

The Price of Peace

Von chelle76

Kapitel 18: Back In the Saddle...Unit

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Chapter 17: Back In the Saddle...Unit

"So what time are they supposed to arrive?" Colt asks pacing the floor.

April laughs, "You're not anxious to see Robin are you?"

"It's been a month!" he protests, getting a grin from April. "Besides, I want to make sure she's okay," he adds defensively.

"I'm sure everything is fine, Cowboy," April says trying to placate him. "She's almost three months along, so she shouldn't feel as bad as she did the last time you saw her."

"I just don't like being away from her," Colt mutters.

"You'll see her in a matter of an hour or so," Commander Eagle says as he enters his office. "They just received clearance to land."

An hour later they are at the landing dock when the ship lands and Robin comes out, followed by Saber in his daily uniform and Amanda. "Colt!" Robin says as she runs over and hugs him.

He returns the embrace and visibly relaxes. "You act like you're feeling better," he says kissing her lightly.

She nods. "I am. I don't feel sick much now and the headaches have eased off. Now I'm just eating constantly," she says grinning.

Saber and Amanda make their way to the group, Amanda still in a sling, Saber using a cane. "I must say that you both look better than the last time I saw you," April says teasingly.

Saber chuckles, "That doesn't take much, does it?"

"Not really," April replies. She looks them over carefully stopping when she notices Amanda's ring. "So you're officially engaged now?" she asks smiling.

Amanda nods, "Yes, we are now officially engaged."

"Do you have a date yet?" April asks.

They both shake their heads. "Not yet," Saber replies. "We're trying to wait until we're a little better physically. I don't want her to be in a sling when we get married."

"Yeah, not the way I want to remember our wedding," Amanda adds. "I got the staples out of my shoulder a couple of days ago, so I'm improving. I'll probably be stuck in this sling for a few more weeks."

"Much to her dismay," Saber adds with a smirk. "She can be rather impossible when she's flustered."

"Look who's talking," Amanda retorts with a laugh.

The others laugh and they talk a while longer as they meet in the Commander's office. "We have a room for the two of you that will be ready within the hour, Saber. I'm sure you'll want to rest before too long," Commander Eagle says.

Saber nods, "This is the most we've done these last few weeks. So we do tend to become tired rather quickly. What time does everything start tomorrow?"

"Sean's initial sentencing is at eight. His lawyer's is at nine, with the others being done consecutively after that. Then Sean's other sentencing will be immediately following the others. So hopefully by lunch time it's all over and done with," Commander Eagle says and Saber nods. "We are also keeping an escort with both of you at all times." Saber goes to protest and the commander holds up his hands. "You do not have a choice in the matter, Richard." Saber flinches at the use of his birth name. "I will not allow any opportunity for either of you to come to harm. It's not like they will be in your room, but they will inspect it before you enter and remain outside the doors while you are in there. If either or both of you wish to go someplace, you will be escorted by two guards. There is no room for discussion. It has already been arranged."

Saber sighs in resignation. "Yes sir, thank you. We appreciate the efforts that have been taken for our welfare," he replies quietly.

The sound of the phone ringing jostles him away and he carefully reaches for it, trying not to disturb Amanda. "Yeah?" he says quietly into the phone. Murmuring is heard. "Okay. Yes, we'll see you shortly." He closes the phone and sighs. He carefully reaches down and kisses Amanda's forehead. "Amanda? Wake up, Love. We have to get going. It's nearly seven."

She stirs and mumbles incoherently. "Already?" she manages to ask sleepily.

"Yes," he replies with a chuckle. "Commander Eagle is on his way here to take us to the courtroom."

Begrudgingly she gets up, with his help and they both dress, managing to barely be ready when the commander arrives. "Good morning," the commander says as he enters their quarters.

"Good morning," They reply quietly.

"Hopefully after today you can put all of this behind you and move on with your lives," he says noting their attempts at hiding their uneasiness.

"I hope so," Amanda says quietly as they are escorted towards the courtroom. They are joined by Colt, April, and Fireball on the way.

They walk most of the way in silence, Saber holding Amanda's hand in a show of support. They enter the courtroom and Sean is already there, a new lawyer standing beside him. He looks up when they enter, watching Saber and Amanda closely, as if he's gaging their physical conditions. Saber feels Amanda tense and squeezes her hand gently. They take their seats behind the prosecution, the Commander and the others filing in near them. It is then they see that the other defendants are being escorted into the room, all looking a bit bewildered. The judge enters the room and everyone rises and then takes their seats. The judge looks at the various people in the room. He stops looking over Amanda and Saber carefully. "Ladies and gentlemen," he begins, "We are here today for the penalty phase of several cases. The primary case is the charges against Mr. Sean McCully. Initially, I was going to speak to the groups at designated times, but as I have learned that all of these charges have stemmed from the original charges against Mr. McCully, I have decided to do something a bit unprecedented. I will be sentencing first the other defendants in the latter cases." Several people begin talking at once and the judge bangs his gavel to cease the objections. "All of the defendants have been found guilty of their charges, so it really makes no difference what order I go in. Will all of the defendants please rise, save for Mr. McCully, Mr. Amberson, and Mr. Finnegan." They rise, all looking amongst themselves not sure what to think before turning to the judge. "Each of you have been found guilty of numerous crimes against the military. They include murder of a military officer, attempted murder of more than one military officer, attempted murder of a civilian, arson, destruction of government property, kidnapping, and false imprisonment. Each of those charges carries a minimum life sentence in a civilian court. Here, on just the one count of murder, you can be sentenced to death. Given the extreme circumstances of the situation and the magnitude of how the threats were carried out, I am passing down a mandatory death sentence for each of you." Several of the prisoners drop to the floor in shock, only to be pulled back up by their guards. "Mr. Finnegan, please rise." He stands and looks nervously to the judge, and the judge continues, "Your life is being spared only because you showed mercy to the people you help to hold prisoner. At the request of the said captives, because of that kindness, your life shall be spared. You are sentenced to twenty years in prison." Finnegan drops to the floor in relief and he looks towards where Saber and the others

are sitting and nods in gratitude before. The judge then turns his attention to Mr. Amberson, "Mr. Amberson, you have proven to be a disgrace to your so called profession. You have shamed your family as well. For your hand in the charges against these other men, you are hereby sentenced to death." The lawyer remains expressionless as his sentence is handed down, and the judge turns to the guards, "Please remove these men from my courtroom to their cells to await their fates. Their deaths will be within the next three days. He bangs the gavel and several soldiers approach the prisoners and lead them out of the courtroom. Only Mr. Amberson turns to face Saber and Amanda, giving them a glare that could have been construed as a threat if he were not being led away in chains. Once the courtroom is cleared from wailing relatives of the condemned people, the judge turns to face Sean. "Mr. McCully, I know that you honestly believe that you are separate from these other men, but you are not. It is because of you that they will die." He watches for a reaction but gets none, so he continues, "You have also been condemned because of the crimes that you directly committed. For your crimes you have been sentenced to death. Yours will be carried out tomorrow morning, twenty-four hours from now." He bangs the gavel and the soldiers come and grab him to take him from the court room. He wrenches from their grasp just as an explosion happens and several outriders appear from a side door, close to where the prosecution desk is.

Sean uses the diversion to get close to Saber and Amanda, "This isn't over. You will never know peace as long as I'm alive. You will have to watch your backs for the rest of your lives. I will get what I deserve." he says looking at Amanda then turns and vanishes with the outriders. Alarms start blaring and soldiers come from every direction armed and ready to fight.

"They're gone, sir," A soldier says as he approaches Commander Eagle. "We're on lock down, but so far there's no sign of the outriders or Mr. McCully."

Commander Eagle nods and turns and looks to Saber and Amanda, "We need to get you home and quickly. I want you to take the Bismarck. It can at least serve as some protection against anything the outriders have. I will do my best to get a team together to help man it once you are safe. We have some promising cadets, so it should only be tomorrow before we get to you. Go now before someone over-rules me," he says looking to the four of them and Amanda.

"Sir!" they say and start for the hangar where the ship is stored.

Saber takes Amanda's hand, "Let's go." They follow April, Fireball, and Colt through the maze of corridors struggling to keep up, but managing to. They arrive at the hangar and see a couple of soldier standing guard. "Let us through. We are under Commander Eagle's direct orders," Saber says with as much authority as he can.

"Sir!" the guards reply.

"Get the doors open fast! We need to go after the outriders who attacked," Saber calls back as they head up the ramp. The ramp closes behind them and without thinking Saber heads to his saddle unit. Amanda follows him and stands behind him. "Hold on tight, Amanda we have to take off before someone figures out that it's us

taking off without proper medical clearance," Saber says hitting miscellaneous buttons as the others run their checks.

The ship starts forward and Amanda grabs on as best as she can. Soon the ship enters orbit and they steady out. "Are we considered fugitives now?" she asks quietly.

"No," Saber replies. "We might get into some trouble, but seeing as he directly threatened you and I, we have the right to go after him. We will head home as ordered, eventually. The commander never said how quickly we had to get there," Saber says flashing her a weak smile. "Come and sit with me. We can sort of share the seat. I can use some help knowing what is on my screen, as I'm still not able to see well enough to decipher individual objects or type," Amanda comes and sits close to him and he places an arm gently around her. "Can you tell me what's on the screen? You should see a blue dot, that would be us, and a red dot, that is most likely the outriders and Sean."

Amanda studies the screen for a minute and then sees a red dot appear on the screen, "It's at about ten o'clock from our position, Saber."

"You get that Fireball, Colt?" Saber asks.

"Got it," they reply.

"Heading that way now," Fireball says as he directs the ship in the general direction of the other ship.

"Let's go and get us some outriders," Colt says.