

"Congratulations General." You had worked your whole life to hear those words. You had given up nearly everything else. Your wife had left you after your third overseas tour in as many years. She said the children could barely remember your face, and that the youngest was scared of you. Of course he was: the boy was a wuss, raised by a weak woman. All you had ever tried to do was make him a man, so he could follow in your footsteps and be worthy of your name. But it doesn't really matter. There will be other women. This is what matters. Finally, after your years and years of effort, your hard work and tactical gifts had been recognized.

Barely a week after your promotion, they gave you your new assignment. You were somewhat disappointed to learn that, rather than managing a major overseas effort, you would be handling military research projects within the US. Not that there's anything wrong with military research: without new weapons even the best army would be left in the dust, but it lacks the glory of an overseas campaign. Nonetheless, you brought to it the drive and control that had brought you to your current state. There are a remarkable number of exciting projects going on right now to help in the modern battlefield. You know from your days in the field that war is not a simple matter of shooting your enemy. Modern enemies fight in cities, behind women and children. Now, it may be true that until the military is willing to kill these human shields they won't stop using them, but civilians won't see that. These days, much of the best research is on "less lethal" weapons that the military can use on the human shields as well as the targets. Anything that helps you take out the terrorists without losing your own men is good by you.

Now there's a new project, Project Resonance, that even your bosses are excited about. Maybe if this goes well and sees use overseas you'll finally be put back in command of a real campaign.

Who you know:

Advisor Cahill has been a major push behind all this Resonance stuff. If it wasn't for Cahill, you're not sure that President Carroll would have bought it.

Corporal Breckinridge is a good guard, but the sort of soldier who is never going to be anything else. Some people are simply not meant for command.

Dr. White creeps you the hell out. All the scientists are a little weird. You don't become a scientist without being a little weird, but White is off even by their standards.

General Markoff showed up recently and started butting into Resonance. You certainly wouldn't mind Resonance being taken off your hands, but you don't want this ass to get the credit for your work if there is credit to get.

Major Hughes is one of those vets that came back from the war a little broken. Some people just aren't meant for combat duty. Hughes belongs here. You don't.

Manager Edwards is the PR guy in charge of Resonance. He handles parents and problems. He's knows how to translate out of geek, but he seems to manage to annoy both the military and the scientists with about equal regularity.

President Carroll has done a good job overall, but it's the Carroll administration's enthusiasm about these projects that got you pinned here. If it wasn't so important to the President, you might have been able to get out of this assignment.