

The Price of Peace

Von chelle76

Kapitel 10: I Get Knocked Down

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Chapter 9: I Get Knocked Down

The alarm blares and April hits it with a groan, "Fireball, get up."

"Ugh, morning already?" he asks groggily.

"Yeah. We have twenty minutes until we have to report to father's office," she replies.

He sighs and slowly starts making his way out of bed. Slowly, he goes and dresses into his uniform, "Feels weird wearing a uniform after so long out of one."

"I know what you mean," April replies as she dresses. "Ready?"

He nods, "Let's go and get this over with."

They leave and arrive at the commander's office a few minutes later. Colt is there waiting for them, along with Robin.

"How did you get here before us?" April asks astonished.

"She made me get up and get ready early," Colt says pointing to Robin. "It was worth it seeing your faces when you came through the door," Colt adds with a smirk.

April comes over and playfully punches his shoulder and goes to make a remark when her father enters the office. They all stand at attention when he enters.

"At ease," he says looking them over closely. They relax and everyone takes a seat. "In a few minutes, I will be escorting each of you to your testing areas. You will be isolated from each other for the next couple of weeks. Robin, Colt will be coming home late, and reporting before dawn each day, so don't expect to see him much." She nods and he continues, "In a few minutes, I will be escorting each of you to

separate quarters. None of you will know where the other is, and will have no communications with one another. At the end of the testing, you will meet here and we will discuss the outcomes of the tests and whether or not you will be fit for active duty again."

"How come Colt gets to see Robin, but Fireball and I don't get to see each other?" April asks.

"Robin isn't part of the crew that was involved in an incident that nearly killed them. Part of this testing is having you talk about the events and how they unfolded. If you had a conversation between sessions, that could change your recollection of an event. It's part of the psychological profiling that is done. Think of it as a vacation away from each other. We have already crossed lines that shouldn't have been crossed by allowing the two of you to pursue a relationship with each other, so this is how it will be. Am I understood?"

Yes, sir!" the three reply.

They discuss the way everything will go and they are soon escorted to their new quarters, then led to the individual testing areas.

"Saber are you in here?" a quiet voice calls from the doorway. He stirs slightly, feeling a bit disoriented. "Saber? Shouldn't you have slept in your room?" the voice asks as she enters the study.

"Probably." he says still not fully awake. "What time is it?"

"Nearly four. You told me that you'd meet me at three. I waited an hour and you didn't show, so I went looking for you." the voice says.

He jolts awake. "I'm sorry, Amanda. I was down here and I suppose I fell asleep. I guess I was more tired than I thought I was. Would you care to eat first?"

She nods, "I was hoping we could. After not eating much more than soup the last week, I'm a bit famished."

He smiles, "I'll meet you in the kitchen then. I should go and change first."

"All right. I'll meet you there in a few minutes," she leaves, heading for the kitchen.

A few minutes later, he comes down, "What smells so good?"

"I decided to cook myself an omelet. Would you like one?" she asks casually.

"Is it safe?" He asks with a smirk.

"Possibly not, with that attitude," she retorts. "I'm putting ham and cheese in mine, what do you want in yours?"

"The same is fine with me. Make it easier, won't it?" he replies.

She nods and finishes making the food and they sit down and eat. A short time later, they are at the stables mounting up. "So where exactly are we going today, Saber?" she asks curious.

"I'm taking you to a place I would go when I wanted solace. It's rather pretty and peaceful. I thought you'd enjoy it," he states, as they head off towards the east.

"So you have another place besides the secret basement?" she asks amused.

He nods, "Yes, but I wasn't in good enough condition to be out in the elements at the time we left for a while before."

"But why do we have to be out here so early?" she asks.

"There is a view you can only see just before the sun comes up. We may not quite make it now, but I wanted to try anyways," he replies, pushing them to ride a little faster. They arrive not long before the first rays start to show over the horizon at a cliff with a waterfall. "Now, just watch slightly south of east as the sun comes up and you will see the most beautiful sunrise ever."

"Seriously?" She asks as the sun rises a few minutes later. "Wow. That is beautiful. But why show me this place now?"

"I wasn't sure how much I trusted you," he replies honestly.

"But you trust me more now?" she asks slowly. He nods. "I'm glad you do. Thank you for sharing this with me, Saber. I won't tell a soul about this place, although I may disappear here once in a while."

They spend the day there, sharing a picnic and practicing defense and fencing with sticks. Near sunset they head back to the house, arriving at the stables. "Why don't you head on to the house? I'll put up the horses and join you in the kitchen," Saber says as they dismount.

"Okay," she says, grabbing the basket from the picnic and her practice stick. "I'll go and empty the basket," she replies and heads towards the house.

Saber begins settling down Amanda's horse, removing the saddle and feeding him.

Amanda enters the house, "Elaine, we're back!" she calls, but gets no reply. "Elaine? Thomas?" she calls again as she enters the kitchen and places the basket on the counter. She looks around and doesn't see anyone, so she turns to head back to Saber. Pushing the door from the kitchen to the sitting room she nearly walks straight into Sean.

"Hello there, Ms. Kelly." he says menacingly pointing a gun towards her.

"S...Sean." Amanda says under her breath. "Where are Thomas and Elaine?" she asks with a bit more confidence.

He chuckles, "Unharm...for now," he says with a smirk. "Where's your boyfriend?" he asks.

"What do you want? Saber told you to not return here," Amanda says glaring at him, anger kicking in.

"Simple. I want you to come with me. Let me show you what a real man can be like, He says eyeing her.

She shifts uncomfortably, "I am not leaving with you."

He steps closer to her, the gun still pointed at her, he runs a finger across her cheek and down her neck towards her chest, "Oh, you're coming with me. Like it or not."

"Get your hands off of me!" she says in a raised voice and pushes his hand away, trying to turn away from him.

He grabs her by her hair and throws her against a wall, hitting her shoulder hard against it, causing her to drop the stick. She yelps in pain and he laughs.

He approaches her, the gun still pointed at her, "Get up."

"No," she replies and lunges for his knees, throwing him off balance.

He wobbles a bit, but manages to kick her just as she tries to roll away. He goes to fire the gun and is hit hard in the hand by a blunt object.

"I told you to never return here," a low voice growls from behind him.

Sean turns around quickly only to be met with a stick to the side of the face by Amanda, causing him to lose his grip on the gun. He drops to one knee and scrambles to grab the gun again. Amanda hits it out of the way and Saber reaches him, placing a sword at his neck.

"Try anything and I WILL kill you, Sean." Sean manages to look up to see Saber's face. He's wearing the sunglasses, but makes it apparent that he can see. Sean looks at him in shock. "Where are Thomas and Elaine?" he asks forcefully.

"They are unharmed," he replies barely audible.

Amanda slowly gets up from the floor, leaning on the stick she hit Sean with. She makes her way to where Saber is standing, the sword still at Sean's throat.

"Are you all right, Amanda?" Saber asks quietly, never taking his gaze off of Sean.

"I'm hurting. I think my shoulder may be out of joint, but I'll live," she replies honestly.

He nods slightly, "Can you go and call the police?"

Amanda nods, "I'll go now," she replies and slowly makes her way to the kitchen. She's on her way back out when she hears a noise coming from the servant's quarters. She slowly makes her way there and cautiously opens the door. "Elaine? Thomas?" she says cautiously as she ventures further into their quarters.

"Why did you return here, Sean?" Saber asks coldly, his grip remaining tight on the sword.

"I don't like being made to look like a fool. I've never had a woman reject me before, I don't plan on allowing it to happen again," he replies looking up towards Saber's face.

"She is well within her rights to refuse you," Saber says anger apparent in his voice.

"A woman's only purpose is to serve a man. They has no rights," Sean states coldly.

Saber starts to react in anger, but regains control, "That is your opinion. I disagree," he finally says in a neutral tone.

"Only because she's giving herself to you," Sean replies with a smirk.

"Actually, we're not anything other than friends, Sean," Saber says firmly.

"Yeah, you keep telling yourself that. I see plain as day that you want her," he states with a laugh.

Saber tenses up at the words, tightening the grip on the blade, "It wouldn't matter either way. I at least know how to handle myself around a woman, unlike you."

Sean notice him tense up and taking a chance, he ducks down and knocks Saber to the floor.

Saber manages to cut into Sean's ribs as he hits and rolls away from Sean, his sunglasses falling off in the process. The brightness in the room causes him to be completely blinded again and Sean goes for the gun. Saber hears the direction he goes in and charges him, hoping to surprise him. Just as Sean turns around, Saber swings at him with the blunt side of the blade. A loud crunching sound is heard and Sean gasps for air, the gun fires and Saber hits the floor.

The police are just about to knock when they hear the gunshot and they charge into the house, finding Sean to one side, bleeding and holding his ribs and gasping for air. A few feet away, they see Saber on the floor and bleeding from his abdomen. "Call paramedics," One of the officers says and the call is made.

Amanda enters the study of Thomas and Elaine's quarters and finds them bound, but apparently unharmed. "Are you all right?" she asks them quietly.

"Yes madam, we're fine," Thomas answers quietly. "Sean is here," he warns.

"Yes, I've already met up with him. Saber is holding him in the sitting room until the police arrive," She winces in pain as she turns around.

"Are you all right, Ms. Kelly?" Elaine asks worried.

"I'll be fine, just a little banged up," she replies. They hear a single gunshot and they all turn towards the exit. "Saber!" Amanda exclaims and starts for the door.

Thomas grabs her, "Ms. Kelly, you are in no condition to help him. We need to get out of here."

She wrenches her arm from his grip, "I'm going back out there. If you know another way out, then use it. Go hide in the stables until someone comes for you." She turns, and forcing herself to move past her pain, she rushes out to the sitting room, stick in a defensive position. She bursts through the kitchen door to find several guns pointed at her. She lowers her stick and looks around the room. She sees Sean on the ground bleeding and gasping for air. She then spots Saber, who is on the ground and also bleeding. She tosses the stick down. "Saber?" She rushes over to him, ignoring the police. She kneels down and places a hand on his. "Saber?" she asks hesitantly.

He stirs a bit and turns his head in her direction. "Amanda?" he asks, his breathing labored.

"I'm here." she replies, deeply concerned.

"Are you all right?" he manages to ask.

She smiles weakly, "Better than you." He gives her a weak smile. "Thomas and Elaine are in the stables, they are fine." The paramedics arrive.

"The Lord of the house is the worst. Take him first," One of the policeman says indicating Saber.

The paramedic nods and he and his partner come to where Saber is lying on the floor. "Sir, we need to move you. You need to get to a hospital now."

"Okay." He says weakly.

Amanda moves out of the way with effort, then once he's loaded onto the gurney, she comes back to his side, taking his left hand. "I'm coming with you, Saber. No arguments." He nods slightly, but doesn't say anything.

"Miss, you look injured, may we take a look at you?" A male paramedic asks, as he walks over to her.

"If you allow me to accompany him to the hospital, I will get checked out there, once I know that he is okay," she says firmly.

The man starts to argue, but sees the look in her eyes and nods. "Yes, ma'am. As soon as he is being treated, you will be seen to," he says firmly. She nods, her hand still gripping Saber's tightly. They get him strapped in, and start towards the ambulance.

Amanda is walking behind the gurney, trying to force the pain from her mind.

"Miss?" The head policeman says stepping into her path, forcing her to stop and release Saber's hand. "We need to know what happened here."

"I need to be with him, sir. Could you follow us and take a statement at the hospital?" she says anxiously looking to where they were taking Saber.

The man follows her gaze and sees the worry and pain in her face and nods, "Yes, ma'am. I'll follow you and meet you at the hospital. I need your name, please."

"Amanda Kelly, sir," she replies. "Oh, the caretakers of the estate, Thomas and Elaine! They are out in the stables. Could someone get them? They can tell you some of what has happened."

The policeman nods and call over to one of his officers, he explains the situation and the young man heads off towards the stables. "Now, let's get you to the ambulance," the cop in charge says to Amanda, guiding her out to the ambulance that they have just finished loading Saber into. "Go with him, I'll come and see you at the hospital."

"Thank you," she replies as one of the paramedics carefully helps her into the vehicle. He allows her to sit beside Saber and she takes his hand. She feels no reply and watches him with a worried expression. The doors close and they take off, sirens blaring towards the hospital.

The young officer finds the stables and carefully calls out for anyone there. After a minute, Thomas and Elaine cautiously come out. After speaking with the police, they decide to call Calvary Command and speak with Commander Eagle.

The police and the remaining paramedics take Sean out to be checked at the hospital, the police following behind the ambulance.

Commander Eagle is in his office when he gets word of a call from Thomas. Going to the phone, he picks it up, "Hello Thomas, what can I do for you?" Thomas tells him everything that has transpired, the commander nodding his head occasionally. "Please keep me posted on his condition. I'll try and come first thing tomorrow," Thomas talks a little more and the commander disconnects the call. He sits back in his chair and sighs. He picks up his phone again, dialing a number, "Dr. Izumi, I know it's late, but I need to speak with you. It's about Captain Rider." A voice replies on the other end. "Yes, I'll meet you shortly," he replies and hangs up the phone.

"Well Ms. Kelly, you are very lucky. You may need surgery eventually, but keep your arm in the sling for a couple of weeks and you should be fine," the doctor says, handing her some paperwork. "There is a prescription for some pain meds, take that

to the pharmacy and fill it before you leave."

She takes the papers and nods, "Thank you doctor," she says quietly.

The doctor smiles at her, "Would you like me to take you to Captain Rider now? He's out of surgery, so I should be able to take you to the recovery area," she states kindly.

Amanda looks up at her relieved, "You'll let me see him?" she asks relieved. The doctor nods. "Thank you. I would like that very much, doctor."

The doctor takes her through several corridors, then swiping her card, she leads her to a surgical recovery area. Stopping at the nurses station, she finds out where he's at, then takes her through another hall to a room that is closed off. "He's in here, Ms. Kelly," she says opening the door slowly.

The room is dimly lit and she hears the beeping of several machines, pulling the curtain aside, Amanda steps further into the room, spotting Saber's sleeping form on the bed. She gasps, then goes over to him, placing her hand on his hand and sits carefully in the chair that is beside his bed. The doctor nods, satisfied and steps out, closing the door behind her as she leaves. Amanda sits quietly, watching the array of machines for signs of trouble, eventually, she drifts to sleep.

"Amanda?" a weak voice calls out, rousing her from her sleep. She sits up in a hurry, immediately regretting the motion. Fighting the urge to vomit, she looks around to see Saber turned towards her. She finally manages a breath and calms herself before speaking, "I'm here." she says quietly.

"I thought it was you," he says relieved.

"You can't see?" she asks hesitantly.

"No," he admits with a sigh. "Are you all right?"

"I'll be fine. I'm better off than you are," she says quietly. "I may eventually need surgery, but for now, I'm in a sling and have to be careful of how I move for a while."

Saber nods slightly, "Thomas and Elaine?"

"They are fine. Perhaps a bit shook up, but they were unharmed. Thomas tried to stop me from coming back out after the gunshot, but I got away," she replies.

Saber smiles, "Not much stops you, does it?" he asks amused.

"I try not to let anything stop me," she replies with a grin.

Saber chuckles, and immediately regrets it, "Please don't make me laugh, it's rather painful."

"I'm sorry," she replies sympathetically. "I wasn't thinking when I spoke."

"It's okay. I can just imagine the scene of Thomas actually trying to restrain you. I found it comical," he says with a smile. His features then turn serious, "Any word on Sean?"

"No. They hadn't even taken him out when I left with you," she replies honestly. "I don't think he was too badly injured."

"Too bad," he says coldly.

"Saber, don't dwell on it. It's over now. I'm just glad that you weren't killed," she starts to say more, but stops herself.

"I'm glad he didn't hurt you worse," he replies quietly.

"I was glad you came when you did. I'm afraid of what might have happened..." she says getting quiet. They are both silent for several minutes. "I was so scared, Saber. When I heard that gunshot..." her voice breaks slightly.

"Amanda..." he starts quietly, then stops, not sure what to say. He stretches his hand out, searching for hers. She sees it and places her trembling hand on his. He feels her shaking and holds her hand tightly, "I'm sorry that I worried you." he says barely audible.

She starts to say something when the door opens. "Captain Rider?" A female voice asks from behind the curtain, "You have a couple of visitors. May they enter?"

"Yes," he replies.

"Okay, I'll bring them in in a moment." The door closes and Amanda goes to pull her hand away and he tightens his grip.

"You don't have to let go, I don't care what anyone thinks, Amanda," he says softly.

She relaxes her hand in his grip. "Okay," she replies just as the door opens and the curtain is pulled back to show Thomas, Elaine, and Commander Eagle.

They enter the room, glancing first at Saber, then Amanda. "Saber?" Commander Eagle says hesitantly walking to the other side of the bed from Amanda.

"Sir?" Saber replies, turning in the direction of the commander's voice.

"What happened?" he asks.

"Amanda and I went out this morning," he begins.

"Yesterday morning now, sir," Thomas interjects.

"Okay, yesterday morning, we went out riding. We spent the day outdoors, practicing

fencing with sticks, self defense, and talking. Towards sunset, we returned to the house. Amanda went inside to return our lunch basket while I tended to the horses. Evidently, Sean was there and tried to accost her. When I came in, I saw him there, and she was on the floor, so I held a sword to his neck. He went to turn to face me and Amanda hit him with her stick. That angered him and he went to react and I made it clear I would kill him if he tried anything. Amanda went to call the police, we struggled, which knocked off the sunglasses, the light blinding me again. The gun went off, but we were both injured. I remember Amanda talking to me, and other voices, being moved, then I'm waking up here," Saber explains.

"What were the extent of Mr. McCully's injuries?" the commander asks.

"I don't know, sir," Saber replies. "I'm fairly certain I cut him at least once."

"How badly were you injured, Saber?" Commander Eagle inquires.

"I was shot in the abdomen and evidently I've had to have surgery. I've not spoken to the doctors yet. Have they said anything to you, Amanda?" Saber replies.

"No. But since I'm not family, I don't expect them to," she replies.

"Saber," Elaine begins as she come up beside Amanda, "Thomas and I are the closest thing to family that you have, would you be opposed to us asking the doctor a few questions?"

"No. Not at all, Elaine. I'd like to know what all was wrong as well," Saber says.

"Saber, how is your vision? I notice that you aren't wearing the sunglasses," Thomas asks.

Amanda squeezes his hand slightly, he returns the gesture, "I can't see anything right now. I'm back in darkness," he replies barely audible.

"I'm sorry to hear that, sir," Thomas replies. "How are you, Ms. Kelly? I see you're in a sling."

"I've been better. I may have to have surgery eventually, but my shoulder is back in joint, and other than some bad bruises, I should be fine. I'm not nearly as bad off as Saber is," Amanda replies.

The commander turns to her and looks her over carefully, "Ms. Kelly, you have been unduly subjected to a lot more than you agreed to when you took this job. I would understand if you wish to take your leave of your position. I would see to it that you are well compensated for being put into harm's way so frequently."

"Thank you sir, but if it is all the same to you, I'd prefer to remain in my current position. Unless Saber wishes me to leave, I will stay," Amanda replies firmly.

Saber moves his hand onto her arm "I'm not letting you go that easy," Amanda

blushes and places her hand on top of his.

The doctor comes in, ceasing any comment on the previous statement. "How are you doing Captain Rider?" the doctor asks.

"I've been shot, how do you think?" Saber replies sarcastically.

"At least your sense of humor is in tact," the doctor replies smugly.

"Excuse me, can you tell us the status of Sean McCully?" Commander Eagle asks.

"He has a gash on his side that needed forty some odd stitches, probably from Captain Riders' sword; and several broken ribs, from being hit with some sort of blunt object, along with a punctured lung," the doctor replies.

"How long until we can take him into custody?" Commander Eagle inquires.

"A couple days, to make sure there's no further problems," the doctor answers. "The local police have him under constant watch."

"I'll feel better when we have him in one of our cells on charges of assaulting a military officer, among other charges," Commander Eagle replies.

The doctor nods, "Feel free to have some of your soldiers take over guard duty, if you see that to be a better fit, Commander," the doctor states before turning his attention to Saber, "Now Captain Rider, I actually need to know you're feeling."

"I'm in pain from the bullet wound," Saber says "and..." he stops, not sure whether to continue.

"And what?" the doctor asks, "Any detail you can offer, no matter how trivial might make a difference."

"What vision that had returned since the incident prior to this is gone. I believe it happened before I was shot, but I'm not certain., Saber manages a weak chuckle, "At least I wasn't used to being able to see again."

"Perhaps we should do a couple of scans," the doctor replies.

Saber shrugs, "I'm not sure it would make much difference."

"Saber," Commander Eagle begins.

"If this about the bloody evals, shove it," Saber says gruffly.

Commander Eagle looks shocked then grins slightly, "Consider it shoved." he mutters. Everyone other than Saber and him chuckle.

"When can he go home?" Amanda asks trying to ease the tension and take the

conversation in a different direction.

"I'd like to keep him until tomorrow, just to make sure he's okay," the doctor answers. "I'd also like to run some of those scans if I may."

"If it doesn't delay my getting out of here then fine, do the bloody scans," Saber says curtly.

The doctor nods, "I'll send someone to get you shortly, Captain Rider," he then turns and leaves.

"Saber, you seem to be in a bad mood," the commander says.

"Someone broke into my home and assaulted me and my girlfriend. How the bloody Hell am I supposed to feel?" he replies irritably.

"Girlfriend?" all the others except Amanda say in disbelief.

"I um.." Saber stutters.

"We weren't ready to tell anyone yet," Amanda chimes in quickly. "I guess the truth is out now, huh?" she adds quietly.

Saber nods, "I suppose it is now," he replies with a smile.

Elaine smiles, "When did this happen?"

"Well," Amanda says. "Since we've been spending a lot of time together, it just sort of happened."

"I'm so happy for you." Elaine hugs Amanda. Amanda lets go of Saber's hand to return the hug. "And you, are in trouble Captain Rider."

"Elaine," Amanda begins, "it was my idea to not tell anyone. I wasn't ready to tell anyone. It's just that my last relationship ended rather badly."

"What happened?" Elaine asks.

"I'd rather not talk about, if you don't mind. It's rather personal." Amanda says and the others nod in response.

A nurse comes in, "Captain Rider, I'm here to take you for tests."

"Of course," Saber says with a sigh, "Let's go."

The nurse gets him into a wheelchair, "It's going to be a few hours before he's done."

"Why don't you all grab something to eat?" Saber suggests as he is wheeled off.

"I um, need to go and drop off this prescription at the pharmacy, I suppose I'll go and grab something after that," Amanda says standing up carefully.

"You really shouldn't be walking around by yourself, may I join you, Ms. Kelly?" the commander asks.

Amanda swallows nervously, but nods, "Sure. Thank you, sir." She looks towards Thomas and Elaine, "Are you coming along too?"

Elaine shakes her head, "No Ms. Kelly, I think we'll go on back home for now and try and get some rest. We'll return later to see if Saber can come home."

Amanda nods, "All right. I'm sorry for all of this trouble."

Thomas comes over to her and gently places a hand on her good arm, "My lady, you have no control over what Mr. McCully did. Do not blame yourself for any of this. I am sorry that it took something so bad to have something good work out for Saber, but he's never been one to do anything the easy way. So do not fret over what cannot be changed, all right?"

"Thank you," Amanda says quietly and Thomas and Elaine leave.

Commander Eagle watches her for a moment, then clears his throat to get her attention, causing her to jump. "Are you all right, Ms. Kelly?"

"Yes sir. I apologize. I was lost in my own thoughts," she replies sheepishly.

They head to the pharmacy, then to the cafeteria where they get their food and are sitting down eating, "So, you said that you and Saber are an item now?" he asks with a small smile.

"Yes sir, I suppose that's one way of putting it."

"How long has this been going on?"

"I can't give you an exact time, sir. As I said, it just sort of happened. I started to realize I cared for him after he got mad at me for copping an attitude with him because of the first incident with Sean. We were talking, and I just sort of realized that I felt safe telling him anything. I didn't feel like I was being judged by him. I tried my best to deny it. I know that it was foolish of me to follow him that time he took off and we ended up gone for a week, but I don't regret it. He was truly a gentleman. When I needed to change or anything, he went to a place that even if he could have seen me, that he wouldn't have been able to. He went out of his way to make sure I was comfortable. Then when I got sick...I remember thinking that he was acting strange. I guess that's when I realized that he liked me too. I know that doesn't fully answer your question, but it's the best reply I have," Amanda replies.

The commander sits quietly during her speech, nodding on occasion, then is quiet for several minutes, "When you and he left for that week, just where did you go to?"

"I cannot disclose that, sir. I gave Saber my word. I will not betray his trust," Amanda states. "Oh, and sir, you no longer need to pay me. I would gladly do what I have for free, even if there was nothing more than civility between Saber and myself.

He nods, satisfied., "I will not cancel your contract, Ms. Kelly. You have still fulfilled your duties as set out in the contract we made, in spite of these other events," They finish eating and he takes both of the trays, "Shall I escort you back to his room?"

"Aren't you staying to know how things pan out?" she asks curious.

He shakes his head, "I'm afraid that I must return to Calvary Command. I know that he will be cared for, so I will await news there. I don't want the word to get around about this attack and have it leaked to his team mates, as that could skew their test results," he replies as they walk back towards the room. A short time later, they arrive back at the room, Amanda carrying her prescription. "Keep me up to date on any changes. I will see that some star sheriffs are guarding Mr. McCully's room, so if you need to reach me in a hurry, ask someone to contact them."

Amanda nods, "I will sir. Thank you." He nods and leaves. She enters the room and takes a pain pill before settling down into a chair, eventually drifting off to sleep.

Several hours later Saber is wheeled back into his room, Amanda is asleep in the chair, the nurse whispers to Saber, "Your lady is asleep, Captain Rider."

"Thank you very much for telling me," Saber whispers back as the nurse helps him into bed. The nurse leaves returning shortly with his meal. While he's eating Amanda wakes up.

"Hey, you're back," Amanda says sounding a bit tired. "How are you feeling?"

"Like I've been poked and prodded enough for two lifetimes," Saber replies "Thanks for saving me earlier."

Amanda blushes heavily, "No problem. You would have done the same for me I think."

Saber nods as he finishes his meal, he sits thinking quietly, not exactly sure how to begin his thought.

"Are you okay,?" Amanda asks concerned. "You've had such a serious expression since you came back."

Saber sighs, "I've been thinking, is all."

"About what?" Amanda asks.

"Are we a couple?" he finally asks after a long silence.

"You're the one who called me your girlfriend," she replies matter-of-factly.

Saber blushes heavily, "I spoke what I was going through my head, even though it wasn't necessarily true," he says quietly.

"So, I'm not your girlfriend?" she replies trying to clarify his response.

"I hadn't asked you to be, but I'd like it if you were," he replies quietly.

Amanda smiles, and gets up and gently leans over and kisses Saber on the cheek, "I'd like that too."

Saber reaches up and Amanda grabs his hand and places it against her face. "I won't ever forget," he says.

She nods and sits quietly beside him, placing her hand on his beside him on the bed, "You should get some rest. It's been a long day."

He nods, "So should you. I could call the nurse and ask for a cot for you. You can't be comfortable in that chair. Especially with your shoulder in a sling."

"It's okay. I'm fine, Saber. I managed to fall asleep in the chair earlier."

A knock at the door interrupts them, "Come in," Saber replies.

"Sir, I have been ordered by Commander Eagle to stand guard outside your room," A young man states as he steps into the doorway, pushing the curtain aside.

"I thought they were sending someone to guard Mr. McCully, not me," Saber says.

"I was told to guard you, sir, There are two other soldiers standing guard at Mr. McCully's room. My instructions were that you were not to be disturbed, save for the medical staff," The soldier replies, nodding towards Amanda.

"Given the tone of your voice, I would assume you are referring to Ms. Kelly, who is presently here in my room, are you not?" Saber asks.

"Yes, sir," he replies.

"I suppose you were not informed that I am blind?" Saber states, hearing a gasp of shock from the soldier.

"No sir. I was unaware of your condition." the soldier states uncomfortably.

"Well, now you know. So be sure to fully state your business verbally with me from now on. As for the matter of Ms. Kelly here, she will remain with me," Saber replies.

"Yes sir! I shall just be outside the door if you need anything, sir," the soldier replies.

"Very well. What is your name, soldier?" Saber asks.

"Cadet Jackson Waller, sir."

"Very good, Mr. Waller, I will call for you if I need anything," Saber says and the soldier leaves the room, closing the door behind him. Saber lets out a sigh and slumps back against the bed.

"Are you all right?" Amanda asks.

"Just tired., he replies.

Amanda lets out a chuckle.

"What's so funny?" he asks trying not to smile.

"You sounded like quite a soldier with that guard. I think he was rather intimidated. I do wish you could've seen his face when you told him that you were blind. It was priceless." Saber laughs, then winces in pain. "He kept looking towards me, like he was waiting to see if I was going to get up and leave, then I think he saw my hand intertwined with yours, after that, he tried to not look at me directly."

Saber laughs again, "I'm sure it was amusing. I heard him gasp when I mentioned being blind. Most soldiers are acquainted with my achievements with Calvary Command as a Star Sheriff, so to see me in such a state probably is quite a shock."

"Evidently they don't expect you to be with a woman either." she replies amused.

"Most people never knew about my betrothal, so I guess no one ever thought of me being with someone. We travelled so much, it would have been nearly impossible to keep any sort of relationship anyways."

"Do you regret..." Amanda starts to ask.

"No. I am glad that I am not with her. I don't think it would have worked out anyways honestly. But, I would have tried, because it would have been my duty to do so," he says quietly.

"This won't come out right, no matter how I say it, but I'm glad that it worked out the way it did. I am sorry for the hardships that you have endured, but I'm glad that I know you and I hope that things work out with us," Amanda says, giving his hand a gentle squeeze.

He returns the gesture and nods, "At least I know that if I never regain my vision that you don't care. You don't seem bothered by it. I hope things work out for us too, Amanda. I feel drawn to you, like I can trust you in a way I've never trusted anyone. It's actually a bit daunting," he replies sounding more tired.

Amanda pulls his hand up and kisses it gently, then places it back down, "I know what you mean, Saber. Now, lets try and get some sleep. I can stay like this for a while,"

Saber nods, and quickly nods off to sleep, Amanda gradually drifts to sleep, still holding his hand.