

Apocalypse 876

Chapter 876 Lieutenant Colonel, Cole Jorgensen

“Like I said, they were bugged,” Kisha stated flatly. “Three of the soldiers who claimed they’d follow you had microchips embedded at the base of their necks. I figured out pretty quickly that they weren’t loyal, they were just smart enough not to fight the tide. Instead, they chose to go with the flow, pretending to submit so they could spy on us and sabotage everything we planned.”

As she spoke, her eyes flicked subtly around the room, scanning data only she could see, thanks to the discreet reports sent by 008. The young officer watching her couldn’t see anything visible, only the occasional shift of her gaze. Still, he asked no questions. He was a soldier to his core, disciplined, obedient, and he knew better than to pry into things beyond his clearance.

But the unease gnawed at him.

‘How did she find out all of this?’ he wondered silently. ‘And how were the soldiers bugged without anyone knowing? Was it even voluntary?’

A darker thought crept in.

‘What if they didn’t have a choice? What if even they didn’t know they’d been compromised?’

He wasn’t sure if Kisha’s suspicion was true, that the three soldiers had only feigned loyalty to survive. But it was also possible. After all, the rest of the troops who resisted had been killed, and the high-ranking officers were all imprisoned.

Now, his mind was a mess. Doubts clouded his thoughts, questions he couldn't even begin to form. Kisha noticed the silence, the stiff posture, the way his jaw clenched. She could tell he was on the verge of a breakdown. And truthfully, she had just as many questions herself.

"Why don't you come with me?" she said calmly, her tone both firm and patient. "Let's find out the truth, directly from your Commander General."

Then, with a slight smirk, she added, "But before that... tell me what you know."

Kisha's eyes remained fixed on the younger officer. She had just finished reviewing the bulk of the data and was now waiting for 008 to complete the microchip analysis. It seemed 008 had to examine each chip individually to determine its exact purpose, and that would take time.

The young officer didn't hesitate. He saluted Kisha, then began.

"My name is Cole Jorgensen, Lieutenant Colonel. I was originally slated for transfer under Major General or also known as Commander Aston McMillan, but then the apocalypse hit. We got trapped in a city near the Capital, and soon after, the President recalled us to help establish a secure base and rescue as many civilians as possible."

"In the early days, most of us were focused on protecting the base while simultaneously carrying out rescue operations in nearby areas. The survivors we brought back were assigned tasks, mainly helping to build the perimeter walls and assisting with logistics. We, the soldiers, were stretched thin trying to secure supplies and save lives."

“At first, nothing seemed off. But over time, more and more civilians started dying from hunger. The anxiety in the ranks grew. We assumed the issue was just a lack of supplies; we thought the rapid influx of people had outpaced our resources. So for an entire month, we pushed harder: civilians built the walls, and we kept rescuing, kept gathering, kept moving.”

“During that time, we also evacuated a team of researchers and professors from City D. The President ordered it himself, saying they were needed to study the virus and develop a cure. We believed him. We truly thought that once they figured it out, this nightmare would end.”

“At least... that’s what we were told.”

He paused, drawing a deep breath, as if bracing himself to unlock the next, darker part of the story.

“Then, out of nowhere, chaos erupted across the entire base. We thought we were under attack by zombies, but instead, we heard tanks firing. Not at enemies, but at our own satellite dish and control rooms. Shells rained down on the officers’ operation wing. There was smoke, gunfire, and total confusion.”

“When we finally got a briefing, we were told that several generals, those ranked just below the Commander General, had defected. No one knew exactly why, but the story was that they realized they were outnumbered and left in a hurry after causing the damage they intended. Some reports said they even kidnapped people as they fled.”

“The entire base was in ruins, walls scorched, systems fried, soldiers injured. Thankfully, none were killed. Most of us believed there had been a major falling out between the defected generals, the Commander General, and the President. It was the only thing that made sense. We were all left in the dark.”

“After things settled, the President gave a speech. He claimed the defected generals had grown resentful, saying they were dissatisfied with the amount of supplies being distributed. According to him, they felt they were being shortchanged, risking their lives for nothing, and going hungry. The President said they demanded more power within the base and tried to threaten him, which escalated into the chaos we had witnessed.”

“But not everyone believed that explanation. It felt... off. And the few who dared question it, well, they either disappeared or were forced into silence.”

“I’m not sure whether that was the Commander General’s doing or the President’s. One of the defecting generals was once in line to become Commander General himself, but lost the position, supposedly because the current Commander General had the President’s backing. Some say that’s why he held a grudge. Maybe that’s why he led the attack. Maybe not. But after that day, nothing ever felt right again.”

“And more than that, the growing crisis inside the base was becoming dire. We were tasked with retrieving more supplies from military warehouses and hidden granaries. But then we picked up a transmission through one of our still-working military radios, it warned of a coming natural disaster, something called a GeoStorm or whatever name they gave it.”

“The President, fearing we might get stranded or wiped out, didn’t send us out right away. We were told to play it by ear. That’s also when we learned that the transmission came from a base in City A. Since the military radios were our only functioning communication at the time, we assumed that City A was using a satellite to make a nationwide broadcast.”

“Then it hit. The disaster, just as the message warned. We were lucky, our base was positioned well enough that we didn’t take much damage. But when we passed through nearby areas, it was catastrophic. Complete destruction. And worse, our original path to the granary was now blocked.”

“That’s when the President gave new orders. He said we should reroute to City B, find the Minister of Defense, and then continue on to City A to help transmit a message to any surviving citizens, let them know that the government had built a secure base in the capital, and they could come there for safety.”

“Or... that’s what we were told.”

At this point, his voice lowered with shame as he stared at the ground, the weight of realization pressing on him.

“We believed we were doing something good, something righteous. That we were saving lives, protecting the country, helping rebuild hope. But now... I see it more clearly. We were just pawns. Used in a political game, even in the face of extinction.”