

SORRENGAIL: SHADOWS OVER ATHERI



The Commander's Heart

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I stood in the heart of the command center, the blue glow of the monitors reflecting in my eyes. My back was straight and my expression unreadable to the soldiers around me, but my heart beat only for the steady voice crackling through my headset.



Asher's voice was calm, a sharp contrast to the static and distant gunfire echoing behind him. He was leading the recon team through the valley, his brilliant mind always three steps ahead of the enemy, even when the situation turned dire.



On the main screen, the heat signatures of the recon team shifted erratically as the mission began to unravel before my eyes. 'Lily, the extraction point is compromised,' Asher said, his tone remains steady despite the chaos unfolding miles away.



A blinding flash of orange and red consumed the tactical display, followed by a deafening, hollow silence on the comms line. My breath hitched as the signal for Asher's vehicle vanished, replaced by the terrifying black void of a lost connection.



I didn't wait for a report; I was already moving, my boots pounding against the metal floor as I tore through the command center. Soldiers scrambled out of my way, their faces pale as they witnessed the first crack in my iron composure.



The air outside was thick with the scent of smoke and burnt metal by the time I reached the smoking wreckage of the crash site. I pushed past the first responders, my eyes searching frantically through the twisted remains of the armored transport for any sign of life.



I found him amidst the debris, his face pale and streaked with soot, but his chest still rose and fell in shallow, ragged breaths. I knelt in the dirt, cradling his head in my hands and whispering promises I wasn't sure I could keep.



Hours later, the frantic energy of the rescue had faded into the sterile, rhythmic beeping of the medical wing. I sat by his bed, the fierce General now just a woman watching the man who was her entire world.



The doctors spoke of a deep coma and of injuries that the mind needed time to heal, but all I could see were his hazel eyes closed tight. I held his hand, my thumb tracing the wedding band that matched my own, praying for a single sign of movement.



As the sun set over the base, I looked out the window, a commander once more, but with a heavy heart. I would lead my troops and protect our borders, but I would wait forever for the moment those kind eyes opened to meet mine again.