Condolences

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Drabble. General O'Neill must record his condolences for a soldier who has fallen.

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Dr. Daniel Jackson set up his recorder on the tripod quietly. He and General Jack O'Neill were in one of the V.I.P. rooms of Stargate Command. Jack was sitting on the foot of the bed with Daniel's camera pointing at him. Daniel bent, making sure the camera was secure, then straightened. Then, he cleared his throat.

"Ready when you are, Jack," Daniel said.

Jack nodded. He knew that he should crack some joke about how long it had taken the archeologist to set up the video camera, but he didn't. Truth was, he didn't really feel like it right now. One of his men, a Major Roberts from SG-10, had died. SG-10 had been on a standard recon mission…and had run into enemy fire. The other three members of SG-10 had survived. Now, Jack had to record his condolences to Major Roberts's family. And he couldn't tell them a damn thing about how he died.

"Um, Jack?" Daniel asked.

"Yeah, Daniel, I heard you. Uh…can I just do this? You know, by myself?" General O'Neill replied.

Daniel gave him a questioning glance, but he nodded all the same. "Yeah. Just--uh--press this button here, and it'll start recording."

"Thanks," Jack said as Dr. Jackson left.

The general did not immediately turn on the camera. He let out a long sigh and rested his head in his hand. This was not the first time he had had to do this. And he knew it wouldn't be the last. Even thought he had not known the major personally, it was still hard.

It was hard every time he had to do this. He knew it wasn't going to easier. But then, it was more than just despair Jack was feeling at having to say that last good-bye someone else didn't get to say. It was guilt.

Guilt at the fact that every time someone he did not know personally died, there was always that millisecond where he was glad. Glad that it wasn't someone he cared about on a different level. Glad that it wasn't someone like Carter, Teal'c, or Daniel.

Jack gave a short laugh. Daniel had died and come back so much that he was certain that when Daniel *did* die for good, he still wouldn't believe that he was gone. Finally, Jack stood and hit the button that Daniel had pointed out. Taking a seat back on the bed, he began.

"I'm General Jack O'Neill of the United States Air Force. Regrettably, this message is meant to inform you that your son is dead. Although it can not be disclosed the means of his death, I can say that he died with courage and valor, defending his fellow man. Your son was a fine soldier and, I'm sure, an even better man. I offer my condolences. I'm sorry."

Jack raised his hand and saluted the camera. Then, he stood and shut it off. He took the tape out and pocketed it. He would send it off as soon as he was back in his office. He sighed again and left, informing the soldiers outside to return Daniel's camera to him.

It got harder every time, even just to send condolences. But each time, he would make it through. Because he had to. For everyone's sakes.
End Notes: So, what did you think? Just a little something. Please don't judge me too harshly. Please review!