

Girls with Guns

by Larry Strattner

She spins the Kimber Ultra-Carry .45 on the tip of a meticulously manicured index finger. The pistol sparkles in the lamplight. A girl-gun with checkered Rosewood grips; but a .45. A .45 will get your attention. Her Kabuki Red nails have a tiny flower hand painted in the center of each. The flowers are three colors; blue, green and white.

The Kimber stops suddenly slapping her palm. She deals gems from Asia. Quality and weight guaranteed. People with cash surplus buy stones and do whatever one does with them. She never asks about sources of money. Her elaborate and extensive system merely launders cash. She gestures with the Kimber toward the man sitting across from her. They are sipping tea.

"I am afraid I cannot take Yuan for stones. One, my network is not set up for Yuan and two, for any appreciable weight in stones I would need a truck to carry all the payment in Yuan. Sorry."

"We have brought you many dollars with our business," the man fidgets like a dog eyeing a cat, barely able to contain himself, "and you cannot do us this one small service?" He stamps his foot on the floor impatiently.

"You have spoken accurately. It is not that I would not. It is that I cannot. As I said, I am not set up for Yuan. It is not possible."

"I would think, for all you have profited, you would find a way. If for no other reason than our friendship."

"My dear man. Friendship has nothing to do with our relationship. You have money you cannot spend. I have the means to turn it into

highly condensed, portable wealth. We are not friends we are symbiotic. Do not overdramatize the situation."

"You will pay for this impertinence!" The man leans forward and bangs his fist upon the table. "We will destroy you. You do not understand who you are dealing with. You are correct we are not friends and you have now insured we are much less." A bit of spittle shows at the side of his angrily curled lips.

"Really?" She says, and shoots him in the forehead. The explosion of the Kimber is shattering in the small room. He falls over backward onto the floor, still sitting in his chair. A cordite smell hangs in the air. "Really?" She pushes a button under the tabletop and Li appears.

"Get rid of Cha-U-Kao here," she says, pointing with the Kimber. "Then call Sing and tell him we may need some people to help us while we sort out the rest of this bunch. Oh. While you're at it, nose around for someone who can handle a lot of Yuan." She picks up the dainty teacup; sips reflectively. Honestly, she thinks she will never understand these gangsters. So impolite and overbearing. Honestly. What was a girl to do?

Idly she spins the Kimber on her finger again. She leaves the grip-mounted laser sight turned on and the red dot zooms around the room as she spins the pistol. The red dot makes it easy to hit the center of irritating men's foreheads. What did they think they were going to do? Just walk in and make all kinds of demands? Honestly.

