

Beautiful 571

Chapter 571 Total mess

"Special Forces! Drop your weapon and hit the floor!" Similar threatening slogans erupted suddenly after a door burst in.

The gang members' psychology was overwhelmed, not yet recovering from the initial two fellows who were unfortunately slammed unconscious by the wooden door.

Pap! Pap! Pap!

Quickly scanning their faces, the operators fired. None of the faces here belonged to the undercover agents they had memorized deeply.

Before leaving, every operator had read Athena's files to enrich themselves with appropriate intel.

Bodies fell. Gunshots rang above, growing heavier as time passed. "Fan out and clear fast."

Kilo 5 operators rushed their movements. Even then, their motions still retained professionalism, without missing steps due to hurriedness upon entry.

Bringing up the NVGs, apart from the responsible one covering important sectors where enemies could pop out, Kilo 5 operators landed a few more shots on the dead bodies.

As bullets sieved through the flesh, dust and small biological debris sprinkled like mini-volcanic eruptions.

"Control."

"Continue," Kilo 5 operator said. "Locate the circuit breaker to cut the power."

"You sure they use a circuit breaker here?"

"Anything that resembles one. Find it. Darkness is our advantage."

Intangible muffled exclamations came from one of the connected rooms. The building was very large.

From Kilo 5's entry point, there were various rooms connected to the aisle in all directions. Directly ahead, the space between was larger; this should lead Kilo 5 toward the staircase.

The sound came from the left. A few operators immediately stacked on the door. One pried the threshold and turned her back, her arm length just in reach of the doorknob.

She retracted her HK416, took out a slim flashbang from a pouch somewhere behind, and nodded to her partner aiming at the door.

The latter nodded back. Both knew there were multiple tangos inside. Clear fast and get out. Using a flashbang was the most appropriate.

Of course, rushing toward the staircase was better while containing other angles that might threaten the team than always trying to eliminate enemies.

But who knew the direction of the staircase? Who was certain they were going in the right direction? Following the sound of gunfire was correct; however, if one pursued the source like this, the entire team would be miserable.

Bursting into a few rooms to check whether there was another path to continue could reveal the building's architecture so that the operators could guess the path. At least, the probability rose.

Receiving her partner's response, the operator smiled under the hood and delivered a powerful donkey kick. The whole door slid vertically into the room, hinges broken from the strong hit.

Since Spirit Fox operators had strengthened their physiques, they were never the same. The aggression shown toward the enemies would scare them to death.

Naturally, they had full control of their force. If the operator desired to simply swing the door in through her kick, she knew. But she was just too lazy to control it.

After the kick, she tossed a flashbang in and returned to high ready.

Bang!

A bright light illuminated outward.

"Ahem...Ahem..." Continuous coughs and screams ensued.

Her two partners entered and began spraying, ending the misery. She stepped in and saw two crumpling uncomfortably and coughing. "Hold! Keep them alive. I have some questions."

These two were the 'luckiest' to stay alive. The two operators put them last on the list since they weren't holding weapons.

Slinging away her rifle, she marched toward one and lifted the figure by the neck, slamming him down on the table behind, sliding him until his neck was off the edge. Choking him, she asked, "Where's the stairs? Tell me now!"

The man choked and coughed, turning his face away. She felt resistance and sneered, gripping his chin and asked again, "Answer me."

The man still said nothing. She simply unholstered her pistol and aimed from above. Out of patience, she squeezed the trigger and the man stopped moving.

She clicked her tongue and huffed. "What a tough mouth! It's not like we're bloodthirsty."

If the man had heard her complaint, he would definitely crawl back from the Death gate to prove his innocence. He really wanted to talk, but with the iron plier crushing his mouth, how could he speak?

And please, he was still recovering from the closest blast. The 'grenade' exploded underneath his feet! He really died unjustly.

Then, she turned her eyes toward another figure, who was pushed down to the floor nearby by her partner. "It's your turn now."

This time, the operator's violence terrified the shivering man, who began to cough and stutter as he confessed.

Too bad, perhaps he was stimulated too much. The operators frowned and bellowed, "Just give me the general direction."

The man pointed in the direction, somewhere close to the widest aisle of Kilo 5's 12 o'clock orientation.

The operators nodded, satisfied. "You should have spilled the beans earlier to suffer less. Look at him now, cold and alone in the underworld. Do you want to accompany him?"

The man gulped and shook his head. These women were devils! Compared to them, his gang was like puppies. Suffer less? Bullshit, they were sent off to see God, not given a chance to reason.

"Touchy, I thought you'd be loyal to your friend till the end." The operator who exhibited pure violence sighed with regret.

The man fumed and glared at the woman who spoke, but he remembered his situation and lowered his gaze.

Who wanted to prove loyalty to the dead? Brotherhood between gang members was like thin paper, easy to tear at a moment's notice. Betrayal was the norm here.

He couldn't complain much before being hit in the back of the head. The operator who attacked pulled the man's wrists behind and cuffed them.

"Tsk, why knock him out? It's too light, he deserves a bullet."

"Sis," the busy operator bit her lip and disagreed. "Control your mood. We still have a job to do. Remember, we're saving people, not killing them for pure revenge."

The members rapidly withdrew from the room and reported to the leader. Pap! Pap!

Firefight continued as enemies rushed toward Kilo 5 and reacted. They were fighting everywhere, but Kilo 5 was never outgunned.

As long as targets appeared, they were mowed down. Spirit Fox's accuracy was ridiculously high. It wasn't a fight, it was a massacre.

"Cut the power," Kilo 5 leader ordered after hearing her subordinates' report of the discovery of the main circuit breaker.

"Roger." The operator pulled the lever down, and the electricity went out. The tide turned in Kilo 5's favor. The enemies went blind and suffered instantly.

Kilo 5 immediately advanced in the rough direction, leaving behind unclear rooms and hallways.

It couldn't be helped. If they focused on speed, they had to sacrifice security. Unlike before, where the team secured step-by-step, ensuring no escapes or loopholes in the manner Spirit Fox cleared.

The gang members and other unknowns could squirt out of the building and flank them, which was why both Kilo 5 and Kilo 6 requested Tang Ziyi's and Ling Qingyu's assistance.

Every member locked their muzzles on the doors as the team passed. For hallways, someone contained the threat until the entire train passed and declared "last man."

Cries in a language they couldn't understand echoed around. The group put down any threats with firearms. There was no resistance.

The gang members were totally confused and in chaos, without any organization. The enemies were picked off one by one.

There were women too, in uniform, running around. This was a total mess for Spirit Fox as well. Nevertheless, saving the undercover operative was a priority.

So, Kilo 5 shouted in an international language to declare their status.

"Special Forces." Then, an explanation, depending on the target's situation. Suspected ones were met with an aggressive tone and forced to lie down. Those who wielded weapons were warned once and shot. Finally, Kilo 5 managed to find the staircase and raced against time, their hearts a little heavy. Leaving behind two operators to guard the stairwell, Kilo 5 reached the second floor.

Fortunately, Kilo 6 made another entry and began to rectify Kilo 5's follow-up, rapidly occupying spaces before Kilo 5 left the floor. Otherwise, the situation would roll out of control. Panicked bystanders despite numbering low compared to the violent gang ruffians.

Kilo 6 cleared from a different angle and neutralized threats that tried to escape from Kilo 5's route. At the same time, the team quelled the remaining chaos.

Chapter 572 Fighting for a chance of survival

2nd floor.

Several figures ran back and forth, stumbling and hitting obstacles, even walls. Gunshots from everywhere caused people to panic, particularly the 'civilians.'

On the other hand, there weren't many gang members, still not convinced they were being attacked. More so, somebody tried to resist, and a small clash occurred. This was the most acceptable guess among the men.

Even if loud violence erupted downstairs, they were still in a delusion. Kilo 5 operators stepped out of the stairway and aimed at the moving figures.

For now, many were harmless, without weapons. They still hadn't encountered enemies and hustled toward the sound of gunshots.

They were getting close. Five men wielding pistols flashed past, shouting in an unknown language. None of them appeared to be undercover agents. Instead, they were heading toward the gunshots. Spirit Fox put rounds in their heads and continued.

These men were supposed to be reinforcements to kill the agents, they were here to rescue. Passing several rooms and an L-shaped hallway ahead to the right, Spirit Fox operators knew they were close. They could even see a few bullets ricocheting across the walls, and small debris flew from the impact.

Peeking from the corner, the pointsman spotted a couple leaning against the wall. A woman stretched out her pistol and fired down the hallway close to her, blindly. One or two shots, then ducked back.

Rapid automatic fire returned to suppress her. From the sound, it was an AK, ripping everywhere without any aim.

Okay, both sides were exchanging fire in the dark. Only when the woman turned her head in the pointsman's direction did the latter realize that the two might be their objectives.

She notified her partner with a gesture to signal a friendly unit. "Be advised, two friendly units ahead. Check your shots."

The operator sprung out from cover and shouted in an international language, "Special Forces! Put your weapon down!"

Her cry frightened the couple, and the woman opened fire toward her. The bullet bounced off her helmet.

The kinetic energy knocked her off balance, and she fell. Her partner instantly backed up and yelled, "Drop your weapon!"

The pointsman slipped to the ground, the second emerged and yelled, her muzzle straight at the 'unfriendly' woman. The third hooked her finger on the pointsman's vest and pulled hard.

These movements were completed within seconds, and the three operators withdrew back to cover. This time, they spoke in their mother tongue: "Lay down your weapon. We are your rescue. Special Forces from Country C."

The woman, who had just fired, recovered and blushed. She remembered she must have hit something from the sound and immediately worried she had injured her support. "Are you alright? I didn't shoot one of you, did I?"

However, she still pointed her muzzle toward the L-shape in fear. Who knew whether the gangs were pretending to be the Special Forces of her motherland, though the voices sounded like females?

The operator didn't give herself away and communicated from behind the wall. "Violet, Taco, we'll take over from here. Come to my voice, hurry. Remember not to point your weapon at us."

"Okay, coming." The woman complied and nodded at the man beside her. Both were now out of options, stuck here. They dared not evacuate blindly, especially with the electricity out.

However, it was this situation that quickly convinced the duo that rescue was here. They sighed in relief and rushed to Kilo 5's location.

The Kilo 5 leader introduced herself and the team, then examined the duo carefully to ensure their identity matched. Some codes were exchanged.

Meanwhile, the three at the front took over the duo's job and began to suppress the gangs. The results were like night and day. The gangs couldn't poke their weapons out to shoot.

"Multiple!"

Pap! Pap! Pap! Pap!

The operators stayed in a high-low position, c-clamping their rifles on the wall as they unleashed rounds on the advancing enemies, who were exploiting the time gap when the undercover duo retreated.

"Tangos down."

"Hallway clear!"

"Understood, keep up the good work."

"I'm so sorry, who did I hit?" The woman apologized and asked with some restraint.

"Don't worry, she's in the fight. The one shooting from above the kneeling one." Kilo 5 leader smiled and replied.

None of the operators cared. Though they were a little annoyed, they didn't blame her. After all, it was also the fault of the pointman who didn't conduct a proper deconfliction drill.

She should have stayed behind the wall and warned a few times. Fortunately, the second one didn't lose her composure and escalate the situation, instead exclaiming their undercover identity codes to raise trust.

"Whew, thankfully, she's fine. Wait, you're all women?" The man questioned.

"Is there a problem?" Kilo 5 leader responded.

"Um..."

"Wait, now isn't the time for that. You gotta save her."

"Who?"

"There's still one left, upstairs. She's running from the pursuers." The woman remembered and explained quickly. "Let me lead you there."

"No need, we'll take over from here. You follow my girl and stay in the temporary safe place." Kilo 5 replied and ordered her subordinates.

Sure enough, the woman was right, sparse gunshots erupted above. Returning to the stairwell, Kilo 5 pushed up while the duo agents stayed with the operators, assuming a guarding responsibility.

Elsewhere, the undercover woman, whom Kilo 5 was looking for, was in danger. She couldn't stay inside. If she didn't move, she would be in danger soon.

Her body trembled, a wave of up and down. Her magnificent chest loomed seductively in the air, but she paid no heed. Sweat dripped over her clothes and hair.

The uniform was like chains, hindering her movement. She ripped her shirt, buttons flying as she took a deep breath. Now, she felt better, or so she believed.

Life and death—she was so close. Never before had she expected the mission to go this way, though people like her already expected the worst when they joined.

The darkness from the blackout, which should have instilled fear, brought a rare warmth. Without light, she had a higher chance of surviving, though the odds were less than 10 percent.

Firing a few shots as the mercenary neared the threshold, she dashed to the door. Her shots did cause the latter to cower.

She was seen as a trapped beast. Nobody liked to be taken down when it was cornered. The mercenary shared the same thought, so he wasn't in a hurry to fight through.

He'd just wait until her ammunition ran out, and victory would be in his grasp. To his surprise, this woman leaped out and parried his pistol.

A shadow pointed at his head.

Shit! That was definitely a pistol!

He ducked and pushed in. Despite the lack of light, he instinctively resisted based on his experience and past training.

Boom!

The explosion rattled his nerves and ears. He could even sense the sonic boom cracking above and close to his head.

He reacted swiftly and stayed closer to the woman, while at the same time maneuvering his pistol to fire, but the woman grasped tightly onto the weapon and the two wrestled.

Bang! Bang!

Shots rang out as both weapons unloaded round after round. They were firing on purpose, even though their muzzles weren't aimed properly, just to gain momentum and shock. Both sides were waiting to see who would flinch first and who could afford more losses.

In the end, both weapons clicked. The woman's went cold. No bullets in the chamber, while the man's was jammed. She kicked the man in the stomach and followed up with a knee.

The man suffered a blow, but he managed to block the knee strike and flung the woman against the wall without mercy.

The woman groaned and coughed. Her chest felt congested from the heavy blow. Maybe the two could match in terms of skill, but weight and size mattered.

The man exploited his advantages to the fullest.

Chapter 573 Defeat

The breath was knocked out of her as pain shot through her ribs, but she barely had time to react. His fist collided with her stomach, sending her to the floor. The weight difference between them was impossible to ignore. Still, she refused to back down, striking out with her legs, trying to close the distance. She had none, but he had a gun.

The mercenary's hands were already at work, clearing the jammed weapon and aiming from the hip.

Boom! The shot hit her chest like a freight train, her body jerking backward and slamming into the ground from the impact. Her brain buzzed with shock, her muscles spasming as she tried to crawl away instinctively. Every breath felt like knives in her lungs, but she forced herself forward, dragging her body, one hand pressing against the wound as her vision blurred.

The mercenary's boots crunched against the debris on the floor as he followed her, savoring the moment. He aimed again, his lips curling into a sadistic grin.

Bang! Her scream tore through the darkness as the bullet slammed into her thigh. The pain was searing, but her body reacted before her mind could process the damage. She dragged herself further, using her remaining strength to pull forward with one hand and one leg, the other arm limp by her side.

"Keep crawling," the mercenary taunted, closing in as she tried to retreat. He knelt over her, his presence suffocating. His pistol gleamed in the faint light as he aimed again, this time at her head.

In a desperate final act, she raised her free hand to block him, but the effort was futile.

Bang! The bullet shattered through her palm, flesh and bone splintering as her hand dropped to the floor, useless. The pain was unbearable, her vision swimming in and out of focus, but she refused to give up, weakly clawing at the ground as blood pooled beneath her.

The mercenary stood over her, his shadow swallowing her whole. She was really done; she had so much to live for. The pistol aimed at her head only injured her palm. The mercenary changed the angle at the last moment. His anger was already vented when he fired several rounds on purpose, especially the last one.

Looking down at the fragile woman, despite the darkness, his breath quickened. The alluring sight depicted a different aesthetic sense of beauty. He gulped and approached the wounded doll.

The female undercover agent could only helplessly watch as she fought her sensory nerves against the pain coursing through her body.

He knelt and groped the woman's white calves, brushing against the smooth skin. He gulped as his eyes hovered over the ripped blouse, skirt, and unbuttoned cleavage.

A pity, this pretty woman was ruined under his hand, but he felt proud. It was the ultimate enjoyment to destroy beautiful objects.

The woman flinched and attempted to move. She merely hissed in pain, her head and eyes sending a message of deterrence.

The anger she showed seemed like a kitty purring for patting in the man's eyes. He didn't mind the gunshots downstairs. He believed with the numbers advantage, the two additional friends of this woman would soon be apprehended.

He didn't care about the casualties among the gang members. Everybody was in it for benefits and price.

Other than his fellows, who were similar mercenaries deployed in the rest of the city, he paid no heed to friendship or brotherhood.

If the gang members dared to show dissatisfaction, they'd be replaced. They were worthless in the eyes of the person he served.

Until now, he hadn't realized the situation had turned against him, but his mind was filled with lust after the surge of hormones from the short, deadly, and exciting battle.

"Dude, how about me? I want to participate." Another man chuckled and rubbed his hands in excitement.

"Shut up! You better stand there and watch," the mercenary scolded the lustful man with disdain, looking at the feeble woman. "You heard him. You better talk if you don't want to suffer under his hand."

The woman responded with a strong glare without blinking. If not for her injury, she would've gotten up and spat at the two scum.

Perhaps understanding the woman's gaze, the mercenary turned cold and sneered. "Hah, I gave you a chance, and you didn't grasp it well. Let me have fun first, then you'll be next."

With that, he ripped the remaining skirt and tore the shirt. Buttons popped everywhere and scattered on the floor. Only the inner underwear protected the woman's body.

Tattered clothes hung on her body, and a chill combined with blood loss brought the temperature down.

Tears dripped from the corner of her eyes, no matter how hard she endeavored to resist emotional weakness.

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600 plus meters away from the event. Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi were watching Spirit Fox breach the last building with haste after Kilo 5 leader reported the situation, through magnifying scopes.

Initially, they were merely 500 meters away from the operation zone, but as the two teams advanced further, the distance added up another 100 meters.

Sitting down in a crouched position, the most relaxed state, they observed as much as possible from outside. Doors were kicked in. Operators flooded inside.

Then, complete blackouts required the duo to utilize thermal and night vision modes, depending on the scenario.

Green landscape or black-and-white thermal differentiator. Bright as daylight under the night sky.

"Well, our girls are wrecking them," said Tang Ziyi from the side.

"Uh-huh. You don't say. They are absolutely abusing the poor bastard," Ling Qingyu shrugged. "We met our packages quickly."

Radio chatter came from various teams. Ling Qingyu paid no heed to it. She had Tang Ziyi, and she didn't want to consume extra brainpower.

Tang Ziyi was also helpless against this bastard's avoidance. Fortunately, her experience and expertise allowed her to tackle such an extreme mess effortlessly.

Sure enough, from the communications, all Kilo teams assaulting infrastructure discovered undercover operatives.

Kilo 5 and 6 found three. Kilo 7 and 8 found two. Kilo 9 and 10 found four. The former and the latter happened to have an extra due to circumstances.

"Load up. We might be needed later," said Tang Ziyi. "Tell me when you're ready."

Taking a deep breath, Ling Qingyu nodded and replied, "Ready."

"Let's test our shots for calibration. Shooter by eye, do you see the closest lamppost on the right of the building our girls are clearing?" Tang Ziyi alternated spotter vision in her scope and began to work.

Ling Qingyu swiftly followed Tang Ziyi's description and found it. "Contact."

"Go toward the right till you see another lamppost."

"Contact."

"More to the right where the lamppost stands on the opposite side of the road."

"Contact."

"Underneath the big lamp, you'll see an advertisement board."

"Contact."

"Go on glass."

This was the term to let the shooter describe what he or she saw in order to confirm both were synced on the target.

The above tactics belonged to the spotter-sniper team, known as the reference point method, where the spotter designated locations and navigated the sniper toward the goals the former desired.

So, Ling Qingyu described further in detail what she saw. Once Tang Ziyi was satisfied, she confirmed, "Positive ID. Range 620, around four and a half notches down. Wind 1.5 mil to the right at your 10'o clock. Hold for 10 kph, gusting to 12. You'll need to favor just off-center to the left"

Tang Ziyi checked the computer data and reported the number. Although these numbers were consistently jumping up and down, she picked up the best range.

Ling Qingyu quickly tuned the scope and pulled the bolt to inject the first round into the barrel.

Click!

Pushing the safety button off, Ling Qingyu took a deep breath and slowly exhaled the air inside.

"Ready," Ling Qingyu whispered.

Tang Ziyi gave a quick glance at her, then back through the spotting scope. "Send it."

"Puff!"

The report of the rifle was muffled by the suppressor. Ling Qingyu's shoulder absorbed the recoil as she stayed on target through the scope.

Her sharp eyes combined with superhuman's merits captured the bullet travel through the lens.

Around 2 seconds later, dust kicked off where Ling Qingyu's bullet landed.

"Impact! Miss," Tang Ziyi reported. "Correction, four and a quarter mil."

Ling Qingyu didn't reply and snapped the bolt back gently. The copper body flew out of the chamber and rotated in the air before burying itself in the wet soil.

Then, she pushed the bolt in again and fired. Pap!

"Hit! Nice one. Wind died a bit mid-flight, but you held it." Tang Ziyi smiled. "You're getting better, as always."

"That's my talent. You can't copy it. Don't envy me," Ling Qingyu joked in a good mood.

Although the first shot missed, it was barely an inch away from the target she aimed at. Hitting within two attempts was already perfect for such a distance.

Besides, the temperature and weather conditions severely impacted accuracy, which explained why, even with the best computer aiding calculations for the mil on the scope, Ling Qingyu still missed and had to rely on test shots.

Tang Ziyi's eyelids twitched. This bastard always knew how to flare people's anger. She clicked her tongue, annoyed, and said in a bland tone, "You better remember the notch. I'll only give mil on winds later on."

"Copy," Ling Qingyu smirked and waited for Tang Ziyi's calibration attempt. Since each rifle might be different within a tolerance range, they had to be tested.

Pap!

However, it was disgusting to witness Tang Ziyi perfecting the shot on the first attempt. Damn, it must be her contribution that led to this result, Ling Qingyu thought.

Both stopped their bantered and concentrated on the building where firefight was going on.

Through the scopes, they captured sight of Spirit Fox operators battling and advancing. From the radio, they knew they had rescued two agents and one agent was on the run, needing immediate help.

Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu searched for their target quickly on the floor above where operators found two agents, based on the intel gained.

Chapter 574: Sniping I

The duo searched for any suspicious activity on the third floor and above. One by one, Ling Qingyu hovered her scope over every window from left to right.

"Probable package found."

"Location?" Ling Qingyu asked. Compared to her, Tang Ziyi had a better overall view, with a spotting device plus a sniper scope.

"Four windows from the left. The fifth one with a double window," Tang Ziyi answered. "Correction, it's now the sixth. Yep, she's moving forward and fighting."

"Contact." Ling Qingyu soon discovered what Tang Ziyi described. "Negative ID. That's a group of men chasing someone... Hmm, multiple down already on the floor... Anyway, she knocked them down. Damn, are the so-called guards so weak? It's not her yet. Continue to check."

"Copy... About the guards, I'd say a bit of both," Tang Ziyi replied. "And she must have mastered close combat. According to the closest intel, shots rang out above. Hey, thermal signature detects rounds traveling across the hallway."

"It's a firearm. She must have found a pistol. The fight is still on." Ling Qingyu rolled her eyes. "Wait, why don't you switch to your sniper scope if you want a detailed perspective?"

"Good. She now has a higher chance of survival. Ready to aid her," Tang Ziyi said. "As for your question, remember, I'm serving as a spotter and I should stick to my role and not interfere with others. Besides, I'm too lazy to toggle between two views."

"I'm confident the latter sentence is the truth." Ling Qingyu scorned and smacked her lips.

"Just follow the figure and stop talking." Tang Ziyi shrugged. "I just don't like our distance. It's too far."

"You can move in closer," Ling Qingyu suggested.

"It's too late for that. Let's hope your accuracy won't be affected."

"You better ask our wind goddess first whether she'll agree."

"Where has she gone?" Tang Ziyi searched for the figure.

"Probably in the blind spot. Hopefully, Kilo 5 reaches her fast..."

"Seems like Kilo 5 is also having a problem," said Tang Ziyi.

Ling Qingyu furrowed her brow as she gazed at her partner from the corner of her eye. Tang Ziyi was likely watching something elsewhere.

Ling Qingyu noticed the heat signatures had stopped moving forward and resumed firefight. Nobody advanced. "Our package is likely stuck now. Well, it's even harder to distinguish gender in thermal mode, especially from afar."

"You can make a judgment on your own. She's alone. Those in the group are the enemies. No friendly unit in the AO except our package," Tang Ziyi whispered.

"Roger, I saw her figure briefly. Damn, the window is too narrow for a clear view and our thermal can't detect through the wall. If we move to our left, we might have a better chance," Ling Qingyu suggested.

Tang Ziyi hesitated and shook her head. "No, she won't last long stuck there. Based on her running pattern, she likely doesn't have ample ammunition. Something's going to happen soon, and she needs us now. The last thing we want is to do good deeds but harm our compatriot instead."

"Come on, darling, stay in our window, we can cover you. Don't move away," Ling Qingyu said to herself.
"Damn it."

"What's the matter?" Tang Ziyi brought her vision to Ling Qingyu's perspective.

"She might have run out of bullets and closed in to fight. Gosh, if she were to stay close to our window, we could help. Now, we can only observe the shadows and marginal figures."

"She doesn't know us. She believes she's alone. It's already brilliant that she dares to face them head-on despite the odds," Tang Ziyi nodded inwardly.

Besides, undercover operatives didn't excel too much in combat. Their talents depended on disguise and deception.

For the woman, Tang Ziyi had nothing but admiration. She wasn't sure if she would react the same in that situation, lacking fighting skill and confidence. It was a true display of courage.

Ling Qingyu exhaled heavily, her eyes laser-focused to provide support at a moment's notice. Tang Ziyi relayed the undercover's location to Kilo 5 so that reinforcements could link up quickly.

"Don't worry too much. Do what you do best. Tell me once you have a clear shot, I'll report variables immediately."

"Understood." Ling Qingyu watched as the undercover struggled with a larger figure. Not surprisingly, she was hauled against the wall and beaten. Afterward, Ling Qingyu witnessed a small flash and the woman's figure twitched before leaning against the door frame and falling to the ground.

She was shot! Ling Qingyu's pupils constricted. She became nervous, in contrast to her prior complete nonchalance.

She saw the woman crawling backward, trying to stay away from danger, even though she knew it was no use in front of the gun.

Another mini flash. Ling Qingyu understood the woman had been shot again. This bastard was toying with her on purpose. Ling Qingyu ground her teeth and snarled, "We have to take a shot soon."

"Understood," Tang Ziyi replied succinctly, sensing Ling Qingyu's anxiety. She couldn't observe closely with her spotting lens, so she switched to her sniper scope and discovered the reason.

Without hesitation, Tang Ziyi read out, "Target, 611 meters. Four and a quarter notches up. Wind 1.8 mil to the right, no. Wind's picking up—now 2 mil at 14 kph from your 1 o'clock. Hold 2 mil right. Stronger wind now.

Take the shot if you'd have to."

Tang Ziyi glanced at the swaying vegetation nearby to detect if there would be a sudden change in wind direction.

Unlike those sniping games, real sniping involved numerous calculations and variables. Although modern technology had digitalized everything for simplicity with computer calculations, classical methods like the ones Tang Ziyi relied on were still useful.

For instance, the vegetation that swayed with the wind direction, or simple flags planted nearby to gauge speed and direction along the bullet's path. Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu had been laying in this spot, concealed for a long time.

It wasn't for nothing. They marked waypoints and references, observed changes in the surroundings, and most importantly, recorded patterns—such as gusts every few seconds.

How many? How long? How often? These were crucial data, especially for a long-distance shot like 600-plus meters.

Timing a shot with wind conditions was indispensable during sniping operations, as wind shifts, even slight ones, could cause a miss.

"Roger." Ling Qingyu's anger flared as her eyes never left the scene in her scope.

Now, she saw the woman, raising her hand as if to protect herself from a bullet to the face. A pistol and the hand grasping it entered her sight.

Bang!

Even though she couldn't hear the shot, she could already picture it in her mind. Ling Qingyu bit her lip. She hoped so much that the shooter was just playing around and torturing the woman rather than ending her misery.

She prayed this bastard had some sadism. Perhaps, her wish was effective because she saw the woman's white figure moving a little.

For a moment, Ling Qingyu's crosshair stayed near the hidden enemy, waiting for him to pop out. She needed roughly two seconds.

The enemy must stay still and let her hit. An almost impossible task. She had to wait for the opportune time.

This was also why she didn't take a shot when she had sight of the woman 'wrestling' with the man. No matter how she calculated, it made no sense to predict anything from that chaos.

"Ziyi, please read out the wind mil if it changes," Ling Qingyu reminded.

"Go ahead, I'll make up a shot if you miss." Currently, the two were entirely in sync, both eyes on their sniper scopes.

Ling Qingyu adjusted her breathing since her heart was racing from the emotional swing.

When her vision caught the man in the crosshair, joy flashed in her eyes, then anger boiled instantly.

The woman was being humiliated—her skirt and shirt torn, the man groping her. Only the man's head and forearms appeared. A little more...

With so much movement, if the man tilted even slightly, the shot would miss. She had only a few chances. Once she missed and the man was alerted, the woman's life would be in complete jeopardy.

Seconds seemed like hours as emotions battled with rationality. Take action. Do you want to see her humiliated?

Inner devils whispered constantly. Ling Qingyu built an imaginary wall and fought the urge.

Tang Ziyi noticed her change but said nothing. Any extra comfort was useless. What she should avoid was adding pressure.

She trusted Ling Qingyu would handle it. The latter hadn't seen too much of humanity's dark side with her own eyes. Inexperienced? Sure, but she was proud of her and believed this challenge would be nothing more than a step.

Tang Ziyi never had the slightest doubt and remained silent. Sometimes, giving trust was the biggest help and the most strategic weapon.

Seen in numerous scenarios across various paths of life, success often came from delegation—and this was a prime example of the merit of trust.

The wind whooshed, and the rain splashed. Thunders cracked constantly above. None of these affected the duo.

Despite under the cover, water droplets splashed against the two's faces. The wetness didn't cost the two to flinch. Seconds passed, Ling Qingyu blinked and finally spotted the man's entire body as he mounted the woman.

"Target, 610 meters away. Wind remains the same. 2 mil to the right. You have a 15-second window before the next gust interrupts," Tang Ziyi reported instantly. "15...14...13..."

No need for communication between them; the moment had come. Now or never. Ling Qingyu adjusted her aim according to the instructions. Like Tang Ziyi, she also believed she would not make a mistake. Trust was the key component between teammates.

She exhaled slowly and entered ultimate stillness—the perfect state for a shooter to land her shot most accurately.

Her cold eyes lazily traced over the man's figure as Ling Qingyu lightly squeezed the trigger.

PAP!

The recoil vibrated through her body. She pulled back the bolt gently, following the bullet's trail as the casing ejected cleanly.

She chambered another round without breaking sight, her finger instinctively moving back to the trigger, pressing it till it was almost ready to fire again.

Tang Ziyi uttered from the side, "Impact in two... one..."

Chapter 575: Sniping II (fixed)

The bullet spurted out of the muzzle, leaving behind bent waves of air particles. Small sparks followed through until the fire could no longer catch up with its speed.

It spiraled and followed the trajectory already set. Traveling fast, in the name of freedom, its height dropped little by little under the restraint of gravity. It curved from the wind's gentle caresses and harsh slaps, passing along several buildings on the side.

Getting closer to the target, in its final milliseconds, it was about to hit the intended target.

Just then, an eddy current of air particles, flushed out of nowhere, howled through the alleyway and swung the original trajectory off course.

The slight deviation caused the bullet to shatter the glass of the window it was supposed to hit before, and it impacted the skin on the man's ear.

Afterward, the round kicked up dust and debris behind, totally missing his head by an inch.

The man stopped his movement, stunned by the sudden stimulus. His doubt and pain were ignored when he heard exclamations outside.

"They are here! Enemies! We are under attack!"

"What? Who?! Where?!"

...

600 meters away.

Tang Ziyi slammed her fist on the soil. "Damn it! Sudden gust—we never expected..." She didn't even need to speak about the mathematical correction as another strong puff went out.

Pap!

Ling Qingyu noticed her miss and fired a second round, quickly snapping the bolt to chamber another.

Both waited for the result. Despite excellent calculations through software, previously calibrated test shots, and adaptability of veteran knowledge from Tang Ziyi, Ling Qingyu still hit shy of the target.

She didn't make any mistakes, but luck wasn't on her side for a moment. Sudden gusts tend to occur—wind is naturally unpredictable in complex environments: cities, mountainous regions with varying terrain, and unstable weather.

All categories fit in the current Ling Qingyu's surroundings. No wonder an uncalculated gust appeared.

Besides, urban structures like several buildings close together added variables to the original complicated equations. Small, localized gusts can arise, particularly between buildings or around obstacles, affecting the shots—probably also known as the wind tunnel effect.

Hence, except for Ling Qingyu feeling a little hesitant in her second shot even if she adjusted instinctively to make up, Tang Ziyi wasn't too frustrated apart from getting annoyed that the bastard somehow gained a bit of luck.

But that was only once, not twice.

...

The man touched his ear lightly, feeling warmth and wetness. His focus shifted away from the woman underneath him. A second later, realization hit him, and his face paled with horror.

Though his profession as a mercenary honed numerous experiences that allowed him to understand what happened, everything was too late. His enemy didn't give him the slightest chance and caught him by surprise.

The other man in the room shrugged at his previous question. "Who knows? Just—"

Whoosh!

A whiplash crackled, and the man who was mounting over the poor woman stiffened and fell backward.

Thud!

Lightning illuminated his face. The entire left eye and nose were ruptured. Blood seeped from behind his head and spread across the floor gradually.

His companion jumped with fright, and his knees buckled from weakness. His fear loosened his control over his limbs, and he slowly knelt as he stammered.

"Du-Dude... Dude... Stop kidding around."

On the other hand, the woman's eyes sparkled like diamonds in the darkness. A flame called hope lit inside her pupils. Apart from the surprise in the first shot, she understood a sniper was targeting her enemies.

...

The muffled report of the suppressed M24 echoed through the rain-soaked night. Ling Qingyu stayed locked in her scope, watching as the mercenary's head jerked violently to the side, a spray of blood misting into the air. His body crumpled instantly, falling lifeless to the side, his legs still on top of the injured woman.

"Impact. Clean hit," Tang Ziyi confirmed in a low voice, her eye glued to the spotting scope. "Wind stayed steady; perfect shot. Bear in mind those short bursts of wind around the buildings. Anyway, you already succeeded."

"The woman's still breathing and moving. The man is totally motionless," Ling Qingyu reported what she saw through the thermal vision.

"Target: his companion, a little to the right, just close to the window frame on the right from your perspective. See him?"

"Yeah, tiny portions," Ling Qingyu muttered. With the second round chambered, she adjusted her aim, this time targeting the remaining man who had frozen at the sight of his comrade's sudden demise.

"Send the second one."

Before he could react, Ling Qingyu sent another round downrange.

Pap!

Another clean hit. The man dropped like a stone.

"Two tangos down, our package is safe," Tang Ziyi confirmed, observing everything through her scope and racking her bolt.

She aimed and squeezed the trigger, prompting an eye from Ling Qingyu: "What are you doing?"

Pap! Clack-clack. Another bolt rack and... Pap!

Within a second, she fired two rounds and answered afterward. "Checking our enemy's pulse."

Another dead check and at a long distance too? Ling Qingyu silently complained. She now found the real reason why her subordinates were so obsessed with 'mutilating' enemies' corpses.

Ling Qingyu smiled and returned her eyes to the scope. Splashes kicked up on the two bodies. "Doctor Tang, it seems like they have surpassed the golden hour."

"After all, we can't judge their crimes properly, and we don't have time."

"Yep, like the way these bastards always excuse themselves. Nobody can judge them; only God can. So, it's our job to send them to God."

"Yeah, right... Emm... Two targets running toward our girl from left to right," Tang Ziyi instantly transformed and reported. "We'll both make shots. I'll aim near the door frame; you'll aim slightly half a mil off. Clear?"

"Crystal, love," Ling Qingyu obliged and joked.

Tang Ziyi rolled her eyes and exhaled gradually. Both synced to relax their muscles as Tang Ziyi counted down in a whisper. "On my count... three... two... one... execute."

Pap! Pap!

Two bullets ejected simultaneously. They were aiming at spots where no one stood. When the bullets were about to reach the destination, two figures stepped into the frame.

Ling Qingyu's round sieved through the first man's torso and slammed into the shoulder of the second man.

Tang Ziyi's hit the right lung of the second man. Both men felt sledgehammer strikes and lost their footing as they smacked the wall behind. They were the source of exclamations, warning about an enemy's attack.

They had no idea what just happened except for a dull pain and a searing sensation later. Their eyes captured two dead bodies in the room.

Their pupils constricted, but that was their final emotion. Their vision heightened, and time seemed to slow down. Two projectiles were straight ahead on their way toward their eyes.

Oh, they were now being killed. What the...? Puff! Puff!

Their souls left the material world forever. The bullets hit true. A heartbeat passed, then both men dropped like stones, crumpling against the wall.

"Beautiful, Ziyi. That was f***** outstanding," Ling Qingyu praised without hesitation. The difficulties of their shots looked simple but comprised uncountable variables and instincts.

Particularly when Tang Ziyi only had a fraction of a second to time the two running targets through the narrow vision of windows and immediately simulated the future pictures, then exactly pinpointed their likely locations.

Though the two shots didn't kill the men instantly, Ling Qingyu had no more words to flatter. She really was at a loss for words, in a good sense, this time.

Her partner brought a stunning operation that even altered Ling Qingyu's former sharp tongue, who used to mock and banter funnily. Tang Ziyi solved them easily like eating cake. She really was her goddess of war.

"Good effort!" Tang Ziyi smacked her lips. "But it's also our great luck to score in one shot."

"Of course, I know. I'm not some lame newbie."

"Technically, you're still a rookie without experience," Tang Ziyi was merciless with her remarks.

"Scram," Ling Qingyu cursed.

Tang Ziyi informed Kilo 5 about the woman's whereabouts. "Be advised. Zero is locked onto the package to protect. No assistance will be available at the moment unless necessary. Double time; she's wounded and needs immediate first-aid care."

"Understood, Kilo 5 out."

"You'll guard her at all times while I scope around the vicinity and provide support where needed," Tang Ziyi said.

"Go ahead; any hostiles that dare approach our door will be dead."

"Alright, don't worry, I'm not losing sight of you."

Pap!

Tang Ziyi fired at the target who swept his AK blindly in the hallway, creating an obstacle for the team.

"Appreciate your support, Boss," Kilo 5 radioed her gratitude.

Soon after eliminating some threats along the way, Kilo 5 reached the target. The woman calmed her anxiousness and recalled what just occurred.

The two men who nearly raped her died from the gunshots. Double tap too. However, the first shot missed, signaling the shooter's range likely to exceed 400 meters.

She never regarded the shooter's marksmanship as poor because after the first shot, others managed to hit precisely. There were no misses.

Plus, she counted the time interval between the shots. Each averaged around two or more seconds. Assuming that there was only one shooter, the sniper was likely 600 meters away.

Damn, that was a long-range shot to accurately kill two targets so fast. Hopefully, the sniper didn't designate her as another target.

Later on, she also heard gunshots downstairs. Her two comrades should never cause such a mess; she deeply understood their talent. They were nowhere near to even let the gang panic.

Another party was attacking the gang. As for rescuing her, she firmly rejected the possibility. While she waited and listened to the hurried footsteps and voices, she felt desperate.

Two men were coming here; they were warning about the attacks. What to do? She couldn't move. Would the sniper save her?

To her astonishment, two whiplashes ushered in. She saw the two who had merely managed to arrive at the doorstep get hit. Then, another round to finish them off.

No, wasn't there only one sniper? Now there were two? Two instant kills—had the sniper or snipers moved closer?

No, she denied because the interval between shots remained the same, and her eyes widened at her conclusion. So awesome?!

This miraculous operation broadened her mind. How skilled were the snipers to precisely judge and calculate the targets' position and speed? As someone related to the military field, she understood the challenges involved more.

Of course, even though she couldn't see in the darkness, a few lightning flashes and the noises easily allowed her to simulate the event.

Just a disturbance aching her head. Was the sniper saving her? Or did they not see her at all? Her confusion halted when she noticed the commotion nearing her position.

Moments after, she saw the figures entering the room. She wept with joy, listening to the mother tongue and her codename. Motherland didn't abandon her.

Chapter 576: Sniper III

"I knew our motherland would never abandon us," the woman coughed and spoke with difficulty. Her eyes flamed like a torch as hope and joy gathered around her. She looked at the fully equipped operators, one of them kneeling before her.

"Stay still. Don't move," a female voice soothed her emotions. "Let me check you quickly. I heard from our snipers you're wounded very badly."

At the same time, she silently complained about the woman's trust in the government, though not too much, because she had once been just like the woman—fully trusting the government and assuming officials' statements were universal truths.

It turned out her vision and mindset broadened after working under Ling Qingyu. She had seen how her boss navigated waywardly to get to where they were today. A strong posture in Province N.

The past belief that gangs were like pests, which were hard to eradicate, was completely overruled. In mere months, she and her fellow sisters, working alongside righteous officials like Yang Qingyue, had eliminated these cancerous infections by thunderous means.

Well, not totally annihilated, but the situation had turned for the best, for the first time in decades. Where there's a will, nothing is impossible.

Had the government been keen to neutralize these threats and save civilians, her boss Ling Qingyu wouldn't have even needed to make a move.

This poor woman still thought the government didn't mind the price to rescue them. It wasn't totally wrong since a minister had requested Spirit Fox to make a move.

However, she knew through gossiping with her sisters that rescue was never considered an option. Mere rhetoric, rewards, and honors, plus small words to boost the government's public image, were the original plan.

These undercover agents were on a deadly mission of their own. Should circumstances turn south, like now, their fate was doomed.

In fact, as warriors, she didn't want to suffer the fate of cannon fodder for a few parties' interests. She had joined the army in the past because of this belief.

Of course, material needs also led her to the path of a soldier. Now, she found her true soul under Ling Qingyu's cause, matching the justice and the ideals, though the boss never confessed them. Everybody felt Ling Qingyu's genuine ideals and vision.

Ling Qingyu wasn't just a simple businesswoman. She was much more. It was an honor and privilege to serve under her leadership. Plus, the treatments given to them fulfilled everything to the point where their ideals had come to reality.

Switching on the strong flashlight attached to her helmet, the operator scanned the poor woman's entire body.

The latter was in totally disarrayed, disheveled clothing. No, it was better to say she was nearly naked, apart from the underwear protecting her final dignity.

Torn-off uniform, pieces of clothing spread around. Blood drenched all over. This girl had gone through a lot in a short time.

From the rough scenario they understood, the first shot came from her. The operator searched for the bleeding and immediately addressed the issue, taking out first-aid kits from her bag while summoning the medic in her team.

Months of repeated training also involved the course of applying combat first-aid treatment, led by Tang Ziyi. Every operator had learned the essential skills and techniques to survive, although, based on the armor setting and protection level Ling Qingyu provided, that day was far away.

She applied tourniquets to the limbs with wounds to stop the bleeding. The injury in the abdomen could only be pressed hard. The medic came quickly and knelt beside her. The two cooperated seamlessly.

Bandaging, administering painkillers and antiseptics, IV drips. A few Kilo 5 operators guarded the women while the rest continued clearing.

In order to treat the woman better, they had to transport her to the temporary HQ, where Ling Qingyu had unloaded medical supplies.

For now, they stabilized the woman's condition. The Kilo 5 leader reported the medic's words to Tang Ziyi, who ordered Kilo 1 to drive the technicals parked in the garage.

Her order stunned the Kilo 1 operators. But, remembering Ling Qingyu likely brought the spatial device, nobody thought too much.

Indeed, when they walked to the location Tang Ziyi described, they saw armed Toyota technicals and armored Landcruisers, ready for an exciting adventure.

Three technicals and a Landcruiser drove off toward Kilo 5's and 6's positions. The woman wanted to talk and was scolded by the medic's harsh words.

Perhaps her eyes were too obvious. The two assisting operators answered her questions. "They're safe. We've already found and sent them to a secure place. Once the floor is cleared, you'll go with them to our temporary HQ, the safest place for the next few days."

"Your injuries are fine, but I don't want to aggravate your mood and fragile body. It's better to stay still than worsen yourself. At least, help me cut off future complications," the medic comforted after being glared at by her partner.

Someone was already in trauma; there was no need to further agitate her. However, the medic's scolding worked since the woman cooperated more, giving trust to the authority.

In fact, the woman was thinking hard about which unit had saved her, particularly since everyone appeared to be female soldiers, a rare sight.

Although she couldn't see the others properly in the dark, their voices and whispers indicated they were women.

...

Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi continued their observations as Kilo 5 proceeded with clearing upward while Kilo 6 conducted a thorough sweep to ensure no threats re-emerged, like wiping Kilo 5's ass.

"Target, three windows from the left on the fourth floor. Looks like he's forcefully dragging a woman."

"Contact. Hostiles?"

"Unknown for now," Tang Ziyi answered with a smile. "Lock on him. It's best not to risk it like a few minutes ago."

"Understood." Ling Qingyu knew luck had played a great role when she and Tang Ziyi accomplished an outstanding feat.

"Good, let's keep track of them and report their status to Kilo 5. They'll handle it," Tang Ziyi said. "Meanwhile, we can shoot targets that are far away from the civilians."

Kilo 5 moved on and shot down multiple hostiles. By now, the enemies were alerted. A few fearful ones dashed for safety, unaware that they were exposed to Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi.

Surrenderers began to appear when they realized they had lost all contact with their leaders. Spirit Fox operators and Ling Qingyu's duo were too lazy to take prisoners, yet when these men threw down their weapons and acted like civilians, the operators had no choice.

They cuffed them for later interrogation and investigation to match with the civilians Spirit Fox had saved, and their testimonies.

Braver ones took up arms, but their fate was no different from the dead ones, even if courage ran through their veins. Without proper organization, fearless resistance was futile.

Like eggs thrown against a solid rock, they stood no chance. The more strong-willed members caught Ling Qingyu's and Tang Ziyi's eyes.

"Three targets engaged with Kilo 5 near the hallway, third floor, seven windows from the right."

"Contact."

"Send it."

Pap! Pap! Pap!

Three seconds later, the targets fell one after another.

"Target..." Tang Ziyi shouted another objective. Ling Qingyu shot them down. Two-prong attacks on a contained building, the situation already dictated the gangs here were finished.

Sure enough, Kilo 5 declared the last room cleared, and Kilo 6 commenced secondary clearance until the building was deemed safe.

Suspected hostiles who were apprehended were forced into one room. 'Civilians' were placed in another. Both were guarded by two operators.

The injured woman was put on a stretcher carried by the medic downstairs where she would accompany her undercover comrades.

Tang Ziyi had already informed the medics that transport would arrive for the agents to be whisked away to a safe zone.

Good news came again as Kilo 7 and 8 declared successful occupation of the 'residence' as well as linking up with undercover agents.

In contrast to the teams Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi were overwatching, their progress was smooth. The cover of stormy weather helped a lot.

They managed to meet with agents while clearing. If not for their excellent memory, the agents might have been treated poorly by mistake, because they were engaging in a secret meeting away from people, with weapons placed near them, depicting them as gang members.

Kilo 7 and 8 cleaned the garbage without letting the enemies fire a single bullet or raise an alarm.

For now, they couldn't count how many they had eliminated and rescued. Too many, actually.

Kilo 9 and 10, belonging to the military faction, were still in progress. So far, they had kept their stealth and hadn't compromised their presence. Slower, obviously, but Tang Ziyi didn't say much.

Through radio communication, every team was aware of each other's state. So, Tang Ziyi consoled the Wolf members to avoid pressuring them to speed up and risk mistakes.

No matter how highly ranked among the special forces of Country C, they still couldn't compare to Spirit Fox.

Perhaps, in the past, when Tang Ziyi hadn't openly cheated, they might have stuck around. Nonetheless, once golden fingers came into the equation, Wolf members could no longer catch Spirit Fox's tail.

Super strength, resilience, endurance, concentration—everything super, including marksmanship, since recoil management became too easy. Obviously, the improvements weren't spectacular, but every Spirit Fox member could be considered at the peak of Soldier Kings with upgraded physiques.

Engine roars slightly rumbled under the thunderstorm. Several vehicles approached, drifting on dirt and mud.

No headlights; purely relying on the NVG capabilities and the thermal front and back cameras equipped on the vehicles. The driver could see them on the dash screen if necessary.

Afterward, the woman and her two comrades were put in the Land Cruiser, which would drive back to HQ.

Kilo 1 operators exited from the driving position and mounted this technical for the return journey. The Kilo 1 medic would take over the job of casualty extraction.

The Land Cruiser and a technical sped away and vanished from sight.

The remaining vehicles were intended for Kilo 5 and 6. Naturally, more vehicles would be delivered again because two weren't enough. In Tang Ziyi's plan, each team would have two fighting vehicles.

Phase one of the entire operation was nearly done once Kilo 9 and 10 finished their clearance.

Phase two would begin with a direct assault on the thriving city. Still, some preparations had to be made.

Ling Qingyu snapped her neck to relax the stiff muscles. The high stress and stakes created pressure. She had no trouble popping bastards' heads, like she was worried.

The strain came from being unable to afford any mistakes during the rescue of the woman, even though she was accompanied by Tang Ziyi. That moment was the most stressful.

She felt a pat on the back and responded, "What?"

"Are you really not considering fully inheriting my skills? I'm looking for someone to transfer my studies completely," Tang Ziyi said with a gentle, doting smile.

"Nope, not at all," Ling Qingyu refused.

"Why not?"

"What, why not?" Ling Qingyu snapped. "Why don't you inherit my company? I believe you have the talents for management. There are many positions. I wish you were there to help me."

"Shut up! No way in hell would I want to suffer headaches," Tang Ziyi cursed, prompting giggles on her side.

"Does that mean I no longer need to participate?" Ling Qingyu asked, desiring a salted-fish state before the shooting began.

"Heck no," Tang Ziyi denied without hesitation. "You and I will do exciting stuff. Come on, it's rare that we have an opportunity."

"Who in their right mind wants this so-called opportunity? Please!"

Tang Ziyi clenched Ling Qingyu's shoulder and smiled in a way, she thought was the most beautiful. But she had no idea, under the darkness and reflective lightning, the face was no different from a conspiring ghost.

Ling Qingyu shuddered from her expression. She understood, once Tang Ziyi smiled like this, somebody was going to get unlucky. Before she used to sneer at the victims, she couldn't sneer anymore.

Help!

Chapter 577 Ultra long-range engagement

"Kilo 9 to Zero. Kilo 9 to Zero."

Ling Qingyu beamed with a smile at the sudden lightweight air. Damn it. Once Tang Ziyi became serious, suffocation was for sure.

She thanked the military saviors. Though she wasn't happy at first that the military intervened, she was now filled with gratitude toward Gu Yi.

Tang Ziyi clicked her tongue. Did Ling Qingyu ever think that she didn't see the slight change of expression and the shining glint in her eyes?

"This is Zero, go ahead."

Because Tang Ziyi announced on the chat that her call sign had changed to Zero, the teams referred to the temporary codes whenever strategic issues needed to be discussed.

Nobody called Kilo 1, which had been transformed into a logistics team. Kilo 1 members were a little adamant about their roles as non-combatants.

However, being able to witness firsthand, the surprised Ling Qingyu satisfied their vanity. In any case, even if Tang Ziyi stayed in the group, their role was nothing more than that of an HQ element.

"Kilo 9 and 10 have a problem. We have multiple runners in vehicles. They are close to leaving our vision."

"Any no-shoot targets?"

"Negative."

Tang Ziyi licked her lips and asked, "What's the general direction of the convoy escape?"

"Southeast east."

Tang Ziyi immediately pictured the map and glanced in the direction the convoy likely retreated. "I see. Don't follow them. Just clear the premises and report back once you're done. Prepare for phase two."

"But Zero, won't we alert the tangos prematurely?"

"It doesn't matter. Phase 2 will go on whether they are prepared or not," Tang Ziyi explained. "We'll try to take care of the convoy from here."

Ling Qingyu switched to the KSR-50 on the side and laid prone, racking the bolt and checking the rifle before slamming the .50 caliber magazine in.

Her muzzle pointed slightly to the left as she aimed at the highway, a short road revealed between two hills. "That should be the road these bastards have to take, right?"

"Correct." Tang Ziyi nodded and laid prone likewise, holding the heavy anti-material rifle. "Adjust your equipment and let's calibrate our shots."

Ling Qingyu also nodded and tweaked her new rifle. "Over a kilometer shot... Yeah... Ready?"

"Ready. We don't have time, so make it quick. We don't have to be accurate."

"Sure."

The city that everyone planned to assault was located in the middle of a triangle between three elements.

Kilo 5 and 6 were in the middle. To their right, connected by the highway, Kilo 7 and 8 were stationed eastbound.

To the left or northwest, roughly, Kilo 9 and 10, the military faction Wolf members, secured the objectives.

From above, all elements were on their way to the city along the highway. Kilo 2 would cover the rear from any potential QRF to the west of Kilo 9 and 10. Kilo 3 would cover the southwest, another highway that led to the position of Kilo 5, 6, 7, and 8.

Kilo 1 would provide support if necessary, behind Kilo 3. Kilo 4 had now taken over the jobs of Kilo 9 and 10 to assault the city while the latter two would attempt to encircle the city, closing the entire net.

Of course, except for Kilo 9 and 10, plus the containment Kilo 2 and 3, which would traverse the terrain, the rest of the teams were ordered to stand by until transport vehicles from Kilo 1 arrived.

Many were stunned by Tang Ziyi's words and merely attributed the makeshift vehicles nearby, looted from the enemies. Until Kilo 1 drove the vehicles to them, they had underestimated their Spirit Fox's potential.

After arranging the teams, Tang Ziyi operated her new rifle and hustled a couple of steps away from Ling Qingyu, in order to avoid affecting each other's trajectories.

Compared to the previous sniper rifles, this time both were firing large anti-material guns.

"Distance around 1300–1400 meters-ish. Steady wind, hold 1 mil right. Four and a half notches up. Fire when ready." Tang Ziyi called out everything.

With powerful kinetic energy and a bigger round, the bullet would not be as affected as with the M24.

Through the thermal lens, Ling Qingyu aimed at the prevalent trees and pulled the trigger. Boom!

The recoil was stronger, shaking Ling Qingyu's figure backward. The sound was loud too, without any suppressor.

The impact reached the nearby Kilo 5 and 6 operators, whose heads turned in the duo's direction.

Of course, from the radio chatter, they knew the action belonged to Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu.

Two seconds passed. A speck of dirt splashed a meter away, short in both elevation and wind.

On average, the muzzle velocity of a .50 BMG is between 850–900 meters per second. Two seconds were enough for the bullets to land on the targets, similar to the M24 firing across 600 meters.

So Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi didn't need too long to wait or calculate for accurate shots across a kilometer-plus distance.

"Miss. Hold 1.2 mil right. Five notches up. No need to care too much about the gust. Fire when ready!"

Boom!

Ling Qingyu endured a strong kick and watched the bullet's trail. The bullet landed on the intended tree and punched a hole through the midsection.

The trunk exploded from the front to the back. The tree snapped in half, and the entire upper body fell. Ling Qingyu's brow furrowed at the powerful strength of a mere single bullet.

The .50 caliber's infamous reputation wasn't for nothing. A bullet decapitated the entire tree, although the tree itself didn't belong to the big class in the first place.

"Good hit. Keep that measurement in your head and adjust accordingly when we lay fire on the coming convoy," Tang Ziyi praised and racked the bolt. "Now, let me fire."

One second, two seconds passed and... Boom!

Ling Qingyu's scope saw another nearby tree suffer the same fate. The corner of her lips twitched.

Trees: "....."

We ain't test experiments!

"Let's wait and see." Tang Ziyi shrugged, and both remained silent for a minute until a column of strong headlights entered the road section they had eyes on.

With the push button attached to the rifle, both conversed through the radio in low voices.

"Tangos in sight. Kirin, you'll attack from the front to back. I'll move from the rear toward yours."

"Understood."

"Fire in three... two... one..." Tang Ziyi counted down as she aimed the crosshair at the last car.
"Execute."

BOOM! BOOM!

Amidst the loud thundercrack and whining of the wind, two huge bangs rattled and spread across the terrain.

Click. Click.

Boom! Boom!

Without even bothering to check their shots, Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu pressed on the attack. They emptied the entire magazine and reloaded.

Precision was secondary. Speed was the key.

Spirit Fox operators nearby swallowed at the menacing sounds that wouldn't stop, silently praying that the foes met their misery sooner.

Their two bosses were truly merciless to bring anti-material rifles into the game. Alas, once Spirit Fox took action, nobody was taking any chances.

Bam! Bam!

The thunders of .50 calibers erupted against the stormy background.

...

1,400 meters away, 8 vehicles sped with all their might, frantically, as if monsters were chasing them.

A combination of SUVs and pickup trucks. No sedans. And which idiot would use those luxury vehicles when traveling on an unfit road?

The mood was low. Nobody spoke except for a few important members trying to smack their radios in the hope that they would work, and cursing their misfortune.

No one expected someone to dare attack the gang. Who was the enemy? Why? Who did they offend?

The first car had its front hood burst and slammed to a stop in panic. The engine caught on fire and stopped working.

The second hadn't had time to react before its windshield exploded, shrapnel damaging the passengers and everything inside. The bullet tore a huge hole in the driver's stomach.

The car slipped and tumbled, rolling twice from the inertia.

The third directly exploded into a fire mushroom; its doors and windows burst outward from the strong pressure. Surely, everyone inside wouldn't survive this.

The bullet likely hit the fuel tank by sheer luck and ignited it. The fourth wasn't any better. It crashed into the front SUVs and rolled over, screeching against the asphalt.

The bullet managed to rip through the passenger's side. One head burst like a watermelon, creating a bloody mess inside. Another person in the back had his spine cut off.

The vehicles in the rear weren't spared. Either their drivers and passengers were obliterated into pieces or their vehicles were destroyed.

The entire convoy was mowed down like weeds. Those that managed to miss the attack in the first round attempted to escape by accelerating out of the kill zone.

They survived for a few seconds before they suffered the same fate and failed. Fire and crackles lit up, sounding the initial symphony of an orchestrated massacre.

Cries of agony and begging rang nonstop, adding to the mess amidst the short silence.

Chapter 578 Ambushed POV

The road was littered with burning wreckage, smoke billowing into the night sky. All eight vehicles had been disabled or destroyed, reduced to twisted metal and flames.

Rain failed to quell the inferno. A few splashes of lightning shed visions. Bodies lay scattered along the road, some lifeless, others writhing in pain, groaning as they struggled to move. The survivors, disoriented and terrified, scrambled to dismount from the wrecks, their adrenaline spiking as they faced the sudden, unseen threat.

"Get out! Get out now!" a man shouted, his voice breaking with panic. His leg was twisted, a deep gash oozing blood, but he ignored the pain as he dragged himself away from the overturned SUV, crawling toward the ditch on the side of the road.

Others followed suit, some limping, others sprinting into the dark, firing blindly in all directions. Gunfire crackled through the night as rifles discharged in panicked bursts, though no target was visible. The survivors shot at the shadows, at trees, at anything that moved.

"Where are they?!" someone screamed, eyes wide with terror as he fired his AK-47 into the air. "Where are the shooters?!"

"They're close! They're close!" yelled another, spraying rounds into the trees, the muzzle flash lighting up his panicked face. His heart hammered in his chest as he squeezed the trigger, praying that the bullets would hit something—anything.

Chieung Sam, who had been the first to abandon his vehicle, took cover behind a boulder at the edge of the road, his breath coming in ragged gasps. Sweat poured down his face, and his hands trembled as he reloaded his rifle. "Everyone, fall back! Fall back to the tree line!" he barked, but his voice was lost in the chaos.

Another man was leaning against the side of a burning truck, his leg trapped beneath the twisted metal. His voice was hoarse from shouting for help, but no one came. He saw the flashes of gunfire in the distance and could hear the screams of his comrades, but the pain in his leg kept him pinned, helpless. "Help me! Please!" he cried, eyes darting around in desperation.

But the others were too focused on their own survival. One by one, they fled the scene, darting toward the trees in a frantic bid for cover. The air was thick with the scent of gunpowder and burning fuel. The gunfire was erratic now—random bursts from survivors who were running and shooting at the same time, too scared to aim.

Some of the men took cover behind the smoldering wrecks, peeking out to fire a few shots before ducking back down, hoping it would be enough to keep the attackers at bay. But in truth, they had no idea where the ambushers were. The night concealed their enemies, and the terror of the unknown gnawed at their nerves.

"Move, damn it!" Chieung Sam shouted again, seeing a few men frozen in place, still staring at the wrecks. His eyes darted toward the road. In the flickering light of the fires, he could see the silhouettes of several bodies—unmoving, their blood pooling around them. His heart sank.

Whoosh! Bang!

Suddenly, a new excruciating thud ripped through the night, this time from the rear of the convoy. One of the fleeing survivors, a man in his twenties, was struck in the back.

His abdomen was left with a giant hole. He staggered forward, dropping his rifle, before collapsing face-first into the dirt. The bullet impact came first before the sonic boom followed.

"They're picking us off!" someone yelled from behind the cover of a wrecked truck. "We've got to get out of here!"

"They're all around us!" another voice added, his tone frantic. The survivors were unraveling, their formation breaking apart as the realization hit: they were being hunted.

In the chaos, Chieung Sam, one of the few still able to think clearly, crouched behind a wreck and surveyed the road, his eyes scanning the trees. He spotted the flashes of rifles being fired in the distance—or so he thought—and then it hit him—those snipers weren't close at all. They were far away, well out of range of their own weapons.

Underneath the rain and thunder in the background, he wasn't sure if the flashes were what he believed. It didn't hurt to assume extreme cases. If what he estimated was correct, the distance should be more than a kilometer away.

"We can't see them!" Chieung Sam shouted, ducking as a bullet whizzed past. "They're way out! Stop wasting ammo! We need to retreat!"

But it was too late for some. As another SUV exploded into flames, a man was caught in the blast, his body thrown several feet into the air before landing with a sickening thud. Those who remained alive continued their desperate retreat toward the tree line, their numbers dwindling by the second.

Chieung Sam, his breath coming in short, desperate bursts, finally reached the trees and crouched low behind a thick trunk, his rifle raised, scanning for any sign of pursuit. He could hear the groans of the wounded and the dying behind him, but he couldn't go back. The attackers—wherever they were—had the upper hand, and staying out in the open would only get him killed.

As he glanced around, he saw a few others crouched nearby, their eyes wide with fear, hands shaking as they clutched their weapons. The night had swallowed them whole, and they were left wondering when—if—the next shot would come for them.

"How is our boss?"

"Dead!"

"You sure?"

"Goddamnit, I'm the only one who survived in that vehicle. None of them experienced a good death." Nobody knew who answered, but the atmosphere went chilled. As desperadoes, each had sharp thorns.

If there wasn't a strong one to suppress, the organization wasn't far from collapse. It was the deadly threat that kept everyone together.

"Damn it, do you see anyone? Who's ambushing us?"

"You still ask questions? Don't you know they're the same group that stormed in minutes ago and killed our brothers!"

"F**king c*nts, I know that. What I'm asking is, where are the enemies?"

"Don't search. They're nowhere near us. It's a few snipers."

"Are you kidding me? What kind of sniper can kill a convoy and blow up vehicles? It's a rocket for sure, which means they're nearby."

Arguments sprouted, some of which were sound, as minutes passed. The initial panic had subsided, and everyone began to think about survival.

"Hey, you," shouted Chieung Sam, spotting the man who crouched and hid behind the metal door of an upside-down SUV. "You'll be picked off one after another if you stay there. Run toward my voice."

"You sure? I think it's safer here." The man didn't believe his words and refused to move. Then, as if to prove him wrong, a clash of metal sounded, and the man was thrown to the ground hard. A mini splash of water and soil kicked off in front of him.

Obviously, a bullet punched through double doors and struck him. The momentum blasted him toward the asphalt.

His body twitched unconsciously as he glanced at his lower body in disbelief. Blood gushed out, beginning to dye the road red.

Silence—nobody spoke. A loud boom signaled death's chant. The man's soul had left the living world.

Their thoughts were completely overwhelmed.

That man had clearly stayed behind cover. He should have survived even if a bullet managed to penetrate those steels. Could the cover they chose withstand the power?

"Ahhh!" A man bellowed and made a run from the burning car, trying to dash toward his companions, who were at a 'safe' location.

"Don't!" everyone warned.

Sure enough, in spite of their poor vision, their eyes captured the man's head exploding into pieces. Lightning displayed brain matter—white and red substances littered all around.

The headless body walked a few steps and crashed downward, syncing with the oncoming sonic bang.

"MAMA! Help me! I was wrong!" a few cried and sniffled.

"Please don't kill us! Lord, save us, poor lambs!" Some prayed for forgiveness. They had never witnessed such utter horrors of destruction. From the beginning, none of the corpses remained in one piece.

Chieung Sam had breathing difficulties, the warm wetness underneath contradicted the rainfall. Only then did he realize he had peed in fright.

The sight deterred several who were planning to run from their positions, where they had taken cover behind the wrecked vehicles.

One by one, they were picked off. No metal obstacles managed to block the attacks. Seeing the brothers who laughed and joked around days ago now cold, without complete bodies, the survivors whimpered.

Running equaled death. Doing nothing was also death. Their hearts despaired. Their mere action was to pray devoutly, begging for mercy in the hopes that the obstacles miraculously stopped the heavy bullets.

Where were the moments when they made fun of the victims who sought prayers while being tortured? Where was the time when they let the victims ask the gods and Buddha they believed in?

They had thought too much. You reap what you sow.

.50 caliber were manufactured to punch through conventional Armored Fighting Vehicles. Even concrete walls and bricks couldn't withstand the penetrating force. If not one, then two; else, three bullets¹

Chapter 579 Keep bragging!

Through the scope, Ling Qingyu watched everything unfold with a cold expression. She methodically squeezed the trigger and racked the bolt to chamber another round.

There was no pause as she shifted after every shot once the target was hit. She saw how her bullet ripped through metal doors and penetrated the gang members hiding behind the vehicles.

She saw another man, who fled in horror and completely lost his mind. The terror broke him. Mercifully, she exploded his head.

Later, seeing numerous figures hidden in fright, she picked them off one after another. Luckily, all the images were in black and white contours, preventing her from feeling nauseous at the sight of the gore.

At the same time, Tang Ziyi kept cussing without shooting. She knew what her partner was up to.

The first time Tang Ziyi missed her shot on a particular person was when the latter ducked by sheer luck or instinct.

She remained adamant and didn't want to lose to Ling Qingyu, who hadn't missed a shot yet.

Disciple surpassing master? Not in her time. Tang Ziyi didn't want this reality.

Ling Qingyu had once said she had an angle on the man and was denied. So, she didn't bother to act and eliminated several figures on the loose.

Once only bodies were piled on the road, she shifted her focus to the treeline, ditches, and behind the boulders, where the last survivors stood.

Perhaps due to her shots creating panic, the crowd in the distance began to speed away toward the thicker vegetation, no longer cowering behind cover.

However, Ling Qingyu curled her lips in disdain. They were indeed retreating, but the two forms of retreat—breaking contact and fleeing in disarray—created opposite results.

Fleeing like this only allowed Ling Qingyu to hunt without problems since the herd ran in a general direction still within her sight.

Breaking contact, in the current scenario, would be when the gang members detected the rough direction of sniper fire and conducted preventive measures.

For instance, instead of running without any thought, they should have stayed on the road and made use of the terrain to hide from sniper sight.

The two hills perfectly provided a vast area of hiding spots. If they had made a run for it, they would have had a better chance of survival.

Of course, Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi were aware of their position's drawback. But that was a big "if." The two were confident they could eliminate everyone if they attempted to escape.

Because of Ling Qingyu's threat, Tang Ziyi managed to finally snipe her targets. Ling Qingyu saw a limb fly into her sight and was speechless.

She didn't know whether it was bad luck for an entire arm to jump into her crosshairs. Damn, she wondered if Tang Ziyi did it on purpose.

Not that this bastard hadn't done similar gross actions before. Ling Qingyu complained, "You wasted precious seconds on him, he wasn't worth it."

"I know. As a teacher, I must study my student's progress and watch over her," said Tang Ziyi without blushing.

The city-wall thickness of Tang Ziyi's skin forced Ling Qingyu to roll her eyes. "Yes, yes. You're correct in everything."

"Hmph!"

Soon, more loud bangs of gunpowder explosions and bodies being torn apart followed. As time passed, the violence became sparser until silence remained.

Ling Qingyu sighed at the vulnerability of a human being. Just a little click, and someone died. Destruction was easier than creation.

Her gaze scanned across the ruined battlefield—broken figurines, missing limbs, holes in the middle, decapitated parts, and more.

Under the pouring rain, Ling Qingyu noticed the white color slowly fading, signifying that their body temperatures were starting to dip as their metabolism stopped.

"Deadchecks?"

"No need." Tang Ziyi relieved herself from the prone position and removed bullets and the magazine. "Even if they survived the carnage, they'll die from their injuries. I suspect none survived our precise sniping."

"Alright, it's your call." Ling Qingyu shrugged.

"Safety first. Remove some parts and store everything in your bracelet."

Ling Qingyu nodded and complied. "What would you have done if the ambush had gone wrong, like if the gangs had spread out and fled, making them hard to hit?"

"Obviously, that wouldn't happen. Even if it did, we might just have a few headaches before we annihilate everyone. Plus, if things went worse, I'd let the containment teams' mortars strike them."

"Holy shit, are you really serious?"

"Anyway, they're too free to serve as a temporary supporting element," answered Tang Ziyi.

"What about the enemy's communication? I think by now, our actions should have been revealed."

"You forget about your daughter," Tang Ziyi pointed out.

"I didn't know she could directly interfere with the network. How about radio communication?" Ling Qingyu never expected Athena's methods to be so advanced.

"As long as she controls the higher command through internet blockage, she can interfere," said Tang Ziyi. "Not to mention, they're also connected to the internet individually. A few might use satellite phones, which are like leakages to her. Even if they're encrypted three times or ten times, it doesn't matter."

"So, this poor group of lambs didn't even send out a distress message?" Ling Qingyu glanced at the ambush site, with small flames burning in the distance.

"Yep. Still, we can't assume that Athena covers everything. We should always expect the unexpected."

"Indeed. I suppose even then, if our enemies knew, we're prepared enough."

"Yep. Now that you've packed everything up, take out the electric dirt bikes. We'll be riding close to the front."

"Damn, I'm going to be your Doraemon from now on. Quickly research space storage." Ling Qingyu complained. "I don't want to serve as a backpack and follow my girls on every mission."

"Sure..." Tang Ziyi smiled.

Helpless, Ling Qingyu flicked her wrist and concentrated on the inner world of the bracelet to take out what Tang Ziyi requested.

Two bikes miraculously popped out of the void. The duo checked their attire for the final time. Tang Ziyi mounted one and pressed the power button.

Ling Qingyu followed suit. Since both were electric, no noise was emitted. Their NVGs allowed them to drive silently in the darkness without light—a perfect stealth roll.

After everything was set, Tang Ziyi took the lead. The two bikes hopped up and down as they traversed through the difficult terrain, where ordinary people would have no idea where to place their front wheels.

In fact, both of their physiques were way above superhuman; their running speed should have been faster than these bikes or even a few types of vehicles, though endurance remained a question.

When Ling Qingyu achieved this state of surpassing mortal limits, she had genuine questions about ancient civilization.

Were the people of old days really as primitive as modern humans anticipated since there hadn't been much technological change?

Or was it that their technology focused on other themes modern humans hadn't yet ventured into?

Or could it be said that humans were moving down the deteriorating path of laziness?

Actually, Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu could run to the destination faster than they could ride the dirt bikes.

"All units be advised: Phase 2 will begin in an hour. Load up and refresh yourselves." Tang Ziyi's voice came through the headset. "Kilo 1, keep track of each Kilo's location and provide support when necessary. Make sure logistics can keep up. The rest, stick to the plans discussed. How copy?"

"Kilo 1, copy."

"Kilo 2, copy."

"Kilo 3, solid copy."

...

"How on earth can you keep up with me?" Tang Ziyi's puzzled tone interrupted Ling Qingyu's focus.

"What? Is it that hard?" Ling Qingyu replied without further thought.

Tang Ziyi choked and stopped in her tracks, glancing back. "You bastard. Do you have any idea how much time I've invested to drive this skillfully?"

"No idea." Ling Qingyu parked her vehicle beside her and shook her head.

"One year... One full year."

"I have a feeling you want to brag."

"What do you mean? One year is a lot. Anything new that I want to learn usually takes around a few months. To be perfectly in sync with my bike is another skill issue. You have to ask how many people broke bones before they reached my state."

"Yep, you just wanted to brag," Ling Qingyu said impassively.

"Geez, isn't your focus in a completely different lane?" Tang Ziyi responded speechlessly. "Now enlighten me. How the hell can you drive so well? I was initially slowing things down, and when I noticed you never fell behind, I sped up, and you also sped up. I even suspect if I weren't leading, you might have already overtaken me."

I knew you were skillful when you impersonated a SWAT motorcycle cop, but..."

"So, you were testing me on purpose?" Ling Qingyu's expression showed realization. "Haha, it seems like I've now gotten several skills that surpass yours. My Ziyi must learn more in case her disciple surpasses her in bed."

"Wait, now that you mention it, this scenario seems similar to parachuting. Now, tell me, how long did you have to learn with your mysterious entity?" Tang Ziyi folded her arms.

Ling Qingyu shut up and flipped a middle finger before speeding off.

"Like I expected," Tang Ziyi muttered and followed. "Hey! Wait for me. You don't know where we're supposed to go."

"It doesn't matter as long as I stay away from you!" Ling Qingyu replied through the radio.

"Please, I want to know too. I'm serious." Tang Ziyi begged.

To Ling Qingyu's ears, the sound appeared more like a mockery. "5 years, okay. Five years! So, Miss Genius, don't continue to annoy me."

"Hehehe." Tang Ziyi's happy giggling responded.

Ling Qingyu: "..."

Chapter 580 Phase 2

Fifteen minutes passed as Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu weaved through bumps and plantations before finally stopping at an elevated position to secure a commanding height.

The heavy rainfall and lightning began to lighten a little. The wind no longer blew harshly. Once Phase 2 commenced, the weather should have already calmed down.

Tang Ziyi picked a spot and arranged another observation post like the one they had both set up near Kilo 5 and Kilo 6.

Now, they had no other operators near the vicinity, alone to scout the city's network and situation. Of course, they had no worries.

A perfectly concealed place along with two talented superhumans—if the worst came to reality, they just needed to move their enemies. There was no way they would fail to fend off even a staggering number of enemies.

Not to mention, Ling Qingyu possessed unlimited ammunition support to sustain a longer fight. Even if they were defeated, they could still run and fight again.

Anyway, neither of them felt any apprehension about commanding so close to the battlefield. The previous Ling Qingyu might have been uneasy, but now she had obviously matured in a hot battlefield filled with gunpowder and smoke, though she was obviously sniping others without being seen.

Since the time was still early, both of their scopes sifted through the city: every block, every building, every house, every street, and every road.

Despite having intelligence from Gu Yi and Athena, close analysis was still necessary for further tactical planning. While Tang Ziyi muttered intermittently every time she glanced at a particular location, Ling Qingyu boredly looked around.

Regarding tactics, she was a complete novice. If not for this bastard's insistence, she wouldn't have joined the battlefield and even decimated gang members' bodies.

Strategy was her advantage, but she didn't believe she could miraculously assume a role as a strategic commander. No matter how talented, she still had to learn to be a commander. Xiao Yue was best for the job.

Fortunately, before leaving Province N, Xiao Yue, Su Ruomei, and Tang Ziyi had laid out multiple plans for the latter to utilize depending on changing variables on the ground.

And Tang Ziyi had the experience and talent to adapt to any change of scenario on the battlefield.

Though she always admitted she was never a strategist, Ling Qingyu gave her the benefit of the doubt. This bastard would fend well, in spite of the obstacles.

Ling Qingyu reckoned Tang Ziyi was merely not interested in thinking games and preferred action on-site.

Forty-five minutes later.

"All units, sitrep," Tang Ziyi asked as she glanced at the timer on her wrist. The hour preparation deadline was over.

"Kilo 1 ready."

"Kilo 2 set."

"Kilo 3 set."

"Kilo 4 on standby."

...

Every Kilo team had their weapons locked and loaded, already rested and energetic. Even the previous Kilo teams, who had been engaged in close-quarters battle, had already regained morale and stamina.

Kilo 1 had already moved the necessary caches for other teams to continue the operation. As soon as Phase 2 commenced, they would begin to evacuate the detained individuals to a safer location. In other words, they would become rear security for the vanguard.

Kilo 2 and 3 were still responsible for containing enemy reinforcements. Kilo 4 already had two Toyota technicals.

Everyone was mounted and waiting for an order. PKM turret gunners lazily leaned on the metal hood.

Usually, grouping together in a stationary formation was frowned upon since the risk of casualties from a single attack was deadly.

If something dangerous managed to hit a single vehicle, the entire team would be out of combat. Each Kilo among 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 possessed two technicals.

Five sat inside the vehicle: two in the front seat, one mounted on the turret, and two on the trailer, covering the left and right.

"Phase 2 is a GO. Move to the staging area." Tang Ziyi's command finally came.

The technicals roared and set out. Exploiting the night advantage, no headlights were used. On the dashboard, a screen connected to the thermal camera perfectly displayed the required vision for the driver.

If required, the cars also had infrared torches to illuminate for personnel using NVGs. Although the foes Spirit Fox were facing merely belonged to the lowest level gangs, not even terrorists, nobody underestimated and assumed the enemies had no night capability.

Infrared headlights could be seen from afar by those who owned the appropriate equipment.

They dared not bet on the possibility that no one was equipped with night vision devices. Since the given intel noted the presence of mercenaries, who knew how advanced their equipment was?

From the elevated position, Tang Ziyi saw her hidden teams and requested Ling Qingyu, "Qingyu, take out three of our endurance drones to the sky to monitor the entire city."

"Which ones?" Ling Qingyu wasn't kidding. So much stuff had been packed in her bracelet. Various drones were included.

She had already released the drones requested by Tang Ziyi to Kilo 1 to deliver the goods.

"Fixed-wing type, the big ones with four hollow tubes on the wings."

"Ah, the ones without engines or propellers?" Ling Qingyu quickly understood and released the three mini-aircraft.

"Actually, those tubes are engines. They suck air and redirect it at extreme speed so that enough force is generated to push." Tang Ziyi corrected Ling Qingyu.

Waving her hand, Ling Qingyu gestured that she understood and stopped the further scientific explanation. "Go ahead, I know."

Tang Ziyi rolled her eyes bitterly and spoke. "Athena, control these drones and fly them above, circling around."

"Okay, Aunt Tang," Athena's reply swiftly came. Instantly, the three drones whirled and hopped into the sky.

The rain and wind seemed to have no effect on the flying machines. From Tang Ziyi's and Athena's confidence, Ling Qingyu knew that lightning wasn't even a threat.

However, a major problem remained. Since the machines were powered by electricity, there was no doubt about aerodynamic efficiency in the design. Only a large delta wing and a vertical tail were used to maneuver the aircraft.

Still, the battery wouldn't last long compared to the fuel-powered ones, right? Ling Qingyu thought.

Unexpectedly, she, like many others, misunderstood. In terms of efficiency and range, electric fared far better than conventional machines, particularly cars.

It was the lithium pollution and inconvenience of charging that people saw as the bad aspects of EVs. Regarding aircraft, heavy static weight became an issue. Conventional aircraft burned fuel, reducing weight in the process, while battery supply got reduced but the weight remained the same.

This meant that more power was needed to sustain the flight. Tang Ziyi noticed Ling Qingyu's expression and guessed the reason. "You still have another three. When these machines have low battery, you can replace them."

"If only we had more time to let Athena come up with a machine to construct a city inside your bracelet. Tsk...tsk..."

Ling Qingyu shook her head, pursing her lips. She wondered if her own possession really belonged to her.

Why were her two generals so unscrupulous? Well, anyway, every time she protested, she wilted.

It couldn't be helped since both of them exploited their advantages to the extreme, including flirtation and seduction.

Not to mention, Athena's products never failed her expectations. Who knew how long the drones' batteries could last? With additional black technology, she wouldn't be surprised if the endurance reached five hours of continuous flight.

"Kilo 4, waiting at staging area."

"Kilo 5..."

All Spirit Fox operators had tablets inside their vests, and a few in each team were equipped with smaller drones to scout.

They could also connect to other drones' cameras and satellite visions. An extreme perk for any tactical team.

From individual to overhead perspective—and satellite eyes—this was the wet dream of every commander.

The tactics were simple. Athena designated visible targets through satellites and relayed them to the tablets where anyone could access the information.

Only suspected and armed targets were focused on. Athena double-checked these through drone footage, where the camera technology provided an outstanding zoom.

Kilo 4 to 8 would move in and out twice, striking the enemy hard and violently suppressing and disorienting them. Afterward, a methodical clearing would start; convoys would march on the road, where Spirit Fox would utilize small drones to check nearby buildings to detect enemies.

They would only enter the buildings that contained threats. Non-threats were ignored, probably addressed the next day or so.

In the meantime, the big drones above would initiate electronic jamming to paralyze the enemy's communication system. Though the jamming capability on the drones wasn't powerful, it was enough to slow down or confuse messages.

Together with Athena's handling, the result was a complete information blackout for the enemy. During the detailed clearance, Athena would send messages for bystanders to stand clear of the conflict and advise to ensure unwanted casualties didn't occur.

As for destroying the communication tower, Tang Ziyi hesitated. Despite the fact that in war, information advantage was necessary, she didn't want to destroy people's normal lives if possible.

She believed her subordinates would complete the mission beautifully.

Since all Kilos had arrived, and the duo had obviously seen them from above, Tang Ziyi gave the order to assault.