

Beautiful 591

Chapter 591 Timely rescue III

Tang Ziyi removed the body and saw a pale woman, breathing weakly and groaning from pain through the NVGs.

"Sophia? Can you hear me?" She scanned her thoroughly and found the wounds. Sophia was shot in the chest, very close to the heart.

As for how she discerned the bullet had hit close to the heart and not the heart itself, anyone with a damaged heart wouldn't survive, let alone continue breathing.

Tang Ziyi's question recollected Sophia's thoughts, as her eyes regained focus. She glanced at Tang Ziyi and said enviously, "These two are really lucky. The country didn't abandon them as I thought. Although I spoke as if the outside attacks were just to rescue them, I never expected my words to be so true."

She coughed and chuckled, genuinely jealous. Why couldn't such good things happen to her?

From Tang Ziyi's conversation in their mother tongue with the two agents, Sophia understood the ins and outs of the chaos outside.

"Well, it's good that you're still conscious. Don't talk; let me treat you," Tang Ziyi replied, tearing Sophia's shirt.

"You? It's useless. You'd better take those two and leave fast. This place will soon be filled with rats," Sophia snorted, hissing slightly at Tang Ziyi's movements. "I never thought I'd be so close to death. Just give me morphine. I hope to sleep without pain."

Seeing her eyes, Tang Ziyi had already decided to make a move, particularly more determined after listening to Athena's explanation of Sophia's background.

A former Interpol agent was thrown here and suffered so much humiliation and injustice. There might be more secrets, but it was enough as long as Sophia stuck to her original morals and conduct.

"I said, don't waste it. Are you trying to torture me?" Sophia's aggression was ignored by Tang Ziyi, who had already assessed the injury level.

She flipped off her NVGs and turned on a small yet very bright torchlight on her helmet to attend to the wound.

"Don't talk."

"You..." Sophia was a little speechless, her eyes moistening. How long had it been since someone treated her as a human?

The only man carrying the unconscious woman didn't speak either, his mood low. Without Sophia, they both might have already died, even if rescue was on the way.

Of course, he stayed away to avoid disturbing Tang Ziyi's work. The unconscious woman still needed treatment. So many unknown drugs had been injected; who knew how damaged she was internally?

Ping! Ping! Pap! Pap!

The noise from the entrance caught their attention. Ling Qingyu avoided exposure a little as sparks flew by, then stretched out her HK417 to suppress the enemy.

Her head swiveled left and right because she was the only person on guard. Both the front and back were vulnerable to enemy assault.

Though she and Tang Ziyi had struck mercilessly before reaching this floor, deterring the enemies, she couldn't rely on the opponent's psychology.

"I know you're having a sweet moment, but you'd better hurry up," shouted Ling Qingyu as sporadic gunfire resumed. "I don't know whether we poked the hornet's nest, but those guards seem fearless in their attacks."

The assault from the front grew fiercer. Ling Qingyu's words also puzzled Tang Ziyi.

This shouldn't be happening, right? The hostages shouldn't be prioritized so much by the gangs. Neither had any idea that a high-level individual had been killed.

The gang members were more afraid of the warlord's methods than of the grim reapers standing in their way. They had to rescue him or his body to atone for their mistakes.

At least, when they reported back, they could confess they tried their best and hoped for leniency. Their young master was missing!

The imprisoned man and Sophia exchanged glances. Tang Ziyi noticed their behavior. "What's the matter?"

So, the man explained everything, but Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu only responded with, "Oh!"

The corner of his mouth twitched. Ladies, he was serious! They should evacuate fast! Even if it meant that Sophia might be abandoned. Otherwise, they might lose the slightest chance of escaping.

Sensing his mood, Sophia smiled mockingly and didn't say much. Tang Ziyi, experienced, understood their emotions and comforted them. "Believe in us. We'll handle everything."

She turned her head in Ling Qingyu's direction and ordered, "Kirin, give me that tube-like can with a first-aid sign."

"What can?" Ling Qingyu didn't stop the pressure while asking back.

"The white one, as large as a water bottle!" Tang Ziyi answered, hoping Ling Qingyu hadn't messed up the storage system she had allocated, separating different types of items accordingly.

"Oh, I see." Ling Qingyu's consciousness entered her bracelet, and she searched. She found several packed inside one box in a medicinal area. It appeared this one was another black technology from Tang Ziyi and Athena.

Well, she should ask her daughter later to enrich herself. As a boss, she was going to be a failure if she knew nothing.

Pretending to reach her backpack, Ling Qingyu took out the can and tossed it lightly toward Tang Ziyi. The latter grabbed it without looking, removed the lid, and sprayed it on Sophia. She gritted her teeth at the sudden chill.

The effect was immediate. The bleeding stopped. The spray contained a biological agent or enzymes that fastened and facilitated natural healing, sufficient for the grave wound Sophia had sustained.

Additional numbness ensured Sophia didn't feel pain. The process worked by stopping bleeding through icing, allowing the body to recover itself. Even the icing came from biological components.

Although it wouldn't cure her completely, her life was temporarily saved, extending the countdown time to days.

The man and Sophia stared at Tang Ziyi's hand in amazement. They had never seen this medical item. Both knew there were painkiller sprays, but to patch wounds so quickly?

Since Athena had hacked the world's data, these discoveries, milestones for humanity at the current time, were included. With Tang Ziyi's cooperation, Athena developed and tested them in lab conditions based on Tang Ziyi's choice of the most suitable inventions.

These preferred developments were prioritized. Many remained a mystery, so much so that even Tang Ziyi felt a little overwhelmed. Hopefully, more scientists with the same cause would aid Ling Qingyu in the future. Doctor Mo was one of those on her list.

Of course, the new products hadn't undergone clinical trial but Athena's computation assured nothing went wrong. Superb calculations, observations combined with numerous animal testings, the success range leaned closet to 80 percent.

Tang Ziyi patched everything up and turned her attention toward the unconscious woman. "Kirin, hold on for 5 minutes."

"You have 2 minutes, I'm telling you!" Ling Qingyu refused, getting busy again. "Damn it, it's just a spoiled brat. Do you need to come and die?!"

Tang Ziyi didn't respond, hurrying her progress. Quickly diagnosing the condition, Tang Ziyi delivered a basic tranquilizer from Ling Qingyu. This was the most she could do.

Further treatment required testing the drugs and treatment plan from doctors. Really, the two female patients needed to be transported to the hospital ASAP.

Fortunately, the man, despite bruises and bleeding, remained strong. Yet it didn't mean a careful diagnosis of him wasn't necessary.

"Done. You'll carry your partner and follow us." She ordered and only switched her attention after seeing the man nod. "Kirin, princess-carry our foreign girl. Pay attention to her condition and injury. Though I've treated her to guarantee the wound remains stable, you need to be cautious."

"Copy. Moving," Ling Qingyu replied and hurried toward Sophia. Tang Ziyi replaced her and kept the pressure.

A moment later, Ling Qingyu and the others were ready, positioned behind Tang Ziyi. The former had slung her rifle on her back. She didn't feel any weight despite carrying an adult female—a tall one at that.

In contrast, the man struggled a little, but his case was understandable. Being no hindrance was good enough. He also picked up a few magazines and a pistol from the corpses.

Ling Qingyu held the woman with one hand and, with the other, took out a smoke grenade, then signaled to Tang Ziyi.

"The way we came here?"

"The same way we're going out."

Grabbing the grenade, Tang Ziyi threw it far in front of the suspected gang members who were still firing. "Smoke out!"

Compared to conventional smoke grenades, Athena's product exploded and sped up the spread of mist.

Several seconds passed, and the already dark vision became more obscured. Tang Ziyi stepped out and fired a few rounds. The enemy kept firing blindly, and Tang Ziyi intended to eliminate them.

Under the smoke, her thermal vision provided a clear sight. She neutralized many threats who became lax from the smoke, thinking their opponents couldn't see them either.

"Move!"

Ling Qingyu took the lead, dashing toward the emergency staircase, followed by the "couple." She cradled Sophia close to her chest with one hand while her other hand held her secondary weapon, ready to engage hostiles.

Tang Ziyi walked backward, maintaining momentum. The incoming fire decreased noticeably. The group trusted Tang Ziyi's cover and raced forward without looking back.

Boom!

A door swung open, startling everyone. "Hey, don't leave! Aren't you here to rescue me?"

Chapter 592 Because of your passion

Ling Qingyu directed her pistol at the sudden intruder. But before she could shout to control the situation, the intruder snapped, "My father should have sent you guys to rescue me. Take me out of here! Quick!"

Everyone was dumbfounded by the young teenage woman's words. Though she looked scared and helpless, her attitude of being an arrogant young lady was quite obvious. Her tone and manner conveyed that it was an honor for Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi to save her.

Ling Qingyu ignored her and proceeded to secure the emergency stairwell. The man followed closely, though his mouth trembled as he tried to speak his thoughts.

Since Athena quickly summarized the new girl's identity, both Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu ceased to worry and resumed their pace. As for whether this girl had hidden herself well enough to avoid any intelligence investigation, nobody bothered to guess. After all, it was very rare for agents to pretend to be sons or daughters of wealthy families, as these could never withstand cross-examination.

Athena explained that the girl was the daughter of one of the richest men from the northern province. She wasn't technically missing but had lost communication with her friends and family last week. She usually played hide and seek and roamed around on adventures, so nobody regarded her absence seriously. Further research found someone had pretended to be her and responded with messages in her place.

Currently, Athena had no idea about the kidnappers' motives. Since they hadn't even tried to demand a ransom, the investigation was at a dead end. Athena completed everything within seconds, from identification to general investigation, and further into details.

While others pretended not to see her, Tang Ziyi couldn't ignore her. A lone girl in the middle of a gunfight?! Her conscience and experience wouldn't allow her to do so. Since this girl had survived here, she could stay safe if she was clever enough. Bringing her along might endanger her instead. However, after remembering they had killed the so-called Young Master, who knew how frantically the gang members might react?

She grabbed the girl by the collar, dragging her along. The girl struggled and protested, but Tang Ziyi's scoldings terrified her. Here was someone still in a dream, thinking her father had sent a powerful team to rescue her. Of course, dreams were meant to be woken up, and Tang Ziyi just did that.

She had no idea how this foolish girl survived but had no time to contemplate further. Though Athena understood, she also didn't want to complicate the operation and disregarded the issue. Tang Ziyi explained everything clearly and gave the girl a task: to carry the unconscious woman. The girl swallowed and agreed, no longer chattering nonstop, obviously hurt by Tang Ziyi's ruthless words that showed no courtesy.

Now, Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi were bringing three extra "baggies" during their escape. These two and a half burdens were a headache. Because of the man, who could join the fight, three became two and a half.

The man listened to Tang Ziyi's command and paired up with the girl to assist. He picked up an enemy's rifle and its magazine during the descent.

Ling Qingyu took point, despite the additional weight on her. Her secondary weapon always had its muzzle in the direction of probable threats. The man followed her steps with an AK, providing support, though Ling Qingyu had zero trust in him. Behind them were the two girls, with Tang Ziyi at the rear, always insisting on rear security.

The most likely threat emerged from the rear. The group moved fast despite the weight, but the man and the girls struggled a little to keep up. However, seeing someone carrying a heavy weight in an uncomfortable position while taking point, nobody spoke.

Along the way, four further attacks occurred, and two were instantly quelled by Ling Qingyu. The others came from pursuing threats. Sophia, the man, and the foolish girl witnessed Ling Qingyu's miraculous close-quarters combat style. Even with extra weight, when enemies struck within arm's length, she parried and countered their moves, finishing with a shot.

Her gunslinging style broadened everyone's eyes. If not for the occasion, they would even speculate whether this operator's job was a Wild West cowgirl.

Particularly, Sophia witnessed everything up close. Though such movements strained her wound, the initial first aid and pain relief prevented additional problems for the operator carrying her. Sophia's eyes beamed with wonder and curiosity; her desire to learn this skill repeatedly fluctuated.

Their initial worries about being rescued by only two operators dissipated. Yes, Sophia and the man were dumbfounded when they realized that just two operators had wreaked havoc across the entire building by themselves. They would never have believed that two special forces soldiers could cause so much destruction and panic if they hadn't seen it with their own eyes, recording the event.

Because they were awake and near the enemy's top level, they understood the situation more clearly. At the same time, they were at a loss for words over the bravery of the two operators. They really fit the theme: "Who dares, wins."

Wait, why were the operators women? While Sophia showed admiration, the man had huge doubts.

Perhaps their violence had worked, as no further attacks stood in the way. Ling Qingyu's group reached the ground safely.

Originally, if there had only been two hostages, Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi would have ridden their dirt bikes with each carrying a passenger. With an extra two, the plan changed. Even though there was only one bike parked, Ling Qingyu could generate another from a hidden space.

"Clear!"

"Clear! No pursuit behind," Tang Ziyi reported and darted toward the nearest pickup truck, entering the driver's seat. She tore open what was underneath the steering wheel, extracting several wires, and tried to start the engine.

Ling Qingyu noticed her situation and advised, "Don't bother. The tanker is leaking."

"Huh?" Tang Ziyi straightened and looked under the vehicle. "Let me check another."

Another truck could only whine. Its engine was properly damaged. Ling Qingyu rolled her eyes and complained, "Let's walk. We've contacted our support. Kilo 7 is on the way to link up. We better move out and hide first. Once our previous momentum disappears, these gang members will recover their courage."

"Indeed." Tang Ziyi nodded and sprinted toward the only truck in good condition. However, Ling Qingyu had a premonition that things wouldn't go well. And as anticipated, the wiring system inside was ripped apart.

"F**k!" Tang Ziyi slammed the steering wheel and stood up from the driver's seat. Her frustration spread around, affecting the man and two women. Ling Qingyu consoled and prepared to move, "Easy there. Let's go on."

"Ah, who would expect?" Tang Ziyi smiled wryly and followed.

"Yeah, you better blame yourself. If not for your blood rush and passion, you wouldn't have blown up so many vehicles and even disabled the good ones." Ling Qingyu snorted.

"Damn, isn't it you who made my adrenaline rush?"

Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi's rapport eased the pent-up anxiety. Sophia was speechless at Ling Qingyu's style of comforting. She had never seen such playful yet cutting banter. If Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi knew her thoughts, they would reply with contempt. Siblings—anyone with siblings would understand.

"The plan now is to search for vehicles or hide and wait," Ling Qingyu summarized. Silently, she withdrew the bike she parked when both of them were playing fast and furious. Nobody noticed a certain bike disappeared.

The group hastened their pace, but it was still slow in Tang Ziyi's eyes. Going on foot for the entire journey was unlikely. Hiding required a careful choice, as they might attract more wolves if unlucky. The man wanted to talk, and Ling Qingyu noticed his behavior. "Do you think you can be as stable as me when carrying her?"

The man shook his head and resigned to his temporary assistant role. The group trotted away from the building, out of the light, as exclamations and commotion sprouted. After realizing the two devils had retreated, the enemy's morale sparked. "Hey!"

More figures emerged, and Tang Ziyi rotated her body and fired, scaring away the chasers after they saw their comrades go down. Some took cover and began to fire blindly. Tang Ziyi easily silenced them by shooting at the weapons themselves. The gunfire that should have heated up cooled down before it even began.

Ling Qingyu also faced several enemies in front of the group. She fired multiple shots, taking down those closest to her. For those furthest, she didn't have an option. The distance was too far for her pistol, and if she had to use the HK417, she would have to place Sophia carefully.

Fortunately, the male agent solved her problem. Bang! Bang! Bang! AK fire sprayed at the enemies' formation. The man seemed satisfied with his shooting as he saw himself suppressing a group.

Ling Qingyu couldn't bear to look directly. How horrible was his marksmanship? There were so many chances to kill and inflict heavy casualties, but he just scared them?

Of course, Ling Qingyu didn't say it out loud and directed the non-combatants to take cover. Tang Ziyi reacted and helped the man, managing to hit the targets. The front and rear were still and clear, for now.

They chose a different route based on Athena's advice, who reached a sound conclusion after studying the drone feeds and the enemy's movements. She coordinated everything to smooth the group's

hardened steps. Meanwhile, other Kilo teams weren't quiet. Each was completing their task and brought severe damages to the gang.

Chapter 593 Fierce fight

Weird combinations of clattering under the dark, rainy night, Ling Qingyu's group tried to hide the pursuers' hint of smell.

The gang members kept following, no matter how accurate Tang Ziyi's shots were or how Tang Ziyi completely suppressed her opponents in any engagement.

These men would flee whenever they saw their friends fall but were forced by the leader-like figures among the gang to carry on the attack.

They were treated as cannon fodder. Even if their instincts told them otherwise, they still gritted their teeth to fight.

After all, dying amidst the gunfire was a better option than being tortured and played to death to please their superior.

The young master died under their watch. None of them could escape the responsibility, even if he was so arrogant as to not evacuate when chaos got closer.

Of course, he wasn't so arrogant that his tail had straightened up like a scorpion; no one expected Ling Qingyu's and Tang Ziyi's movement to be so fast!

The leading figures had no other choice but to atone for the coming punishment to show that they were remedying to avenge the young master.

Compared to the sudden attacker, nobody believed the gang would dissolve and be buried soon. The attackers would definitely leave after their objectives, whatever they were, nobody knew.

So, every time Tang Ziyi scored several alarming headshots, the enemy's resistance dipped naturally, but they always bounced back. Natural fear under the reign of warlords had created hierarchies of slaves.

Though in the modern, peaceful world, people with separated classes were no different, here, there was no minimum guarantee of safety or rights.

Hence, Ling Qingyu's pursuers remained persistent in spite of the losses and weren't deterred. Particularly, when everybody began to comprehend that they were played around by merely two special operators.

Wouldn't it be an honor if they were able to participate in the chase to eliminate one? Word of mouth spread from one to ten to hundreds. Gradually, the size of the army chasing Ling Qingyu's group grew, and Tang Ziyi had headaches.

The commotion attracted eyes from the gang elsewhere. Those whose hands were free joined in the fun when messengers exchanged reports.

Ling Qingyu, who led the team, had to take several detours to avoid entrapment. She and Tang Ziyi wished to play a cat-and-mouse game, without pressure if they were alone.

Nonetheless, they were carrying extra weight, and these weights must be protected from harm.

Their caution was necessary when they couldn't control the probability of stray bullets. Whether morally or to preserve reputation, Tang Ziyi wouldn't allow anybody in the group to get hurt.

On the other hand, Ling Qingyu was in distress. Carrying another human while ensuring she fought, control of strength and mind put her to an ultimate test.

Fortunately, forewarnings owing to Athena's calculation of the enemies' movement and drone footage above helped share the pressure.

When they went quiet, they managed to surpass a patrol without a shot. When unavoidable, Ling Qingyu could aim before the enemies showed up in her vision. First sight, first shot, first kill.

Along with their skill level, they outmatched their opponents. In order to hide their tracks, Ling Qingyu equipped a suppressor on her handgun when she got a chance.

The man and two women followed without complaints, but their legs showed if they pressed on, they wouldn't be able to make it. Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu didn't have the slightest change in their breathing.

Cool composure, steadfast and methodical.

The man and Sophia, who were keenly observing the two, couldn't help but shrink their eyes, noticing their state. They had been running for more than fifteen minutes nonstop.

Especially Sophia, who couldn't fathom, with her extra weight, how on earth Ling Qingyu expressed nonchalance?

This was too unusual, right? She had contacts with special units and knew more in detail. At least, the breathing rhythm and the heartbeat must show signs of alteration, but no.

Were these two so strong? Stronger than men she worked with before, and females too? Not only did the man suffer confusion, but she did too.

Unbeknownst to Ling Qingyu, the two shared similar suspicions, but every time they dove deep, someone would interrupt.

Ling Qingyu brought her team to narrow alleys, avoiding obvious roads that would soon be filled with patrols and checkpoints.

She could have breached buildings nearby and attempted to stay incognito, but she couldn't risk the innocent civilians.

The gang might not care about collateral damage, but she and Tang Ziyi did. They would never be able to forgive themselves if an innocent, unrelated bystander got injured or died because they chose to hide inside someone's apartment.

As for the method of running on the street and breaching a particular room to reach another street, it was a myth and shining Hollywood scenes of spies.

The reality was totally in contrast. First, Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi had no idea about the architecture and culture of the environment.

They needed time and adjustment if they wanted to escape like in the movie scenes to avoid getting lost.

Second, who said that a building always contained two doors—front-door and back-door?

There were many without any extra door; some high-rise buildings even didn't have an emergency staircase according to the regulations.

What if the group intended to escape through one apartment but found out there was no back door?

The group would be trapped instead and cut off their road to escape by themselves. It was safer and preferable, in Ling Qingyu's and Tang Ziyi's opinion.

Besides, once they barricaded themselves, civilian harm became natural. Speeding up would drain the hostages' energy, unfavorable in a life-and-death scenario.

"How long before Kilo 7 arrives?" Ling Qingyu asked.

"10 mikes out," Tang Ziyi answered and looked behind as if she noticed something. Snapping her HK416, she fired two rounds at the fast-moving figure, which tumbled and drifted close to the body.

"Another dog?"

"Eh. They keep sending in hunting dogs," Tang Ziyi chuckled. "Do they consider us as helpless 'civilians' without any threats?"

"I don't think so," replied Ling Qingyu. "It's the manner they use dogs to chase, not to track us like professionals."

What Ling Qingyu said was correct. This was the sixth dog killed by Tang Ziyi. Ling Qingyu had shot two.

The enemies kept releasing dogs to hunt them down. Each time, the group fought against a small squad.

Ling Qingyu still didn't understand why they continued sending them in. Did the opponents really think that dogs would make the two panic?

Initially, there were one or two. As time went by, they sent in a group of canines. These dogs were troublesome, even for those with military experience.

Under the darkness, despite night vision aids, dogs moved too fast for the eyes to react and aiming difficulties increased, particularly when a group sprinted at the same time.

However, for Tang Ziyi, the menacing canines didn't cost a sweat. The good old double tap was all she needed to end what everyone regarded as a crisis.

Perhaps, their quick elimination frightened the enemies so much that they dared not send in further. Who knew there might be dogs with leashes chasing them?

Among the pursuers, as the size grew, there were a few targets with good skills. They made sure they were harder to hit, and Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi understood these might be mercenaries hired from abroad.

Face to face, the duo didn't bother to land an eye, but when they combined with the average gang, both practiced caution to ensure they didn't roll over.

Naturally, such was the reason why both never scratched the possibility of seeing a K-9 trainer.

"Mom, my advice is to roll into the building. You're now stuck. If you keep going, you'll be in an open field soon." Athena's warning changed Ling Qingyu's complexion.

Her eyes captured faint figures ahead, and she immediately changed direction. "Athena, mark me the closest main avenue. Easiest and fastest access for Kilo 7 to support."

"Roger. It's marked on your visor."

"Any advice?" Ling Qingyu asked.

Her voice puzzled Sophia and the rest. Yes, by now, the drugged female agent had regained consciousness and was able to move, barely.

The burden on the youthful spoiled lady decreased, but she still protested, panting. "I... I, we need to rest. I'm sorry... I..."

She was ashamed that she couldn't go on. The burning heat inside her chest wreaked panic trains of what-ifs.

The man wasn't any better, but his training merely kept him from embarrassing himself.

"No worries. We'll handle that. And don't be sorry. Just hang for a while; we'll let you rest," Ling Qingyu said.

"A standoff fight then," Tang Ziyi knew what Ling Qingyu had in mind.

"Yeah, you've got the knowledge and experience. Why don't you take control?"

"No need. You're already doing good. Carry on with your idea." Tang Ziyi smiled and prodded her chin.

"Let's move and find a secure position," Ling Qingyu asked Athena for a suggestion.

Defending inside a building sounded great, but once they got surrounded, grenades, RPGs, and others might kill them.

Safe yet their visibility decreased. With only the man and Tang Ziyi, fighting inside wouldn't cover too much. Hanging on till reinforcement arrived remained questionable.

Safe under rain was different than safe under the sun. What if the mob lit a fire or used gasoline? They would be trapped like a turtle inside a cage.

However, the situation changed again when gang members slammed out of several buildings.

Ling Qingyu's group trotted away, and the adrenaline forced the hostages to strive on. She knew the hostages might soon collapse and needed rest.

Ping-pongs rang behind. After a while, everybody got used to trusting Tang Ziyi's handlings.

Seeing concrete blocks on the T-shaped corner beside the main avenue, which the group was heading to, Ling Qingyu's eyes sparkled with delight.

Natural defensive positions plus a few vegetations to hide. She wondered if the location was the old checkpoint for the gang.

Sure enough, the concretes were set up for defensive postures in a circular formation. A perfect spot to rendezvous with Kilo 7 and escape rapidly.

"That's it. Take cover behind the concrete blocks!" Ling Qingyu shouted and pointed at the man. "You'll make sure they stay under cover and protect our flank."

Rapidly, the girl hobbling with the weak female agent fell as soon as her feet stood on the place Ling Qingyu indicated.

Emotion was everything. She relaxed the moment the obsession completed. The man also looked around worriedly and asked, "What's next?"

"We'll wait till our QRF arrives," Ling Qingyu said nothing more and laid down Sophia in a safe place. "I'll be leaving them in your hands."

Pang! Puff!

Shots landed everywhere. Some passed overhead. A few hit the concrete, drawing sparks and dust.

Tang Ziyi jumped over the block with one hand as support and took cover. Ling Qingyu assumed another angle, unslung her HK417 from behind, and anchored the C-grip against the structure for stability, then began firing.

Tang Ziyi lay prone backward and reloaded before crouching over again to return fire. Their action prevented further encroachment and halted the enemy's advance.

For now, both sides fought to compete for suppression. Outnumbered but never outgunned, since every shot Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi released hit the targets or scared them to hide.

Every bullet counted. "Reloading!" Ling Qingyu stayed back and slapped another magazine in.

Both of their bodies shifted as they aimed at an extreme angle, pivoting the front part of the rifles on the blocks.

After a while, rounds came from another direction and surprised the duo a little. Even the drones didn't notice the enemies' movement. Obviously, the gang went through buildings and hid their presence from Athena.

However, the duo didn't say a word of blame for missing. Ling Qingyu immediately readjusted the formation and rushed for another block to cover the new angle.

They defended against two-pronged attacks. The firefight heated to an extreme. Ricochets, whiplashes, loud cracks, and thuds!

Two rifles against hundreds. The war to achieve suppression kept raging, albeit at a slight disadvantage for Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi. The battle was tilting in the enemy's favor, and the man with an AK joined the fight, crouching beside Tang Ziyi.

The latter just looked and didn't say anything. The man was relieved that he contributed and thanked his collecting behavior as he saved ammo from the dead enemies.

Suddenly, Tang Ziyi saw a rocket darting in her direction and pushed down the man with her elbow to the ground. "RPG!"

Ling Qingyu ducked upon Tang Ziyi's cry. Boom!

The impact fell short of their position, a few meters away, but the explosion and the quiver threw the group off-balance.

The gunfight quieted down for one-tenth of a second and resumed again. Meanwhile, the girl, female agent, and Sophia covered their heads in dismay. The former shook and cried.

The agent had luckily woken up to comfort the young teen. All she could do at best was to avoid adding chaos to the team and trust their rescuers.

Sophia sighed and felt a strong guilt. If not for her, the team might have moved much quicker, right?

...

"Athena, what's the ETA again?" Tang Ziyi asked.

"More than 5 mikes away."

"Make it quick. 1 or 2 mikes, or you'll be collecting bodies. Tell them that," Tang Ziyi snapped.

Chapter 594 Overrun

"RPG!"

Boom!

Sands splattered above and rained sharp specks over everyone's skin. Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi returned to the original covering posture and fought back.

The male agent without proper protection for ears, head and body, suffered minor issues. His head kept shaking, not yet recovering from the powerful explosion.

This time, the projectile impacted very close and brought a stunning buff. Ling Qingyu was pissed and scolded. "Hey, don't you even aim at that bastard?!"

"You don't need to say that!" Tang Ziyi retorted. "That guy always shoots and scoots."

"I don't know if you can bear it but I can't." Ling Qingyu cursed and decided to cheat. "Hey, catch it and blow them up."

She scooped out a short tube and threw it over to Tang Ziyi, who examined the item and instantly laughed. "Nice! Just for the right occasion."

What Tang Ziyi held was a rocket launcher, folded to shorten the length. Once unfolded and fired, the item turned useless.

She extended the tube and flicked a couple of mechanisms to switch on the rocket launcher. Glancing backward under the rain of enemy bullets to make sure her rear stood cleared, Tang Ziyi straightened a portion of her chest out to present her weapon and pressed the trigger.

Boom!

The front tube flared up, punching the projectile out and hot gas blew from behind. The fulcrum of air dispersed. Tang Ziyi didn't bother to watch and retracted back to cover, while flinging away the tube like garbage.

Job done for a temporary rocket launcher.

The rocket flew straight and exploded near the last seen enemy RPG user. To Tang Ziyi's luck, the target happened to walk out of cover to fire another rocket and meet her attack.

The figure was directly blown upward and shocked the enemies. Ling Qingyu shouted in support. "Yeah! Woohoo!"

The two regained the fire superiority initiative and ignored the male agent, who seemed to be suffering a little.

Tang Ziyi observed this man's state and understood that it was merely an effect of a close proximity explosion. He should recover soon.

As for his hearing damage, she had no answer and hopefully, the effect was minor so that the body healed without any pressure.

"Give me another," Tang Ziyi requested.

"With pleasure, honey." Ling Qingyu extracted another from the bracelet and threw it again.

Boom!

Tang Ziyi fired and scared the enemies to withdraw a little. Both girls smiled at the result. At least, they achieved the objective of elongating the time for survival and avoided being overrun.

The chaos ensued; Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi maintained the suppression effect until the latter changed her expression as she put in the last magazine. "Give me 2 reloads."

Ling Qingyu threw the requested items without hesitation from the bracelet. An ample ammunition amount was stored here. She didn't expect Tang Ziyi's to run out soon.

However, considering that Tang Ziyi held back the pursuing force alone most of the time during the run before arriving here, Ling Qingyu didn't say much.

Tang Ziyi grabbed one and slid it in her gun. The other was dragged near her under her feet and put inside the pouch afterward.

In order to suppress the enemy, even Ling Qingyu was burning bullets like hell, nonstop. Each carried 8 extended magazines, housing 40 times 8— 320 rounds.

Firing one per second, 320 bullets equals 5 minutes of sustained fire provided the shooters didn't roll off the track.

However, that was a simulation; a real battlefield comprised of numerous factors, especially uncontrollable ones like morales, adrenaline blood rush, and fear.

In a heated battlefield, shooters would fire 5 rounds in a flash or ten if needed. Even if Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi suppressed their enemies, how long could the effect last?

Once depleted, everything returned to square one and they would become the meat under the knife.

Of course, both had no such fear because of Ling Qingyu's existence. A humanoid Doraemon, if not to keep secrets from outsiders, all the enemies were killed against all odds by them.

Even without an ammunition supply, Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu could maneuver and defeat them. It was the presence of four hostages that anchored them to defend instead.

Modern battlefield was all about maneuverability. Being stationary meant not far from losses.

Fortunately, both girls weren't average shooters. They were much more, particularly Tang Ziyi. Only two or three bullets at most were needed to kill the target. Their accurate shots exhibited a fierce suppression effect and elongated the time.

Bang! Bang!

Tang Ziyi noticed the male agent returning back to his post. "Steady. Don't panic too much and don't be too brave either. We are handling it well. The situation is under control," comforted Tang Ziyi.

It would sound more convincing if the last sentence wasn't replicated with Tang Ziyi ducking in disarray when debris ripped around her.

While this man and the enemies shot blindly or used iron sights to land accurate hits, Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu fought differently.

Their hologram scopes weren't much of a use during the night. The quads on their helmets blurred their vision if they fired the same as before.

Instead, infrared lasers zipped regularly as the beams hovered over their targets and they pulled the triggers.

The initial stage of the firefight passed as the enemies began to apply tactics. Muzzle flashes sprouted out of the building, increasing the difficulties of Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi.

Both shot back at the windows and whatnot. They had no time to care about civilians and bystanders.

Another RPG popped out on the road. Ling Qingyu, who saw the figures, fired instantly and the projectiles somehow landed on the rocket's tip.

Boom!

The explosion engulfed the man and blew away his companions around. Their life and death uncertain. Even Ling Qingyu didn't expect her luck to be so good.

"Haha...Good jobs." Tang Ziyi chuckled before ducking again as the rocket trails flew out of a building and landed in front of the group.

Nobody would be able to spot this gunner from the building clearly. By now, he should have switched his position.

Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu couldn't let the RPG gunner shoot again. His zeroing would get better as time passed.

At the same time, Athena warned her aunt and mother, about imminent threats on the road. For the enemy hiding inside the building, she was also helpless.

But her excellent computation roughly estimated the gunner's position from the drone footage.

Ling Qingyu took over the responsibility and fired at areas, guided by her AI daughter. She had no idea whether her shots hit him but no more RPG spew out of that building again.

"Enemy technical!" Tang Ziyi exclaimed as she spotted a truck rolling on the road toward their direction.

The huge machine gun on the trunk, pointing in their direction, lit up soon and honed the muzzle at their positions.

Rapid continuous whiplashes and sparks on the concrete blocks forced them to cower and the situation turned against their favor.

Tang Ziyi pressed down the only male hostage to prevent him from trying to fight back. "Stay down! You'll be fine." She cried out amidst the roars of machine gunfire

Ling Qingyu wasn't any better. She slanted slightly above the concrete blocks, exposing very little except for a portion of her eyes and hands to fire from this weird and uncomfortable position.

Her shots managed to scare the turret gunners, when pings rang out very close to him, creating an opportunity for Tang Ziyi to rise up and put more rounds accurately.

The gunner and the driver were eliminated but she made no great change because another replaced the gunner again soon after.

Helpless, Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu had to crouch behind the concrete. As more rounds from the enemies splashed on the concrete, they were a little panicking when the structures were torn down.

How long could these blocks serve their purposes? Tang Ziyi cracked her radio. "Zero to 7, hurry the f**k up, we are pinned down and on the verge of being overrun."

"Hold on, Zero. Kilo 7, one mike away. Hang on."

"I want to but we might not be able to." Tang Ziyi glanced at the hostages shortly. These four figures were her highest worries.

Though she didn't want to admit that she and Ling Qingyu were losing to a bunch of gangsters, a loss was a loss, even if they killed so many figures. 3 minutes had passed by since this unfavorable battle began.

More enemies poured out than the rate they scratched off. Not outgunned or outnumbered but the enemies had too much manpower.

The scenario totally changed as the opponents closed in while rounds continued to ping on the concrete covers from all directions. Too many buzzes, cracks and whiplashes.

"Damn, so this is what it feels like to be in a last stand." Ling Qingyu laughed and shook her head. Throughout her entire life, tonight's adventure would be remembered the most for sure, compared to boring office tasks and business war. The smell and heat of gunpowder excited her.

"Well, not sure if you could say that. But I guess movie creates better scenes," Tang Ziyi replied.

"Maybe we're missing a soundtrack!" Ling Qingyu shouted.

Their conversation stunned the four audience. Please, they were completely on the verge of collapse and these two could still joke in spite of the adversity.

Perhaps, the little girl might not understand but Sophia and the duo agents knew more. The group was going to be wiped out soon if help didn't arrive soon.

"Okay, ignore the shooters from afar. Kill the close ones." Tang Ziyi ordered.

"Understood."

Both studied the pattern where the bullets landed and picked an area of the lowest hit. Of course, these were their guesses.

Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu switched to multiple lying positions to return fire. Sometimes, their feet hung against the concrete.

Their actions tried to avoid incoming rounds from afar. Even then, a few hit them, bringing small pains. The most dangerous, at least to the male agent's eyes, was when a bullet ricocheted off Ling Qingyu's helmet. The latter paused for a while and became more fierce.

Nonetheless, their action cleaned up any gangsters who were trying to run over, deterring others who wanted to get closer.

The enemies, who thought, the victory was near, became vigilant again and switched to cautious mode.

The movements of Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi, opened the male agent's eyes. Only, he, among the hostages witnessed the rare sight. These techniques imposed strict requirements on the physiques. He bet he couldn't even manage to copy one, especially when conducted rapidly.

Just when Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi were racing their thoughts, a radio cracked in.

"Ladies, I heard begging from Zero. Instructor, are you going to give us some benefits for us? Call us mom and we'll be quicker."

"F**k you, Kilo 7. You even want to be my mother; you were still drinking milk when I started to learn to fight. You better not let your mother know who you are. Or I'll be very very willing to bloom your ass." Tang Ziyi was instantly relieved to hear this voice before scolding back in anger.

Ling Qingyu giggled at the rare sight of Tang Ziyi being teased. She lit a candle for the speaker, who thought that they were hidden deep. This bastard would surely call Athena to verify.

By then, those operators would undergo devil training. Thinking about the moans and whining, Ling Qingyu shook her head. She loved her girls.

"Haha, Mom. We got your ass." Kilo 7 leader sneered and got serious. "Kilo 7 approaching from the east, watch your fire. Stay down and stay safe, we got everything covered."

"Kilo 7, your words are redundant. We couldn't even show up. Show these MF, who's the boss here. Laser marking our position." Tang Ziyi swore again and vented her pent-up again.

Nobody liked being suppressed for so long. It was impolite to return the favor. Athena quickly laced an infrared beam from above, following Tang Ziyi's words, flicking multiple times.

"Laser spotted. Clearing the vicinity area. Closing in, guns...guns...guns." Tracers flung in from the east and painful cries erupted around.

Although Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi couldn't observe carefully under the enemy's suppression, it seemed like Kilo 7 lit up everything.

From the engine roars and PKMs' buzzes, both estimated their reinforcement's location. The sudden intrusion caused disarray among the enemy's ranks.

"Don't care about control, light them up." Tang Ziyi added.

"With pleasure."

Chapter 595 Return

Two Toyota technicals bolted through the silent, deadly avenue. Steering westward to reinforce the trapped Zero, the wheels screeched as they skidded from the high-speed turn.

Kilo 7 was racing to support. The previous message had been sent out, giving the team one minute to arrive.

After a while, even under the darkness, tracers' trails and fierce sparks from the collision of two substances flared vividly.

The operators, utilizing night vision goggles, saw more. Seeing their friendly unit still in combat, everyone heaved a sigh of relief.

Although they knew their bosses weren't in trouble, witnessing it firsthand delivered greater comfort.

The team leader had time to joke around and received Tang Ziyi's threat. Her subordinates giggled, but she wasn't to be outdone.

"Oh, don't think about shrinking away. We are all in this together. Don't laugh," she said.

The rest of the operators bulged their eyes at their leader's despicable and shameless act. Wasn't she the one who wanted to poke at the tigress's butt? Now everyone had to take responsibility?

Where would such good things occur? Perhaps, noting her subordinates' piercing gazes, she coughed to lighten the weird atmosphere.

"Stop glaring at me and focus. Prepare to greet our enemies," the leader redirected the topic.

Once a solid beam flickered directly multiple times on Zero's position, she knew it was her turn to start.

She ordered her girls to fire everything that could house enemy combatants while avoiding the area marked by a laser from the drone above.

Two turret gunners aimed their PKMs and unleashed everything. Bursts of automatic fire conversed between the two machine guns. A rhythm of short bursts hit the building walls, windows, and top floor.

A few figures very close to Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu were left behind for them to handle. Indeed, the duo returned fire and killed them once the reinforcement's gunfire entered the battlefield.

Kilo 7 announced its presence and suppressed the enemies with one hand. Two vehicles drifted and halted near the duo: one directed toward the northern threats, the other toward the western threats.

The turret gunners never ceased to pull the trigger, consuming enormous rounds of ammunition.

The other operators quickly dismounted and took formation, making the best use of cover—infrastructure, vehicles, etc.

Boom! Boom!

Two operators launched RPG-7s, exploding suspected locations of enemy presence. Some used grenade launchers for maximum firepower.

The gang members were totally crushed from every angle. Before, they had held onto the hope of defeating a small team of operators already burdened with hostages.

Even then, they lost morale multiple times, and if not for the forced push from the gang leaders, they didn't like fighting at all.

However, when Kilo 7 showed up violently and ruthlessly banged everyone's last straw, most gang members cried out in distress and retreated or hid.

The leaders' coercion no longer worked. Some began to fall back, regardless of any threats. Figures that were shot wilted like dominoes.

Kilo 7's combat strength, plus the presence of Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi, overturned the entire dilemma. Though only 10 more operators provided support, the effect was more than one plus one equaled two.

"Okay, roll out, everyone. Hop onto the vehicle," Tang Ziyi ordered, dragging the man beside her and forcing him into the trunk after sensing that there were no more incoming rounds from the enemies, who were completely suppressed by her reinforcement.

"Copy," Ling Qingyu responded and ordered the three women as well while she carried the injured Sophia.

The truck carrying them reversed slowly before making a 180-degree turn when more space was available.

The remaining truck still kept the pressure on the enemy before gradually extracting itself from the battlefield.

Nobody was sure if any malicious parties still existed, but suppression and overwatch were required for a safe retreat.

One after another, the remaining operators mounted the truck and followed Ling Qingyu's group. Both raced toward the safe zone.

The hostages on the truck were a mission priority. Actually, if not for the need to annihilate the syndicate gang here, Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi could have called off and returned.

Kilo 7 would be responsible for the security in the danger area and escort the hostages out.

On the way, the only man exhaled and patted his chest in relief. His worried eyes glanced occasionally at his partner, who seemed lethargic from the drug's effect.

The usually spoiled girl pursed her lips. Tonight's ferocity had made a huge impact. She now dared not leave her house and act recklessly.

Though inwardly, her blood rushed with excitement. Death had been so close. One wrong move or an accident, and her life would have been doomed.

Of course, her eyes shone with curiosity whenever they landed on the operators' weapons. She stared at Ling Qingyu, whose vigilance hadn't loosened even after breaking contact.

Tang Ziyi turned on a small flashlight and observed Sophia's state. She patted her chest and sighed.

Despite support from a highly sophisticated medical sprayer, it couldn't be denied that Ling Qingyu's method of carrying had prevented the injury from worsening.

Throughout the escape, she had provided a stable platform. Fortunately, both of them were already classified as superhuman.

They had zero confidence in getting out alive together with the hostages without their special physiques.

Of course, they would never dare to venture alone without this perk, which meant the hostages would have died and their primary objective would have failed.

Hopefully, the instability of the fast-moving vehicle wouldn't have any impact on Sophia.

Although the sin city was well-designed for tourist attractions and the wealthy people's black market, the presence of potholes and mud was unavoidable. It was already great that the roads weren't made of sand.

Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu had decided they needed to transport Sophia and the drugged agent to the hospital as soon as possible.

The two had merely stabilized their conditions, not cured them. Professional matters needed to be handled by professionals.

"Hey, I have now tasted what it means to offend our Spirit Fox," said Ling Qingyu over the channel. "You, girls, kick their balls hard. They must be squealing in pain."

"Of course, no one dares to chase us because of this," Kilo 7's leader responded. "We are really impressed that the two of you handled them easily, even with all the burdens."

"Yeah, in fact, I believe, with just the two of us, give us more time, we could have killed them all instead of being forced to run around like dogs," said Tang Ziyi.

Ling Qingyu: "Okay, we know we are pros. No need to mention that."

"Says someone who got scared of being sniped with all the given protections," Tang Ziyi whispered lightly, not over the radio. Only Ling Qingyu, with her sharp ears, heard her voice.

Tang Ziyi did it on purpose. On the trunk, except for Ling Qingyu and the turret gunner, her voice was imperceptible.

Ling Qingyu humphed and cursed her inwardly. After a while, she muttered over the channel, "Hey, I saw you girls strike like thunder. Did you already know there were no innocent civilians in the AO?"

Tang Ziyi: "..."

Kilo 7 leader: "..."

Kilo 7 operators: "..."

No one said a word. Now that Ling Qingyu mentioned it, they realized they had gone overboard during the rescue action.

"Well, somebody say something and don't make me panic," chuckled Ling Qingyu, a bit nervous.

"Ahem... we were a little too hyped and ignored the possibility of civilian presence," Kilo 7's leader stuttered.

"Alright, don't talk about that. We did the best we could. If we hadn't hit them hard with a lightning strike, we wouldn't have had the shock effect that allowed us to escape like now," Tang Ziyi comforted everyone, affirming that nobody made any mistakes. "Remember, you saved four important hostages. We aren't gods; we can't get everything."

Despite her words, everyone restrained their excitement and carefully considered whether other options had existed instead of a split-second rampage.

However, it appeared their choice was the best after simulating multiple scenarios. In the end, nobody dwelled on the topic, hoping civilians had found a place to hide or there had been none in the first place.

If Spirit Fox hadn't fired grenades and RPGs to overwhelm their opponents, the window of opportunity would have remained small. Instead, they would have been drawn into a World War I-style rifle confrontation.

Utilizing all weapons was the real path to victory. Combined arms was the true method of success in any warfare.

...

Several minutes passed, and everybody relaxed their nerves as the sound of gunfire faded away, muffled in the background. Kilo 7's technicals were leaving the battlefield.

The weather had begun to improve as the rainfall lessened to a few droplets. Lightning still flashed occasionally.

Everything requested by her mother-in-law had been achieved. Only Miss System's mission was pending. Three days was more than enough.

Three days later, the entire city and the gang hideouts should be completely overturned, along with the rescue operations. The general trend had been set.

The warlord and his family factions were now aboard a sinking ship. The only threat came from foreign intervention. Would the country here responded or would the other family neighboring here attempted to seize territories?

Chapter 596 Inexplicable

Ling Qingyu's group arrived at their destination. Kilo 7 switched roles with Kilo 1, which had been serving as the logistics department.

The procedure took a while since Kilo 1 operators had spread out to accompany the undercover agents and investigate, separating criminals from innocents.

They also distinguished foreign and domestic victims with the help of prior intelligence.

Of course, Athena participated to facilitate the process. According to Tang Ziyi's plan, everyone would return to Province N via land transport.

Arranging the human statistics became vital for future actions. Kilo 1 operators happily replaced Kilo 7; most girls were beaming with joy.

Their vibrant energy left Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi speechless. For Kilo 1, being ordered to serve as a support element while watching their comrades in battle was disheartening.

Shaking her head, Tang Ziyi watched her subordinates depart again on the technicals. Although Kilo 7 had several rough engagements, they were still disappointed to replace Kilo 1 and had no desire to rest.

On the other hand, undercover agents were elated to see their two missing fellows soon. They gathered around and discussed the situation.

At the same time, they praised their country for being willing to conduct a cross-border rescue operation.

Of course, the presence of female special operators gnawed at their minds, but everyone selectively turned a blind eye.

Whether the operators were men or women, they had been rescued by them. What right did they have to further contemplate the issue?

The drugged undercover female agent was taken away soon under the guise of medical treatment, along with Sophia.

Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu wanted to separate them from the crowd. The little rich girl trotted behind.

Whenever Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu glanced back suspiciously, she would rub the floor with her toes in guilt.

Both ignored the girl and let her follow them. Anyway, they decided to send her back to Province N quickly.

The question was: How would they do that?

"Ziyi, you said these two need to be sent to the hospital ASAP," said Ling Qingyu. The group stayed inside the building far away from the battle.

Even though the muffled sounds of clashes rang out in the distance, she felt very safe here. Besides, the enemy, despite their fierce firepower, had no artillery to threaten them from kilometers away.

"Yes, it's okay for this female agent to wait until the drug's effect dissipates. But I have no idea whether there will be internal damage because of her immune system's resistance to the drug," Tang Ziyi answered, taking a peek at the three women near the two.

Sophia and the female agent lay on top of a cushion, serving as a temporary bed while the wealthy second-generation girl accompanied them, whispering and chatting excitedly.

The two elder women nodded and smiled, not minding the little girl's disturbance. The presence of a young teenager soothed their souls.

"Then we better send them off, especially Sophia," Ling Qingyu said. She and Tang Ziyi chatted in a low voice, barely audible even at such a close distance.

The two of them were extraordinary in every aspect. If they didn't want anyone to hear their conversation, no one could, not even with technological devices.

Those devices might take time to decipher the meaning. By then, the lead would be gone, and the topic would have changed.

"We will airlift them and fly into Province N."

"Airlift?" Ling Qingyu expressed doubt.

"Yeah, remember the new armed helicopter I asked you to store away before we left?"

Ling Qingyu frowned, trying to recall. "Isn't it an attack helicopter? And a new one I've never seen before."

"It's a prototype and hasn't undergone flight tests," Tang Ziyi replied with a shrug.

"What the heck?" Ling Qingyu almost burst out with foul words. This Tang Ziyi dared to fly a prototype without any flight tests?

How dare she? But it was impossible for Tang Ziyi to ignore such a danger.

Moreover, it seemed that the armed helicopter only allowed one pilot to operate it, right?

That was why she remembered it vividly—most armed gunships in the world had at least two pilots, one to fly and one as a gunner.

"Stop worrying. Do you think I don't know what you're thinking?" Tang Ziyi scolded. "I've considered every aspect, and I understand the cons of flying an untested prototype. But Athena has simulated everything."

"But... that's just a simulation, not reality."

"Wrong. Her simulation is more powerful than our flight tests conducted worldwide."

Ling Qingyu stopped talking, realizing that Tang Ziyi had more to say. Indeed, Tang Ziyi explained quickly to persuade Ling Qingyu to release the helicopter gunship.

Otherwise, without Ling Qingyu's trust, the whole idea was pointless. Athena's computations and hardware could replicate a parallel world.

This ensured that the simulation resembled reality much better than contemporary flight tests.

Previously, Athena had the capacity to achieve this, but some parts were lacking. Only after Athena researched Ling Qingyu's bracelet and the storage world inside, which could even house living beings, did Athena—the Goddess of Wisdom and daughter of Ling Qingyu—have a technological breakthrough in both software and hardware.

Even in stormy conditions, with heavy rainfall and dire environments, including the unpredictable Murphy's law, the gunship performed perfectly.

Ling Qingyu had nothing more to say when Athena promised everything. As a mother—well, in front of cute and coquettish Athena, Ling Qingyu didn't complain anymore. She trusted Athena more than Tang Ziyi, who also liked adventure and took risks.

As for how the technology worked and how Athena had her breakthrough, Ling Qingyu didn't ask. Even if she did, she wouldn't understand, which would only embarrass her further.

She had to act like the head of the family. Pretending to be aloof was the most required skill. Unfortunately, who were Tang Ziyi and Athena? Both snickered inwardly and didn't mention a word about the science.

Ling Qingyu's pretense was blown away as soon as she acted. Perhaps realizing the situation, she transferred the topic away. "Then, what are we waiting for? Let's roll out."

Tang Ziyi chuckled and followed behind as Ling Qingyu sped away. She ordered nearby Kilo 7 operators to carry the two women.

Outside, Ling Qingyu looked around and extracted a modified Land Cruiser, whistling like a lewd man fawning over a perfect ten beauty. Who didn't love cars, especially ones built to rock and roll with passion?

She rubbed the camouflage metallic exterior and sighed. This beast was a work of art—bulletproof, with modified rails and front bumpers.

Soon, Tang Ziyi came out, and with the help of a few operators, Sophia and the female agent were put inside.

Ling Qingyu had already adjusted the backseat to make more room for them to lie down. The little girl also followed and got in.

Tang Ziyi shrugged and hopped into the front seat. Ling Qingyu took the driver's position and started the engine. The cranks and vroom during ignition elevated Ling Qingyu's passion.

Switching gears, the vehicle drove away before screeching to a halt. Tang Ziyi asked in confusion, "What are you doing?"

"What else? I'm thinking about the male agent. He's also injured. Though not seriously, it's better for him to get treated," Ling Qingyu rolled her eyes. "And, you, my dear Ziyi, never thought about him, I suppose."

She thought she was bad enough for preferring women over men, but this Tang Ziyi completely forgot about the existence of male creatures. As expected of comrades with similar goals and ideals, the opposite sex was absolutely ignored.

"Why should I do that? Transport him will expose our secrets."

"Hmm, You're right." Ling Qingyu scratched her neck and cleared her throat guiltily. "So, how do we move him? We can't leave him behind from humanitarian perspective."

Tang Ziyi stared at her partner, who seemed to be teasing her. She really had forgotten about the man, but considering his state, even if it wasn't an emergency, it was better for him to return soon.

However, there was a problem: he could observe the helicopter closely, unlike the three women inside the Land Cruiser—the two couldn't move properly, while the third knew nothing about tech.

Who knew who he might report to later? This was why Tang Ziyi never considered the male agent. "Alright, let me handle it."

The Land Cruiser reversed, drawing eyes from around. Tang Ziyi exited and walked toward a group of undercover operatives gathered together.

Without a word, she knocked out the male agent, lifted him by the collar as if his weight was nothing, and tossed him into the trunk before getting back into the passenger seat.

The operators and undercover agents were too stunned to speak.

"Eh... that... Umm, Ma'am." One of the agents wanted to protest, but all they saw was the vehicle driving away.

Everyone glanced at each other in dismay but dared not move, especially with Spirit Fox operators nearby.

Luckily, someone came out and explained, but the reason for knocking out the man remained a mystery. Did treatment require the patient to be unconscious?!

Even if they knew something was off about Tang Ziyi's conduct, they considered it the male agent's bad luck.

Male agent: "Oh, what a lovely and loyal group of friends?"

Chapter 597 Someone needs a spanking

Soon, the vehicle arrived at the destination, far away from the sights of others. Ling Qingyu parked the Landcruiser and waved her wrist as a gesture to release the armed helicopter, Tang Ziyi requested.

She didn't need to gesture as long as her mental concentration properly did the job. However, when external behavior acts got involved, everything surged in a positive way.

For instance, there was a research from Country J that inputting gesture while the test subjects spoke resulted in improvement from every angle. Even the task was done more beautifully without errors.

Well, people likely made fewer mistakes when the entire body got involved. Naturally, Ling Qingyu had no idea about this research but she knew for a fact that gesturing facilitated her action.

The sudden appearance of the armed helicopter was only seen by Tang Ziyi and Ling Qingyu, who were wearing night vision goggles.

Athena had already interfered with satellite imagery to ensure the perfect logical appearance.

This was the reason why Tang Ziyi knocked out the male agent, who was mostly the highest threat to expose their secrets.

Injured Sophia, a drugged female agent and ignorant girls posed nothing, nor the slightest difficulties.

"Who's flying?" Ling Qingyu asked when she thought that if she served as a pilot, the Doraemon advantage would be lost. If Tang Ziyi flew, the entire command chain would be disrupted.

None of the choices appealed to her. Tang Ziyi understood Ling Qingyu's worries and answered. "Athena, she'll be commandeering the gunship."

"Athena..." Ling Qingyu stopped talking. She had never seen a fully autonomous aircraft but since Athena perfectly produced automobiles driven by AI, she believed her daughter would do the same excellence for the helicopter.

Of course, what stopped her from further questioning was that she saw Athena's hologram on the pilot seat.

She was certain that there was never a pilot when she released the aircraft. So, the real cause belonged to Athena's tweaking. Heck, even these unnecessary devices were put to work in the gunship?

No more words, she exited the vehicle and popped the trunk. Tang Ziyi followed suit. The whirling of the rotors began.

The gunship design leaned on the futuristic and aggressive angular factors. Obviously, it was built for stealth, with a sleek, angular shape for reduced radar visibility like RAH-66 Comanche.

The composite and streamlined fuselage exuded state-of-the-art smell. However, its width wasn't small. From the front, a single-pilot machine provided ample space for a human to maneuver in contrast to modern aircraft where compact living space was preferred.

The ease and comfort was shown at a maximum level. The pilot had excellent visibility due to a large, wraparound canopy with a dark-tinted appearance, flaunting the aura of intimidation and protection.

The most noteworthy of the gunship, unlike what Ling Qingyu had seen before was that there was no tail rotor. The tail boom was wider instead to accommodate NOTAR ducted fan system. The small vented slots along the boom would eject high-pressure air to stabilize and control the yaw.

With an H-shape horizontal stabilizer, the center also consisted of additional slots to blow out air from behind so that the aircraft flew faster than conventional aircraft.

These were what Athena explained briefly, citing NOTAR technology where even throughout the entire world, less than a handful designs was produced.

Although the whirling wasn't small, Ling Qingyu felt the noise quieter. What she didn't know was that the Four-Bladed Main Rotor—composite plus low radar cross-section—minimized noise through superb rotor blade design, where it features swept-back tips.

From the outside, the armament didn't change much. Fixed Winglets with 3 hardpoints extended from each of the fuselage, carried rocket pods.

The obvious, chin-mounted cannon struck fear to anyone whose eyes laid on them. The same applied to Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi even though both knew Athena was controlling them.

There were also retractable side-mounted missile pods, that could hide the weaponry to lower its radar presence. A spherical sensor on top of the rotor mast told the viewers that the gunship attained 360-degree surveillance.

Ling Qingyu withdrew her gaze and focused on the task. She and Tang Ziyi pulled out the stretcher, housing Sophia who was in rest.

The patient's eyes looked around with curiosity as she heard the presence of a helicopter very close. However, the darkness was expected to disappoint her expectations.

Tang Ziyi took the lead while she grabbed from behind. The rear ramp opened gradually as the duo neared the gunship. A dim red light illuminated the space inside.

Not too big, not small either for a special-purpose armed gunship. The space designed here must be intended to transport casualties or ammunition to the frontline where the environment was too hot for ordinary military helicopters to handle.

Ling Qingyu had no idea what Tang Ziyi and Athena had in mind. They must have their own ideas and plans to produce this prototype.

After placing Sophia, Ling Qingyu returned to carry the drugged female agent while Tang Ziyi hoisted the man, followed by the girl.

Tang Ziyi reminded the girl, who was in the most healthy state of what to pay attention and to listen to Athena's instruction.

The girl nodded fervently, her glances roaming around nonstop. Tang Ziyi rolled her eyes and no longer paid attention.

Anyway, this girl wouldn't pick up more troubles once inside. Even if she did, nothing would occur to the gunship.

The girl, the unconscious man, and the female agent sat around Sophia's stretcher. The former waved her hand as the ramp began to close.

Looking at the energetic girl, unlike the panicked one during a firefight, Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi lamented her courage and heart.

Without hesitation, both returned to the Landcruiser as the whirling pitched up and blew leaves and grasses. The duo squinted and angled their faces to avoid the sand and debris, flying around owing to the rotor wash.

The cargo compartment in the rear was possible perhaps because of no tail rotor, Ling Qingyu assumed.

Both watched as the gunship steadily lifted off and swung in the direction of Province N until the contour hid under the night sky and disappeared from their sight.

"Damn, I wish to fly that machine. I've never seen such a futuristic appealing gunship," sighed Ling Qingyu.

"Don't say you, I also have the same wish. That beast is now commandeered by your daughter." Tang Ziyi snorted with disgust. She really wanted to try but the situation demanded her presence.

So, Athena took all the benefits. Ling Qingyu smiled and shook her head. "Hey, at least, you design the machine really well. What's its main function?"

"The same as other gunships to provide fire support."

"Oh? I thought you also included transportation capability."

"Nah, transport isn't the main goal though this gunship can adapt in severe cases."

"Hey, we need transport more, isn't it?" Ling Qingyu asked with a puzzled face.

"Don't worry, enlarge the size with an additional pilot. There, we have a utility gunship."

"Okay, so long as you're happy and don't consume my wealth like burning fistfuls of cash." Ling Qingyu humphed. "What's its name?"

"Eh, I didn't have any idea yet. It's just a serial number to me—AH-01."

"You're too lazy to give a name." Ling Qingyu scoffed.

"Me..me...Mom, I have one." Athena interrupted.

Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi exchanged helpless glances. This naughty daughter still paid attention to their dialog.

"Alright, girl. Shoot it away." Ling Qingyu didn't have much hope. But this daughter was better at naming compared to the two idiots, here.

"Since you have Aegis as an armored vehicle, why don't we name our helicopter as Virgin."

"What the F***?" Tang Ziyi cursed with her eyes bulging.

"Yeah, what the heck, Athena? How could you name it like that? It sounds so weird and cringe." Ling Qingyu shuddered as she tried to call out. "Virgin 1, Virgin 2...Eww. I think Witcher or Witch is more domineering."

"Agreed," Tang Ziyi nodded. "I suppose Banshee seems a lot more presentable. Not a VIRGIN."

Okay, strangely, both Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi believed their standard was higher than Athena. The AI daughter now sucked in naming all of a sudden.

"Mom, pretty please. Let me name it this way, because it's very important for me." Athena begged coquettishly and sold her cuteness to an extreme.

Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi felt their hearts were hit hard and melted. But they would regret soon for not sticking to their opinion till the end.

"Aiya...Darling, come on if you can convince me, we'll accept your decision." Ling Qingyu waved her hand and leaned against Landcruiser.

Tang Ziyi shrugged and allowed Ling Qingyu to be a decision maker. She was also curious what Athena had in mind.

"Well, Mom and Aunt, you know my name is Athena, citing as an incarnation of the goddess of wisdom, right?"

"Yes." Ling Qingyu and Athena prodded their heads, their bad feelings trembled more and more.

"You already have Aegis, as Athena's shield. I want a powerful Warmachine to be named after my spear."

"Don't tell me the name of her Spear is Virgin."

"Yes, so, please give the title of Virgin to honor the goddess."

Tang Ziyi: "..."

Ling Qingyu: "..."

Had her daughter gotten swollen recently? She believed Athena needed a beating very much.

Chapter 598 Hospital

Two hours later.

Repetitive whopping blades drummed in the background. Sitting alongside her companion, the little girl, referred to by Ling Qingyu and Tang Ziyi as ignorant, became bored. Initially, riding a helicopter and the rotary chopping intrigued her. There were tiny slits of glass on the sides where she could view everything outside. However, because the location was in a rural area, not many light sources were reflected. It was dark and lonely.

The others were soon asleep, exhausted mentally and physically. Perhaps being ignorant was a benefit for her. She had no worries and trusted others easily. She knew she was going back home very soon. She decided to roam around to satisfy her curiosity. She had suppressed herself since entering the cabin. There was also a small ladder in the middle. She had no idea where it led to, but it didn't stop her from being inquisitive.

Although the interior spacing was a little crowded, with her small body, she climbed up and reached another room. But she had to bow to avoid hitting her head.

"Wow!" What she witnessed was truly magical.

In front of her, covered by an additional glass layer, she could observe the pilot's movement from a slight height advantage. Outward, her eyes captured what the pilot saw: a mesmerizing city landscape from afar. Layers of light sources aligned in a great formation along the main road. A dazzling collection of lights from multiple buildings. The combination of these illuminated the night sky.

It appeared that the helicopter still hadn't reached the urban infrastructure yet because only tiny speckles could be seen.

"Why don't you sleep like the others? Are you bored?" A woman's voice interrupted her dazed state.

"Ah, yes. I'm sorry, I hope I didn't disturb you," the girl replied.

"It's okay."

"How do I address you, Miss Pilot?"

"Athena."

"Codename Athena?"

"Hmm." Athena didn't elaborate and eased the conversation. The rapport between the young girl and her naturally deepened.

With someone to talk to, the girl became energetic and sometimes asked about those weird buttons and screens. Athena explained them briefly. She wasn't worried about disclosing any secrets. She could redirect the topic elsewhere whenever the conversation touched on sensitive subjects.

She liked conversing with the girl, who also discovered that she and Athena matched. She begged for Athena's contact, and the latter replied that she could chat online later.

She refused to return to her companions' place and stayed close to Athena. At least, being able to observe the moving scenery soothed her boredom. Athena helplessly or happily entertained this rich young lady. She was also speechless about how this girl got kidnapped and sold without being aware of the danger.

The gang protected her too well, or they had other agendas and required her to be fully healthy and well.

Soon, the gunship hovered above the hospital and began to land on a newly modified helipad. As the wheels touched the ground, the rear ramp slid open.

"Alright, girl. Rest well and don't play around. Listen to the elders; they'll help you."

"I will, Sister Athena. Bye-bye!"

...

Outside, a crowd waited patiently for the helicopter to land. If not for the sound of rotary wash, no one would notice its presence. Athena crossed the border, utilizing max stealth capability and her hacking skills to delete her presence from the two countries' networks.

Nobody noticed her, unlike the ones on the ground. Even then, those people would attribute the sound of the aircraft to many reasons. She didn't need to worry about them. Also, she had switched off the guidance lights on purpose to erase onlookers' visibility. Apart from the sound heard by human ears, the gunship couldn't be detected.

Waiting on the top floor of the hospital where the helicopter was landing, Mo Yunxi and Yin Jingfei were among the crowd for obvious reasons. After Ling Qingyu's contact and short conversation, both women prepared to receive three patients with injuries of varying degrees.

Furthermore, confidentiality issues prompted that it was best for the women familiar with Ling Qingyu to handle the case. As soon as the door opened from the rear compartment, Doctor Mo and Nurse Yin ordered the nearby doctors and nurses, rolling quickly with four stretchers.

Doctor Mo picked the most severely injured patient. The others chose accordingly. Even the little girl, who seemed healthy and strong, was forced to lie on the stretcher.

The crowd moved away with haste, ready to diagnose and treat the patients. The doctors read Tang Ziyi's scribbled handwritten notes, where the causes and emergency treatments were listed.

Sophia's case naturally had to be treated by confidantes. That was why Doctor Mo chose this patient to avoid any human leakage. She read more than the others because Tang Ziyi described the effectiveness, pros, and cons of the sprayer.

The moment everybody inside was evacuated, Athena lifted the helicopter off the ground and flew away into the distance, submerging into the night sky.

Three women still stood by, withdrawing their initial gazes on the patients toward the distancing gunship. They were Gu Yi, Yang Qingyue, and Assistant Su. When Doctor Mo paused her steps for a while and looked at her, Gu Yi waved her hand, telling the doctor to ignore her presence. Mo Yunxi and Yin Jingfei might be the only two in the hospital who knew that Gu Yi was here because she wore a mask.

The rest thought that the urgency was due to Yang Qingyue's presence, the current police chief of City N Police Department. The latter's position had risen a couple of steps more after successive merits in addition to her excellent academics and connections.

While the crowd hustled away, the trio set their gaze on the aircraft and sighed. They never expected Ling Qingyu and the group behind her to be so capable.

An armed gunship, newly developed and designed for war. What sort of normal businessperson owned these war machines? Ling Qingyu just did it, and she showed off without any purpose of hiding.

Should they be grateful and glad that Ling Qingyu shared a few of her secrets? If her friend, General Tang, were here, she would definitely pressure her to obtain the aircraft's information.

Fortunately, everybody here was related to Ling Qingyu, and their shared interest meant that the news could be successfully hidden. As for the other doctors and nurses, nobody raised any questions, attributing the aircraft to an experimental model, secrets from the military. No one liked getting involved with the military because of their curiosity.

All hidden problems were solved before they exploded. Gu Yi began to disclose everything about her deal with Ling Qingyu to Yang Qingyue while following a group of medical professionals. They came here because Ling Qingyu also called her mother-in-law to inform her about the successful rescue. The primary objective had been achieved when Athena landed the aircraft at the hospital.

Gu Yi was overjoyed when she heard the news from the phone call and rushed to the hospital with her daughter, who reacted with a puzzled mood but followed her mother's orders.

Gu Yi felt that her trip to Province N and meeting with Ling Qingyu were worth it. So many good deals and the best compromises were reached between the two parties, cooperating seamlessly. Understanding each other's aspirations, Gu Yi was certain that her enemies and Ling Qingyu's would tremble with fear very soon.

Of course, Gu Yi couldn't rush to the hospital straightaway, and there was no need after she received Ling Qingyu's call. Her protection measures had to be absolute. Ling Qingyu couldn't afford any risk because of her ministerial position, not to mention Gu Yi was also her future mother-in-law.

Xiao Yue sent several teams of Spirit Fox operators to escort and protect Gu Yi. On the rooftop, there were two teams of snipers, overwatching the surroundings from the height advantage. They were also gossiping about the aircraft and wondered when they would have the chance to ride.

Downstairs, many key areas were guarded by Spirit Fox operators. Four Aegises parked at several gateways, checking the entry and exit vigilantly.

A few more SUVs were stationed nearby as well. They patrolled the nearby radius to ensure they had control around the hospital, including building blocks and streets.

Two hundred fifty operators participated to protect Gu Yi from harm, which made the latter speechless yet grateful for the effort. She believed even the head of state wouldn't receive this kind of treatment under an incognito visit.

No one in Province N related the heavy presence of Spirit Fox to serious issues. They were desensitized tremendously, bombarded with daily missions and successes of Spirit Fox. A mere increase in sentries didn't mean much to the public.

...

At the same time, when the good news reached the military superiors cooperating with Tang Ziyi, they burst and jumped in joy, especially after Gu Yi confirmed the arrival of two important primary objectives.

However, the elation didn't last long as General Tang cursed out loud. "What do you mean, they won't retreat?"

"General..." Her secretary stammered and explained quickly. Obviously, no one wanted to be scolded because they were stuck for words. Even if the aura of a superior suppressed and instilled fear, survival instinct urged their mouths to move fast.

Chapter 599 Mouthwatering

"Absurd!" General Tang slammed the nearest piece of furniture. "Unless every soldier in this operation is a super soldier, annihilating this syndicate gang is a dream! Tell them to evacuate immediately."

What General Tang didn't know was that her description of super soldiers wasn't wrong. Out of 100 personnel, 80 belonged to Spirit Fox, and they were extraordinary. So, the impossible mission was indeed possible from the very beginning.

"...But... but... the commander of the operation ignored our words," the assistant almost wanted to cry. Did the general not know that he had already explained this before? He wasn't a fool to repeat himself to the special operations unit to emphasize the evacuation notice.

"Then, inform my men to withdraw on their own. I allow them to do so," General Tang exhaled heavily. The assistant left to relay the order.

She wasn't relieved for long before the operators started troubling her mind. Although the mission was covert and even hidden from her superior, she still had access to the satellite network to monitor its progress. Many military staff were busy tracking the entire operation, even though they weren't directly involved.

From above, a chaotic battlefield seemed to be unfolding on the ground. The reason she let her own special forces unit participate was for experience and to investigate the depth of the recently popular Spirit Fox. Despite merely operating in Province N, their prestige had reached every military department interested in elite tiers.

The assistant returned with an embarrassed expression. General Tang frowned, waiting for his report. "General, your men request to stay. I've informed them about the dangers and complexities, but they decided to remain on the grounds of rescuing their remaining comrades."

"Huh... remaining comrades..." General Tang wanted to scoff but sighed at her subordinates' choice. She didn't blame them too much—morals and conscience versus orders and rationality. "Didn't you warn them of our stake here? Even if we successfully suppress the gang, incoming reinforcements won't show mercy. Our words will be useless by then."

"Yes, ma'am." The assistant nodded. "I've already laid out these consequences, and they accepted them. Besides, they said they trust the commander of this operation to have considered these possible scenarios."

"Oh..." General Tang was stunned to hear this. Had her troops been swayed by an outsider? What was more shameful was that the commander's surname was also Tang! Nonetheless, she calmed down and realized Spirit Fox was a private armed group. There was no reason for them to sacrifice themselves without sufficient interest.

Based on her talks with Tang Ziyi and the background analysis of Spirit Fox operators done by intelligence personnel, these female soldiers were very righteous and protective of their own. She had read files about their relentless pursuit, clashing with the military to capture the culprits who had 'injured' their companions.

So, Tang Ziyi wouldn't waste and risk her teammates' lives, suggesting they had several methods to deal with reinforcements from adversaries or watchers looking to take advantage.

"Okay, let them know their choices. Once made, there's no going back," General Tang relented helplessly. These bastards knew how to find trouble for her. It was easy for them to say wars were fought by sergeants and corporals, but she had to wage battles with politicians and face pressure from above. If the mission went south, she was done for. She had to resist and make appropriate plans to

ensure her subordinates' safety. It wasn't as easy as it looked to command the troops and make extreme decisions.

One wrong step, and her future would be over—imprisonment and sentencing were likely. This was the price to ensure her subordinates were protected. Although she hadn't conversed much with Tang Ziyi, she decided to trust this stranger who provided a sense of security. Anyway, the primary objectives had been accomplished beautifully.

"Three days," she muttered. It seemed like she was in for three more sleepless nights.

6 hours later, far away from Province N, in foreign land.

The war intensified. Sparks of gunfire lit up the building corridors. The fight had escalated. As time passed, the gangs regrouped and launched several counter-offensives instead of blindly defending, especially when they realized they were losing miserably and were encircled. They had no idea who their attackers were, but their goal was extremely clear—to wipe them out of existence.

Every move they made was ruthlessly crushed by Spirit Fox, like a stone wall standing strong and stable against tidal waves. The gangs were pushed back, losing territory whenever they launched an attack. They didn't dare rest because the enemy never stopped advancing, except for a few short pauses to recharge.

In every aspect—individual fighting techniques, small team tactics, battlefield strategy, intelligence, morale, and firepower—the gangsters were outmatched. How could they defeat Spirit Fox when they didn't even know who they were up against?

Forewarnings from Athena when necessary, plus Spirit Fox girls' scouting advantage due to small drones, kept everyone prepared against ambushes. Compared to conventional urban warfare, where attacking forces got dragged into a quagmire, Spirit Fox's achievements were remarkable, particularly when technological advantages were in play.

With night vision and Spirit Fox's accuracy, the outcome of the war was already determined—it was only a matter of time. Combined arms tactics with armed technicals working closely with infantry left the gangsters with no chance. Athena didn't directly communicate with individual operators unless it was an emergency. She merely relayed information from the surveillance drones and mini-drones, connecting them into a large network that displayed on each operator's visor.

In their vision, human contours appeared, allowing the operators to see through walls in a way. Although technically, they couldn't see the enemies, Athena used her computing power to draw these images. For instance, enemies hiding behind walls or inside buildings were quickly discovered by mini-drones, including non-combatants. When there were no civilians present, Spirit Fox suppressed heavily at any holes until a team smashed in and eliminated the armed gang members. Otherwise, they acted cautiously and used hostage rescue tactics, behaving more like civilians rather than violent military aggressors.

Sporadic gunfire set the rhythm. Occasionally, when both parties met head-on in a mighty formation, heated exchanges ensued, resulting in gangsters' losses.

Kilo 7, tasked with logistics, moved in and out of the city, transporting supplies and ammunition. The high-stakes, stressful environment drained energy, so with Ling Qingyu's help, Tang Ziyi provided the best comfort and care—water, juices, food, snacks, etc. Spirit Fox's morale and comfort were high. Even Kilo 9 and 10 from the military were a little dumbfounded by the treatment, though Tang Ziyi had reduced their portion on purpose to avoid exposure.

The fighting on the outskirts and edges of the city had quieted down. Only the inner circle stood against Spirit Fox's assault. Tang Ziyi estimated that the battle would end within another 12 hours.

Tang Ziyi held a radio in her hand as she communicated with other teams. Watching the screen from a distance, she was able to give succinct and appropriate commands. Drones had truly changed the nature of warfare, especially when combined with Athena. One drone could alter the tide of war, and with so many machines flying around, the commander could monitor their troops much more efficiently compared to the old days of relying solely on subordinates' descriptions.

Quick, accurate, and efficient.

Tang Ziyi sighed helplessly as she looked at the lazy figure beside her. Ling Qingyu was leaning her entire body against the table, her legs dangling in the air from the knees. One hand was behind her head as a cushion, and the other held a tablet. Tang Ziyi was sure she wasn't watching anything serious.

While others were working nonstop, Ling Qingyu's casual whistling annoyed Tang Ziyi, making her grit her teeth. She long wanted to throw a radio at her. Instead of helping, Ling Qingyu seemed to enjoy her struggles. Tang Ziyi had to argue with General Tang on the line, making up lies about the weapon channel and preparations before the group set off on the Y-20 aircraft.

She heard multiple snickers from behind during the conversation. If not for the important matters at hand, Tang Ziyi would have dragged Ling Qingyu away to make her pay.

In reality, Ling Qingyu, the supposed culprit, was wronged. She was indeed accused of uncharged crimes she hadn't committed. Her behavior was entirely different from what Tang Ziyi thought. The reason she couldn't look away from her tablet was the pictures and data of the latest gunship model, which had her practically drooling.

No way, since she learned driving skills of every machine, including aircraft, she had the urge to pilot the new model. Worse when she saw it with her own eyes.

Despite having observed with only night vision devices, the sharp and futuristic contour appealed Ling Qingyu. Since then, she beckoned Athena to transfer its data so that she could read and guesstimate the gunship's prowess.

Indeed, the specifications and armaments forced her mouth agape. It had been a while before she would now own her own helicopter fleet. An aircraft, outclassing the world.

Within a year, her plan to form a formidable mercenary was very close. Unlike those that posed no threats to the nations' army, her own should rival many small countries.

Chapter 600 Ling Qingyu won finally

Ling Qingyu ignored Tang Ziyi's protest and continued swiping her screen. Her eyelids jumped in excitement every time she reviewed the gunship's specifications.

A NOTAR helicopter concept, driven by only one pilot, with additional cargo space for emergencies.

The sleek, stealth design comprised numerous technologies. Although Ling Qingyu wasn't an academic, she had some insights into how stealth worked.

The angular exterior ensured radio waves were deflected away from the source, making sure that the radar didn't capture its emission.

Well, it was impossible to deflect everything, but a greater percentage meant a lower radar cross-section.

The stealth paint coating also contributed to further reduction. These technologies were seen in the venerable F-22 stealth fighter aircraft, an air superiority type.

However, Virgin type... hmm... anyway, this gunship, named by Athena, didn't rely solely on this type of stealth.

The internal skin structures were designed in a way such that they functioned as an absorbent to soak up and detect the remaining incoming radar waves that weren't deflected, further decreasing the originally small radar cross-section.

The concept wasn't new, as far as Ling Qingyu was concerned. The B-2 bomber with its alien aerodynamic structure fully exploited such a technique.

The combination of the two methods fully proved what it meant to retain the term—stealth. The difficulty increased when these were applied to helicopters.

At the same time, Virgin had an active system to ensure stealth. The spherical sensor on top of the rotor mast not only served as a radar for 360-degree surveillance but also as a system emitting appropriate frequency and wavelength outward to cancel the opponent's radar.

Frequency resonance should be a relevant description. Heck, Ling Qingyu rubbed her eyes and looked again carefully. Yep, Athena didn't lie. Active stealth system... GG!

Looking further into armaments, Ling Qingyu wasn't new to chin-mounted auto-cannons for strafing runs and close support, which would be integrated into the nose for a low profile when in a non-combat state.

The mini-rockets on the winglets' hardpoints totally numbed her brain. Each small, lean rocket was an advanced, sophisticated missile, where internal components were developed and miniaturized, no different from the big ones.

The Hellfire missile, she knew, wasn't different from the one drawn by Athena. The functions, capabilities, and integrated systems matched the conventional ones, if not exceeded. A revolutionary weapon had come out of Athena's hand.

Ling Qingyu didn't know whether to applaud her daughter or sigh. Never underestimate the strength of Skynet, especially with one with more creativity.

A smaller size meant less weight, resulting in more being equipped on the gunship and staying longer in the fight. That was on the winglets' bottom hardpoints. There were two above, which housed two small missiles for air-to-air combat.

Additionally, the bottom of the fuselage included retractable pods for 6 hidden missiles, comparable to the F-22 internal weapon system. These were likely more advanced specialized missile types.

As for powerhouse to fly the machine, Virgin possessed twin engines, domestically manufactured, self-produced.

Virgin had a length of 25 meters, a cabin width of 2 meters, and a height of 5 meters, with a rotor diameter of 18 meters. The dimensions weren't as impressive as the other perks but still notable in Ling Qingyu's eyes, especially when Athena compared them with other aircraft on purpose to ensure her mother didn't underestimate her work.

Ling Qingyu knew her daughter's competitiveness and smiled, nodding from time to time as if to praise Athena. At least, her child must be supported.

As for range and speed, Ling Qingyu was dumbfounded. This Virgin wasn't a propeller-type fixed-wing aircraft, was it?

It could fly at a range of 2200 kilometers, the longest she had ever read, at a maximum speed of 600 km per hour. This was more than just stunning.

Athena even listed that the ample space compartment behind could be modified, like adding fuel tanks, predicting a surplus range of 4000-6000 kilometers!

These numbers could increase further if a mid-air refuel scenario was factored into the equation.

Ling Qingyu clicked her tongue and glanced lightly at Tang Ziyi with contempt. Now, she was fairly certain that Tang Ziyi's involvement in the production of Virgin was likely close to zero.

How dare she take on the name of her daughter's hard work?!

No matter how talented Tang Ziyi was, the results Ling Qingyu learned were impossible, especially when the former wasn't even an aerospace engineer.

Modification she could accept; concept planning... perhaps, but designing and producing? In her dream, Ling Qingyu humphed.

The demand for a highly efficient design pushed the technology limits several decades ahead. The complexities involved were easily solved because of Athena's existence. Otherwise, in less than 50 years, no such concept would be possible.

Nevertheless, it was false to say that Ling Qingyu wasn't looking forward to flying one herself and equipping them into her force. The pure sight of a formation of Virgins gave ecstasy to satisfy her imagination.

"What do you mean by that look?" Tang Ziyi noticed someone's scornful gaze and asked unhappily.

"Don't you have any shame?" Ling Qingyu was merciless in her response.

"...???..." Triple question marks appeared above Tang Ziyi's head. Had her partner gone through menopause?

"You take advantage of Athena's innocence and declare yourself as an inventor. Come on, give credit to my daughter and don't take it for yourself," Ling Qingyu scolded, pointing at the tablet in her hand.

Tang Ziyi understood Ling Qingyu's sneer and coughed in guilt. "What do you know? Concept is everything. Without a beginning, how could a design start?"

"Damn, don't I know what you do?" Ling Qingyu spat out. "Merely stating your demand and walking away after patting your butt while my daughter completed everything. Then you come back, say a few words about what you want again until you're satisfied."

"At least, I draw the design framework," Tang Ziyi folded her arms and defended. "The menacing and futuristic shape is my idea."

"I highly doubt your imagination," Ling Qingyu rolled her eyes.

"Please don't fight, Mom and Aunt," Athena placated both sides. "Without my aunt, I would lose the important drive and diverge from reality and what you need, Mom."

Athena was helpless against these two. Whenever they bickered, they seemed more like children than she did.

Ling Qingyu snorted, and Tang Ziyi looked away, focusing on commanding. The former believed Tang Ziyi was a genius but not to the point of leaping 50-100 years ahead.

She was confident in the argument because she already foresaw Tang Ziyi backing out. Unlike before, if she refuted a little, Tang Ziyi was keen on dragging her away for a duel or promising to hold one.

Yes, this bastard now knew shame and guilt. However, Ling Qingyu didn't blame much since, without her presence, her goals and ambitions were nothing.

So, she stood up, hugged her waist, and leaned against her back but said nothing. Hehe, taking advantage of someone felt very good.

"What are you doing?" Tang Ziyi chided.

"Loving you."

"I suspect you just want an excuse." Tang Ziyi elbowed to separate the two, but Ling Qingyu held tight.

She sighed and let it be, focusing on the screen as she studied the battlefield and her subordinates' status, not having the mind to use too much force.

Ling Qingyu smiled with joy, sensing no resistance from her partner. This was the first time she had won a big victory.

A pity, both were wearing military vests and other equipment, interfering with the sensual soft touches.

A sudden announcement grabbed Tang Ziyi's thoughts, and she struggled to break free. Yet, Ling Qingyu didn't like to give up.

"Say again, Kilo 2... Understood... Kilo 2 and 3, can you deal with the reinforcement?" Tang Ziyi asked.

Realizing the situation, Ling Qingyu restrained herself and separated. It appeared the containment team encountered attacks from the gangs.

Although the gangs' industry and residence were mostly located in the city, small peripheral bases and checkpoints were necessary to prevent attacks or outreach from opponents or the country's military.

Without a proper defense, money meant nothing but shining gold for robbers to take away.

These bases housed soldiers. Perhaps time had passed long enough for them to realize that the city was in trouble.

Not to mention, continuous explosions and gunfire most likely had spread. The long-lost contact from the radio also petrified them into making a decision—send a team to investigate or connect with the top command.

"Copied, page me when you need support. Remember to set up a defensive depth," Tang Ziyi ordered and ended the communication.

"We are now under attack?" Ling Qingyu inquired.

"Yeah, but Kilo 2 and 3 could handle it easily, or so they say," Tang Ziyi shrugged her shoulders. "I mean, you've given them so many weaponries from missiles, RPGs, .50 caliber machine guns, snipers, mortars, and so on."

Ling Qingyu's lips twitched at the level of equipment. Sure enough, with enough support, numbers didn't matter much on the modern battlefield. "What if they consume faster than the enemy's strength?"

"Occasionally our logistic team will support them with goods. In an emergency, since you're free, you can deliver these items." Tang Ziyi teased and laughed after seeing Ling Qingyu's dark face.

Someone wanted to rest but someone always wanted to mess her around, Ling Qingyu lamented her fate but her expression fade away when Tang Ziyi said another sentence.

"Besides, we still have Elena on standby."

Ling Qingyu's eyes beamed as she remembered Elena's prowess. Elena was the manifestation of a huge submarine she owned. With the level of weapons at her hand, Elena could indeed serve as a titan firepower in case more support element was required.

Okay, Tang Ziyi covered everything pretty well. Ling Qingyu was proud.