

The Price of Peace

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Kapitel 12: The Trial of Sean McCully

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Chapter 11: The Trial of Sean McCully

Early Monday morning, Saber wearing his dress uniform, is being pushed by Thomas, who is in his best suit. Amanda is walking beside him, her arm still in the sling and is wearing a business-like shin length black dress. Commander Eagle walks behind them also in his dress uniform, Elaine is in a nice dress following slightly behind them as they enter the courthouse. They enter the courtroom and take their seats. They are only sitting for a short while when the Judge comes in and the trial starts.

"The charges against Sean McCully include trespassing, kidnapping, assault, assault on officer, assault with a deadly weapon, attempted murder of a civilian, and attempted murder of an officer. How do you plead Mr. McCully?" the Judge asks.

"Not guilty, sir," Sean says.

The judge sighs, "Very well, Mr. Amberson, you may make your statement."

The lawyer that was sitting with Sean gets up, "People of the jury. Sean McCully is a fine upstanding member of his community, often giving money to various charities. Several weeks before the incident Mr. McCully was invited to Captain Rider's place of residence to participate in a fencing practice. Upon arriving at Captain Rider's estate he met Ms. Kelly, whom he was under the impression was a servant of the house. Later Mr. McCully and Captain Rider proceeded to hold their fencing practice. What Mr. McCully did not know was that Captain Rider was blind at the time and was hoping to make a fool of Mr. McCully by defeating him while handicapped. Fortunately it did not end the way Captain Rider intended, and Mr. McCully won. Captain Rider offered Mr. McCully to stay the night, and he accepted. Later that night he saw Ms. Kelly alone, and assuming that she was a servant, and being use to servants "taking care of his needs" he came onto Ms. Kelly and she rejected him."

"Sir," the Calvary Command lawyer speaks up, "How is any of this relevant to the

case?"

"Mr. Amberson?" the judge asks.

"I'm getting there sir," Amberson answers.

"Make it quick."

"Of course, your Honor," Mr. Amberson says. "Mr. McCully was deeply hurt by the rejection. He went home to try and calm down. He took a couple weeks to do so and then returned to apologize, and was attacked by Captain Rider, and fired his pistol in self-defense. That's what happened, ladies and gentlemen."

"Mr. Dunhill?" the judge asks.

The Calvary Command lawyer gets up, "I was not going to bring up the first incident in this trial as Mr. McCully was not charged with any crime at that time. However, since Mr. Amberson deems it necessary to bring it up, I will tell you what actually happened."

"Objection, your Honor!" Mr. Amberson says forcefully.

"On what grounds?" the judge asks.

"Relevance," Mr. Amberson replies.

"He brought it up, your Honor. I think the jury has the right to hear both sides of the story," The Calvary Command lawyer states.

"Over-ruled, Mr. Amberson. You may proceed counselor," the judge states.

Thank you, your Honor," He turns back to the jury and continues, "Yes, Mr. McCully was invited to Captain Rider's estate for fencing practice. Ms. Kelly, had been hired to help rehabilitate Captain Rider, and thought that an exercise that was physically familiar with a friend could prove to benefit and speed up the Captain's recovery. Mr. McCully happily accepted the invitation to practice with his old friend, having not seen him in a number of years. Upon arriving, he jumped right into wanting to practice, not even allowing Captain Rider or Ms. Kelly to tell him that the Captain was blind. Mr. McCully did defeat Captain Rider and when he was told that he was blind, was shocked. He seemed to be over the shock by the time dinner was served. They talked about old times, joked and told stories. Captain Rider retired to his room later that evening and Ms. Kelly was heading to her room when she was approached by Mr. McCully. She did not know his background, but made it clear that she was not interested in him. She then retired to her room, shutting the door a bit harder than usual. She went about her business, and Mr. McCully, not used to being rejected, was angry and entered her room and grabbed her, forcing her down onto the bed. She screamed and a struggle ensued. Captain Rider had heard the door slam and then heard Ms. Kelly scream, and out of instinct grabbed the only weapon close by, his late father's loaded pistol. He then goes to Ms. Kelly's room. Calls out to her, and hearing

signs of a struggle, enters her room, the gun pointed towards the voices. He orders Mr. McCully to vacate the premises. He refuses and Captain Rider fires a shot towards him, missing him. Mr. McCully then leaves, after making an attempt to hit Captain Rider and is shot. Everyone present that night assumed that they would never hear from Mr. McCully again. They were wrong. Mr. McCully does return a few weeks later. He enters the house and ties up Captain Rider's servants, Thomas and Elaine, and then waits for Ms. Kelly and Captain Rider to return and attacks Ms. Kelly. Captain Rider hears the struggle and comes in and saves her, injuring Mr. McCully and getting shot in the process. That ladies and gentlemen, is what actually happened."

"Defense, do you have any witnesses?" the judge asks.

"No sir," Mr. Amberson says.

"Prosecution?" the judge asks

"We call Captain Richard Rider," Mr. Dunhill says. Commander Eagle gets up and pushes Saber in the wheelchair up to the podium where Saber is sworn in. "Captain Rider, would you please tell us what happened on the day in question?"

"Ms. Kelly and I decided to go for a ride out to some of the more remote parts of estate to have a picnic and practice some basic sword moves using sticks; upon returning to the house I took the horses to the stable and Ms. Kelly went inside with the picnic basket and her training stick." Saber states.

"Were you blind at this time?" Mr. Dunhill asks.

"I had limited vision at the time, sir. Anyways, I was tending to the animals when I heard a struggle. I ran into the house, and grabbed a sword that was hanging on the wall."

"Do you typically keep weapons hanging throughout your house, Captain Rider?" Mr. Dunhill asks

"Just that particular sword, it's ancestral, but when I heard the struggle I grabbed it anyway. I came into the sitting room and saw Mr. McCully about to shoot Ms. Kelly, so I struck him with the blunt side of the weapon. At this time, Ms. Kelly grabbed her stick off the floor and knocked the gun out of Mr. McCully's hand. At that point I told Ms. Kelly to call the authorities as I held Mr. McCully at sword point. I suppose that with my limited vision I missed his movements that would have indicated he was about to attack, and he lunged at me, knocking the sunglasses off my face, which with the light in the room, caused me to be fully blinded again. Without thinking, I slashed at him. I had just regained my balance when I heard Mr. McCully cock his gun, I lunged at him without thinking, and that's when his gun went off."

"Is that when you struck him in the ribs with the back of your sword?" Mr. Dunhill asks

"I was discombobulated from being blinded again, so I'm not entirely sure, I remember hearing a loud crack, and then Mr. McCully gasping for air. So I'd say that was more

than likely what happened."

"And did you invite Mr. McCully to your home this time?"

"No, sir. In fact the last time that he was in my home I made him very aware that he was no longer welcome at my estate."

"And is the bullet wound that you suffered on that day is the reason that you are in a wheelchair today?"

"Yes sir, the bullet ripped into my stomach, and I had to have surgery to repair the damage. I am currently undergoing physical therapy to rehabilitate myself to a state where I no longer need the chair."

"Thank you very much." Mr. Dunhill says, "No further questions, your Honor."

"Mr. Amberson?" the judge asks.

"Captain Rider," Mr. Amberson begins, "I understand that you and Mr. McCully grew up together, is that right?"

"That is correct, sir."

"I also understand that the two of you learned to fence from your father, is that correct?"

"Yes, sir it is."

"You and Mr. McCully are friends then?"

"We were friends."

"Were friends?" Mr. Amberson asks "What changed?"

"The initial incident you mentioned in your opening statement, sir."

"Your Honor?" Mr. Amberson asks.

"Captain Rider, please answer the question." the judge says.

"Mr. McCully assaulted and attempted to rape Ms. Kelly." Saber replies.

"Why did you not bring charges against him then?"

"Objection!" Mr. Dunhill yells.

"Over-ruled" the judge says, "Please answer the question, Captain Rider."

"I was well aware of the way Mr. McCully was raised. I didn't think that he would

consider Amanda a servant."

"Amanda, Captain?" Mr. Amberson asks.

"I'm sorry, Ms. Kelly. Her name is Amanda Kelly, sir." Saber replies.

So you say that Mr. McCully attacked Ms. Kelly and threatened you.?"

"Yes sir," Saber replies with a nod.

"So you were aware that Mr. McCully was used to receiving sex from his servants?"

"Yes."

"How do you know this?"

"He told me."

"Did you ever see him have sex with his servants?"

"No, but I did hear noises that many would consider congruent with sex coming from his room and a young maid leave his room shortly after, then upon entering the room saw no one in there other than Mr. McCully."

"Those noises could of been anything."

"I will not deny that, I'm just telling you what I heard."

"Did you ever have sex with one of his servants?"

"Of course not!"

"How about one of your own?"

"Objection!" Mr. Dunhill yells

"Sustained," the judge says. "Mr. Amberson, watch your line of questioning, you step too far I'll have you brought up on charges of contempt."

Mr. Amberson nods, "Of course, Your Honor," he clears his throat. "Now when you and Mr. McCully were friends you visited each other's homes often."

"Yes, but that was long ago. Once I joined Calvary Command I did not see Mr. McCully until the day he came over to fence with me."

"No further questions." Mr. Amberson says and Commander Eagle gets back up and wheels Saber back over to the seats.

"Next, the prosecution would like to call up Ms. Amanda Kelly," Mr. Dunhill says and

Amanda gets up and goes to the stand and is sworn in.

"Ms. Kelly, could you tell us why you were at the Rider estate at all?"

"I was employed to help Saber learn to adjust to being blind." Amanda replies.

"Saber ma'am?"

"I'm sorry sir, it's a nickname that some people use for Captain Rider, is it okay if I use it in court?"

"Mr. Dunhill?" the judge asks.

"I'm fine with it if the defense is fine with it," Mr. Dunhill says

"I have no objection to it, your Honor," Mr. Amberson says

"Now, Ms. Kelly, please tell us about how you were helping Captain Rider."

"Saber could actually function fairly well on his own, but I saw he needed to get his confidence up, so I let him teach me how to ride a horse, and how to fence." Amanda says and blushes a little. "Well, I suppose I still need some work in that department," she adds ruefully, getting a few chuckles from the jury and others in the room.

"Can you tell us about the day in question?"

"It was my idea to go have the picnic, and Saber agreed, anything to be out of the house. So we rode out and ate, then he started fencing drills with me. We practiced a good bit of the day and I suppose lost track of time, when we realized that it was getting late we returned. Saber said he'd take care of the horse and for me to go in and see about maybe getting us some food. I took the empty picnic basket and the stick that I'd been using with me. I didn't want to leave the stick because I'd finally found one that was comfortable in my hand for long periods of time. When I came into the kitchen I noticed that no one was there, which was strange being so close to dinner time. So I started to head back towards the stables to find Saber and that's when I ran into Sean."

"By Sean you mean?"

"Sean McCully, sir," Amanda affirms.

"Just so we are clear."

Amanda nods, "Sean pointed a gun at me and said, 'You're coming with me.' I told him that I wasn't and he threatened to shoot me if I didn't come with him right that moment. He said something along the line of never having had a woman reject him and he wasn't about to now. I went to get past him and he threw me into the wall, dislocating my shoulder. It was at that moment Saber came in and hit him with the sword, distracting him. I grabbed the stick I'd been using and disarmed him. Then

Saber told me to call the authorities, so I left to call the authorities. I called them, that's when I discovered Thomas and Elaine tied up, and untied them. About that time I hear the gunshot and then I hear the police break down the door, and I rush back into the room to find Saber and Sean both bleeding and laying on the floor." she finishes, her voice breaking slightly at the end.

"Thank you, Ms. Kelly" Mr. Dunhill says, "No further questions, your Honor."

"Ms. Amanda Kelly" Mr. Amberson says as he approaches the witness stand, "Please tell us exactly how you got the job assisting Captain Rider?"

"I saw an ad placed by Commander Eagle. I replied and was granted an interview. I came to the interview and said that trying to teach someone how to live while they are blind might be an interesting experience."

"So you had no previous experience?"

"Not professionally. I did help my father cope after a stroke."

"Did you tell them this?"

"Yes."

"Did you claim to have any professional experience?"

"No."

"Did Mr. McCully attempt to sexually assault you?"

"Yes."

"Why didn't you press charges?"

"Saber apologized to me, said he'd forgotten that Sean had been raised to view servants the way that he does, I stated that I'm not a servant. And Saber said he knows that. But apparently Sean didn't, and he thought that he could get what he wanted from Saber's servants. So I agreed to drop it, as Saber told him never to come back. I'm regretting it now, if I'd pressed charges maybe he wouldn't have come back to the estate with a gun."

"Mr. McCully claims that you are and I quote, "A backstabbing, no good gold digging whore." How do you respond to this?"

"Objection!" Mr. Dunhill yells.

"Sustained," the judge says. "Mr. Amberson, watch your language, this is a court room."

"Let's just get to the main point then. Mr. McCully claims that you are only hanging

around Saber to get his money from him and he came that day to help his friend not lose his fortune."

"I'll have you know that I have no need to work for money, sir," Amanda replies. "I've anticipated that this might come up, so I've taken the liberty of collecting some financial documents to show you the state of my affairs. Ms. Elaine, if you would please," Amanda requests and Elaine gets up and brings a folder to Mr. Dunhill who examines it for a second then hands it to the judge who examines it for a second before handing it to Mr. Amberson. "You'll also notice that in that folder are all the checks that Calvary Command sent to me for helping with Saber, you'll notice that none of them have been cashed. After my first day trying to help Saber I decided that there was no way I was going to be paid for helping him, especially when most of the time he was teaching me."

Mr. Amberson puts the folder down, "Are you and Captain Rider in a relationship?"

"Objection, your Honor," Mr. Dunhill says. "Relevance?"

The judge looks at Mr. Amberson for a minute, "I'll allow it, but this had better be good."

"Yes we are," Amanda states simply.

"How long have you two been in a relationship?"

"Objection! Not relevant at all!"

"Mr. Amberson, you're starting to annoy me," the judge warns.

"Ok, how about this, were you in a relationship with Captain Rider on the day of said attack?"

"No, sir. We were not officially in a relationship at that time." Amanda replies.

"You say you weren't officially in a relationship, what's that mean?"

"Well, we spent a lot of time together, him teaching me new things and all, but we weren't actually a couple, even though sometimes it felt like it."

"I see," Mr. Amberson says, "So why did you turn my client down?"

"Excuse me?" Amanda asks.

"Why didn't you have sex with my client if you weren't dating Captain Rider?"

"Objection, your Honor!" Mr. Dunhill yells.

"That's it. I'm bringing you up on charges of contempt of court Mr. Amberson, there is no reason to ask questions like that," the judge states.

"Sure there is." Sean stands up and yells, "That filthy no good lying whore came onto me, and then cried rape."

The Judge bangs his gavel "Order in the court! Defense, I suggest that you quiet your client," He turns to Amanda, "Now Ms. Kelly, you may step down."

"I'm not done with her yet," Mr. Amberson says.

"Oh you're done son, you just don't know it yet," the judge says firmly. He turns to the jury, "Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, you have heard witness testimony, and the cross examinations given from both the prosecution and the defense lawyers. By law, anything that was deemed objectionable is considered inadmissible as evidence for you to base any decision you make in the status of the defendant. Please take due process and as is your duty, come to a unanimous decision on the fate of Mr. McCully. You must decide whether he is guilty or not guilty of each of the following charges: trespassing, kidnapping, assault, assault on officer, assault with a deadly weapon, attempted murder of a civilian, and attempted murder of an officer. With these instructions, I send you to go and deliberate your verdicts. You may go begin your deliberations."

"My closing statement, your Honor," Mr. Amberson pleads.

"I don't want to hear another word from you, Mr. Amberson," the judge says and bangs his gavel, the jury is escorted to the deliberation chambers.

Several hours pass. Saber, Amanda, Commander Eagle, Thomas, and Elaine are all sitting in his office awaiting word from the jury.

"I wish we would just hear something already," Amanda says shifting in her seat.

Saber takes her hand and smiles at her impatience, "I'd rather the jury take their time. I don't want Sean having a chance to appeal the decision on basis of bias. I wouldn't want you to have to go through that again, Amanda." he says.

"It took all I had not to lose my temper with his damned defense lawyer," Amanda says coldly. "He seriously thought Sean was in the right."

"I saw the way they both looked at you, Ms. Kelly. They are from the same breed of people," Commander Eagle states. "I am glad you kept yourself in check. There were a couple of times I would have loved to have said something."

"You had to remain impartial, sir," Saber states. He sighs and stretches a bit in his seat.

"Are you all right?" Amanda asks concerned.

"I'm fine. Just need to move a little," he replies.

"I'm grateful that Thomas or I didn't have to testify. I probably would have told that

lawyer off," Elaine says getting a chuckle from the others.

A knock at the door jolts them to attention and a soldier comes in, "The jury has decided a verdict. You should return to the courtroom now."

They all get ready and return to the courtroom. Sean is there and he turns and glares at them when they enter and head to their seats. Amanda makes a point of not looking at him. The judge comes in and they are all allowed to sit. Saber reaches over and takes Amanda's hand. Noticing she's shaking he squeezes it gently, she returns the gesture and tries to calm herself.

"Has the jury come to a decision on the charges facing Mr. Sean McCully?"

"We have, your Honor," The jury chairman states and hands an envelope to a soldier waiting at the edge of the jury box.

The soldier takes the envelope to the judge and hands it to him. He studies it for a moment, reading it carefully before setting it down, "Mr. McCully, please rise while the verdict is read." Sean and his lawyer stand up and the judge reads the paper, "On the charges of trespassing, the defendant, Sean McCully is found guilty. On the charges of kidnapping, the defendant Sean McCully is found guilty. On the charges of assault, the defendant Sean McCully is found guilty. On the charge of assault on officer, the defendant Sean McCully is found guilty. On the charge of assault with a deadly weapon, the defendant is found guilty. On the charge of attempted murder of a civilian, the defendant is found guilty. On the charge of attempted murder of an officer, the defendant Sean McCully is found guilty." Sean starts to say something but the judge bangs the gavel down to stop him. "Thank you, ladies and gentlemen of the jury. This completes your service to this court and this matter. Mr. McCully, you are to be held in the brig at Calvary Command until I decide on your sentencing. Take him away," The judge says to the waiting officers.

Sean turns and glares at Amanda. She stands defiantly not showing any other emotion. He starts to say something but is stopped by the officers who come and handcuff him and start to lead him from the courtroom. "This isn't over," he mutters angrily as he passes them.

Amanda starts to reply, but Saber places a hand on her arm and shakes his head, so she says nothing. They watch him leave, and the lawyers pack up and start to leave the courtroom. Mr. Amberson stops in front of them and looks Amanda over, "You had a judge on your side today, Ms. Kelly. I will be appealing this outcome. Next time I won't be so nice."

Saber tightens his grip on her arm, telling her not to say anything. Amanda turns away from Mr. Amberson and towards Saber. "Are we free to go then?" she asks trying to control her anger.

Commander Eagle nods, "Yes. Let's go back to my office, and then I will see about arrangements to take all of you home." They nod and a short time later, they are sitting in his office. "So, I assume you wish to return as soon as possible?" the

commander asks.

"I would, sir," Elaine replies. "I don't like being away longer than necessary."

They return to Saber's estate as quickly as possible, much to everyone's delight. They walk in and smell food cooking. "You know, that smells quite good," Saber says

"Shall we see who is cooking?" Commander Eagle asks

They go into the kitchen and find Colt and Robin cooking. "Well, now here's a surprise," Amanda says "Never pictured you as the cook."

"I'll have you know that when I was a bounty hunter I found the skill of cooking came in handy an awful lot," Colt says, "And I'm teaching Robin."

"Wait..." Saber says, "You're teaching Robin something Colt?" he asks amused.

"Yeah, you got a problem with that?" Colt retorts defensively.

"No, not at all, just found it interesting," Saber says forcing a neutral tone.

"You're not the only one who can teach his girl something you know."

Amanda starts to make a remark, but thinks better of it and stops herself.

"You know what I mean," Colt replies sensing her unspoken objection.

"I'm actually quite pleased that someone else is able to cook., Elaine says.

"I made the mistake of letting April try to cook breakfast," Colt says. "I'll buy you a new pan."

"It can't possibly have been that bad," Saber says.

"The pan is in the trash," Colt replies with a nod towards the trash.

"Elaine?"

Elaine goes over to the trash and looks into it and turns pale, Thomas rushes to her and grabs her before she passes out. "I assure you sir, it's that bad," Thomas says dumbfounded.

"Is Elaine okay?" Saber asks obviously worried.

"She fainted. I believe that may have been her favorite pan," Thomas says in shock.

"I'll replace it Saber," Colt says apologetically. "I shouldn't have let her cook."

"That's not necessary, Colt," Saber says. "Elaine can go and buy a new one. It'll give her

an excuse to go shopping."

Colt chuckles, "If you're sure," Saber nods. "All right. Well, y'all get comfortable, dinner be in about 30 minutes."

"I could use a hand with Elaine," Thomas says, "I'd like to lay her down in our room."

"Oh Thomas I'm sorry," Saber says, "Amanda, do you think you could run up and get Fireball?"

"I'm right here," Fireball says coming into the kitchen. "Is everything ok?"

"Elaine seems to have passed out after seeing April's attempt at cooking, you don't suppose you could help Thomas get her to their room?" Saber asks

"Of course," Fireball goes and helps Thomas get Elaine to the room.

"I'd like to go change out of this dress," Amanda says.

"You know that sounds like a good idea," Saber says. "Don't want to ruin our good clothes." They head up to their rooms and change into everyday clothes, by the time they return the food is ready. They take their seats and Colt and Robin serve up the food.

As they eat. "You know Colt, this is really good," April says, "Where'd you learn to cook like this?"

"It's not important," Colt says with a blush.

"Robin, do you know?" April asks.

"He won't tell me either," she replies with a shrug.

"I know," Commander Eagle says. "It was in his Dossier." Colt gives him a look.

"Why would something like that be in his dossier?" April asks curious.

"Commander, you have no business telling them," Colt protests.

"Then perhaps you should, because you know April will eventually get me to tell," he says trying not to smile.

"Dang it," Colt sighs, "Fine, it was one of my marks."

"Mark?" Amanda asks confused.

"One of the people I brought in for a bounty," Colt explains. "I used to be a bounty hunter."

"Why would a mark teach you to cook?" April asks.

"She didn't have much choice," Colt says "I was chasing her for bail jumping after she was arrested for killing her husband. I finally tracked her down to this cabin in the mountains, on this little planet, can't even remember it's name now. It was winter, and I guess she saw me coming, so she ran, and fired at me, and I fired back, the resulting reverberations caused an avalanche, which broke her leg. I had no choice but to take her back to the cabin and tend to her. By that time it was night fall, and there was no way I could get back to my Bronco Buster until morning, so I bunked down for the night. I woke up the next morning we were snowed in. The mark couldn't cook, cause she couldn't stand, so she told me what to do, and I made the meals. We were in that cabin for almost a month, you'd be amazed how much you can learn in that amount of time. When the snow melted I got her back to my Bronco Buster and got my bounty. I had to tell them everything that happened, to explain her condition. I suppose that's why it's in my dossier."

"And why is it just now that you're telling me that you learned to cook by spending a month alone with a wanted woman?" Robin asks obviously hurt.

Colt blushes heavily, "I was rather embarrassed."

"Why?" Robin asks suspiciously.

"I have no problem with having had learned to cook, it's just how I learned that bothers me," He replies. "Learning from an enemy. It just don't seem natural."

"If it means living or dying, sometimes you adapt, Colt," Fireball says. "I'd be proud that I'd learned. It doesn't matter how. If anyone asks, just say you learned it on the job and leave it at that. Unless you're hiding something else."

"No. I'm not hiding anything else. I did nothing improper with her, if that's what you're meaning, Fireball. It was strictly business," Colt says seriously. He turns to Robin, "I swear that's it."

Robin relaxes a little, "You should have just told me, Colt. I wouldn't have been so upset had you just been honest about it. I felt like you were hiding something far worse than that."

"I was just embarrassed that a woman I barely knew had to be the one to teach me. I'm sorry," Colt replies.

The rest of the meal passes with chatter about the trial and how everything went. Shortly afterwards, Amanda excuses herself and heads up to her room.

"Hey, is Amanda okay? She left in a bit of a hurry," April asks.

"Perhaps the stress of the trial is getting to her," Commander Eagle offers.

Saber nods, "I should go and check on her," he gets up and heads to her room,

knocking softly on the door. "Amanda?" he says waiting for a reply. After a minute, he knocks again, still no reply so he reaches for the handle and the door opens, so he enters the room. "Amanda?" he asks as he enters and closes the door behind him. He doesn't get a reply, but hears her on her bed. He walks over to the side of her bed and can hear her trying to stop crying. "Are you all right?" he asks, carefully sitting down on the edge of the bed.

Amanda takes in a deep breath trying to calm herself. "I'll be okay," she manages to whisper. She is facing down on the bed, her back to him.

He reaches out and tries to lay his hand on her arm and she flinches. "Did I hurt you?" he asks concerned as he pulls away.

"Don't worry about it." she replies softly as she gradually rolls onto her back and wiping her eyes., "I'm sorry I took off like I did."

"It's not like you to just take off without a word, so I came to see about you," he replies, the concern evident in his voice.

"I am just really sore and feeling a bit stressed. I'll be okay in a day or so," she replies weakly.

He brushes a hand gently across her cheek, "Can I do anything to help? Even if it's leaving you alone for a few days, I'll do it. Whatever you ask."

She reaches up and touches his hand, "I don't want you to leave me alone, Saber. I just..." she sighs and slowly sits up, and rests her head on Saber's shoulder. "I just feel like I'm overwhelmed I guess. I need to find a way to get past the whole thing with Sean. I just don't know how to do that."

"How would you feel about leaving here for a few days?" Saber asks quietly, placing his arm gently around her.

"It might help." she replies.

"I just don't really have any suggestions. I don't know where to tell you to go," he replies.

"My place, I suppose. I really should go and put my financial records back and make sure everything is okay there. It's not as big as here, so I don't keep anyone to run the household in my absence."

Saber nods, "You can spend as long as you need to."

"You're not coming?" she asks.

"I thought you wanted to get away from everything that reminded you of the whole thing with Sean?"

"I don't really want to be away from you, Saber. Just maybe not be here or at Calvary Command for a few days. Not having to worry about someone asking me about the whole situation. I'd like it if you came with me. I would feel safer having you around."

"When do you want to leave?" he asks running his fingers through her hair and then resting his hand on the bed beside her.

"Early tomorrow? Before anyone gets up. That way we don't have to explain things to anyone," she offers.

He nods, "You should probably leave Elaine a note. Either on your dresser or mine. We should pack light, so we can just take Steed, I suppose. A small bag for each of us."

"If we're going to my place, then only you need to pack. I have things I can wear at my house," she states. "Oh, what should I say in the note?"

"That's true. As for the note, tell her the truth. We took off to get away from the stress and we will call in a few days."

Amanda nods, "All right. I guess it's late enough no one will bother me now. Do you need some help packing?" He shakes his head. "Then why don't you go pack and try and get a little bit of rest. It's almost eleven now, so how about we meet about four in the morning? So that way we can both try and rest before we leave. I'll get the note ready and bring it to your room."

"That sounds good. I'll pack and lay down for a bit. I'll see you in a few hours," he stands up and heads to his room to get ready.