

# **Book 1: The Call/No Return**

## **Chapter 1: This is where it all begins**

Danger is approaching.

I watched as the sea waves caressed the coastal rocks in the Levante Natural Park, keeping pace with the dance of the leaves on the trees.

I closed my eyes and sighed, knowing that this would be the last peaceful day I would have before going into a place where the chances of being murdered were very high.

Damn the Draft Day Tests. My jaw clenched as I remembered the boys and girls killed by terrorists' children on the battlefield just for kicks.

On that day, there are more deaths than on any other. Thousands of deaths, to be more precise. It's true that you can also be killed in combat when practicing the art of fighting. However, the first day was always the most tragic. And all because of the bloodlust of the children of the country's most bloodthirsty terrorists. That's why I promised our allies in the Revolution to avenge their fallen loved ones and everyone else. That way, the families of the victims could rest in peace and suffer no more. And to fulfill that promise...I must survive at all costs.

Dying is not an option.

And I die. The entire future generation of the Revolution and my friends will suffer the consequences, and all hope will be lost. I am the only one capable of destroying Cornelius O'Donnell, the Prime Minister. There is no room for failure.

"I can smell your bad mood from far away, Alondra," said a mocking male voice that I recognized immediately, and just by making me smile, it brought me back to reality.

That was my father, Cailean. When I turned around, I saw he was wearing his uniform as a General of the Revolution and of the Astran Clan. He had a powerfully built frame, standing at six feet one inch, his muscles gradually thinning due to his age, though his black hair hadn't yet faded. He was a respected and beloved General, known for his heroic deeds. If you were in trouble, he would come with his best warriors to help you, regardless of your social class. He was always there. He could also make everyone laugh and often wore a smile. However, with his enemies, he couldn't...to say itsame. His brown eyes they imposed because of the cruelty they saw in them and how ruthless he was with all that scum thatuncleto get in the way between him and his target. *As if they could stop him.* How ignorant! They were. All the clans know how costly it is for their army when you interfere between an Astran and their well-defined objective.

"That's because I feel like teaching that scum a lesson," I said, amused.

"You look like a warrior who's in heat to fight," he told me with a mocking smile.

"I really enjoy fighting for what I believe is fair for everyone," I paused, "although I should balance that thirst fueled by negative emotions. A good leader must control themselves."

He smiled proudly.

"Never change your mind, Alondra," she paused. "That's why you'll be a good successor," she said wisely. "You have the heart of a true warrior, and you know that's something people like me can't boast of having."

My eyes widened when I remembered the day he told me that. I was little then, and I always believed my father had that spirit. I wanted to be like him. I took it for granted that I had it until that day. However, that doesn't change the fact that he's my role model.

*"I don't have this warrior spirit, Alondra," my younger father told me as he knelt in front of me with his hands on my shoulders.*

*- Yes, you do have it, papi- my eight-year-old self replied confidently - I've seen it.*

*My father broke into a small smile that disappeared shortly after.*

*"Just because I'm a great fighter doesn't mean I have it," I shook my head. "It's not something you can acquire, my dear daughter," I shook my head. "It has to come from within," I pointed to my heart.*

*I made a confused face.*

*- I don't understand.*

*"The day will come when you will," he told me compassionately. "I know you will find the answer on your own, my brave little beast."*

AND had That's right. Now I knew.

Then my predecessor brought his hand to the hilt of his sword and drew it, assuming an attack position.

"Let's see if you're really prepared for the fight," she said with an amused smile that was contagious.

- I always am.

I felt the emotion that always filled me when I fought as I lunged at my father.

He easily stopped it. I threw another punch, this time stronger, making it difficult for him to block and backlosing their balance a little.

"I think you're losing your touch, old man," I teased him amicably.

He smiled maliciously.

- Oh, you'll find out for saying that.

I received a stab wound, which I predicted. And I dodged it without using my sword. He growled in annoyance, causing me to burst out laughing. I could contain.

"You'll have to do better!" I exclaimed ecstatically, a smug smile plastered on my face.

I attacked with much greater speed than before. Then I steered it to the side, barely stopping him, and he looked at me in surprise. My heart racing, I forced him back and spun around with Katana behind me as I went directly toward him. My father stopped the blow just in time. Immediately, he spun around, and I followed, watching in admiration the impressive turns he could still manage. Adrenaline still coursed through my body with anticipation. He had the upper hand, and he knew it. All I had to do was watch him unload his heavy burden, and suddenly, the defensive stance I had maintained during our fight transformed into an attack, one that was becoming increasingly difficult for me to hold.

*Let go of yours!* My inner voice shouted euphorically when I realized that I had to do the same as him.

I clenched my jaw to concentrate better and threw a side punch that hit him almost in the face, unbalancing it. I was back in the same position at an impossible speed; had he not knelt and clumsily brought his sword down, the

tip of mine might have grazed his side. My father's eyes widened in shock as he realized how close we had come. I took advantage of his distraction to disarm him with a powerful blow that sent his weapon crashing to the ground. Then, I watched my father intently, knowing he wanted to pick it up and continue fighting, but before he could, I said:

"Don't do it, Dad," I warned him seriously. "Speed gives me the advantage."

My father withdrew his hand from his sword and raised his hands in a sign of surrender.

- Very well, you win - he smiled at me proudly and I gladly returned the smile - You have become much stronger than before.

- I'm aware of that - I extended a hand to help him up and he took it - Before it took me longer to take your sword from you, now by simply taking out my heavy load I could defeat you more easily.

- But, you decided not to pull it out until it was harder for you to stop my punches so the fight would last longer - I nodded - I guess I should thank you for not leaving me in a bad position - with him already up from the ground he put his hand on my shoulder with a wider smile.

I shrugged, downplaying it.

- I just wanted to spend a little more time training with you one last time before I leave home.

My father gave me a tender smile and wrapped me in his arms, moved by my words.

- Thank you anyway, Alondra.

In response, I squeezed his body tightly, hoping that would make him realize how happy I was. toward to hear those words.

"We should leave to go home; your older brother and your mother must have arrived for your farewell dinner," he said, letting go of me to pick up his sword from the ground and sheath it while I followed him.

"It must be past six thirty in the afternoon," I said, surprised.

"You know your mother and Grey, they always want to do things on a grand scale," he said, rolling his eyes.

I let out a short laugh as I imagined as Things would be like that when I got home.

- I hope there are no disagreements as if there was in all other respects.

He nodded his head emphatically.

- I hope they hear you, my dear daughter.

A pleasant, comfortable silence then settled between us as we walked toward the car parked at the entrance to the Levante Natural Park. Turning my head toward the sea, I could make out what looked like waves in the

distance. impacted fiercely against the rocks that remained undisturbed before them.

When we were in the car, halfway home, a call suddenly started ringing on the car's screen, and I saw it was Officer Storm from Revolution Base. My father and I looked at each other, knowing it wasn't good news.

"Yes?" my father asked seriously as he looked at the road.

- General Astra "We have top-secret information that may interest you," Officer Storm replied.

"Can't you wait until tomorrow? We promised my wife and Grey that we'd be there to help with Alondra's farewell dinner."

"I'm sorry, General, but your visit is required immediately," he sighed heavily, giving me a bad feeling about this. "Commander Costa says it has to do with one of the most important recruits on the Prime School list."

I abruptly turned my gaze towards the car's screen. *God, don't tell me it's him.* My body went on alert and I tried to calm my breathing, which had become rapid. *Please tell me it's not him.*

*Is Impossible, and you know it.,* a voice inside me said to soothe my discomfort.

"Okay, let's go there," he said, looking at me with concern.

The call was cut off and no one spoke for what felt like more than five minutes until my father broke the tense silence.

"I know who you're thinking of, Alondra, and..." I interrupted him, glaring at him.

"Do you know why it's not him? He's never been interested in leading a clan," I said furiously, feeling my veins ignite.

"But you have to accept that he might be the heir to his clan," she said, trying to reason with her. "Things change, Alondra, and we have to adapt to them to prevent obstacles from overwhelming us." *impidanto* get what we want.

I turned around to analyze it, frowning, and found something I didn't like at all. *abe que es él*. My eyes widened as I understood that, but that gave way to anger. *He knew and didn't warn me*.

"You hid this from me?!" I shouted indignantly, my eyes blazing at him. "How dare you not tell me something like this! You know I don't want to see him again!"

My father finally showed his guilty face. What's the point of continuing to hide something that's already been discovered?

"I'm sorry, I thought about telling your mother, Grey, and you during dinner," he said regretfully.

"Damn it, Dad," I said, turning to face him. "Do you have any idea that the mission has become even more complicated than it already was?" I put my hands to my head.

- It had to be classified because we didn't have, and still don't have, all the information about him.

"At least tell me that Cornelius O'Donnell doesn't know about my past with him," I said, turning my eyes away from him as if he were burning me, to calm myself down.

I was fuming and I didn't want to yell at my father. That wasn't right.

"We don't know," he said, almost in a whisper.

- That's not reassuring at all.

- I know, daughter, and you may not like it, but it is what it is.

Now it was I who was ashamed of my actions.

"I'm sorry I raised my voice at you, Dad," I said sincerely, knowing it would bother him for a while. "I shouldn't have done it. There are lines that shouldn't be crossed, and I've done exactly that."

My father smiled sadly.

"I'm sorry I didn't say anything sooner, Alondra," she sighed. "I know how much this affects you emotionally, and I didn't want to tell you until we had all the information about why he decided to go to Prime's School."

I turned my head in his direction and gently placed my hand on top of his, which was on the car's handlebars.

- Promise me that next time you'll do it no matter what.

He moved his hand, which was on the steering wheel, to my hand, which was placed on top of his other hand, and squeezed it.

- I promise.

I sighed overwhelmed I felt a bitter unease in my stomach as I thought about the last day I saw him. I closed my eyes to avoid the flood of memories that threatened to invade my mind without my consent, and I gritted my teeth at the effort it took to get there. When I imagined a giant hand, I roughly pushed them away, and those flashbacks fell into my subconscious before they could surface. Then, I opened them again and exhaled deeply with relief at having stopped them and spared myself further pain.

Board He's right. I have to fight for my people no matter who or what stands in the way of our goal.

## **Chapter 2: Farewell Scene**

After going to the Base, my father and I arrived home in our car, which is located on the outskirts of the County of the Pla. It was a white, English-style mansion with cylindrical columns on either side of the front door, and in front of it was a roundabout designed to improve traffic flow. There were two windows on the ground floor and three more upstairs, each with a balcony and a staircase connecting them to the central balcony above the living room, dining room, and kitchen, which were used on days when we didn't have visitors. There were also windows at the rear with access to a balcony in the bedrooms, which led to the central terrace. A few tables were scattered across the terrace, which extended to the Astran family's seemingly endless yard. In the yard, there was a grassy area with chairs and a table near the steps.

*I'm going to miss you all so much.*

I thought as I watched them chatting animatedly amongst themselves, especially Grey and his silly antics. He treated me like his little sister, even though I'd never been related by blood. Grey was adopted; he might resemble my father and mother in some ways, but his physical appearance was what gave him away the most, except for his height, which was six feet two inches. He had dark brown hair and eyes as blue as the ocean, and his body was muscular thanks to

the daily training his battalion did to stay in shape. Despite everything, he's part of the family, and honestly, I wouldn't trade him for anything in the world.

*Grey, I don't think you realize just how much I'm going to need you.*

I smiled sadly. He's always been a great support through thick and thin. He's never let me down. He's one of the few who see beyond appearances, apart from my friends and our parents. The others are busy judging me or not. they saw He's a part of who I am. Besides, he knows exactly what to say when things go wrong or to lift someone's spirits. In fact, when I or one of his friends is going through a rough patch, he's always there to comfort us and offer reassuring hugs. Because of all this, it's hard to stay mad at him for more than two days. Because how can you stay mad at someone as charming as Grey? I always struggle to make it past the third day because I hate it when we're angry for too long. I tried going beyond three days once, but I realized it was pointless. We both need to be very close to each other to support one another whenever needed.

I was so grateful for everything: for accepting me as I am, for being such a good father, for being there when I needed him most and conveying in them how much I will throwless.

## **Chapter 3: Inevitable Reunion**

He massacred his enemies like dogs, and only the bravest and most experienced in battle dared to stand in his way. My father, if he wanted to go somewhere, could get there despite how difficult it was to reach the goal.