

# The Price of Peace

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## Kapitel 11: More Than A Feeling

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Chapter 10: More Than A Feeling

"Here we are, Saber," Elaine says as she wheels him into the sitting room. "I'm sure you're glad to be home."

"Yes, I can safely say that I am, Elaine. It will be nice to sleep in my own bed tonight," he replies as he carefully moves from the wheelchair to the couch.

"I'm sure Ms. Kelly feels the same way," she states as she folds up the chair and places it in a corner.

"That I'll feel how, Elaine?" Amanda asks as she comes down the stairs.

"Glad to be home," Elaine replies.

"Oh, most assuredly. It will be nice to not sleep in a chair," she says with a laugh as she goes and sits beside Saber. "I was surprised they kept you that long," she says to Saber.

"Yes, I wasn't exactly thrilled about being forced to stay there two extra days," he replies gruffly, causing Amanda and Elaine to smile.

"It was for your own good, Saber. At least Amanda was with you, so you had company," Elaine says, trying not to laugh.

"True, I was in good company. That's probably the only reason I didn't attempt to force my way out," he says with a smirk.

"Oh yes, I could hear the commander calling and telling us about that. Perhaps he was afraid of that very thing. Maybe that is why he sent the soldier to guard your door," Elaine says laughing.

Amanda laughs, "I don't think he could have convinced me to go along with an escape plan. At least not unless I was uninjured."

Elaine shakes her head, "I'm going to go and finish up dinner. The two of you just relax for a while," she says as she heads off to the kitchen.

Saber smiles, taking her hand, "I might could have convinced you. I can be persuasive."

Amanda laughs, "I don't mind escaping from your friends and family, but I don't relish the idea of becoming a fugitive," she says mockingly. "Not even for you," she adds, kissing his cheek.

"Hopefully, you never have to make such a choice," He says with a grin. He gets quiet suddenly.

"What?" Amanda asks seeing his face become serious.

"How does the room look?" he asks quietly.

"Like it always has," she replies confused.

"No, I mean can you tell...The blood, the place where you hit the wall, is it cleaned up?"

Amanda gets up and walks around the room, to where she was, where the blood should have been, "I can't tell it ever happened, Saber," she replies as she comes and sits back beside him.

He nods, "Good. I'd hate for there to still be signs of it. Just knowing what happened here bothers me though. It probably bothers you more so than it does me."

"Actually, I'm not too bad. I admit, I was a bit hesitant about how I'd feel coming back in here, but I know that Sean is locked up at Calvary Command, so he can't come back now," Amanda says quietly. "Besides, being here with you makes it worth coming back for."

They talk for a while and before they know it, Elaine comes in from the kitchen, "Dinner's ready. Do you want to eat in here or the kitchen?"

"Kitchen," They both reply as they get up slowly and head for the kitchen.

"Sir, Mr. McCully has just arrived in the brig." A soldier says upon entering the commander's office.

"Thank you. I shall be down there momentarily," the commander replies. He picks up the phone, "Yes, as soon as they are released, send them straight to my office. Have them escorted, they are not to speak with anyone until I have spoken with them. I should be back in half an hour. Thank you." he sets the phone down and heads for the brig.

Upon entering he is met by two soldiers. He salutes them and goes into the holding area. There he sees Sean sitting in chains, he looks up when the commander enters.

"Came to make sure I made it here?" Sean says with a smirk.

The commander looks at him and pauses a moment before speaking, "I would lose the attitude, Mr. McCully. You have been charged with some extremely serious crimes. The stakes are high for you. You very well could lose your life," The commander states firmly.

Sean rolls his eyes, "The bastard deserves what he got for defending that tramp of a woman. I wouldn't have attacked him if he would have not poked his nose in my personal affairs."

"And on what grounds do you get to call Ms. Kelly anything of the sort?" the commander asks.

"Simple. She's there for the money. Why else would some woman want to care for a blind soldier?"

The commander laughs, "You truly believe she is there for the money? You have no clue who she is, Mr. McCully. She probably has just as much money as he does, not that it matters. I didn't know it until I began investigating why she continually never cashed her pay vouchers."

"Okay, so if it's not the money. Why would she want to hang around someone who can't do anything for himself now?"

Commander Eagle shakes his head, "You are obviously the one who is blind, not Saber. I don't expect someone as self-centered and egotistical as you appear to be to understand. I'm not wasting anymore time with you. I came to see if you showed any remorse, obviously, you do not., he turns and leaves, the guards locking the doors behind him.

"I wonder why we were told to come here? I thought after we were done, we could go back to our quarters." Fireball states.

"I don't know. I've not talked to my father in a couple of weeks. Something seems off though. It's like everyone has been ordered not to talk to us. I was actually escorted here by a guard!" April says.

"So was I," Fireball says as Colt comes into the door and sits down with a puzzled look on his face. His escort closes the door and waits outside.

"Did we do something wrong?" Colt asks. The other two shrug.

The door opens and Robin comes in, followed by the commander, who has a serious look on his face. Robin sits down, a look of confusion passes to each of them as they

wait, all of them watching the commander closely.

Commander Eagle sits down and looks to each of them before taking a breath, "Well, the doctors say that you have all improved significantly, however, none of you are ready for full duty again. You may never be." He sees the shocked looks of the group before him but continues, "That having been said, I shall see to it that you are still allowed to work within the command in some capacity. You will retain your current ranks as well."

April sighs relieved. "But what about Saber? Do you think they could even find something for him to do? I mean, he'll be tested in a couple of weeks, so what will they do to him?"

Commander Eagle shakes his head, "There have been a few changes occurring while you were isolated for your testing. Saber won't be testing for quite a while."

"What? Why?" Fireball and April ask simultaneously.

Commander Eagle holds up his hands to silence them, "Saber was shot nearly a week ago by Mr. McCully." They go to speak and he silences them with a look. "Mr. McCully returned to Saber's estate, tied up Thomas and Elaine. Saber and Ms. Kelly had gone off riding, so he waited for them to return. Ms. Kelly entered the house alone, while Saber put up the horses. She called for Elaine, and when she couldn't find Elaine or Thomas, she was heading back towards the stables when she ran into Mr. McCully. He attacked her. She put up a fight, but in the end her shoulder was dislocated and she has quite a bit of bruising. Saber walked in just as she was thrown into a wall, and confronted Mr. McCully. The police were called, they got there just as Mr. McCully made a move against Saber, who managed to cut him with his sword, and in the process a shot was fired, hitting Saber in the abdomen. He is home now, but will not be ready for testing now for a while. Also, during the course of the altercation his vision went out again. We don't know if it is a permanent or temporary issue."

A stunned silence ensues, each of them looking to the other and back to the commander. "Anything else we should know?" April finally asks.

The commander starts to say more, but decides not to. "No, that should cover what you need to know. Anything else you can talk over with Saber."

Colt shakes his head and grins, "We can't leave him alone for a minute."

The commander chuckles, "So it appears. Although technically he wasn't alone. Ms. Kelly was with him."

Colt starts to reply, but getting a look from Robin, he closes his mouth again and grins.

"So when can we leave to go back?" April asks.

"Tomorrow morning. I want them to have time to rest a little before you bombard

them with questions. This hasn't been easy on either of them. It could have turned out much worse. We currently have Mr. McCully under our guard here and he is facing a multitude of charges from both attacks."

"Let me talk to him. We wouldn't even have to have a trial then," Colt says coldly.

"Mr. Wilcox, that sentiment is the very reason I want you all to return to Saber's home. I do not want any of you present at the trial. I share your sentiments, but I know how to separate my personal feelings from the matter," Commander Eagle admonishes.

April sighs, "Let's all go get some food and then some rest."

The next day, they are flying to Saber's estate and talking amongst themselves, "So Amanda is still there, even after all of this?" April asks to no one in particular.

"She seems to be a glutton for punishment, that's for sure," Fireball says.

"I think there is something more to this. No one in their right mind would stay after all of this happening. I wouldn't," April says.

"Neither would I," Robin says. "I probably would have left after the first incident. However, I had noticed a change in both of them since the day you found them in the barn and they took off for a week."

"How so?" Fireball asks.

"Well, for one thing, I think Saber had some of his vision return before he admitted it to anyone, including Amanda. I think he..." Robin starts.

"Started falling for her?" April finishes. Robin nods. "But, he doesn't seem like one that would," April says.

"I know, but it makes sense. When she got so sick, he wouldn't leave her side," Robin says.

"I thought it was because he felt guilty," Colt states.

"Perhaps that's how it started, but I think as they talked more, he realized he liked her. Why else would she hang around?" April says.

"Money?" Colt suggests.

"She doesn't strike me as the type," April says.

They talk a while longer and before long they land and start the ride to Saber's estate.

They arrive at the estate a short time later. "I hope Saber's still not mad at us," Colt says.

"It's Saber," Fireball says. "I don't think he'd hold a grudge like that. Besides, he told us we were welcome to come back."

"We'll see," Colt mumbles.

They enter the house, "Hello?" April calls out.

Thomas comes up to them, "Miss April, Mr. Hikari, Mr. Wilcox, Ms. Robin, I wasn't aware you were going to return so soon. Welcome back."

"My father didn't tell you we were going to return?" April asks.

"No ma'am," Thomas replies.

"I hope we're not intruding," April says.

"I'm sure it'll be fine ma'am. Come in, everyone's in the kitchen," Thomas says and leads them into the kitchen where Saber and Amanda are eating.

"Thomas, do we have company?" Saber asks, "I thought I heard other voices and footsteps."

"Well," Thomas begins but is interrupted by April.

"Hi. We're back," April says.

"So you've finished your testing," Saber says, "Welcome back."

"Saber about what I said before," April begins but stops when Saber raises his hand.

"Let's leave the past in the past and move on," Saber says. "Agreed?"

"Agreed," April says with a nod.

"Elaine," Saber calls, "Would you please prepare their rooms?"

"I cleaned them after they left, and left them ready on the chance that they would be returning before too long. I didn't see any reason not to," Elaine replies.

"Thank you. I'm glad you are so well prepared," Saber says.

"Do you require assistance in getting your baggage up to your rooms?" Thomas asks.

"I think we're all fine," April says and they take their bags up to their rooms.

"Are you sure this is a good idea Saber?" Elaine asks.

"They are my friends," Saber says. "They didn't mean to upset me, and I might of over-reacted a bit."

"A bit?" Elaine asks amused.

"Well, in the long run things have turned out okay, more or less. So perhaps everyone can finally move forward," Amanda says. "Besides, things very well could have turned out differently for both of us had he not gotten so upset over things. Of course I'd probably have reacted similarly, so I don't have much room to talk."

Elaine shakes her head and smiles, "So do you plan on telling them that the two of you are together? Or are you going to make them guess?"

"Make us guess what?" April asks walking into the kitchen. Fireball walks in behind her.

"Well, I suppose we may as well tell you everything that has happened. Once everyone is together, so we don't have to repeat everything," Saber says.

April nods, "The others should be down in a minute."

"Let's head to the sitting room, since we're finished eating," Saber says.

Amanda carefully stacks and grabs the dishes and takes them to the sink, "Yeah, then we can discuss anything you'd like, since I'm sure you've heard about things here while you were away., She walks over to Saber, who takes her hand and they all head to the sitting area, Saber sitting beside Amanda just as Robin and Colt come down.

"How are the two of you doing?" Robin asks as they sit down.

"Yeah, we heard there was a bit of excitement here while we were gone," Colt adds.

"Excitement is not the word I'd use. At least not for the majority of it," Saber says dryly.

"Okay, so what happened?" April asks eagerly, glancing towards where Saber's hand is holding Amanda's.

"You heard about Sean coming back?" Saber asks.

"Yeah," they reply in unison.

"So you know that part of it. No need to recap what you already know," Saber replies.

April looks to Amanda and studies her closely for a moment, "Amanda, how is it you can still be here?"

"What do you mean?" Amanda asks confused.

"Oh, I know this is not going to come out right but, I have tried imagining myself in your place, and had the things that have happened to me, that you've had happen, I

don't think I'd be able to stay. Even if I were offered more money, I just don't see how-"

"I'm not being paid to stay, Ms. April." Amanda interrupts, trying to answer before something is said that shouldn't be, "I have yet to cash any pay voucher that your father has sent. I don't need the money. I do fine with out it. My family was well off, I do this because I enjoy it. There have been a few times that yes, I thought about leaving. I will not deny that. But, by staying I have found more than I imagined I could. Saber has been a good friend to me. I know that I can trust him with my life. I've never trusted anyone like that."

"So you're saying that-"

"We care for each other, April," Saber states. "Like Amanda, I tried to ignore that I felt something, but after everything, it just sort of happened." He turns to Amanda, "Of course I had no idea that you weren't taking money for this. You've more than earned it."

"As I said, I have no need for it, Saber. My family left me money. I also have made good investments. I took this job initially as a challenge, just as I told you before. I had no intention of..." Amanda replies, trailing off at the end.

"Falling in love?" Saber says barely a whisper.

"Yeah," Amanda replies quietly.

April laughs, "This is too funny!"

"What is?" Saber and Amanda say together.

"You two are so much alike." she replies smiling.

"So even though you originally denied it, I guess it's safe to assume that you've-" Colt starts to ask.

"No, we have not, Colt," Saber says before he can finish the question. "We've slept in the same room at the hospital, but she was in a chair. When and if that time comes, it will not be your concern anyways," he adds sternly.

Colt goes to say something in reply, but gets a glaring look from both Robin and April, so he decides against it.

"I'm happy for both of you. Maybe things will calm down for you now that Sean is locked up," Fireball says.

"I hope so," Saber says.

"Yeah, there sure has been a bit too much excitement. It would be nice to enjoy some normalcy," Amanda says.



"Whatever that is now," Saber replies. "So," Saber begins, trying to change the subject, "How did all of you come out from your tests?"

"Well, none of us are cleared for duty yet, but we've all improved quite a bit," Fireball replies.

"The doctor told me that I'll be undergoing extensive physical therapy in about a month's time, so I'm going to do my best to get ahead of it. He gave me some sheets with the exercises that I'll be doing," April says.

"Yeah, that's pretty much what I was told also," Fireball says. "Maybe we can all workout together sometimes."

"Sounds good to me," Colt replies. April nods in agreement.

"I wish I could say we'd go out riding, but I don't think Amanda or myself will be doing that for some time, given the type and extent of our injuries," Saber states with a sigh.

"Getting a bit stir crazy already?" Amanda asks amused.

"Yes, I believe so," Saber replies. "I suppose it wouldn't be so bad if I could at least see things. I wouldn't feel as trapped perhaps, but knowing that I can't go out riding, it's rather annoying," he says.

"If you wish to go outside Saber, I can help you get outside. We just can't venture too far," Amanda says quietly.

"I know you could help, but you're not exactly in the best of shape yourself, Amanda. You've got one good arm, not exactly conducive for pushing a wheelchair, which if we were to go further than the patio I'd have to be in," Saber replies.

"You know, I'm sure we could ask for a powered chair or one of those scooter things, you could get yourself around then," Colt suggests.

Fireball laughs, "Um, Colt, I'm not sure a blind guy driving a powered anything is such a good idea."

"Why not? If I use it around here, I'd be fine. I rode my horse without much trouble," Saber says laughing.

"What's scary is that you actually make a valid point," Amanda says with a smile.

"I thought Colt coming up with a good idea was the scary part," April says teasingly, getting a laugh from everyone except Colt. "I'm going to make a call to my father and see if it can be arranged, if you are serious about wanting to try it, Saber."

Saber shrugs, "It might allow me more freedom. I don't want Amanda trying to do too much with her shoulder, and I don't really like the idea of having to have someone

push me around. It actually makes sense enough to look into it. I may find I can't do it, I don't know."

"I'll go and call my father now, perhaps he could arrange for something to be here in the morning," April says and she goes off to make the call.

A few weeks go by and everyone is eating dinner when the doorbell rings. Thomas comes through and answers the door. A minute or so later, he returns followed by Commander Eagle. "Good evening, everyone," the commander says as he enters the room.

"Good evening, sir." they all reply.

"We just sat down to dinner, would you care to join us?" Saber asks.

The commander nods, "Sure. I can talk to you over dinner," He sits down and Elaine brings him a plate.

"So what brings you here unannounced?" April asks between bites.

"I wanted to check on Saber and Ms. Kelly's condition. It is going to be necessary for them to come to Mr. McCully's trial, along with Elaine and Thomas."

"Are they going to have the trial already?" April asks.

"The only problem that we had is finding a jury of his peers that wasn't predispositioned one way or the other."

"I thought he was going to have a military trial," April asks.

"His lawyer requested that he have a civilian jury, seeing that the majority of the charges were against a military officer he thought that a military jury might be too easily swayed. We couldn't really come up with a good argument against it, so we found a civilian jury, but we have a military judge, and any sentence will be in accordance with military law,"

"I suppose I can understand that some concessions had to be made, we do want this to be a fair trial don't we?" Saber asks.

"I know what I'd like see happen to him," Colt murmurs.

"Is that why we need to testify?" Saber asks pointedly ignoring the comment.

"Yes, and you will be cross examined, so expect them to ask deeply personal questions to try and make you angry and make the jury disbelieve your stories."

"What do you mean?" he asks.

"I would not be surprised if they insinuated that Ms. Kelly was here for money,"

Commander Eagle raises his hand to stop the outburst he sees on her lips, "I know very well that is not the reason you are here at all, Ms. Kelly."

"Then I'll be sure to bring all my uncashed checks from Calvary Command, along with my financial records to show that I am financially independent," Amanda says fighting to keep her anger in check.

"That sounds like a good plan," the commander replies.

"When does the trial start?" Saber asks.

"Monday," Commander Eagle states.

"I'll need to go home and get some paperwork," Amanda says.

"I'd like to go with you," Saber says. "I'm sure we could have Thomas take us."

"We could ride Steed there, it might take the whole day, but I know the way, and you could ride behind me," Amanda offers.

Saber nods, "We could spend the night at your place, then return the next day. It'd be nice to take a ride before we left for the trial. We'll set out tomorrow."

"I'll be here to get all of you Sunday, and hopefully you should be able to return late Monday, or early Tuesday." the commander states.

"Who's going to take care of the Estate while we're gone?" Elaine asks.

"I think we can manage for a few days," April says.