

The Price of Peace

Von chelle76

Kapitel 25: Discoveries

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Chapter 24: Discoveries

"Saber, the others will be arriving any time. Are you coming out anytime soon?" Elaine calls from the bedroom door.

Begrudgingly Saber comes to the door and opens it. "Amanda is almost ready. I'm waiting for her so we can come down together," he replies.

Elaine nods, "How is she today?" she asks quietly.

"She seems all right. She had a nightmare again last night, but after she calmed down she slept peacefully," he replies.

"How are you doing?" Elaine asks.

"I've got the darker glasses on, but with them I can still see fairly well. Not as clearly as before, but perhaps it will come and go a little. I've still got more vision than I expected to have after the accident," Saber replies as Amanda comes up behind him.

"Did you think we weren't coming down, Elaine?" Amanda asks smiling weakly.

"I came to see if you were up to company, Lady Amanda. I know you've not felt your best since you've come home."

"I'm doing a bit better than last night or even the last few days. I even felt the baby move some this morning," Amanda replies as Saber goes back into the room to finish getting ready.

Elaine smiles broadly, "That is exciting, and good to know. After everything that has happened, I'm sure that makes you feel better knowing your little one is active."

Amanda nods, "Yes, it does. I'm just feeling a bit more tired, but I know that part of that is from not sleeping well." She looks to see where Saber is and notices he's in the dressing room, "I am a bit worried about Saber though. His headaches have returned. He says not to worry, but I can't help it," she says in a hushed voice.

"Perhaps I'll get Thomas to talk with him later. Maybe he can get him to be checked by the doctor," Elaine replies quietly. The doorbell sounds and Elaine turns towards the stairs. "I'll tell them that you'll be down shortly. We'll talk more later, okay?" Amanda nods and Elaine heads down the stairs.

Amanda returns to their room just as Saber comes from the dressing room, "Are you sure you're up to seeing people today?" she asks.

Saber nods, "The headache isn't as bad as it was earlier, Love. With the darker glasses I should be fine. I can still see fairly clearly, so I'm not too worried about it. Besides, it's been nearly a month since we've seen everyone, it'll be nice to see them when no one is currently fighting. Besides, you're starting to show a bit now, so that should make it a little more real to them," he says as he wraps his arms around her from behind, placing his hands on her stomach.

She leans into his embrace and relaxes against him, "Pretty soon we'll be due for another ultrasound. I'm hoping you can still see well enough to see the images clearly."

"So do I," he replies quietly and turns her so that she's facing him and kisses her lightly then reluctantly releases her with a sigh. "I suppose we should get down there."

"Aye. Don't want them waiting too long, Colt might come up with some sort of remark," she replies as she heads for the stairs.

He follows her and they go down to the sitting area where the others are waiting.

"Morning, you two," Colt says with a grin.

"Good morning," they reply as they take a seat on the last empty seats.

"So, how are things at Calvary Command?" Saber asks casually.

"Not too bad. We are in the process of upgrading the current Bismarck ship and creating a new version of the Tirpitz. After a lot of grueling hours, we decided to come and annoy you," April says.

"Since you've returned here, instead of staying at Calvary Command to recuperate," Colt adds.

"I couldn't be there any longer. Not after everything," Amanda says quietly.

"Also, those military beds are rather uncomfortable at times," Saber quips.

"You're not the one that's pregnant," Amanda says with a smirk.

"I do have some bad news," April says, in a serious tone.

"What's that?" Saber asks.

"We finally got the invoices from that convoy that the Outriders ransacked," April replies.

"Why didn't you tell me?" Fireball asks.

"I wanted to tell everyone at once," April replies.

"Well, what was on it?" Colt asks impatiently.

April sighs looking exceedingly nervous, "Explosives."

"What sort of explosives?" Saber asks.

"High-power bombs," April replies.

"Why would a convy have those?" Fireball asks.

"They are relics of an old war, and were being taken to be destroyed. They may not even be any good."

"But there's a chance that they may be fully effective?" Saber inquires.

April nods.

"How powerful of bombs are we talking about here?" Colt asks nervously.

"Also how many?" Saber asks.

"They're old nuclear warheads, and enough to disintegrate Calvary Command, or a colony."

"NUKES!" Colt exclaims. "I thought that those were out-lawed by the New Frontier Securities Council years ago!"

"They were," April says

"Why weren't they destroyed years ago?" Saber asks.

"The then President of the former United States hid them, and then the secret was passed down from President to President until the current head of the New Frontier Alliance decided that they needed to be destroyed. The convoy was on it's way to the last nuclear weapon disposal site still in existence," April replies.

"Who knew what that convoy was carrying when it was attacked?" Saber asks.

"Why?" April asks.

"Well, it is now evident that that convoy was attacked purposely." Saber says and the other gasp. "I believe that there's a traitor inside Calvary Command."

"Impossible!" April says in disbelief.

"How could that happen?" Colt asks.

"It's possible, that in a rush to get the amount of soldiers necessary to fight against the Outriders before we defeated Nemesis, that somebody slipped in and was probably in training when we defeated Nemesis. Then they waited until Jesse showed himself again."

"You're talking about a sleeper agent?" April asks. Saber nods. "But that could be anyone," April says exasperated.

"We can limit the suspect pool down considerably if we can find out who all knew what was on that convoy before it was attacked," Saber replies.

"My father should be able to get us that information," April says. "Want me to go and call him and ask him to send us the information?"

"No. Any call we make could be recorded or intercepted," Saber says.

"Ask him to come here. That way we can talk with him without the risk of unwanted people hearing," Amanda suggests.

"Yes, he should be able to access anything we would need remotely," Saber adds.

April nods, "All right. I'll go and call him then," she says getting up and pulling out her phone and walking out of the room.

Saber sighs, "I sincerely hope that I'm wrong about this," he says quietly.

"We all hope you're wrong," Fireball replies. He turns and looks to Amanda, "So, how are you feeling?" he asks trying to find a more pleasant conversation.

"Well, for the most part, not too bad. I'm still having nightmares, though not quite as frequently. I've not really felt sick, just a bit more tired than usual," she replies.

"And you've had a bit more of an appetite," Saber adds with a smile.

Amanda laughs, "True. I could probably out eat Colt right now."

Fireball laughs. "That I'd like to see!" he states.

Colt shakes his head and laughs.

April comes back into the room and sits down, "Father should be here in a couple of hours. He might bring Dr. Izumi with him."

"Why would he do that?" Saber and Amanda ask at the same time.

"Because I used you as a scapegoat, Saber. I told him that you're wearing the darker glasses again and that I was concerned. So he said he'd call Dr. Izumi and see if he wants to come with him to check you out here. Otherwise, he might make you return there for a check up."

"Well, at least if someone was listening they shouldn't suspect anything. It sounds like a valid reason for a visit," Saber says, not sounding too thrilled.

"Hey, I was thinking fast, and didn't want it to seem suspicious. I noticed the darker glasses and said the first thing that popped into my head, that would seem like a reason to get him here without rousing suspicion," April says.

"I know, April. It was a good ruse. I'm sure Amanda will feel better having my eyes checked anyways," Saber says.

Amanda nods, "Yes, it will make me feel a bit better," she replies.

Elaine comes out from the kitchen, "Would any of you like something to eat?"

"I could eat something, Elaine," Amanda replies.

Colt goes to say something, but the look from Amanda stops him.

Elaine comes back a few minutes later with a cart with tea and some small cakes on small plates. "Lunch won't be for a little longer, so I brought this out for those that would like some," Elaine says handing Amanda a plate and placing a cup of tea in front of her and one in front of Saber on the small coffee table. The others each take a plate and she passes out tea before returning to the kitchen.

They chat and talk about things for a while when the doorbell rings and Thomas goes to answer it. He returns a couple minutes later followed by Commander Eagle and Dr. Izumi. "Good afternoon, everyone," Commander Eagle says as he enters.

"Good afternoon, sir," they all reply.

Thomas returns with a couple more chairs and the commander and Dr. Izumi take their seats.

"So, Captain Rider, I hear that you're having a bit more trouble?"

Saber nods slightly, "Yes, Dr. Izumi that is correct. About a week ago, I started with the headaches again. I've also been a bit more sensitive to light the last couple of days. I

can still see fairly clearly, but it is becoming a bit of a nuisance."

Dr. Izumi nods, "Would you object to coming with me to your room, so I can do a few tests?"

Saber shakes his head, "No sir. That would be fine. I'd much rather remain here."

"Very well then, let's head upstairs, shall we?" he replies and he and Saber head upstairs.

Amanda watches them go and sighs.

"Hey, I'm sure it's nothing," April says before turning to the commander. "We need to talk to you father, but we couldn't risk doing it over the phone."

The commander immediately tenses, "Why? Is there something more seriously wrong?"

"Well, you could say that," April says hesitantly. He gives her a look and she takes a breath and continues, "We fear that we may have a traitor within Calvary Command," she says getting a look of shock then anger from her father.

"That is an extremely serious accusation, April," he says trying to keep his anger in check.

"Yes, I know it is, but once we discovered what was on that convoy that was attacked and then stripped of its contents, it became obvious to us that the most likely thing is that the Outriders wanted what was being transported."

Commander Eagle looks around the room to the others, trying to read their features, he notices that each show anger and fear. "So what exactly was on the convoy, April? I've not yet read the reports. I intended to do that today before this trip came up," he asks.

"Old nuclear warheads," she replies quietly.

He doesn't even try to hid his shock, "I thought all of the nukes had been disposed of years ago," he says in disbelief. "How many are we talking about?"

"Enough to kill millions. Easily decimate Calvary Command and probably a colony or two," April replies. The commander shakes his head, "Father, we need to know who all knew what that convoy was carrying. But we can't let on that we're trying to find a traitor. That is why I had you come here and not say something over the phone. It could be anyone at this point."

"So there is nothing wrong with Saber?" he asks.

"Um, actually sir, that was just a convenient solution to get you here. He has been having more trouble recently with headaches and such, so when April used him, I was

relieved. He's a bit stubborn and didn't want to return to be checked out," Amanda says quietly.

Commander Eagle smiles slightly, "I know he can be rather stubborn, so I suppose some good will come of this trip. I'll need to hook up my laptop and do some digging to find out who all knew what was on those ships."

"Well, we still have the basics here from the when the command center was set up, so you are welcome to hook up where ever you wish. If you would like some privacy, we can set you up in a bedroom upstairs," Amanda replies.

"That would probably be for the best, Amanda. The fewer people who know why I'm actually here, the better. Do not mention this to Dr. Izumi. We can find a way to stall his return if we need to. Even if we have to have him give you a check up as well," Commander Eagle replies.

Amanda nods and stands up, "I'll go and get Thomas and ask him to make sure a room is ready for you." He nods and she heads towards the kitchen.

A short time later, Elaine comes down followed by Amanda. "Your room is ready, Commander. Would you like to join us for lunch shortly, or would you prefer I bring you something upstairs?" Elaine asks as Amanda goes and sits back down.

"Did you go and check on Saber?" April asks.

"I was going to but I heard he and Dr. Izumi talking, so I didn't want to interrupt," Amanda replies. "I just hope everything is all right. I don't mind if he can't see. I know he's capable of living with out it, I just hope that there isn't something else wrong," Amanda says quietly.

"I'm sure if there was something bad going on, they would have called you up to hear about it," April says coming over and sitting beside her. "I'm sure it's just the pregnancy making you more nervous right now," April adds trying to comfort her.

Amanda nods slightly, "I'm sure you're right," she replies unconvinced.

"Amanda, can you come up here for a few minutes, please?" Saber says as he comes down the stairs.

She casts a nervous glance to April who pats her arm gently to reassure her, "I'm coming," she replies as she gets up and they head back up the stairs.

They make their way up the steps and Saber sees her uneasiness, "Amanda, do you not feel well?" he asks concerned.

"I'm fine, just tired," she replies, not daring to look at him.

He sighs, but decides against pushing her to talk and they enter the bedroom where Dr. Izumi is waiting in a chair.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Rider. How are you feeling?" he asks as she sits down giving him a nervous glance.

"I'm all right, doctor," she replies. "The dreams are less frequent than they had been."

Dr. Izumi nods and studies her closely, "Is there something on your mind? You seem to be rather tense."

Amanda swallows and takes a breath, "Just things, it's nothing to be concerned with. I'm fine," she replies quickly.

He smiles and shakes his head, "You're worried about Captain Rider, aren't you?" he asks.

She nods slightly, "Yes, of course."

"Don't be too worried. I think this issue will be an intermittent problem. I don't feel that he will lose his vision completely again. He can still see rather well, he is just a bit more sensitive to light and it makes him have headaches. I'll just order him a darker set of glasses, then he should be fairly normal."

Amanda allows herself to relax in relief, "Thank you," she manages to say.

Dr. Izumi smiles, "Don't worry, I'd tell you if something was wrong. I actually wanted to do a brief check up on you, if you would allow it. I brought a portable ultrasound machine, so we can see and hear your child, if you would like."

Amanda smiles, "I wouldn't mind," she replies. "You are staying in here, right?" she asks Saber.

He nods, "You couldn't kick me out of here, Love," he replies with a smile and kisses her cheek. "Amanda, if there was something wrong with me, I swear, you'll be the first person that I will tell, okay?"

"Okay."

"Now, let's get you to lay on the bed and I'll set up the machine," he begins setting up the ultrasound machine while Amanda settles onto the bed.

Saber goes into their bathroom and brings a couple of towels and sits down beside her as she raises her shirt and repositions her pants so that the doctor can perform the ultrasound.

After a few minutes, they hear the rapid sound of the heartbeat and start to see an image on the screen. "That looks different than the last time," Amanda comments sounding a bit uneasy.

Dr. Izumi goes slowly with the probe and has a look of disbelief on his face, "How

could I have missed it before?" he mutters under his breath.

"Is there something wrong, Dr. Izumi?" Saber asks trying to remain calm given the doctor's facial expression.

"Well, not really," he replies slowly as he continues to rub the probe across her abdomen.

"Then why do you look so..."

"Because Captain, I think we may have to alter the due date a bit."

"Why?" Saber asks.

"Because apparently you are having twins," Dr. Izumi replies.

Saber and Amanda stare at him in shock as they process the information, then slowly, they turn and study the ultrasound screen. "Twins?" Amanda finally manages to whisper.

Dr. Izumi chuckles, "Yes, twins. However, that means you aren't quite as far along as we thought you were, Mrs. Rider."

"Um, okay, then how far along am I?"

"Judging by the measurements I'm seeing today, I'd say you're about twelve weeks now. Not the approximate sixteen weeks that we had figured before."

"How...how did it not show up before now?" Amanda asks.

"Well, it's actually not that uncommon an occurrence. Usually, in the case of twins, one of them isn't noticed until around the end of the first trimester. It's when they really start becoming more of an individual. I could tell that there were two the moment I heard the heartbeats today. Before, they were more in sync, now they are totally separate. It is probably why you are noticing an increase in appetite and feeling a bit more tired than most women do at this point in their pregnancies."

Amanda lays there a couple of minutes, processing the information and dares a glance at Saber, who has yet to say anything and is just staring at the ultrasound screen. "Saber, are you okay?" she finally asks.

Slowly he nods and looks away from the screen, "I'm fine, Love. I just can't believe...twins. I don't remember ever hearing of any in my family before. But there it is, plain as day before us," he says quietly and smiles at her.

She smiles back weakly and nods, "So it is. What do we do? How do we tell everyone this bit of news?"

Saber chuckles, "Well, given how things have been lately, I think they would welcome

the distraction."

Dr. Izumi hits a couple of buttons and soon a group of pictures come out and he hands them to Amanda and Saber, "Here you go. The first pictures of your little ones," he says smiling. "Now they won't think you're playing some kind of joke on them, like when you decided to get married."

Saber chuckles, "Yes, I suppose this would be irrefutable proof, wouldn't it? I can already imagine Colt's reaction."

Amanda groans as she sits up, "Just make sure he's not eating or drinking anything when we tell him." She shakes her head smiling as she turns to sit on the edge of the bed.

Dr. Izumi laughs, "Yes, please don't kill him when you spread the word. We may yet need him from what I've heard. At least until the new ship is completed."

"Aye. I just hope it's completed before it's needed. It's been too quiet for too long since the last attack," Saber says quietly, the feeling of dread returning.

Amanda stands up and stretches a bit. "I suppose we should head back downstairs," she says as they hear a knock on the door.

Saber get up and goes to answer it. Opening it, he finds Elaine on the other side.

"I was coming to see if you would prefer to have your lunch up here or with the others," Elaine says quietly.

"We were just about to come down," he replies. "Would you mind coming in for a minute, please?"

Elaine nods and Saber steps back, allowing her to enter. She comes into the room and walks over to where Amanda is on the bed and looks at her nervously.

Saber follows her back over to where Amanda is and places a hand on her shoulder, "Please Elaine, sit down," he says quietly.

Elaine does as requested and looks between them, trying to read their expressions.

"There's nothing wrong, Elaine, but we thought that you should be the first to know," Saber says handing her the pictures.

Elaine takes them and studies them for a moment, a look of realization comes across her face and she looks first to Saber, who nods, and then to Amanda, who smiles at her and nods. "Twins? You're having twins?" she asks, the excitement evident in her voice. They both nod and she smiles, "So does that mean you're having them sooner or later than you thought?"

"Probably later, Ma'am," Dr. Izumi says. "She's actually only about twelve weeks along,

as opposed to the nearly sixteen that we thought based off of the hormonal levels of her blood."

Elaine nods, "Well, I am excited. Although I wish I had been here to see your faces," she adds amused. "Thank you both for telling me aside from the others." She gets up and hugs both of them and returns the pictures. "I suppose it was quite a shock for the two of you, wasn't it?"

They both nod, "Yes, it was. I thought the doctor was joking at first," Saber replies.

Amanda laughs, "I thought that perhaps you had put him up to it, Saber. I thought it was all a joke until I saw your face."

Saber smiles, "I would never joke about something like that, Love. At least not with you."

Elaine smiles and stands up, "I'll head on down and get lunch on the table. I'll let the others know that you will be down shortly."

"Thank you, Elaine," Saber says and she heads out the door. He turns to Dr. Izumi, "You are staying to eat with us, aren't you?"

Dr. Izumi looks up from packing his equipment and nods slightly, "I don't see where I really have a choice. I don't think Commander Eagle will be ready to return to Calvary Command so soon, so if you have enough food, I would love to eat with you."

"Of course we do, doctor. Leave your things and I'll have someone take them down for you. Come on down with us."

Dr. Izumi nods, "Very well then, let's head down then."

The trio head down the stairs and enter the sitting room. The others look up at them nervously. "Everything is fine," Saber says noticing their looks. He sees them visibly relax and then realizes that Commander Eagle is not in the room. "Where's the commander?" he asks.

"He's in his room doing some research. He'll join us later," April replies just as Elaine comes in and announces that lunch is ready.

They all eat and after lunch return to the sitting room just as Commander Eagle comes down, a serious expression on his face. April looks up at him expectantly. He comes and takes a seat and looks between everyone before turning to Dr. Izumi, "Dr. Izumi, I have decided that I will stay here for a few days. I think I need a bit of a break, and it is a lot more restful here, than back in my office. Perhaps here I can get more work done without interruption. I have asked Thomas to take you back to the ship at our outpost. There will be a pilot there waiting for you whenever you wish to head back."

Dr. Izumi nods, "I would like to head on back rather soon, I do have rounds to make and I need to get the lab going on some new glasses for Captain Rider, as well as

update his and Mrs. Rider's medical records."

"Well, let Thomas know when you wish to leave, and we will make sure you get to the outpost," Saber says.

Dr. Izumi stands up, "Where would I find Thomas? I think I would like to head on, although I do wish to thank you for lunch."

"I am right here, doctor," Thomas says. "Are you ready to go, sir?" Dr. Izumi nods and Thomas leads him out to the car and they leave for the outpost.

"So..." the commander begins as he studies Saber for a moment, "How did you come out?"

"All things considered, not too bad, sir. The headaches will evidently be an intermittent problem, but is from the light sensitivity, that may be an ongoing issue. However, that is easy enough to deal with. I can still see fairly well, so he is just getting me another pair of darker glasses that start at this tint and become darker outdoors. He thinks that is our best solution. I am happy with it."

The commander nods, "I am glad that things are not getting worse again for you."

"If everything was okay, why did you ask Amanda to come up to talk with her?" Colt asks.

Saber ventures a glance to Amanda who nods slightly, "Well, he wanted to do another check up on Amanda while he was here. That's all."

"Then why did you look to her before you answered, is something wrong?" April asks looking between the two of them.

Saber chuckles, "No, nothing is wrong. The doctor did learn that she isn't quite as far along as he initially thought, but that is nothing to be concerned about," Saber replies. "He did give us some nice pictures to keep though." He takes the pictures and passes each person one of the pictures and waits for a reaction, taking Amanda's hand.

They all study the pictures in their hands for a minute before Colt looks up in disbelief, "No way! This has to be a joke!"

"It's no joke, Cowboy," Amanda says. "That's why he had to change the due date. My hormone levels were correct, but not knowing what we know now, skewed the time frame."

Colt shakes his head and Commander Eagle looks up and smiles, "I bet this was quite a shock."

"That's a mild way of putting it, sir," Saber says.

Commander Eagle chuckles, "And a welcome distraction for me from less pleasant

situations," he adds grimly.

"I take it you have the list then?" Saber asks, getting a nod in reply.

"Time out. I still don't know what is going on with you two!" Fireball says exasperated.

"They're having twins," Colt says as if it's the most obvious thing in the world. "Can't you see that from the picture?"

"I've never seen an ultrasound picture before. I didn't know," Fireball quips.

The realization of what Colt said hits him and April at the same time, "Twins?" they both ask in shock.

Amanda smiles and nods, "Yeah. Talk about a shock."

"So how far along are you?" the commander asks.

"About twelve weeks, as opposed to the sixteen weeks that we thought I was this morning," Amanda replies.

The commander nods, "So it was even more dangerous for you when you went out that last time than you thought it was."

"Aye, so it was," Amanda replies quietly. "So, how long is the list, sir?" Amanda asks trying to take the attention back to the present situation.

"Well, not very long," he replies. "General Whitehawk, the crew of the Tirpitz knew, their back up crew, and the crews of the convoys knew. The convoy crews were all killed when they were attacked, so that unfortunately leaves the Tirpitz crew and their back up members as our prime suspects."

Saber sighs, "I thought that all of them had background checks?"

"They did. I've even gone back over everything and I can find nothing that flags any of them, nor any of the other Tirpitz candidates." He looks around to the people before him and sighs, "I am open to any ideas that you might have to help catch the traitor or traitors."

"Suppose we send out another convoy of weapons?" Saber suggests.

"But then if they get it, we're in even more trouble," Colt argues.

"I didn't say they had to be functioning weapons, Colt. We could load up a convoy with empty boxes, or boxes full of scraps or something, label it as some sort of experimental top secret weapon and say it's being transported from an outer colony to Calvary Command. Only don't tell anyone that it's not a real shipment. Even have the crew of the convoys believe it's the real thing. Have the Tirpitz crew act as an escort, then if they are attacked, we can see if it leads us to someone as a traitor."

Commander Eagle listens as Saber explains and slowly nods, "I think we could try something like that. The only issue that I can see is that the Tirpitz isn't quite ready to be used yet."

"Well, we have a couple of other battleships that could be used as an escort. They have a good caliber of weapons on them. Tell the crew that this is another test of sorts, that you are checking their general skills, and not just how they do in an advanced weaponry ship," Saber offers. "That after the last incident, you don't want such a convoy left unguarded."

"What if they ask about using the Bismarck?" Fireball asks.

"It's still being upgraded," Commander Eagle replies. "Neither ship would be ready to go before this convoy had to make it's drop."

"We can be on guard if things get bad, and use our vehicles, if needed," Fireball says.

"Actually, the Bismarck is currently on Amanda's property being worked on. So if need be, you could take it," the commander states. The others look to him in surprise. "I believe in being prepared. It's crew is here, so I had it brought here. Only myself and the people working on it know this." He looks to Saber and sighs, "Of course I'll need to know your thoughts on a few things, Captain."

Saber nods, "If it comes down to it sir, I will accompany them in the Bismarck." Amanda goes to protest and he holds up his hand to stop her, "Please, hear me out before you object, Love." She nods and he continues, "I know that I said I would not fight again. But given that I can see fairly well with the glasses, I think I can get by in an emergency. It will depend on my current situation should the need arise. If I am having more trouble than I am now, I will not risk my life or any of yours by going. I suppose in that instance, you would have to go with them, sir." The commander nods. "The fact that the Outriders now most likely have nuclear weapons at their disposal changes a lot of things. No one is safe, not even here. Any place in the New Frontier is a potential target. I want our children to have a chance at living. If that means fighting again, I will, if I am able."

Amanda nods slowly, "I don't like it, but I understand, Saber," she says quietly, trying not to allow her fear to show. "You are right, of course. No one anywhere is safe if those weapons are indeed in Outrider hands, I know that. You are one of the best, even when blinded, so I will support you in whatever decision you make."

Saber takes her hand and squeezes it gently, noting that she is forcing her fear back from her face. She returns the gesture, not daring to look at him directly.

"How soon should we attempt this?" Commander Eagle asks.

"Fairly soon, sir. We don't want someone to become suspicious, or notice that the Bismarck is no longer at Calvary Command," Saber replies. "We could even set it up so that the convoy ships aren't actually manned by anyone. Patch the communications

through to here and one of us can reply. You could tell the crew that we are the ones transporting it because of it's cargo. You could have a cargo ship take off from Jarre remotely and arrange for the Tirpitz crew to meet it there. Keep the radio signal to us, so we can talk to them as if we were on the ship. From the outpost, we could actually be on board a cargo ship, so if they wanted to video conference for some reason, they would see us in a cargo ship. It would endanger the least amount of lives that way."

"I see now why you are a good securities specialist, Saber," Fireball says quietly. "It makes sense. We could send them out as early as tomorrow."

"Yes, a quick mission would make it seem highly important, also more secretive. Not telling anyone until just when needed. Also cutting out the window of opportunity for the Outriders to be let in on the plan," Saber replies.

Commander Eagle nods, "I'm going to set this into motion now, unless any of you have objections or more input." No one says anything, so he gets up and heads to his room to make arrangements.