

# The Price of Peace

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## Kapitel 6: Mood Swings

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The Price of Peace  
Chapter 5: Mood Swings

It's not quite dawn when Amanda enters the kitchen to find Saber sitting there with a cup of tea. "Up already?" she asks quietly, as she sits down across from him.

He nods slightly. "Are you all right?" he asks, concern evident in his voice.

"I will be," she replies, barely a whisper.

"Amanda..." Saber starts and sighs, "I'm sorry about what happened."

"Why are you sorry? You didn't do anything wrong," she replies.

"I thought he was a friend, I trusted him. If I had ever thought that he-"

"Saber, don't blame yourself for his behavior. I don't hold what happened against anyone but him," Amanda says, cutting him off.

"Would you like some tea?" Saber asks quietly trying to diffuse the tension he senses building.

"I can get it," she replies curtly.

"I'm fixing myself another cup, so it's no trouble," Saber offers trying to make peace.

"How many have you had?" she asks, the anger no longer evident in her voice.

"This will be my third," he admits with a smirk.

"Just how long have you been down here?" Amanda asks.

"Since they left with Sean," he replies barely audible.

"All night?" Amanda asks.

Saber nods. "I wanted to go and check on you a couple of times, but I thought that after...Sean, you might not want anyone bothering you," he says as he slowly fixes the tea and brings it to the table, setting both cups towards the middle. "I'm still not good at placement, so you'll have to bring it towards yourself." he says, pulling a cup towards himself after he sits back down.

"I haven't been able to sleep either," she says taking her cup and sipping the tea.

"Did he hurt you, Amanda? You know, physically," Saber asks concerned. Amanda is silent for a long time. "Amanda?"

She sighs, "I'm fine," she finally replies.

"That's not what I asked," he says firmly.

"I have a couple of bruises, but nothing more," she mumbles.

"I would understand if you wanted to discontinue your services here," Saber says. "No one would blame you."

Amanda glares at Saber. "Listen here Mr. Richard Saber Rider, I'm not going anywhere. I am under contract to be here to help you, and I'm not leaving until you no longer need me," she says forcefully.

Saber puts his hands up in a gesture of exasperation, "Fine, forget I ever mentioned it."

"And while we're at it, forget this entire episode with Sean; it never happened, and will never be mentioned again, are we clear?" Amanda says, her temper flaring.

"Yes, Ma'am. Crystal clear," he says coldly and gets up and heads out the back door, leaving his cup on the table.

Amanda watches him go and sighs, not sure what to say, the anger leaving as quickly as it appeared.

Saber goes out on Steed and rides across some of the estate. No real destination in mind.

A couple of hours pass and Amanda goes and knocks on Saber's door, "Saber?" She waits a minute, and getting no answer, she enters the room. She notices that nothing looks disturbed. "Saber?" Still no reply. Just then Elaine enters the room.

"Oh, hello Ms. Kelly." Elaine says. "I thought you were with Saber."

"I was just looking for him actually. I've not seen him for a couple of hours." Amanda

replies.

"I've not seen him today, Miss." Elaine says. "I remember Thomas saying that the two of you went off on a ride this morning. Steed is still gone, so I was a bit surprised to find you here." Elaine says concern appearing in her voice as she places some clothes away.

"I'll go see if I can find him, Ma'am. I think I made him a bit mad this morning." Amanda says quietly and turns towards the door.

Elaine chuckles, "Pushing his buttons once in a while is a good thing. Not too many people are brave enough to do so. Just be sure that you do it for the right reasons."

Amanda nods, "Thank you, Ma'am," she replies before heading out to the back door and taking a horse, she leaves to find Saber. After nearly an hour of riding, she spots Steed near an old building, Saber nowhere in sight. She rides up close to him, and dismounts looking around. Steed neighs in greeting and she then hears sounds from inside the building. Curious and a bit worried, she goes to the door and carefully opens it. It's fairly dark and it takes her eyes a minute or so to adjust, but as she goes further in, she spots Saber. He's got some sort of stick and is practicing hitting something. He repeats several deliberate moves, then stops, switches hands and repeats. She watches in awe for several minutes before he finally stops and turns her direction.

"You can come closer, I'm not going to hit you with the stick, Amanda." he says quietly as he goes and sits down for a break.

Amanda timidly comes closer to where he is and sits down nearby. "Have you been here this whole time?" she finally asks breaking the silence.

"I've been here for a while," he replies quietly.

"I wasn't really mad at you," she says barely above a whisper.

"I don't know what you're talking about, Amanda." Saber says seriously and stands up.

"Where are you going?" she asks.

"To get some water. There's a well out back," he says as he grabs a small pail and heads for the back of the building to another door. He's almost to the door when he trips and falls, the pail clattering to the ground.

"Saber!" Amanda says jumping up and rushing to him.

"Damn that hurt," Saber mutters rubbing his leg as he sits up.

"Can I do something for you?" Amanda asks concerned.

Saber takes the pail and throws it randomly away from himself in disgust. "I just don't

know any more. I feel like everyone is expecting me to act like nothing is wrong, but it's been six months, and I still can't see a damn thing. It doesn't matter how much I try to act like it's just an inconvenience, something as simple as a lip in the floor can trip me. I could've broken my leg there, or I'm sure I was close enough to the door that I could've broken my skull open. I don't know, I'll never know," he breaks down and cries into his hands.

Amanda goes to him and hugs him, attempting to comfort him. "Saber, it just proves that you're human," she says trying to comfort him and calm him down.

They stay that way for several minutes, neither one saying anything. He finally calms down and she releases him from the embrace and sits beside him. He sighs deeply and faces her, "I'm sorry." he says barely a whisper.

"Why? You have every right to be angry, Saber. I would be, if I were in your position," Amanda replies, placing her hand on his arm.

He places a hand on hers, "I've taken so much of it out on you. I've been...I could have handled myself better than I have." He gets quiet for a few minutes before continuing, "Perhaps I'd have been better off not remembering anything. I wouldn't care what I've lost then. It wouldn't matter., he says mumbling the last part.

"You are not completely inept, Saber. Hell, you protected me and you couldn't see. You have good instincts, you could be a great teacher. You might not ever get to fight again, but is that really all bad? You don't seem the type to just want to fight to fight," Amanda replies. "I saw how you were with the stick, your movements were those of someone with excellent skills. Your other senses have begun to adapt. In time, I'd be willing to bet you can do everything you could before. You've lost one of your senses, not all of them. I'm sure you didn't plan for your life to be this way, but sometimes, things happen for a reason."

"I'm sure my parents wouldn't be too happy about how things have turned out," Saber mutters bitterly.

"Why do you think that? You don't think they'd understand? It's not your fault that you were injured."

"The injury, I think they would have accepted, it's some of the repercussions that I'm not so sure about," he replies quietly.

"Like what?" Amanda asks, trying to understand.

"Like the fact that my fiance' left me when she found out I was blind," he mutters barely audible.

"Then you deserve better. Perhaps this was a favor to you then," she says firmly, then seeing him flinch, she recoils a bit. "I'm sorry, I crossed a line that I shouldn't have, Saber. I shouldn't have said that out loud."

He shakes his head, "It's okay," he sighs, "You're right, I suppose. I guess it was better to know before marriage that she is the way she is."

"Did you...love her?" Amanda asks hesitantly.

"I thought I did. I never knew that there could have been anyone else. We were betrothed as children. So I always knew she was the one I would marry."

Amanda shakes her head, "I don't think I could imagine knowing my whole life that I had to marry a certain person. I just don't get it."

"Have you ever been in love?" Saber asks curiously.

Amanda thinks for a few minutes, "I loved someone once." she says finally.

"But?" Saber interjects.

"We were engaged, until someone else caught his eye. He left me and married her less than two weeks later." Amanda says matter-of-factly.

"Ouch," Saber replies. "Is that why you took this job?"

Amanda looks up at him, studying his face, "No. It isn't."

"Then why?" Saber asks.

"Because I felt like it would be a challenge," she says wryly.

Saber laughs, "A challenge? Seriously?"

"Yes. Reading the description of the position, I thought, 'okay, a soldier having to learn how to live after being blinded. should be a barrel of fun.' So I responded, and well, you know the rest." she replies with amusement in her voice.

"Yes. It's not exactly been easy, has it?" he replies.

"Actually, the job itself has not been as difficult as I thought it would be. You seem to be more...able than I think I'd be. Of course I'm not exactly what you would call 'graceful' by any means," she says with a laugh.

"Hmmm." He says to himself.

"What?" she asks.

"I thought you carried yourself just fine. You got riding down fairly quickly," he says.

"I had a good teacher. But you have yet to try and teach me anything else."

"Like what?" he asks.

She shrugs, "I don't know. Maybe how to use the stick like you were doing when I found you?"

Saber laughs, "You are a glutton for punishment." He shakes his head and sighs, "Thank you," he says quietly.

"For what?" she asks.

"For not patronizing me, and for letting me vent." he replies quietly.

She chuckles, "Well, it's what you needed to do. I'm pretty much the same way. I push and push myself until I snap, then whoever is nearby bears the brunt of it." He nods, but remains silent. "How's your leg?" she asks concerned.

"It hurts, but I don't think I broke anything." he replies seriously.

"Do you think you can stand?"

He nods, "Yeah, I think I just need to walk a bit and I'll be fine."

She stands up and takes his hand, "I'll help pull you up."

He tightens his grip of her hand and nods, "All right." She helps him stand, placing his hand on her shoulder to steady him.

"Are you all right?" she asks, feeling him a bit unsteady.

He nods, "I think so," he says as he slowly lets go of her shoulder. He manages to walk a bit, his leg a bit sore, so he's limping, but able to walk. "I think I'll be fine." he says with a bit more confidence.

"Are you up for trying to teach me to fight with the sticks? Or do you want to go back to the house and rest?" she asks seriously.

He thinks for a minute, still walking gingerly on his leg, "If we go slow, I should be fine. I would still like some water though," he says as he sits down on a stack of wood, using it like a bench and moves his leg a bit, stretching it. "If you wouldn't mind getting it," he adds begrudgingly.

She smiles and nods, picking up the pail, "Sure. I don't mind. You said it's just out back, right?" she asks, receiving a nod in reply. "Okay. I'll be right back." She leaves, coming back a few minutes later. "Do you just drink straight from the pail?" she asks unsure.

He nods, "Yeah. I don't recall there being any cups or anything. It's a spring-fed well, so the water's clean. It felt like the pail was clean, though I can't vouch for it after I threw it."

She chuckles, "It wasn't too bad. I rinsed it a bit before I got some to bring in," she says

handing him the pail.

They sit and talk a while, then he stands up, "Are there two sticks close to the same size over there?" He says nodding in the direction he was earlier.

Amanda gets up and goes to look. After a minute, she finds two sticks about her height and brings them back to him, "Here, are these okay?" she says placing one in each of his hands.

He inspects them and nods, "They should do for our purpose. Are you sure about this?"

"Yes," she replies with certainty.

He lays one stick down and takes the other one and places it in her hand, "Are you right or left dominate?"

"Um, right." she replies.

He nods and steps to her right, and places his hands over hers, and shows her how to stand. She copies his stance and grips the stick tightly. "You need to loosen your grip or it's going to hurt like Hell when you hit something solid." She relaxes her grip slightly and he nods, his hands still on hers. "Okay, when you are attacking someone, how would you swing?" She starts to go up high and he grips her hands tighter and ceases her movement. "That's a good way to get your ribs broken. Try this," He moves her arms in smaller movements and slowly releases his grip and steps back. "Now, try swinging at the beam I was hitting before."

She does so and after several minutes, she stops. "How can you keep this up for so long?" she asks, practically out of breath.

He smiles, "Practice. That and usually, I'm hitting a moving object. The impact isn't usually as brutal then."

"Can we try that? My hands are starting to hurt from hitting the beam," she replies.

Saber nods and goes and picks up the other stick, getting into a ready stance, "I'll try not to hit you too hard," he says with a smirk.

Amanda laughs, "That'll just teach me to block, right?" she retorts and readies for his attack.