

The Price of Peace

Von chelle76

Kapitel 22: Revelations

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Chapter 21: Revelations

"The cadets seem eager to out do one another, sir," Saber says as he and Commander Eagle talk in his office.

"Yes, it seems that the motivation of possibly being selected as one of the crew members of the Tirpitz is causing quite a lot of competition. I'm glad that you and Amanda were able to come and visit for a week."

"Well, the chance to see April and Fireball actually get married was a huge bonus, sir," Saber replies laughing.

"I know they have been with each other for a long time now romantically, and that they've known one another since they were children. I don't know why they waited so long. Everyone knew that they were...close," Commander Eagle replies.

"Yes. I almost asked them what prompted the wedding, but decided that I was better off not asking. I don't care to make Amanda a widow after almost ten months. I'd like a bit more time with her," Saber says.

Commander Eagle laughs, "I actually asked if their sudden interest was motivated by certain circumstances and they both have sworn that it wasn't. Of course I'm surprised that it isn't, but I wouldn't say that to April. She has been quite busy with the design and production of the Tirpitz. I'm glad to say that we have several qualified candidates. April is helping to choose the first test crew. I was hoping you might give some of your thoughts on her picks, I can give you all of the files of the ones she has picked. There are eight of them. We need four for the first run."

Saber nods, "You do realize that I'll have to allow Amanda to read them as well, sir?"

"Yes, I am well aware of that. I know that she can remain objective, and that you will

not let any opinion she offers be your sole source of information."

"Then I suppose you can send me the files and we can go over them tonight while we're here. Perhaps later this afternoon we can come and observe the candidates in the VR rooms to see how they react in situations. That is if Amanda is feeling up to it," Saber replies.

"Is she all right?" the commander asks concerned.

"She's just been a little tired lately. She's had nightmares again, so she's not sleeping as well as she should be. She said she felt queasy the other day, but never actually threw up, so perhaps getting away for a bit will help her feel better. I told her if she's still not sleeping well when we go home, she has to talk to the doctor. Maybe he can give her something to help."

"Have the nightmares been about Sean again?" the commander asks quietly.

"Yes, sir. She keeps seeing the whole fight I had with him and then where she kills him before he can kill me. I wish I could make it stop, but all I can do is console her and pray it goes away on it's own," Saber replies quietly.

"She's a strong woman, Saber. I think she'll be fine in the long run. Perhaps getting her to a doctor sooner would help. Not getting enough sleep for any length of time isn't a good thing."

"Perhaps while we're here I can get her to agree to see the doctor. She is technically a soldier," Saber says.

"She's your wife anyways, so they would see her regardless. Go and check on her, and after lunch, meet me back here, unless she agrees to get checked. Then I'll take you with me to observe the training."

"Yes, sir," Saber replies and he gets up and heads back to his quarters. Upon entering he hears Amanda in the bedroom and goes in to see about her. "Hey Love, how are you feeling?" he asks concerned.

Amanda finishes changing and nods, "A little better. I didn't manage to get anymore sleep. I couldn't get comfortable. These beds are much harder than the one at home."

Saber chuckles, "Aye, that they are. How would you like to come observe some cadets this afternoon?"

"Sure. I think I'd feel up to it. What are we observing them for?" Amanda asks.

"We get to help hand pick the crew for the Tirpitz. I should have an email now with the soldiers' information and academy records on what their specialties are and such that we can go over this evening. I thought it would be nice to go in unbiased and then compare our observations with what's on paper," he replies.

"Sounds like a good idea to me. Maybe tomorrow we can catch up to the others and compare notes or something," Amanda offers.

Saber nods, "Yes. April has already been observing them. She has chosen the top eight cadets that she feel are the best choices. Our job will be to help narrow it down to four. Commander Eagle wants us to meet him after lunch if you're up to it."

"You mentioned I wasn't feeling well to him?" she asks.

"Yes I did. He recommended that you be checked while we're here, but unless you get worse, I won't force the issue. I don't like that it's been nearly a month now since you've had a decent night's sleep," he says firmly. "I hate that I can't stop the nightmares from happening," he adds barely a whisper.

Amanda comes over and places a hand on his shoulder and he turns and pulls her against him, "It's not your fault, Saber. It will pass eventually," she says quietly. "I tell you what, if I have another bad night tonight, I'll go and see the doctor here tomorrow, okay?" she says looking up at him.

He nods and kisses her lightly, "Okay. I can agree to that, with the stipulation that if you start feeling bad before we retire for the evening you'll go sooner," he counters.

"Deal," she replies and kisses him.

He reluctantly releases her with a sigh, "I figure we should go and get lunch before we meet the commander."

She smiles at his reluctance and grabs his hand. "Let's go," she says dragging him towards the door.

A couple of hours later, they are at the commander's office and April and Fireball come in. "Are you coming to observe too?" April asks.

Saber nods, "Your father asked us to come and observe. I hope you don't mind," he replies.

"Why would I? Colt should be here too, but you know he's always late," April replies.

"It's like since he and Robin had Wil his brain has gone dead. He has no sense of time," Fireball adds with a laugh.

"So you're saying he had a sense of time before?" Saber adds laughing.

"Better than now," Fireball quips.

"That's rather a scary thought. He was pretty much consistently late anyways," Saber says dryly.

A few minutes later, Colt comes in. "Sorry everyone., he mutters.

"It's all right. We're getting used to it," Fireball says with a grin.

"Wait until you have kids. Then you'll understand," Colt retorts.

Commander Eagle enters his office and they all turn and salute him. "Well, the cadets are in the VR rooms for training. I have an observation room set up for us. We will have sound and visual on all of them. I allowed them to break themselves off into two teams, that way we can see how their team dynamics are." The others nod. "Come on." He leads them into a room and after everyone is seated, he activates the screens. You can see people in every direction. Their voices coming through unseen speakers. The commander begins explaining everything, "Each cadet has been assigned a letter. They are on the vests they are wearing. The files that I have sent to each of you will give the cadet's letter, followed by their files, including their names. They all have previous battle experience as pilots of the fighters in the recent skirmishes." He falls silent as everything activates and they become engrossed in watching the screens.

"It's like we're beside them," Amanda states quietly as she starts looking over the soldiers and involuntarily gasps.

"What's wrong?" Saber asks her concerned.

"It's nothing," she replies barely a whisper, her eyes following one of the cadets.

"Please tell me," Saber says quietly.

"I'm sure I'm mistaken, but I thought Cadet 'G' looked familiar. He reminds me of someone that died years ago."

Saber nods, "Fair enough. Let me know if you start to feel too bad."

"I will. I promise," she replies.

They all continue the observations for the next couple of hours. Each person making notes into their PDA type devices.

Later that evening they are all sitting in the commander's office discussing the cadets. "So, Amanda, you think you've seen cadet 'G' before?" Commander Eagle asks.

"I'm not sure, sir. He sort of reminded me of someone, but that person died before I was born. I can't tell you why that popped into my head when I saw him though."

Commander Eagle nods, "Has everyone gone through the files I sent?"

"Still going through them, sir," Saber and Amanda both reply.

"Not a problem. Does anyone have any initial thoughts?"

"I think G, B, E, and A. They were grouped together and seemed to be able to think

well as a group and independently," Fireball replies.

"Yes, the dynamic seemed to work as well. They are evenly matched as far as genders and their scores and such rate them rather high," April comments.

"The other group was good too. Their weapons guy was quick and seemed to be the leader of the group. But as you said, there is something about the others. They kinda remind me of us," Colt says.

Saber looks up. "They also seem to be a good mixture of people. One is from my area, he appears to be a weapons specialist. The girl from the German colonies seems to be the scientist of the group. The other two are from the Asian colonies, and they seem equal in piloting and strategic response."

Amanda nods, but continues reading. "Well, I fairly sure that I don't know cadet G. Nothing on his file seems familiar to me," she says aloud to no one in particular.

"Who did he remind you of, Love?" Saber asks curiously.

"A brother that died before I was born. Father kept a picture of him on the mantle. He used to talk about him once in a while. He said it's why he spoiled me so much," she adds with a smile.

"Well, I'm glad that's cleared up. What are your thoughts on the cadets?" Commander Eagle asks.

"The others make valid point, sir. I would agree with them. The second group is good, but the others seems to work a little better together," Amanda replies honestly.

"Well, that being said, I want all of you to meet with the group in a while. They are getting ready for a trial run of the Tirpitz. I'd like for all of you to be there when they take it out for the first time. If everyone is agreeable to that, we can go on to the hangar area now," the commander says looking to the group.

"Yes sir," they all reply and everyone gets up and they head to the hangar area. The cadets are standing around talking and fall into formation and salute them as they enter. They all return the salute and the commander steps to the front of the group.

"All right, as of this point on, you are the crew of the Tirpitz. I want to introduce you to the crew of the Bismarck. They will be observing you on your test run and can give you advice if needed." He points to a young Asian looking female who salutes them, "This is Erika Kawamura." She nods and steps back to her crew. He then points to the young Scotsman, who steps forward and salutes them. "This is Alex Mackenzie." He nods to them and his eyes stop when he spots Amanda. He looks to say something then decides better of it and steps back to his crew. Saber casts a glance to Amanda but doesn't say anything. The commander looks in her direction, but since no one says anything, he continues with the introductions, "This is Yuri Hido." He steps forward and salutes them before returning to the others. "And finally we have Gabrielle Weber." She steps forward and salutes them before returning to the others.

They all talk for a while and the crew leaves on a test flight. After a bit of practice, they return to the hangar and agree to meet in the morning to practice more. They all disperse and Saber and Amanda are just about back to their quarters when someone calls to them from behind.

"Captain Rider!"

Saber stops and turns, "Yes?"

"Sir. I would like to speak with you and your wife," Alex says stopping as he catches up to them.

Saber looks to Amanda and she nods. "Sure, please, come in," Saber replies and they enter their quarters, followed by Alex. Once they are seated Saber looks to the nervous cadet. "What can we do for you?" he asks.

"Um, well. I..." he stammers then takes a breath and looks to Amanda. "Ma'am, have we met before?" he finally manages to ask.

Amanda shakes her head, "Not that I recall, sir. You remind me of someone, but I don't remember ever having met previously," she replies.

"Well, I know this is going to sound weird, but you look like my birth mother," Alex says.

"Birth mother?" Amanda asks.

"Aye. My birth mother died when I was almost five. She died in childbirth. I was upset and ran away. I ended up getting lost. I was nearly dead when my father found me. He and his wife took me in and adopted me as their own. They were unable to have children of their own, so they took my arrival as a sign from God. A couple of years ago, my mother died. Then about a year ago my father fell ill. On his deathbed he told me that I should find my birth family. He gave me a name and address, but when I went to see him, I found the place burnt to the ground and being used as a temporary command center by Calvary Command," Alex replies.

Amanda gasps. "Impossible," she mutters under her breath.

"What was the name he gave you, sir," Saber asks.

"He gave me the name of Richard Kelly. My birth mother's name was Catherine Kelly," Alex replies.

Amanda looks shocked and Saber feels her tense up and grabs her hand, "Are you all right, Love?"

"You...you're?" she stammers.

"My father told me that my name had been Alexander Kelly. But he didn't know that until just before his death. Long after they had adopted me as their own," he replies quietly.

Amanda nods, "I see. Um, well my father died a few years ago. I'm sorry that you've never been able to meet him."

"So um, what do we do? I'd like to know for sure if we are really related," Alex asks.

"If you are both agreeable to the idea, we could go to the med bay and have the doctor run a DNA analysis. That should tell you whether you are or are not related," Saber offers.

"I'd be okay with that," Amanda replies as a knock is heard at the door.

"I'll get it," Saber says and heads to the door, finding the commander on the other side. "Ah, good evening, sir," he says as he steps aside to let him in.

The commander enters the apartment and sees Alex talking with Amanda. "Mr. Mackenzie?" he asks surprised.

Alex stands up and salutes, "Good evening, sir."

"At ease, Mackenzie," the commander says and Alex relaxes as the commander comes in and sits down. "I would however like to know what you're doing here."

"Sir. I...When I saw this young woman this afternoon, I thought I was seeing my birth mother. But my mother is dead. So I came to ask if she might have been related, and after talking with her, we think that we might actually be related."

"Well, that makes things interesting. I know that since this didn't come up before the decision was made for you to be a Tirpitz crew member, so that this possibility doesn't play into the decision, so you are to remain a crew member. I would like to be informed of the results."

"Of course, sir," Amanda replies.

"When were you going to have the test done?" the commander asks.

Amanda looks to Alex who shrugs, "I can go now if you are willing to."

"Let's go then. I'd like to know and then I can come back and rest," Amanda says.

Saber eyes her with concern, "Are you not feeling well?"

Amanda shakes her head, "I'm sure it's the shock, but no, I'm not feeling too good right now. So let's go and get the test done, then maybe, if the doctor has time, he can check me, fair enough?"

Saber nods, "Yes. Let's go."

The three of them head down to the med bay and after some searching, they find Dr. Izumi. "Ah, Captain and Mrs. Rider. Commander Eagle just called and told me to be expecting you. Good evening to you as well, Mr. Mackenzie." Alex nods to him. "Now, I understand that the two of you," he says nodding to Alex and Amanda, "would like me to run a DNA test. Is that correct?"

"Yes, doctor," They both reply.

"Very well, right this way," he says as he leads them towards a couple of chairs and takes blood first from Alex, then Amanda. "Mrs. Rider, I would like your permission to take an extra vile of blood from you. Commander Eagle said that you've not been feeling well and having trouble sleeping. I would normally run a blood profile before prescribing anything for sleep issues, so since you're here, I think it better to do it all at once."

Amanda nods, "Yes, please do. I rather dislike needles, so it's better to get it over and done with."

Dr. Izumi nods and takes the blood. "Well, it will be tomorrow morning before I know anything I'm afraid. The lab is a bit backed up," he says apologetically.

"It's no problem, doctor. If we've gone this long, whats a few extra hours?" Alex says.

Dr. Izumi nods, "I will however run your blood profiles, Mrs. Rider, and if I find anything abnormal, I'll contact you. Those should be done first thing in the morning. Should you start to feel worse, please come back sooner, even if I haven't called you."

"I will, thank you," Amanda replies quietly.

Saber is lying awake when the security alarms start blaring. He shakes Amanda and they quickly get up and change into uniforms before heading to the commander's office. They arrive just after April and Fireball. "What's going on?" Saber asks when they arrive.

"We're under attack. I've deployed the crew of the Tirpitz to join the fighters. They should be able to hold them off and end the skirmish quickly. For now, you should just be on standby. This is the first time they've gone into combat with the ship," Commander Eagle replies.

Colt comes in during the commander's explanation and is watching the screen in front of him with great interest. "I don't like the look of those renegade units," he says quietly. "We should be out there helping them."

Saber comes over to him and places a hand on his shoulder, "I know you don't think anyone but us can handle this, Colt, but none of us truly have any business fighting if we can help it. This is their chance to prove themselves, as we did all those years ago. At least we are available should they need the help. A luxury that we didn't have."

Colt sighs, "I know. I just feel so...useless not being out there."

"Easy Cowboy, don't be asking for trouble. You should be proud of everything we've accomplished, not dwelling on the fact that others are beginning to take the helm," April says.

They all stand quietly watching the battle. The Tirpitz starts losing ground against two larger renegade units, but then transforms into a large robot and quickly takes one of the two enemy units out. After a long battle, they finally finish off the other unit, and the few remaining enemy fighters retreat. The crew all return to the hangar, along with their support fighters. Then they make their way to the commander's office.

"Very good job," Commander Eagle says as they enter and salute their superiors. The others all return the gesture. "You are doing well. Everyone should go and get some rest. They could return with reinforcements any time."

"Yes, sir," The crew members reply and they turn to leave, followed by the others.

Everyone returns to their quarters, when Saber and Amanda reach theirs, they find the doctor waiting for them. "Dr. Izumi. Isn't it a bit early to be coming around?" Saber asks as the three of them enter the apartment.

Dr. Izumi nods, "Typically, I would agree with you, Captain, but seeing as the entirety of the base was roused from their sleep, I figured I'd come to speak with you both about some of the lab results," he replies as they make their way to the sitting area and sit down. "I'm afraid that given some of your test results, I am unable to prescribe a sleep aid for you, Mrs. Rider."

"Why? What's wrong?" she asks nervously. Saber takes her hand, trying to comfort her.

"Well, technically nothing, other than stress," he replies slowly, trying to figure out how to explain.

"Then what's the problem, doctor?" Saber asks concerned.

"Well, Mrs. Rider, it appears that you're pregnant," Dr. Izumi replies. Seeing their shocked faces he chuckles. "And judging by the hormone levels in your blood, I'd guess you are close to nine weeks along. Of course I should run a couple of other tests and do an ultrasound to confirm the gestational age of the fetus, and make sure that there are no other issues. All of which are standard procedure and nothing to worry about," he adds seeing their nervousness.

"But...but I've not had the symptoms like Robin had," Amanda protests.

"I assure you ma'am, I am one hundred percent sure about my diagnosis. Not everyone always presents the same symptoms that are typically associated with pregnancy. I'd like to perform the ultrasound as soon as possible though so that you don't have to

explain your absence for medical tests unnecessarily."

Saber places his arm around her and kisses her cheek, "Are you up to having the test done, Love? Perhaps then we can decide what to do."

"I guess so. But if he's right, what will we do?" Amanda asks.

Saber shrugs, "Deal with it and think of it as a blessing. Sure, we weren't planning this, but I suppose we didn't exactly try and prevent it either." Amanda smiles weakly at the comment and he continues. "I'm not against having children, the thought just had not occurred to me as a possibility so soon."

Amanda nods, fighting back tears, "Let's go and do the test then." Saber nods and they get up and follow the doctor to the med bay.

It's mid-afternoon and Saber and Amanda are in their quarters having just gotten up after a long night and are eating lunch. "So what are we going to tell the others?" Amanda asks quietly between bites.

"I personally feel that we should wait a few more weeks to tell them. Unless something comes up that could cause a problem. I'd like to go back home, but I get the feeling that we're needed here right now."

"Aye. I feel that way too. Can you imagine how Elaine is going to react to the news?" Amanda says with a laugh.

Saber chuckles, "She'll be as excited as any grandmother I'd bet." A knock at the door halts their conversation. Amanda gets up and goes to the door and finds Dr. Izumi with Alex with him. "Ah, come in," she says and they enter the apartment and they all take a seat. Saber comes over and joins Amanda.

"Well, I just received the results of your DNA tests, so I thought I'd bring you all here to hear it together." Dr. Izumi says as he takes out a sheet of paper. "According to the test results, you two are indeed brother and sister."

Amanda gasps, placing a hand on her mouth.

Alex looks shocked for a moment then nods, accepting the information.

"I hate to give you such a shock and then leave, but I have rounds to make. I'll check back with you later, Mrs. Rider," Dr. Izumi says as he stands to leave.

"Thank you, doctor," Amanda replies quietly. The doctor then quietly leaves.

"So what do we do now that we know, Mrs. Rider?" Alex asks after the door closes.

Amanda studies him for a minute before answering, "Well, I suppose I owe you some of the inheritance. But I would like to get to know you too, as a brother. Perhaps we can become friends?"

Alex shakes his head, "I don't need money. My father left me well off. I just wanted to know for curiosity's sake. I'd like to get to know you as well. I'd also like you to meet my wife and child, if you're agreeable to that."

Amanda nods, "That would be nice. But please call me Amanda, okay?" Alex nods.

"The only exception to that would be in formal company, such as the commander or the general," Saber adds. "Then you should address each other by your last names." They both nod in agreement.

"Could we possibly meet up later, so you can meet my family?" Alex asks.

Amanda glances to Saber who nods, "I don't see a problem with that. Could we all meet here? Amanda hasn't felt her best recently so I don't want to venture too far from the apartment when we can avoid it."

"Of course, Captain Rider. Maybe we can meet in about an hour?" Alex asks.

"That should be fine," Saber replies. "Oh, and since we're technically family, you may call me Saber when it's just us, all right?"

"Thank you, sir," Alex replies and then he gets up and heads for the door. "I'll be back in about an hour." he leaves and Amanda flops back onto the couch.

"Are you all right, Love?" Saber asks concerned.

"I can't say as I'm completely shocked by the news. I suppose the combination of news today overall is a bit overwhelming though," she replies honestly. "I mean when I saw him, the first thing that popped into my head was a picture that had been on the mantle of the house. It was taken just days before I was born. Dad always told me that he was dead, even though they never found a body to bury. He even had a marker made to place beside mother's. I used to lay flowers on it when I went to mother's grave. I just can't believe that after all this time..." she says, her voice breaking a bit.

Saber gently pulls her against him. "I know this is a lot right now. But at least you've got family. Perhaps you will be good friends with him and maybe his wife. That's a good thing, isn't it?" he says trying to comfort her.

Amanda nods, her head against him. "Yeah. I think so," she replies.

They stay snuggled for nearly an hour when a knock at the door awakens them. Saber gently awakens Amanda and then gets up to answer the door. "Hello Alex," he says as Alex enters followed by a woman and a little boy that looks close to three years of age. They enter the room and Amanda stands up to greet them.

She looks up and has a startled look when the woman makes her way over. "Amanda?" the woman asks hesitantly.

Amanda regains her composure and nods, "Sarah. How surprising to see you again," she says quietly.

Sarah nods, "You're the last person that I expected to run into. What are you doing here?" she asks in surprise.

"I'm here with my husband," Amanda says nodding towards Saber. "So how are things with you?" she asks trying to sound casual.

"The two of you know each other?" Saber asks curiously.

Amanda nods. "Yes, well we did a few years ago," she replies.

"She was once engaged to my brother Derrick," Sarah replies, getting a look of surprise from both Alex and Saber. "She should have been my sister-in-law. Until my idiot brother left her for that-

"Sarah. Let's not bring up that here," Alex interjects trying to diffuse the situation. The boy coming out from behind him and over to Sarah.

"You're right, Alex. I'm sorry Amanda. I'm sure you don't care to bring up such a bad memory," Sarah says apologetically as she scoops up the child.

"It's okay, Sarah. You seem like you've made a good life for yourself. I'm glad to see that," Amanda replies.

"Funny, I could say the same thing about you. How long have you been married?" Sarah asks.

"Not quite a year," Amanda replies.

Sarah nods, "We've been married for a little over three years." The little boy starts squirming in his mother's arms.

"Congratulations," Amanda says. She smiles at the boy, "Hi. What's your name?"

"Tyler Mackenzie and I'm three years old," he says proudly.

"Hi Tyler. I'm Amanda." He waves at her and wiggles down from Sarah's grip and makes his way to Amanda, sitting at her feet and watching the adults talk.

"So, you're the infamous Captain Rider?" Sarah says to Saber.

"I am Captain Rider," Saber confirms.

"So how did you two end up together?" Sarah asks.

"I suppose if you know of me, then you know that I was severely injured nearly two years ago?" Sarah nods and he continues, "Well, one of the injuries caused me to be

blinded. Evidently permanently."

"You're blind? Seriously?" Alex and Sarah both ask obviously surprised.

"Legally, yes. I can see some outlines and shadows, but not much else. I thought the sunglasses were a bit of a giveaway," he says with a chuckle. "But to answer your question, we met when Amanda came to teach me to live and function as a blind person."

"Turns out that he taught me as much or more than I taught him," Amanda says.

"I didn't know you worked in such a capacity, Amanda," Sarah says.

"I didn't. Professionally, at least. I worked with my...our father the last few years of his life after he had his first stroke that left him totally blind and partially paralyzed. I actually enjoyed helping him learn to do things for himself again, so when I saw the ad for the position to help someone who had lost their vision, I thought it would be fun."

"Fun?" Alex laughs. "You have a warped sense of fun, Amanda," he says with a grin.

Amanda laughs, "I suppose I do. Especially considering all that's happened since I met Saber. However, I'd probably do it all again if I had to."

They all talk for a couple more hours before retiring for the night and promising to meet up again. Amanda gets in bed beside Saber and snuggles against him and sighs, "What a day," she says sounding completely exhausted.

"Aye, that it was." he replies.