Laura: Agents of ALIS: Episode 8 – Combat Trance

Kai slowly rose from behind the barricade, an absent look on his face.

"Godsdamnit," Tema hissed, cycling the energy rifle and preparing to provide cover fire. One of these days Kai wasn't going to come back from going on walkabout in the middle of combat.

"Oh I thought I heard the old man say, Leave her, Johnny, Leave her…"

His voice rang out across the battlefield, clear as a bell and calm as still water, as he slowly walked toward the enemy. Tema scanned the crowd, ordering and reordering priorities of shots as she observed more.

"For tomorrow ye will get your pay - "

These combatants were moderately trained. They had a breaking point, one the trance-like Kai would hit. His utter disregard for personal safety typically scaring the hell out of the opposition.

Kai reloaded the rifle, muscle memory smoothly slotting a fresh energy pack.

They would break faster without a leader, someone who could rally them.

" - and it's time for us to leave her"

He raised the butt to his shoulder and lined up the iron sights.

Tema spotted what she was looking for: someone raising an external comm unit.

"Leave her, Johnny, leave her - "

A shot blared from the barrel.

Tema breathed out and squeezed the trigger of her energy rifle. The person with the comm unit crumpled.

"Oh, leave her Johnny leave her - "

Another shot from Kai.

Another head shot by Tema.

"For the voyage is long and the winds don't blow - "

A third blast.

Tema half rose from her cover, bracing the rifle on the broken wall in front of her. Another shot, another corpse.

"And it's time for us to leave her."

A fourth.

Knee shot to drop the man blocking the shot Tema wanted. Head shot on the person with better armor than average gearing up to charge Kai.

"Oh, the wind was foul and the sea ran high"

Fifth shot from Kai.

Tema shot the person preparing to charge Kai from the other side.

"Leave her, Johnny, leave her"

Sixth shot.

She shot the woman with the grenades.

"She shipped it green and none went by"

Seventh shot.

Two more shots, two more corpses. Tema dropped her left hand from the rifle and pulled one of her energy pistols.

"And it's time for us to leave her"

A shot with the left hand, stowed the rifle with the right, and jumped the wall.

Kai reached an opponent stupid enough to stand their ground. Tema could picture the smile he was sporting.

"Leave her, Johnny, leave her"

Kai slammed the butt of his rifle across the opponent before him's forehead. They dropped like a rock. Kai stepped over them.

Second pistol out, two more corpses to Tema's left as she started walking after Kai.

"Oh, leave her, Johnny, leave her"

Eighth shot. The last combatant in front of Kai went down.

Another pistol shot, and another corpse to Tema's right before the remaining opponents broke and ran.

"For the voyage is long and the winds don't blow," Tema joined Kai's singing, mentally wincing at her off-pitch voice. Good enough genetic engineering to hear the difference, not enough

education to figure out how to fix it. Not that her speaking or singing voice was anything to inspire joy with.

Didn't matter. Kai adjusted his pitch to harmonize with her by the third word. Tema kept eye contact with Kai as she walked forward, refusing to look or let him look elsewhere.

Tema let her voice start the fade out on the next line (*"And it's time for us to leave her"*) though it took a repetition of the chorus to get Kai to follow. Kai blinked as he let the last note fade away; his eyes focused somewhat, came back from wherever his mind had gone.

"You back with us, Kai?"

Kai slow blinked again before bending down and kissing Tema, hard.

Ah well, whatever worked to ground him back in his body. This was certainly faster than waiting it out.

And it's not like they hadn't fuck on a corpse strewn battlefield before.