

Immaculate Spirit

Chapter 199

"On it!" Lina shout before running back to her desk.

"Nathaniel, we talked about this, they are not ready." Scott said, shaking his head.

"I know that and this is why I'm going to explain everything to them. I'm not going to sugarcoat the risk involved in this operation. If someone doesn't feel like it's worth it, he or she will stay here without repercussion."

Not really convince by this, Scott still nodded before closing the door and leaving them alone once again.

"Do I want to know?" Ivania asked, raising an eyebrow.

"No, this isn't your life anymore Ivania and this isn't concerning you. In the meantime, tell me everything you have on the Saudi's asset overseas."

It took one hour to have the whole team in the bunker, Scott having to go to Hans appartement to get him. He had fallen asleep the second his head had touch the pillow and almost had an heart attack when he was roused from his sleep by a very displeased Scott.

"First of all, I'm sorry to take your leave away but as you can guess, this is important. Are you all familiar with the China one child policy?" Nathaniel asked looking around the table.

Seeing only a couple of hand raised, he sighed internally before moving on to explaining it to everybody.

"China one child policy was part of a child birthing program designed to control the size of it's growing population. Implemented in 1979, it was then modified later to become a two child policy but at that point the harm was already done. Considering the culture of family and clan in China and the need to have a male heir to continue a family line and you starting to understand the problem that the country is facing. In 2012, there was a shortage of more than twenty millions women's compare to their male counterpart and that gap is widening more each year."

Taking a break to make sure that everyone was following, he then continue.

"Rural zone are especially impacted by this discrepancy and that created a market than everyone with a logical mind could have predicted: Slavery. Women's are being kidnapped, drugged and then sold in China to be married. Just in the Yunnan province, we estimate than more than fifty thousand women's have been sold, all coming from the neighbouring country, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and Myanmar and this is where we are coming." Nathaniel said before sending a file to the big screen displaying the face of a man.

"This is Wunna Thant. Ex colonel in the Myanmar army, he and some of his mens turn rogue two years ago and have been involved in the slavery market ever since. They established a stronghold in the mountain at the frontier with China and have used it to smuggled women's into the country without being worried by custom check."

"How the hell is he getting away with that? Why nobody is stopping them? It's slavery for god sake!" Lina asked, pissed off.

"He's clever and know who to pay on both side of the border to be left alone."

"You say that they were doing that for two years, what change for you to call us?" Lucie asked, her face way too more composed to be natural.

"Good question." Nathaniel nodded in her direction before starting a poor quality vid taken from a cellphone showing multiple house burning. "Four hours ago a little village twenty miles away from the stronghold was attacked. All the houses were burned and the residents got executed but to one exception, no women's could be found among the dead except the one who were past fifty's and those that were younger than five years old."

"Why did they killed the young and the old ones but take the others?" Hans asked, his eyes glue to the screen.

"They are selling less." The cold voice of Ivania startled everyone except Nathaniel who was aware that she was eavesdropping. "The younger ones on the other hand need more resources, time and knowledge to take care of them before being sold, things that they don't seem to have or they just don't care. Considering that their market is selling women's to serve as wife and later mother, I'm leaning to the second options."

Hearing that, the whole team had various emotions on their face, the majority being anger and disgust. Na-Yung, Hans and Jon look at Ivania with curiosity while the others were clearly displeased to see her sneak in here.

"Ivania, I told you to wait for me in my office." Nathaniel said, frowning at her.

"I was curious and you knew I was there to begin with so stop pretending." She remark coolly.

Smiling slightly at her antics, Nathaniel got back on topic.

"She has no concept of boundaries but she's right. That was not the whole reason of course, by killing everyone like that they send a powerful message to the others villages nearby which is: 'Accept all of our demand or this will happen to you too.' Cruel, ruthless but depressingly effective nonetheless and this is why we need to stop them."

"You say stop them but do you know how much people we will be facing?" Jon asked.

"This is where it gets complicated." Nathaniel answer, looking for a second at Scott before focussing back to Jon. "The rapport are sketchy in that regard but the lower estimation put their numbers at twenty mens, the highest is fifty, all with poor military training."

"Fifty?" Hans stutter, looking at the others. "We are eight! We can't take on fifty men, especially when they are entrenched and at the other end of the world!"

"I know that Hans, that is why this mission is not mandatory, you can opted out if you think you can't do it. I will not lie to you, it will be extremely dangerous and in a country we should not be in. If you are taken, their will be no rescue mission, you will be tortured and killed and that is in the best of case. You are a majority of womens in this room, I don't think I need to tell you what the risk for you are, considering why I want to hit them in the first place." He said with gravity making eye contact with everyone.

Waiting for a minute for that to sink in, Nathaniel saw Lina was going to say something looking afraid but resolute.

"I know what you are going to say Lina and I refused, you and Hans are excluded from this mission, you are way too green for something of that scale, you will provide support from afar. Now, Na-Yung, Camilla, Jon, Scott and Lucie, I'm going to need an answer from you." Nathaniel said.

He knew that time was short, in the past the womens that they took were always sold in a seventy two hours window period after the fact. Albeit it would not be surprising that this time he took longer considering the amount that he took far exceed the normal, Nathaniel was not willing to bet on it. For Lina and Hans it was an easy decision, they never been in the field before and taking them would be a liability more than anything

in this situation. They also never used their gun on a living person before and it was not a place where you could afford to have doubt, especially considering the odds were already stacked against them.

"If we all refuse, would you go alone?" Lucie asked.

"Oh, that's a good question, I like this girl." Ivania remarked offhandedly smiling at Lucie who grimaced in answer.

"Yes." Nathaniel answered honestly, ignoring Ivania's intervention entirely.

"Nathaniel, you are the most skilled person I have ever met but even for you this is insanity." Jon said.

"Maybe it is but people need help and I'm going to provide it. I waited too long already to do something about this situation, I will not wait any longer but I'm not forcing you guys, this is all voluntary. I will not hold it against you if you choose to opt out of it, quite the contrary in fact."

Nodding, they were all pondering what to answer when Lucie gave her answer.

"I'll go with you." She said slowly in a calm tone.

"Me too." Scott added, he was the one who was aware of that mission the longest as it was the file that Nathaniel brought when he visited him at the hospital months ago.

"There is no way I'm sitting this mission out if even the Frenchie is going! I'm in too!" Camilla shouted, frowning in Lucie's direction who just gave her an amused smile in response.

"F*ck it! I'm going too! You are going to need a medic if you hope to come home alive." Jon said.

"Where you go, I'll go." Na-Yung finally said after being uncharacteristically quiet up until now. "Can we know who is that woman exactly? Lina told us about what happened earlier but we still don't know who she is and why she's here."

"She was here in relation to what happened in Saudi Arabia last year but don't worry I have a plan. For her name, you can look it up if you want but her most popular alias was 'The Lark'. I have things to do and you do too. We are leaving in three hours, get ready. Lina we need satellite images and Hans I want you to check our gear thoroughly before we are leaving. Alright, Ivania follow me, we have work to do." Nathaniel said, walking out of the room and leading her to the armory.

"Wow that's impressive." Ivania said looking at the weapon and material stock in the room with a glint in her eyes.

"Take everything you need, you can change clothes if you want something more fitting, you should find something at your size in that closet and there is a room to the side where you can change. The sun is going to set in half an hour, we will go then." Nathaniel said, taking a gun from the rack and arming it with practice gesture.