gestured Gu Yi to continue.

"You should know about cyber scams that are going outrageous around worldwide."

"Yes," Ling Qingyu nodded, a little confused at the sudden turn of events.

Perhaps noticing Ling Qingyu's doubt, Gu Yi added. "My visit is related to those issues."

Ling Qingyu understood cyber scams had affected and destroyed so many families across the world. The victims were exploited through their feelings for their loved ones.

In the old days, which Ling Qingyu was aware of, the scammers targeted old people, impersonating hospital phone calls and fraudulently demanding payment because their loved ones had an accident and needed treatment.

Those, who lost their minds or were panicking, hurriedly paid without further thought. Some tried to check but not much since the situation sounded like an emergency. The scammers knew how to fake and lie to the victims

Not to mention, scammers already chose the target long before they made a call. So, many victims appeared. The younger generations were also targeted albeit seldom since they had heard about those scamming events from the news and government projects to warn against scammers.

As time progressed, scamming upgraded from telephone calls to internet chats. The old examples expired and a new scenario arrived. So, people suffered under the new conspiracy before the government was able to inform the public to beware.

For example, with the advent of AI, scammers could now impersonate people's love one like father, mother, husband, wife and children...etc.

Especially when the filter could appear like their loved one on the video call, lowering the victims' vigilance. There were some cases of child trafficking by appearing on the video call like the children's parents.

The moment Ling Qingyu knew about this from Athena, she asked the latter to attack and shut down the scammers' hives and traffickers' den.

Athena also informed relevant departments and families about the news so that the victim would meet again their loved ones.

As for the scammers' network, Athena located them and paralyzed their internet capabilities. Plus, she dug out their hideouts and reported them. Her actions were effective only in countries where corruption wasn't rampant.

For most nations, the government or related agencies even tried to search her location. Ridiculous, if they achieved the goal of locating her, Athena would commit suicide.

If she declared herself as an uncrowned king, no one dared to topple her reign in the internet world.

Since they had protectors, Athena's actions became restricted. She wasn't reconciled with letting it be, so she released the news to the public after gaining Ling Qingyu's approval.

Of course, there was outrage but since things happened elsewhere, Ling Qingyu didn't bother too much.

However, these types of scammers shouldn't elicit grave expressions in Gu Yi. Ling Qingyu had a glimpse but focused on listening to Gu Yi.

"If only we were speaking about simple scammers, I wouldn't even hesitate to hide. But now, there's a new term called cyber slavery."

"Cyber slavery?" Ling Qingyu digested the new terminology and understood her glimpse of insight was likely to be true.

"Yes, the worst I have ever seen in human history. It's no longer about money or wealth, breaking families apart and killing indirectly. Those hateful organizations are blatantly enslaving people and burying corpses."

"Enslaving?" Ling Qingyu pressed her nose in deep thought. Actually, she was listening to Athena's narration. It seemed like she stayed away from the world for too long.

"Yes, enslaving. You do know that since our economy fell, people lost their jobs." Gu Yi summarized her words. "Our government is also helpless against these affairs especially when the entire world financial bubble is moving in a downward trend."

Well, but her business wasn't included, Ling Qingyu shook her head inwardly. As expected in life, there will always be a race for survival.

Chapter 532 Mother-in-law requested help

"So, they are desperate for work?" Ling Qingyu said knowingly.

"Exactly." Gu Yi nodded. "Once they catch a straw, people race to catch it in fear of missing the only opportunities that might raise their living standards and possibly survival."

"You can't say they're stupid." Ling Qingyu sighed. "Sometimes, pressure from society and life force them to step on this path unknowingly."

"I never said they are stupid, I just cannot...you know my feeling; we're also solving those problems but..." Gu Yi didn't know what to say next.

"But people need to live. They need money and food. In the times of falling economy, no one is living well except for the top layers." Ling Qingyu added.

"Anyway, the scammers act like employers posting jobs for the netizens and attract many people." Gu Yi continued to explain. "What's unbelievable is that they operated near our borders and seemed legit in terms of paperwork and every legal issue. Flawless, not drawing our suspicions when it happens initially."

"Then, how did you find out?"

"Two years ago. When a mass number of people flocked in a single direction, it naturally raised our concerns and we investigated just across the border. On the surface, nothing happened but that's the oddest result." Gu Yi said. "If people didn't even return after a few years and went missing, we wouldn't even know about cyber enslavement."

"Actually, it's our corruption at fault here too. Just after our Province N, there's our neighbor, which is where the scammers that target our citizens thrive. In fact, if we look downward, the same group existed. We know they are there but we have no idea where exactly."

"Hmm, so can you elaborate on cyber enslavement?"

"Sure, let's say once you meet your so-called employers and are given food and accommodation as promised in the advertisement, nobody suspected a thing until it's too late. By then, you're under their control."

"But jobs abroad are also the same, right? They provide relocation aids, how can we blame people for believing the scammers? It's the latter's cleverness that caught everyone off-guard."

"That's what makes us powerless. We can't differentiate from who's true and who's false based on the information uploaded in the advertisement. Although we can analyze the data and try to connect any missing coincidence, a huge manpower, time, energy, and money are required." Gu Yi shook her head. "You do understand our situation."

Where can those high-above even make amend just for a few thousand missing, especially people missing is the norm here."

Ling Qingyu listened to her mother-in-law's narration and Athena's detailed explanation of the event. Her concentration worked simultaneously, a feat she would have struggled with in the past if not for her ancient bracelet improving both her mental power and physique.

Indeed, as Gu Yi described, the government really wouldn't care too much, causing the bottom of the hierarchies to not take the scammers' affair seriously since the higher-ups themselves only mentioned watery words of the month.

However, as the scam level upgraded, it began to take a toll on the nation's economy and touched the reverse scale of some elites who had a say in politics.

Only then, would the government utilize all the resources to tackle the problems of scammers which was too late in Ling Qingyu's opinion.

Of course, as long as people corrected their mistakes, no matter the time, it was better than doing nothing.

According to Athena's report, the targeted people were isolated and cut off from their connections to the world, even online. They were monitored throughout the entire day and under coercion to prevent them from talking about potential crimes.

When these people who went first didn't say anything, others thought they were trying to hide the good news and flocked faster.

The lightest work the victims did was to scam others again like the old days when they still made phone calls and lied about money. These were the luckiest victims.

Others were driven to work like cattle slaves, exploiting their potential till they were drained. Killing and burying were the norm there.

In the black market, organ harvesting also flourished which made the scamming criminals had no slightest pity to kill. They weren't hesitant at all. Anyone disobeying their rules was tortured and killed as deterrence on purpose.

Although Ling Qingyu had no idea about the extent of the torture method, she knew she should never underestimate the evilness of human beings.

For most women, particularly attractive ones, Ling Qingyu didn't need to guess to know most of their fates. Serving as prostitutes, nearly a hundred a day...holy shit, Ling Qingyu had her eyes widened.

Gu Yi thought her words shocked her daughter-in-law and comforted her, not aware that another existence was expanding the details.

In the end, the government requested the relevant authorities in the neighboring countries to fight against the scammers.

In order to achieve the goals, numerous diplomatic visits were made in the name of cooperation but everyone discovered their actions were meaningless.

Unfortunately, these stakeholders seemed to already know the scammers' existence and were likely receiving their protection fees.

How could they bear to eliminate it as requested by Country C after seeing the money? Even if Country C was powerful, they must be mindful of their actions in foreign affairs.

The World Government's existence wasn't for nothing. If Country C harshly intervened, things might backfire and there would be more losses than gains.

Gu Yi and the higher-ups sent undercover agents as usual. "We sent 12 of them, two months ago. It's so secretive that except for a handful, nobody knew about their identity."

"But you're telling me now." Ling Qingyu raised her brows.

"That's because you'll know anyway when I request help from you."

"Help? Wait, what happen to those operators?" Ling Qingyu's face turned grim, remembering what Yang Qingyue had told her about the tragedies of police officers who attempted to steal intelligence.

She hated these operations where the spies were at risk. Should something go wrong, they were on their own always without back-ups. Usually, once their covers were blown, everything was over.

Nonetheless, human intelligence was necessary and a tactic used since ancient times, bringing effective results.

Gu Yi pursed her lips and nodded heavily. "Something did happen to them. Not all, but let's make long stories short."

"Please."

"2 of our agents went missing and we have no news report. Our guess is that the informant betrayed us."

"Why do you think so?" Ling Qingyu asked in a low tone.

"Because only these two are responsible for linking up with the insiders and relaying information to other undercovers. Apart from those two, we still can't dig deeper. Our eyes and ears are blind. I don't know how they managed to block the news. Their defenses and systems are flawless."

"Aunt Gu, please cheer up; there's no such existent as a perfect system, not even our universe. Loopholes are always there but we just haven't found them yet."

"Alas, that's why the higher-ups meetings decided to pause the operation and let the other agents remain under the radar." Gu Yi shuffled her hair. "The problem is once the two's mouths can't stop, they are also in danger and can't get out. We cannot rescue them as well. Two weeks, we sent reinforcement to attempt multiple covert escapes and failed. We can't act again in fear of alerting the snake."

"Those two..."

"They'll hold on as long as they can but little Yu, everyone has a limit. Once the string snaps." Gu Yi closed her eyes and shook her head gently. "I knew that those two will remain strong but I dare not bet."

"Then, why don't you send an army?" Ling Qingyu realized later she asked a stupid question.

"Actually, the reason I come here is also to facilitate what you say. Sending special forces to extract them is possible." Gu Yi replied. "But here's the catch, if you read about that country we want to enter carefully, you'll understand how complicated and convoluted the political infrastructures are."

Sending army in the short term seems like nothing but in the long term, other nations might become wary of us."

"So complex to consider every party." Ling Qingyu felt dizzy, merely from hearing her mother-in-law's political lectures.

"Yes. And we also have doubts about our own military capabilities to launch cross-nation border raid, particularly when a scandal among the senior officers appear in the capital. Corruption is way higher than what we expect. Our previous measures of strength needs to be calculated again. Whether we're still a genuine effective fighting force needs time to evaluate."

"Really, I haven't heard about those scandals."

"Of course, you won't. I'm relieved that you didn't receive any news because we buried those shits. Although I know you can access easily, your unawareness shows that you stick to your morals firmly."

"Should I be proud of my negligence?" Ling Qingyu joked.

Gu Yi and Assistant Su laughed. Tang Ziyi chuckled alongside and rolled her eyes boringly at the long talk. Nonetheless, her heart was racing at the possibility of Spirit Fox's involvement after listening to the conversation.

Chapter 533 A deal

"Believe it or not, your Spirit Fox's confrontation with the military based in Province N raises another concern, which is the real reason why I hesitate." Gu Yi said. "What if our actions alert the scammers and ruin everything? We don't know whether Province N's corruption has already been drilled by those connected to the scammers."

Assistant Su added on the side. "We don't have solid evidence but from the reports we heard from the undercover agents about the rumors inside, some people here are involved."

"Well, that really complicates everything." Ling Qingyu understood Gu Yi's difficulties. When one couldn't hide their moves, catching the criminals with surprise became harder.

Even the slightest army movements might alert the scamming gangs and endanger the two missing undercovers.

Although they were in danger, they had a chance of survival because they still retained useful information.

But they were under countdown. Despite persistent requests from other undercover operatives to rescue them, Gu Yi took over and denied their request.

She didn't want to lose more subordinates without certainty. Even if she knew them only on the papers and weren't related, she cared for them.

They weren't numbers in her eyes. She was the one who pressed the most among the ministers for rescue and not simply recorded them as martyrs.

After all, it wasn't a surprise heroes lost their lives. Every day, people sacrifice for a cause. Just wave some compensation and list the people grandly to show that the country cared for them.

This method was more cost-effective than conducting a costly rescue operation. Besides, in terms of public opinion, no one was aware of these officers.

Unlike last time, during a civil war ten years ago somewhere in Elephant continent, where many compatriots were trapped, the government was obligated to protect them and send in the army and navy to escort them out of the country.

Since most people knew and pressured the authorities, they must react. Now, they had resorted to several diplomatic solutions despite unsuccessful results. At least, they proved that they had tried.

Nobody could blame them for their inaction but the undercover operatives' luck. Sad but true. Public opinion rose and died quickly; they never stayed for long unless the event was so outrageous that people were willing to sacrifice important survival matters.

"But you still haven't spoken why you need my help. Believe me, I won't charge a dime; I'm willing to end these demons who suck on the blood of innocence."

"Demons?" Gu Yi uttered and agreed with Ling Qingyu's description. Indeed, they were dealing with demons who lost all humanities. "You can reject my request but I want your Spirit Fox operators to rescue the two undercovers and others as well if possible."

"Wait a second, Aunt Gu. Why isn't the military spending special forces?"

"Like I said, the decision for the operation to commence is going back and forth. Who knows for how long? I can't afford to wait. If possible I want action, now."

"Why us?" Ling Qingyu couldn't decide on this issue, She thought Gu Yi was asking for her hacking power and investigations. But to directly assault and rescue?

"You know the real reason. Strength, proven record, and experience." Gu Yi answered.

"That's cross-border issues. We've never operated outside." Ling Qingyu replied.

"Everyone has the first. You have the ambition to grow overseas, why not help me in the early stage?" Gu Yi persuaded. "It's not like you won't receive a reward."

"Then, what's the reward?" Ling Qingyu wanted to know what her mother-in-law would gift.

"You'll have the opportunity to buy two Y-20 military cargo aircraft and a small personal airfield for you, which I'll negotiate with the governor so that your girls can practice skydiving."

"Puff..." Tang Ziyi laughed and bent her waist, trying to control her twitching body.

On the other hand, Ling Qingyu had a dark face and even considered whether Gu Yi was teasing her. Looking at her mother-in-law's sincere face, Ling Qingyu was speechless.

This wasn't a reward; this was a massive salt amount to rub her wounds.

"What?" Gu Yi asked in a puzzled tone. Based on her conjectures, Ling Qingyu didn't need anything more from her apart from the cooperation between the two to benefit themselves.

Even gifting away Y-20, an opportunity for Ling Qingyu to buy was rare. One had to understand, that some things couldn't be bought with money.

"Aunt Gu, I don't mean to offend but these aircraft, we can easily manufacture them if we want. Don't forget any secret is nothing in front of us."

"Oh," Gu Yi understood. "But you'll have a legitimate reason to prove."

Damn, Gu Yi hit the nail again. Ling Qingyu was really convinced. The reason why she didn't engage in the aerospace sector was in fear of attracting unwanted eyes.

If Ling Qingyu gained an airfield in Province N, many situations became as easy as a pie dropped from the sky.

The private airfield was possible here, provided she had relevant connections above and the merits.

Even if others knew what Ling Qingyu gained in the future, the higher-ups would simply consider the reward as deserving.

"The price is worth it. Yet I have to build my own airport then."

"Of course, being able to own a large land is my largest concession. The pressure I must hold for you isn't simple." Gu Yi leaned back and stared at Ling Qingyu for an answer.

"Hmm, isn't that supposed to mean that I have to buy land?" Ling Qingyu stared back with frustration. Her mother-in-law was definitely someone who wouldn't accept a loss.

"No, a rent for decades." Gu Yi smiled but her words weren't heartwarming.

What a huge mouth desiring to swallow but seemed to fit Ling Qingyu's needs. She wasn't in a hurry but for her future rapid development, she needed Gu Yi's transaction.

However, she also admired Gu Yi's courage to save her subordinates who she never interacted. As for why Gu Yi trusted her more than the officials, Ling Qingyu didn't bother to think.

"Please give us a moment to discuss." Ling Qingyu gestured toward Tang Ziyi to get out and talk.

Gu Yi nodded. "Sure, please. I hope to hear great news."

She knew Ling Qingyu was persuaded by the chips she showed and what she did was simply selling favors from the ones who owed her.

Even if she took their favors, they couldn't repay her yet. Gu Yi acted like she paid a lot for Ling Qingyu to see.

Assistant Su, who didn't understand Gu Yi's advantage, turned hesitant, wanting to ask but thinking she had no right to question her boss, she closed her lips.

"Don't worry, the deal's worth it. In fact, this day would come sooner or later so why not sell a favor?" Gu Yi explained softly after the door closed outside.

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Ling Qingyu leaned against the wall with her forearm and asked: "What do you think?"

"What do you mean, what I think? I have no idea." Tang Ziyi folded her arms and shrugged. "I'm not Xiao Yue. She's better at weighing the scale for a sound decision. Don't ask me."

"Come on, use your brain to see whether our Spirit Fox can rescue the undercover operatives."

Tang Ziyi lowered her gaze and took a deep breath. "Before we carry on, we must know that our neighbor has militants, various armed groups, and militias, all working for their interest. The intertwined parties' formation is what made our government so hesitant. Remember, we are being used as a knife. If we can succeed and get out safely, we gain a lot but there's a risk."

"You don't need to talk about political stake. I understand completely. I'm just asking you given our capabilities, can our mission succeed or in other words estimate our probability."

"Then, 99 percent. One percent is just to suppress the arrogance. You're underestimating our improvements too much by comparing us with ordinary people. We aren't ordinary humans anymore. Our physiques have at least overcome beyond the limit."

"Every operator?" Ling Qingyu asked with joy and received Tang Ziyi's nod.

"We also have Elena to back us up if anything goes south. Her support along with the satellites above means we have firepower. The only issue is our entry. How do we get in without alerting about our presence?"

"I guess you have an idea."

"Yes, and it happens that you know about it today."

"Wait, you aren't suggesting..."

"Exactly, HALO infiltration. Skydive and open our parachutes at a lower altitude." Tang Ziyi affirmed Ling Qingyu's words.

"Shit! Our girls don't have any experience and you dare take a risk. And let's say we have them, what about the aircraft?"

"First, among your guards, the oldest member had experience in parachuting. They might not be specialist but they had the basic skills long ago before skydiving training." Tang Ziyi paused. "Second, since we know the scammers' hideout, it's best for us to directly land near them rather than driving around and possibly exposing ourselves.

"Third, your mother-in-law can facilitate our means of transport. Believe me, she'll be happy to cooperate. Fourth, you have to learn to trust us and delegate. You're too demanding of yourselves and others. The skydiving training here isn't comparable with others which you might not notice but the simulation level had reached over 70 percent. None of your daughter's inventions are simple."

"Then, won't our actions tell the others about the mission subtly? Aunt Gu already pointed out about this disadvantage."

Ling Qingyu didn't hear any reply and looked at Tang Ziyi suspiciously, only to hear the latter muttered: "After everything I have told you, can't you get it? You are an idiot!"

Your mother is an idiot, Ling Qingyu slapped her forehead, annoyed.

Chapter 534 Sorry, my conscience doesn't hurt in front of benefits

Ling Qingyu understood what Tang Ziyi meant later. Since her mother-in-law requested her entry, she would have already thought of her worries.

She might even be entrapped by Gu Yi if she blurted out her worries and increased her busy time.

"Okay, then let's go for an adventure. In any case, we have Elena to support us if something goes wrong." Ling Qingyu decided to give it a go.

"Sure. Actually, I can promise you that nothing will go wrong but it never hurts to be prepared." Tang Ziyi replied.

"Speaking of covering any weaknesses, how's your research on talisman?"

"Please believe in science and not linger around superstition." Tang Ziyi lectured like a strict teacher to change the wrongdoings of the students.

"Superstition my foot. You and I both know how we came to this world. Even Atheist needs to doubt and ask again." Ling Qingyu muttered with a speechless expression. "So, how's your progress?"

"Do you think I'll finish an impossible research within a short time frame?" Tang Ziyi asked with widened eyes.

Ling Qingyu nodded, ignoring Tang Ziyi's stern gaze. "Of course, I believe you. You're the best intuitive innovator I've ever seen. The rate you took out all the toys surprised me as well."

"Best innovator my ass. You better stop flattering me, just to step on me without mercy in the future." Tang Ziyi clicked her tongue. "Don't think I don't know what's going around in your head."

"Hehe," Ling Qingyu giggled before continuing to speak. "I'm serious. Tell the truth about how far your progress is. If you haven't finished please step up so that we have another insurance for our girls."

Tang Ziyi rolled her eyes and stroked her hair upward. She twirled her tongue inside, subtle movements noticeable across her cheeks. Obviously, she wanted to scold someone but that someone had a very good reason.

Sis, when would you be so relieved of your subordinates, Tang Ziyi thought. She had added so many safety measures with numerous black technologies from liquid exoskeleton, vibrainium-like materials, as well as full protection from head to toe, no skins exposed. Even visors were included to protect the only exposed eyes. A fragile and skinny layer of gloves could withstand a huge ton of force.

Tang Ziyi wondered if what she had produced was still vulnerable. "How safe do you want to me?"

"If the protection fails, we can defend our girls mysteriously three times."

Tang Ziyi slipped as soon as she heard the words. Fortunately, she was close to the wall that when she fell, it seemed like she leaned on the wall purposefully.

She didn't make an embarrassment of herself in front of Ling Qingyu. The latter raised her brows, seeing Tang Ziyi's reaction.

"What? You can't do that?"

"Of course not but I need time. I don't think I'll ever be able to finish in time before we set out."

"Then make it quick. You have Athena. Don't worry about consumption." Ling Qingyu waved her hand.
"With so many permutations and combinations, you'll surely achieve your results."

Tang Ziyi stopped talking with Ling Qingyu to avoid hurting her own heart. The two weren't on the same channel.

Nonetheless, if she really studied seriously with Athena's full output, Ling Qingyu's words weren't impossible. So, she decided not to argue and tried.

At the same time, Ling Qingyu's focus entered the inner world. Miss System made a movement.

[Ding!...]

'Please stop with ding, ding. I know you aren't a machine but an entity close to us.' Ling Qingyu complained.

[Well, once you do a job, you need to fulfill the roles without holding back.]

'Yes, yes. Please.'

[Ding! Mission released: Participate in the rescue of undercover operatives and safely extract them from danger.]

'What! Are you kidding me?' Ling Qingyu's eyes bugged as she cursed multiple languages at Miss System.

[Reward: 30 years of skydiving skills (preliminary) + A380 private airliner (modified and suited to your taste, including the crews)]

'Oh, my beautiful System, although your gifts are so rewarding, I don't think I want to involve myself. As a boss, I should save my face by staying behind the scenes.' Ling Qingyu refused in spite of wanting the aircraft, solely belonging to her.

Anyway, she had money to buy; why should she fall for Miss System's sugar? And she didn't want to experience a nightmare of 30 years. Continuous 30 years of training nonstop.

Even ghosts would reincarnate directly from despair. 15 years of driving had already numbed her.

Raise the number twice, Ling Qingyu shivered. Forget it, being steady without greed is the path for a strong man, I meant woman, hmm...

Perhaps, Ling Qingyu's reluctance was too obvious, so Miss System changed her tone.

[Additional quest following the former: Annihilate the notorious scamming criminal organization that imprisons the undercovers.

Reward: Full ownership of a private hospital built on a private island — Star Hospital, 2 private jets to provide charter service for the patient.]

Damn, Ling Qingyu reversed her decision 180 degrees. She apologized to her conscience, Miss System gave too much.

In order to confirm Star Hospital, Ling Qingyu searched the keyword on the phone. She was stunned after briefly scanning the description.

An island with a hospital, which serves only the elite with the best treatment and equipment. Owning this meant vast connections, unthinkable to Ling Qingyu.

Sure, there were residential buildings, restaurants, leisure parks for rehabilitation and a large airfield to serve and maintain elite customers' transports.

Of course, the outstanding aspect was the talents. World-class surgeons, doctors, nurses and equipment.

Miss System knew how to seduce her. Ling Qingyu couldn't hold her greed. Combined with the Airbus aircraft, 30 years of suffering seemed nothing at all.

In any case, in her past life, she struggled for decades to earn a mediocre income. The same boring timeline to possess the largest civilian air transport; the deal was worth it.

Not to mention, Miss System emphasized modifications. She was looking forward to the reward. I'm sorry, scammers, your extinction is my development.

Tang Ziyi had nothing to do except cast accusing eyes at the daydreaming Ling Qingyu. Who would expect someone to get lost in thoughts despite discussing seriously about national affairs?

"Ahem, my dear surname Ling." Tang Ziyi pursed her lips.

"Oh, oh. Sorry, there's an important matter needing my attention. I'll participate in the mission."

"What the fuck! Say again." Ling Qingyu shut Tang Ziyi's mouth and looked left and right warily. She didn't expect Tang Ziyi to overreact.

If Tang Ziyi heard her complaint, she would vomit all the blood and sympathize herself to even care for this bastard.

"Calm down. It's not so frightening." Ling Qingyu said.

"You dare say that. Why are you participating in a dangerous mission? You don't have any paratrooper training to begin with."

"Do you think I want to?" Ling Qingyu rebutted.

"If not..." Tang Ziyi paused and remembered a mysterious entity who brought her and Xiao Yue to this world. "Don't tell me, you're being tasked."

"Yes, exactly as you thought." Ling Qingyu was relieved to see that she didn't need to explain.

This time, Tang Ziyi didn't argue any longer. Ling Qingyu was the loved one of the mysterious entity. How could Ling Qingyu be hurt? There must be some meanings that she and Ling Qingyu didn't understand.

After all, different heights had different perspectives. Tang Ziyi agreed quickly, even more, relieved after Ling Qingyu repeatedly affirmed to solve the skydiving scenario.

The two returned to the room. Assistant Su and Gu Yi stopped their chatters and looked at the two. Their expressions asked eagerly about Ling Qingyu's answer.

Not disappointing their expectations, Ling Qingyu agreed and put her demands on the table, a scenario which might encounter some troubles.

Gu Yi waved her hand nonchalantly and promised to solve them. An oral contract between the two had been formed.

Gu Yi only had the intention of testing the water depth. She understood Ling Qingyu's psychology. Despite being a businesswoman, Ling Qingyu never stepped on the path without the slightest chance of success.

In fact, she belonged to the weirdo. Gu Yi discovered Ling Qingyu never failed. Every move she made had at least 80 percent probability of winning.

Since Ling Qingyu agreed, Gu Yi knew she had a certainty of victory to some extent. In short, Gu Yi trusted Ling Qingyu's decision and resourcefulness.

...

Far away in another country, inside a murky room filled with dust and moisture. A small lamp overhead shook back and forth eliciting dancing shadows on the wall.

There was no window except for a thin rectangular pocket with metal frame for circulation.

A man covered with dirt and messy hair, leaned on the wall at a slanted angle. His hands tied behind. A simple T-shirt and ripped jeans.

His reddened eyes stared at the door with a lost hope. Bang!

He twitched and straightened his posture as the door kicked open.

"Still so strong slut! We have all days to play. We'll wait for the days where you'll wag your tail and begged us, brothers...Hahaha"

Thud!

Chapter 535 Leave no regret in life

A/N: Folks, I have to apologize for my rest yesterday. My eyes got blurry last night which scared the heck out of me. Anything in the distance became unclear. My eyes are sensitive because I can see what others can't. A little change transformed into a huge issue for me.

A body was thrown in, motionless after hitting the floor. The men, who laughed evilly shut the door and walked away, not stopping their remarks.

The man inside regained energy and wiggled his way toward the body with worries as he hissed subconsciously. He didn't dare to confirm his fear as he crawled closer.

The body wasn't moving. If not for the slightest ups and downs on the chest, indicating her breathing, the man would have thought his partner was really gone.

"Hey," he whispered. "Please talk to me."

"Just don't talk." A female voice moaned. "Let me take a rest."

"No, don't.... Talk to me." The man with bruises and wounds on his body and his face urged.

He feared as soon as the woman stopped talking, something might happen. Sometimes, willpower plays an important role in survival.

Losing one meant one step into the gate of the underworld. The woman realized what her partner had in mind and rolled her eyes silently.

She wasn't giving up. She was just too tired. The man managed to move the woman's body and saw her state. He gasped.

The reddened sore parts across the entire body and the puff cheeks apparently hit multiple times. And the blood stain, he shivered in anger.

In fact, he wasn't well either. Being tortured and interrogated to suck any information, these bastards gave no quarters.

He even had doubts about whether what he was doing was worth it. Of course, these thoughts dissipated when his eyes landed on the woman's figure.

Someone weaker never gave up, where would his face go if he relented? Although this woman was his superior, as a man, letting someone weaker than him suffer was another agony.

"It's all that bastard's fault. We never thought we would be betrayed." The man cursed lightly.

"This is war. There'll always be traitors among us. Only the strong will remain faithful." The woman comforted, hearing the grinding of teeth from her partner.

She smiled despite her miserable appearance. The ugliness was beautiful like an angel banished to the mortal world in the man's eyes.

He really didn't want to work under a woman's supervision initially but he must obey orders. After spending time together, her charisma and effort changed his opinion. He should never judge the book by its cover.

To him, she was the most beautiful goddess. Even now in the most desperate situation, she managed to calm his agitated soul. "Senior, if you really can't, you can..."

"Shut up." The woman scolded. "Don't ever think about it."

"But...you won't be able to hang on for long." The man pleaded. He was selfish, yes. In a matter of life and death, rights and wrongs were blurred out.

"I know you're considering me but you should never harm your comrades." The woman spoke in a gentle tone again, understanding the man's protectiveness. "Remember, we are here for our people. It's just our luck, which isn't too bright for the future."

"You always care for others, senior. When will you ever think about yourself?" For the white moonlight, the man was dissatisfied. Such a pure soul had to go through hell. For what? Justice? He wondered if their efforts and sacrifice were worth it.

He had asked multiple times and the woman's answer didn't waver the slightest. He was ashamed of his weak heart. Compared to this senior, he liked and respected, he really didn't deserve to be her subordinates.

"Someone has to pay for it right, for peace and security."

"How about our comrades? Why don't they even try? It's almost two weeks." The man complained bitterly.

The woman was silent for a while. "Maybe they have their own issues to solve."

On the day, they knew they were betrayed, they tried to inform the rest through the secret channels. They didn't know whether their comrades received the message but both attempted an escape.

Running continuously for three days and three nights, both ran for their life in the game of cat and mouse.

The enemy wasn't a barbaric tribal opponent. They utilized high-tech as well. Despite the borderland, the region was very developed.

They also had their own teams of hackers and experts to track both trails. The technology of Country C had no leverage here, without proper support behind the scenes.

Being a spy usually meant going alone without help. Life-threatening and exhausting as well.

The amount of stress burdening the operatives wasn't light. Unless a person had sufficient psychological willpower, they would collapse quickly, especially when they had to escape for life.

Fortunately, at least, they managed to deliver a message that the informant betrayed them. Otherwise, more people would be captured.

These bastards were skilled enough to hunt further if their connections still existed. The two naturally hoped to see, their comrades making a rescue attempt.

After seeing and hearing none, they had some discomfort inside their heart. Even if they weren't certain, the feeling of being abandoned occupied their minds.

Both had no idea that their comrades tried to infiltrate to search but the enemy's defense and vigilance were too strong. Covert operation was impossible.

Getting them out was easy but to leave the country unscathed and find their location were unsurmountable gaps given a few manpower. Along with pressure from above to stand down, the two completely lost connections and were on the missing list in the hands of their superiors.

"What do we do?" The man lost hope. They couldn't escape. Both were tortured and out of energy. Food was merely given to let them live long enough.

"Wait. I'm sure our motherland will never give up on us. We must survive to see the light." The woman struggled to sit down and groaned with pain from the movement.

Even though she thought the reality was far from her hope, hope must exist to survive, right? Not to mention, she had a partner, whose psychology was collapsing. She needed to reaffirm and build a stronger wall.

"Did they...hmm...did they go to that length?" The man asked with a lack of confidence and a little apprehension. "I'm worried every time they take you out."

"No, not yet." The woman paused and sighed heavily. "But it won't be long before they resort to those humiliating methods for the woman."

Thinking of the fate of women like her, it would be false to say she had no fear. She merely suppressed her emotions and didn't show her weakness to her enemies and her friends.

Today, because she was wearing clothes and the light was dimmer, the whiplashes on her body weren't seen by the man.

Should her partner witness what happened to her, she dared not think more. She glanced at the man, whose face couldn't be seen clearly.

"I'm actually more worried about you." The woman's words surprised the man. "They will soon use me to extract information from you. Promise me, no matter what happens, you won't say a word."

"..." The man turned his face away. "Senior, I—"

"Please, okay?! Don't fail my expectation for you even if you heard my begging voice or..."

"Don't talk, senior." The man interrupted her. "I don't want to hear about it. I promise, okay."

The two were silent again, feeling each other's temperature. Probably, the last warmth for the unknown fate ahead.

The woman recalled what she had seen when she was hauled around. A certain beautiful foreign figure, played around like a prostitute. Because she was tortured to the point that she couldn't remember everything, she only heard those bastards threatening her future similar to the figure, they humiliated.

She knew they were explicitly behaving on purpose to scare her mentally with examples.

According to them, they called her, Sofia. Another Interpol agent who got trafficked somehow. She didn't know the real reason but her shock was close to collapse when she saw and listened to the stories of Sofia. The woman shuddered as she wondered whether her fate would replicate Sofia's, a trophy for these demons.

Imagining herself, played around like a sex slave by many people till she only knew about mating for survival. Her final self-esteem and respect were driven out.

Even the well-trained agent became like this, could she survive? These frightening thoughts never ceased to linger in her head.

The woman calmed herself again, not to think too much, one step at a time, and apologized inwardly to her compatriots for her mission failure.

Because of her mistakes in reading people properly, the rescue operations in the future would take a toll. She had dragged other people down.

Many people, who shouldn't experience disaster in the future, would die and suffer as a result since they couldn't eliminate the threat early.

Sorry, it seems like I won't be able to go back. The woman muttered silently. She recalled the faces of her family members and friends. One wrong step, forever into the abyss.

As her mood dipped lower, a voice elicited a spark. "I like you senior. I have always liked you. I don't want to leave any regrets. I love you."

Just when the man felt, his confession was doomed to receive nothing, not that he expected too much but he decided to spend a worthy time while he lived, the woman smiled and waited, snaring the man's heart.

A few seconds later.

"I like you too. I should have taken you out on a date sooner if I knew this would happen."

"I know you'd reject but I...eh...wait...are you serious, senior?" The man trembled with excitement, his eyes still in disbelief. He regretted he should have confess sooner.

Chapter 536 Rough ideas

Ling Qingyu separated from Gu Yi and Assistant Su after obtaining appropriate benefits. The latter two moved around and studied Spirit Fox operators then decided to take a rest.

Returning to the manor for some snacks, Ling Qingyu felt a little heavy, hearing the news of possible sacrifices.

Being aware such people existed was one thing; knowing yourself was another.

Tang Ziyi followed behind her without words. She seemingly had several questions for Ling Qingyu's decision to participate, when the latter could become an off-hand boss.

On the dining table, Tang Ziyi tapped her forehead as she fathomed Ling Qingyu's role. She didn't even consider the skydiving aspect since Ling Qingyu gave her words.

Meanwhile, Ling Qingyu tried to chat with Miss System. 'Hey, what do you mean by preliminary reward? Is it just what I expect?'

[Correcto. Too bad, you won't receive any extra reward for guessing right.]

Ling Qingyu's lips twitched, hearing Miss System's playful manner. 'Is that all? Even if I'm capable, my subordinates need one as well. They have too little experience.'

Miss System rolled her eyes at the upcoming bargaining. As expected of a businesswoman, not taking advantage of others was blasphemy.

[What do you want? Don't go overboard, or you'll understand how I'll play with your life later on.]

A naked threat. Ling Qingyu gulped and greeted Miss System's ancestor.

'I just hope that I can share a mini experience of my training with the girls so that they are more familiar and adapt easily.'

There was a pause in Miss System's reply. [Alright, that's still solvable. The system wastes energy doing so and hopes you'll harvest more merits and do more goods for the people.]

'Yes, yes. Thank you, Elder Sister System.' Ling Qingyu totally changed her manner of flattery. Fortunately, she managed to negotiate properly.

[However, there's a catch.]

'Emm, don't hang me in the air, just say it.' Even then, Ling Qingyu sensed a dreadful future.

Miss System sneered at Ling Qingyu's confidence in moving her around like a servant. She was a metaverse existence. Hmph, Ling Qingyu needed to be taught a lesson.

For now, she should hide what she intended to do, lest Ling Qingyu reject the mission completely. [Hmm, anyway, you'll be tasked with a mission someday. Believe the system, you won't be forced to do it against your conscience.]

Miss System spoke while her gaze landed on another parallel world, where people spent their lives peacefully but only she knew what fate awaited for them. The world was under countdown from a disaster.

What else but to nod helplessly before Miss System's unequal treaty? Ling Qingyu wondered when would she ever have a cute Miss System.

"Why are you following me?" Ling Qingyu asked Tang Ziyi, satisfied with Miss System's tolerance, not knowing the latter had a bigger plan for her. By then, Ling Qingyu never treated Miss System as a simple naive child anymore but as a black-bellied Tsundere.

"We need to discuss properly." Tang Ziyi laid on the furniture and replied. "Even though our minister has described the requirements, that's her. What about yours? Only then will I be able to calculate and decide what to do next."

"Well, I didn't think these through enough. My apology." Ling Qingyu said gently.

Tang Ziyi waved her hand, not minding Ling Qingyu. She just reacted slower. In a matter of time within a day, Ling Qingyu should be aware soon.

Perhaps, that mysterious entity occupied most of Ling Qingyu's mind. Tang Ziyi never blamed Ling Qingyu.

"Tell me more about your request."

"It's to annihilate the entire scam group or to render them useless from hurting more innocent people."

"Damn, that's going to cost us a lot. Time, money and manpower."

"Seriously, Sister Ziyi. I don't think we need to worry about money when we produce our own equipment and ammunition," said Ling Qingyu. "Besides, like you said, we have Elena to support us anytime."

"Yeah, honestly even without Elena, we have a way." Tang Ziyi nodded. "It might be impossible before but when you have a bracelet with a spatial function..."

Tang Ziyi didn't speak more but Ling Qingyu understood. Right, this bracelet was stupidly hanging on her forearm. Apart from strengthening her mystery, Ling Qingyu thought the large space inside was useless.

Now, in the coming mission, the bracelet could serve as a mobile warehouse, where ammunition, food, and other supplies were stored.

Not to mention, the bracelet wasn't a simple space device, it contained a vast area of land, the size of a big airport, which meant that small manufacturing production lines could be assembled inside for necessary stuff.

Ling Qingyu needed to consult Tang Ziyi on this matter. The latter's idea was more helpful than hers.

Thinking of the handsome moment, when she waved her hand, and a pile of weapons and armored vehicles appeared, Ling Qingyu smiled.

There was only one drawback. How to persuade her subordinates from speaking out?

Based on her prestige and her support for the girls, financially and everything, Ling Qingyu knew they would never do that but what if. It was always good to be cautious.

Signing an NDA wouldn't solve the problems. She wanted more binding force, much more powerful than law.

Ling Qingyu spoke about this matter to Tang Ziyi, who promised to solve these problems quickly and also affirmed that she should trust her girls.

Although the time spent together hadn't exceeded a year except for the original security team members like Su Ruomei and Jiang Yu, the trust built upon the comradeship and fighting together had proven everything.

Besides, with her monitoring and collective system of punishment, rewards, and strengthening, no one would like to extricate themselves.

The feeling of becoming more powerful and being able to grasp their faith was addictive.

With Tang Ziyi's promise, Ling Qingyu no longer thought about these unnecessary worries. She really should give her trust.

Otherwise, the other parties could feel her vigilance and lost the possible deeper connections with her.

The two then discussed about the previous conversation with Gu Yi. Under Tang Ziyi's rough plan, Gu Yi promised to satisfy their request to allocate a big transport for Spirit Fox.

Although Ling Qingyu understood Gu Yi was merely polite, asking any further requirements, Ling Qingyu said everything was enough.

In fact, if Ling Qingyu owned an aircraft, the group might not even need Gu Yi's arrangement.

Gu Yi reminded both that the arrangement above might change despite unlikely but she had both of them mentally prepared.

What if superiors had a clearer mind and steeled will to press on to rescue the undercover operatives? Spirit Fox might not be needed.

Even then, Gu Yi comforted Ling Qingyu that the previous deal would still go on, no matter the change.

What Gu Yi didn't realize was that Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi already decided to eliminate and rescue the operators whether requested or not.

Miss System had said so, it would be impolite to refuse.

After the two conversed and argued back and forth, Tang Ziyi left quickly for arrangement, not forgetting to curse Ling Qingyu's frivolous shopkeeping behavior.

80 operators would follow Ling Qingyu's mission. Along with Tang Ziyi's hidden inventions to provide tactical support in the battlefield, she figured their strength should crush any forces in the initial engagement.

Maneuver warfare was the key here. Once the team got stuck and brought down, enemy's reinforcement would encircle and trap them.

In spite of the worst scenario, Ling Qingyu possessed a wild card—Elena, a cruiser-like humongous nuclear submarine. Elena's electromagnetic precise long-range artilleries combined with satellites above brought a terrible combo.

The only predicament was extracting the undercover operatives as well as those innocent victims, who were 'trafficked' and enslaved.

Damn, like the saying, getting in is easy; getting out is a misery.

Chapter 537 Interview

However, Ling Qingyu didn't linger for long as she felt a little worried about spending time outside like a rough caveman.

She dared not imagine herself suffering. Out of nowhere, she remembered her bracelet and beamed into a bright smile.

Her lips curled up as she laughed heavily. The space inside was so large that even bathing and toiletry could be taken care of.

As someone who lived a luxurious life, why should she suffer? It seemed like Miss System forced her to work because she already possessed a treasure.

According to Miss System, the bracelet originally contained spiritual aura and immortal treasures even if the legendary item was damaged. Yet, these were removed by a tsundere.

Being able to allow a living creature to enter and exit, based on her permission, was a huge boost.

Ling Qingyu no longer had an air of heaviness around her, realizing the depression she disliked would never come true.

The reason why men were preferred on the battlefield was clearly shown here. Although drastic living conditions affected a lot, none of Spirit Fox operators except for Ling Qingyu would have a problem, even if they lived under dire conditions.

Mentally and physically, they had been trained to an unimaginable length. The longer time passed under Tang Ziyi's transfer of inheritance, the more astounding results were seen.

Of course, for men, adapting to those dire living conditions was easier. In terms of hygiene and health, women demanded more stringent conditions; otherwise, they would get infected under worsening conditions.

It couldn't be helped when women with weaker physiques were prone to harmful substances. Plus, the manner, in which the two genders excreted waste, was different.

If living conditions were first-class, even during the battle, Ling Qingyu understood the morales would definitely go up again. Nobody likes suffering if an opportunity to enjoy exists.

She consulted Miss System and Athena to renovate the bracelet's interior space. Fortunately, Miss System talked more today and didn't neglect Ling Qingyu like most of the time.

Even separate small manufacturing assembly lines were possible. How come, right? Ling Qingyu had the same question as anyone who had a clever mind.

Miss System replied the bracelet was storing energy from outside and Ling Qingyu knew where it went after absorbing it based on her improving physique.

But what amazed Ling Qingyu was that these energies could be converted into resources for a separate world inside the bracelet to cultivate itself.

By then, Athena could transfer pertinent machines to produce autonomously—a perfect secret realm, belonging solely to Ling Qingyu.

She hadn't tested out yet. After discussing with Miss System and Athena, she decided to try. Selling cuteness and begging nonstop, Miss System finally relented to allow Athena to navigate inside the bracelet as an AI.

Ling Qingyu was immediately glad. She had a housekeeper to take care of her secret universe.

Since Tang Ziyi should likely talk and cooperate with Athena, Ling Qingyu let them aside. Her Miss System had disappeared and could no longer be called after Ling Qingyu's request.

She shook her head wryly.

Well, she remembered what she was supposed to do today. After treating her mother-in-law at the highest level, Ling Qingyu almost forgot what she decided.

She had sent a message to the woman, who attempted to commit suicide with a kid, introducing herself as a friend contacted by the police officer who rescued her.

After all, Ling Qingyu promised herself to help the people needing charity. Since her foundation establishment needed manpower, this woman could be in the recruitment.

Even though she had no idea about her psychological state yet, Ling Qingyu guessed the woman should have already refrained from killing herself and her child again.

She didn't like dragging one's child toward one's pitfall but Ling Qingyu figured she should give that woman a chance. After Athena's investigation, the woman graduated with flying colors in management subject, suitable as her candidate.

She got pregnant early and married a man, who died in an accident. She had attempted to find jobs but failed and naturally fell under a scumbag's sugarcoating when her mood was at its lowest.

The woman replied with excitement when she saw hope that someone offered her an opportunity. She had been denied because of her gap years, inexperience and a child.

Cheerfully responding to Ling Qingyu's request to meet, the woman thanked her benefactor multiple times. From her tone, Ling Qingyu exhaled and smiled.

At least, this woman lost any thoughts of seeking death. As for how she would solve the lawsuit regarding suicide, Ling Qingyu could hire lawyers and the woman's situation and plight should allow the judge to show mercy.

The poor kid would lose a mother if the woman was charged with crimes. No sane judge would carry on the fruitless punishment. Law existed above but humanity stayed beyond.

Although this was an interview, Ling Qingyu already accepted the woman. What remained was to test her skills and talents.

Ling Qingyu almost forgot to call the woman about today's meeting when she had informed her about the appointment.

Rubbing her nose, Ling Qingyu made a call, which was answered within 2 seconds. She smiled more awkwardly when somebody was waiting with huge hope and anticipation.

"I'm sorry. I was occupied with some serious matter," said Ling Qingyu.

"It's alright, Ma'am. I can understand."

"I still should apologize, right? If I don't look at my schedule at the last moment, I really would have ignored you. Fortunately..." Ling Qingyu didn't say more.

The woman on the opposite line also responded politely. After a casual exchange, Ling Qingyu asked where could they meet.

"Ma'am, you should decide."

"Then, where do you live? I'll pick you up."

"Ah—I don't want to trouble you..."

"Tell me, please don't waste my time." Ling Qingyu gave no escape and the woman finally relayed her address.

Hanging up, she called Su Ruomei again to increase security details around the residence and send more Spirit Fox members to protect the minister as well as increasing the patrolling units to ensure the radius was safe.

Even Athena monitored thoroughly the entire Province nonstop without the slightest care of energy consumption.

Ling Qingyu really couldn't afford a risk of news, where a minister was harmed under her watch.

Su Ruomei understood the severity and promised. Afterward, Ling Qingyu decided to leave the manor to pick up the woman.

In order to prevent stressing the poor lady too much, Ling Qingyu thought about choosing an ordinary vehicle but considering the dangerous factors and for her safety, she drove her Bentley.

Compared to Rolls-Royce and other supercars, Bentley was indeed ordinary.

Chapter 538 'Interview?' (Edited)

Even if Ling Qingyu said no, her bodyguards would trail behind her. Helpless yet pleased, Ling Qingyu shook her head as she entered the location of the woman she had an appointment with.

Athena immediately took over and drew the navigation path, prompting Ling Qingyu to sit back and relax.

She didn't bother about her followers. Usually, they weren't noticeable but after being taught by Tang Ziyi, she began to capture these implicit movements.

Annoyed, Ling Qingyu cursed multiple times at Tang Ziyi but at the same time grateful for improving her situational awareness.

Well, a bit too much.

After half an hour, she reached the location and gave a call. The woman's voice seemed to jump with joy.

Ling Qingyu smiled, a little happy that she had helped someone out personally while saddened to realize there were others who were struggling with life or suffering from evil's hands.

Good won't exist if evil doesn't. Ling Qingyu understood the phenomenon but she like the rest of the world hoped for the best.

From the side mirror, she saw a woman, she was familiar with, stepping out of the apartment, looking left and right.

Seeing the only luxurious vehicle in the parking spots, among ordinary cars, the woman showed some restraint. She neither knocked on the window nor stayed closer, merely standing away and pressing her phone.

Apparently, this woman was trying to call Ling Qingyu, who knew the woman or remembered the suicide victim clearly.

She recognized the figure as soon as the woman walked toward her Bentley through the side mirror.

"Come inside." She got out and waved at the poor woman, who blushed and responded with a bit of embarrassment.

The two entered and Ling Qingyu obviously noticed the woman appeared too restrained, not daring to touch or feel like her skin would ruin or damage the other luxury.

Ling Qingyu sighed and started the conversation. "Have you eaten, anything yet?"

"Emm...Yep." But her stomach cried out in protest. "Well...sort of."

"Alright, let's eat too. I haven't taken a meal too." Ling Qingyu lied without the slightest change in expression.

Though she hadn't eaten lunch yet, the snacks in her residence were a large portion for ordinary people. However, Ling Qingyu was no ordinary.

Given her strengthening physique, the demand for food was unimaginable. If not for being the boss, Ling Qingyu would have been questioned multiple times by her subordinates with worries about her health.

Where had they seen a beautiful woman gobbling a huge amount of food? Luckily for Ling Qingyu, Spirit Fox operators provided a suitable excuse because their appetite increased as well.

So, it wasn't a problem for Ling Qingyu to eat a meal with the woman beside her even if she had eaten not long ago.

Ling Qingyu furrowed her brows as she asked. "Where's your child? Why don't you bring him along?"

"Ah—Ma'am, I left him with my neighbor, who will babysit for him." The woman replied. "I don't want to trouble you with my son."

"It's no trouble at all." Ling Qingyu shook her head. "I should have told you to bring the child along."

As a single mother, seeking employment, a child could become an obstacle. Ling Qingyu understood why this woman sought death though her paranoia was too extreme.

After all, in Country C, rarely employers hired people with children, particularly single parents. However, the discrimination leaned more toward women.

Men weren't asked such questions but women were. For example, are you in love, single or married? Do you have a child?

From these questions, they kicked off irrelevant applicants. Since Country C's labor laws and regulations weren't considerate for women, these kinds of unfair questions went unanswered.

Most women who came out of pregnancy for work found difficulties merely in searching for one. The time gap they took would become their disadvantage.

Hearing Ling Qingyu's considerate words, the woman merely smiled. She didn't want to ruin the first impression of her employer because of her child even if Ling Qingyu had mentioned several times, she never cared.

Ling Qingyu wondered if this woman never realized her identity or didn't bother to know at all.

After all, most of the women here admired and worshiped her. This woman clearly seemed to treat her like a complete stranger.

Or perhaps, the glasses she wore, hid her identity, Ling Qingyu comforted herself. In fact, those who struggled to survive daily had no time and the leisure to gossip and study about other people.

"What's your name?"

"Tao Ling."

"A beautiful name indeed." Ling Qingyu complimented as she savored the rhymes and meanings in Country C language.

"Ma'am, how should I call you?"

"Just call me, Ms. Ling. The name is Ling Qingyu." Ling Qingyu looked with expectations as if imagining the woman gasped and recognized her.

The reality hit Ling Qingyu hard as Tao Ling tilted her head and repeated the name. "Ling Qingyu...A powerful name, Ms. Ling."

"Thanks." What could Ling Qingyu say more?

Athena laughed without hiding, sprouting her voice through the spectacles after learning about Ling Qingyu's deflated appearance.

"That, Ms. Ling. Whether or not, I am suitable and selected, I'm grateful to give me this rare opportunity," Tao Ling said, not bearing too much hope despite her burning eyes.

"You'll definitely succeed." Ling Qingyu replied and drove out of the parking spots. A joke, she had clearly investigated Tao Ling's biography and her character. Even Athena analyzed the past events. The only negative result should belong to her suicidal moment of dragging her child along.

Who knew? Maybe this girl was still hesitating but Ling Qingyu's and the rest of her operators' appearance agitated Tao Ling. Nobody could know for sure what the relevant party had in her mind.

"Please express my gratitude to the officer who saved me. She was really courageous in spite of all the dangers involved. If not for her words, I might recover slower," said Tao Ling.

"I'll tell her that." Ling Qingyu blushed when she heard someone praising her up to the sky, recalling her selling miserableness moment, one of her darkest time. The light talk eased Tao Ling's nervousness and the communication went smoothly.

When they arrived at a reputable restaurant, Tao Ling showed hesitance then bit her lips to follow. Ling Qingyu insisted and tried to warm up the vulnerable girl.

Yes, a girl. In Ling Qingyu's eyes, Tao Ling seemed more like a young inexperienced girl in the affairs of work, no matter what the latter had experienced.

From the start till now, Ling Qingyu never mentioned about Tao Ling's work, which aggravated the latter's nervousness. "Please eat, Ms. Tao. We'll talk deeper after our stomachs are full."

Chapter 539 Who doesn't begin with nothing?

What else but to listen to Ling Qingyu's words? She was the boss here. Tao Ling could only oblige and eat the meals but the waitresses hadn't served yet.

Why didn't Ling Qingyu want to talk about work here? Was she acting perfunctory to cater to her friend's request for help when the truth was that Ling Qingyu never considered her?

Tao Ling bit her lips and glanced away. Her mood dimmed but she still try to maintain her expression and inner turmoil.

Ling Qingyu poured a hot tea for Tao Ling, ignoring the girl's uneasiness. She knew and could read this girl's mind. Despite similar ages, the two experienced totally different lives.

Tao Ling could never hide her thoughts. Ling Qingyu poured a cup and took a sip, savoring the hot yet fresh taste, calming her mind.

"Take a sip."

"Ah-yes. I'm sorry." Tao Ling was stunned and bowed a little, smiling apologetically then reached out for the cup.

Seeing Tao Ling fiddling around, Ling Qingyu smiled and began to question her past, thawing the frozen emotion.

Under Ling Qingyu's social skills, Tao Ling spoke more and more about her life with joy, filling in parts of the information, that Ling Qingyu already knew.

On the other hand, Tao Ling realized she wasn't as bad as she thought she was. She had accomplished many successes.

Only when the part of where she reached her love life, Tao Ling sighed. She didn't regret falling in love or becoming pregnant because this was no use.

What she regretted was staying inside the home, serving her husband and the family which made her depend on others.

If she had still retained and applied her learned skills, she wouldn't have to suffer. But then, life was a wonder.

If she had not dived so low in life, where would she have had the chance to meet Ling Qingyu and surpass what she had had in mind for her ambition?

Soon, the waitress served so many dishes that Tao Ling widened her eyes. There was no way, two frail women could gobble everything.

But Ling Qingyu proved her wrong. Stunned, a few minutes later, as Tao Ling watched so much had entered Ling Qingyu's mouth.

If not for the elegance in Ling Qingyu's movement and fairy temperament, Tao Ling suspected she had encountered a hungry ogre.

Heck, seeing so many pieces of food, disappeared from the dishes, Tao Ling controlled herself from rubbing her eyes.

Ling Qingyu teased. "What? You believe girls shouldn't eat too much?"

"Ah, no, Ms. Ling." Tao Ling blushed.

"Alright, I'll stop kidding you. I have a huge appetite because I work out a lot."

After Ling Qingyu felt full under Tao Ling's disbelief, she ordered the waitress to pack the remaining food as well as two untouched cuisines.

"Take these to your home. I don't want to waste any food." Ling Qingyu smiled.

"Thank you, Ms. Ling." Tao Ling pursed her lips and nodded. How could she not realize Ling Qingyu did everything on purpose?

Although Ling Qingyu ate a lot, her consumption couldn't empty the dishes. Tao Ling felt her hope dashed away, believing Ling Qingyu was compensating her.

"You're hired, Ms. Tao." Ling Qingyu decided to not torture the little girl any longer.

Tao Ling obviously paused, her expression dead silent, awestruck by the sudden good news. Ling Qingyu waved her hand to resurrect her.

"You aren't joking around, right?" Tao Ling asked.

"Am I the type who likes to tease and torture people?" Ling Qingyu snorted but her lips twitched when Tao Ling nodded imperceptibly.

She had a premonition, the girl before her would definitely give her a headache in a good way in the future.

"But you haven't interviewed my skills or relevant experience."

"Haven't I prompted you to tell your story?" Ling Qingyu replied. "You don't really think I'm doing useless stuff when I'm conversing with you?"

"Oh," Tao Ling responded with admiration in her eyes. "Then, could you tell me why and what work I am doing? I don't need to accept what you offer, right?"

"Of course, not. I won't force or rush you. The decision is yours." Ling Qingyu answered. "As for your job, I have a general idea which will demand a lot from you because the business is just beginning from scratch. In the meantime, while I prepare, you'll work as my secretary before you are transferred to work in a position that I envision."

"Thank you, Ms. Ling. You have no idea how lost I am for words to express my gratitude."

"Then, please don't talk." Ling Qingyu joked.

"Ah..." Tao Ling's face turned energetic.

"And, you can withdraw your three months' salary early and pay any debts you have if you agree," Ling Qingyu said. "Is the amount enough? If not, I can extend it to 6 months..."

"No, it's more than enough." Tao Ling was frightened by Ling Qingyu's offer.

"Good, you'll gain experience and study under Sister Zhao, who will be your direct superior. I'll introduce you to her later." Ling Qingyu tapped her phone and sent a message to Zhao Xiurong to connect the two. "You won't be feeling down that you are only in a studying position?"

"I won't. I'm more than happy to earn a salary. I'm just a little undeserving to be a secretary with my appearance."

"Don't belittle yourself." Ling Qingyu studied Tao Ling's figure and thought this girl really needed to eat full and work out, to regain her healthy luster. Although she wasn't pretty, Tao Ling seemed adorable.

"Can you explain what I will work on after learning?" Tao Ling asked with anticipation.

"Sure, nothing is confidential. I intend to establish a foundation where you'll manage the staff and others."

Tao Ling listened to Ling Qingyu's vision and praised inwardly. Sure enough, the elite was an elite—she saw something further than anybody else.

If a foundation like Ling Qingyu said existed, Tao Ling's past problem wouldn't have happened, not knowing in life who to consult and what to do next.

So many tragedies could be prevented; so many injustices would receive a fair trial again.

After all, in addition to charity, providing funds, scholarships and opportunities to people, lawyers' service was included.

With a background, those second-generation evils must consider twice where they ran around with impudence without reprisal.

Of course, these hadn't started yet but Tao Ling was already eager to serve this noble goal. The charity aimed more toward those being oppressed by power and money.

As Ling Qingyu said, she had too much that she needed to spend. Don't those rich villains intend to tire out the victims through money in the court elongating the process?

Why not provide a lawyer and funding to seek justice? Ling Qingyu hadn't told Tao Ling that Athena's existence would ensure everything was covered perfectly.

"In fact, the reason I chose you and thought you are suitable is your background." Ling Qingyu steepled her fingers. "You have experienced so much and you'll never forget your suffering. With your strong mindset, you will never be corrupted and never succumb to injustice. I'm relieved to hand over my foundation once you attain the necessary skills.

As for work experience, who doesn't begin with nothing? You just need an opportunity to spring up."

Chapter 540 Shit!

After packing up the remaining dishes, Ling Qingyu and Tao Ling departed from the restaurant. The former sent the latter to her house, while explaining future works.

Tao Ling's work wasn't easy. She had to recruit so many employees and manage them but Ling Qingyu had the confidence that after following Zhao Xiurong around, Tao Ling should have sufficient capability.

Besides, these employees could be sought from the victims, who were housed in her residence. Tang Ziyi could allocate them based on their needs.

Tao Ling bowed several times, standing still until Ling Qingyu's Bentley disappeared from her sight.

Initially, Ling Qingyu wanted to wait until Tao Ling entered the stairwell or her apartment before leaving. After all, she must be responsible for Tao Ling since she was the one to take her out.

Well, it sounded weird like ensuring her wife's safety...Anyway, Ling Qingyu could only drive away helplessly under Tao Ling's insistence. The latter felt so much in debt that she dared not trouble Ling Qingyu.

It was fortunate she had Athena to check Tao Ling's status so that she could go on with peace of mind.

While outside, Ling Qingyu decided to roam around Tao Ling's neighborhood. As a boss, it wasn't wrong to care for her subordinate, right?

Although during her last patrol, the area was extremely in contrast with the rest of the chaotic places, nobody could say for sure.

Ling Qingyu parked the vehicle in the middle of a congested lively night market town. Don't think a town meant a low population.

In Country C, multiplying by 10 times the original measurement amount is the only method comparable to other countries.

Other nations' towns seemed like thriving cities in Country C. Villages appeared like towns, and vice versa. The higher the terminology, the more incomparable to the rest of the world.

The province had surpassed many small nations.

Because the time hadn't darkened yet, Ling Qingyu detected no business. Clean and sparse elderly populations roaming around in leisure while most youths were at work.

Sometimes, Ling Qingyu felt like a Buddhist. What was the point of working hard if one day she must die? What was the use to struggle?

How could life torture living beings? Just to live, they had to struggle continuously till they died.

In this life, Ling Qingyu could enjoy luxury and life because of her wealth. A wage-earner would never have the slightest moment to enjoy since they feared someone would rob theirs. No one liked being replaced and worked harder.

In the end, they spent more time on work than important matters, families and relationships. A fast-paced world had destroyed the thriving social structures into something else.

Either the system evolved or the downfall would chew on everyone, not leaving any bones, a few generations later.

What was the point of thinking all this if she couldn't change yet? Why not attempt a change by herself? Ling Qingyu thought.

Her parked Bentley attracted eyes around. Many trying to unveil the identity of the driver. The luxury sedan seemed out of place surrounded by mediocre vehicles.

Ling Qingyu ignored the gazes and closed her eyes. She was safe here. Plus, her subordinates were parked nearby to support her at a moment's notice.

Since she was free for now and had little time, regarding Gu Yi's matter, Ling Qingyu unboxed her 'punishment' — 30 years of skydiving.

'Miss System, bring me the preliminary reward. Let's do this.'

Her spine felt numb after she requested Miss System to continue and boom. She entered a sleeping beauty mode. One year converted to one minute. 30 minutes later, she should exit from her slumber state.

When Ling Qingyu opened her eyes, she noticed her surroundings had totally changed. The temperature seemed colder.

Her eyes widened as she saw the landscape from an extreme height. Damn, even a mist of clouds wafted around.

Ling Qingyu knew she was inside an aircraft, just from the frequent vibrations of ups and downs and engines' whirls. The wind seemed turbulent, shrilling in her ears.

She looked around and gasped, realizing her situation. She saw a group of men and women, dressed tightly in military uniform, kevlar, and helmet, their eyes dead serious.

They formed two line formations toward the opening at the back of the aircraft. Ling Qingyu knew they were preparing to parachute.

She also realized one of her hands was holding the rope attached to the metal line above. Surely, this was a mechanism to open a parachute automatically once a paratrooper dropped from the aircraft.

The small translucent red light shone across the compartment, depicting that the plane hadn't reached the staging point for the paratrooper. Once the color turned green, she had to go first.

She felt hands touching her back and shuddered. She tilted back and received a thumbs-up and a strong pat on the shoulder.

Because the sound was too loud and the lighting was dim, she couldn't understand or see what the man meant. But her eyes captured a soldier behind this man replicating the same process and she understood.

Pre-jumping checklist, She assumed.

Ling Qingyu nodded and patted with her fist, eliciting a chuckle from the man. She turned her gaze to the wide vision in the front.

Whew, she took a deep breath. Everything was too realistic; she never expected Miss System to go through this length. She thought she had to go through some arduous training first before jumping from the plane, not this!

Miss System directly let her jump and she was the first one in the line too. Heck, even the military training exercise appeared.

Well, although the situation was a bit exciting, who hadn't tried the first time? Plus, she was merely simulating in her mind despite realism here. She knew she was in an illusion.

Frankly, a normal person would sink deep into an illusion unable to extract themselves but Ling Qingyu wasn't one.

She, herself, had yet to understand the length of her mental strength. Miss System also noticed her perks and decided to hone Ling Qingyu through this journey.

Just when Ling Qingyu clapped her hands in excitement, she saw bland fireworks and heard small explosions.

Until her eyes glanced at streaks of yellow lines whizzing past and exploding at a certain height, Ling Qingyu knew this wasn't an exercise.

These were tracers from anti-aircraft guns and a large one too, no not one but several. Was she in some screenplay of a big war where she became a small character?

Ling Qingyu complained bitterly at Miss System. Obviously, the latter was punishing her on purpose to show dissatisfaction with her greed.

This bastard threw her in the middle of a battlefield. A complete novice sent to war! Fortunately, this wasn't real but Ling Qingyu knew, she could still feel pain if she was injured accidentally, or even death, who knew?

Nonetheless, seeing explosions against the evening background, Ling Qingyu immersed herself in a beautiful dream although one question remained in her mind.

Why didn't the other force take out the enemy's AA forces before parachuting airborne troops?

Amidst the chaos, someone came out of the two lines, looking left and right as he stepped out. He had no restraint! Didn't he fear he would fall?

Ling Qingyu saw the man stretching his head out on both sides as if to check the aircraft's left and right. The only attachment was his hand grasping the metal rail.

Apparently, this guy should be a jumpmaster or her platoon leader. He made sure everything was safe and nodded to himself.

Then, he patted her shoulder and asked with worry. "Sergeant Ling, your face looks so white. Are you nervous?"

Ling Qingyu was speechless. Any sane person would feel frightened by the sudden scene of war even if the explosions went afar.

"Come on, don't be nervous, you'll be the first to jump and feel nothing."

"I'm more afraid after you said this." She shouted back.

Owing to the noise cancellation headsets, where loud noises were powered down while small tones were amplified, normal conversation could still be spoken through shouting.

However, everyone communicated with signals and gestures in order to avoid polluting the only channel where important cases would be held.

After all, what if a superior cried out a command and the soldiers were dilly-dallying? Since this superior spoke himself, she didn't need to bother too much.

"See, now that you're so scared that you began to regret many things."

"Regrets?" Ling Qingyu glanced with confusion. "What to regret?"

"Of course, many things if you haven't experienced all the walks of life." The man folded his arm. "You should have agreed to my date. At least, you would know the feeling of fulfillment and happiness under my powerful love. Not like now, when even if you wish to experience cloud nine, you can't."

You're so correct that I can't refuse, Ling Qingyu rolled her eyes. This bastard knew when to take advantage.

The soldiers nearby laughed and cheered. At the same time, previous nervousness dissipated. Ling Qingyu pursed her lips with complicated eyes. This man was definitely a great leader to calm down everyone's agitation. A pity, this was an illusion.

"Come on. It'll be fine once you reach the ground."