



## Episode One

by Damon Suede

No alarm. No movement. Nothing to mark his first day in a new town.

Quinn opened one eye to blinding light. Somehow it was morning already. Shit. First day in Boxer Falls and he was already late. He'd been expected at his new job at the tavern a half hour ago. Hopefully employers were laid back round these parts. Hell, he was a bartender not a brain surgeon. They'd deal.

Quinn had overslept. The big snoring body next to him in bed felt too good. The other man's coffee skin contrasted sharply with Quinn's bone white legs.

*Rick? Nick? What was the guy's name? Vic. Victor.*

Vic dozed on like a big, satisfied grizzly stretched from the headboard all the way to the foot of the mattress. Big son of a bitch, he was. African-American, but sometimes he almost looked Cuban. The sheets were streaked with lube and the sheriff had some beautiful stripes on his butt from the spanking. Quinn knew what he was doing there.

In the dark he hadn't noticed the contrast, but in the morning light, Quinn's pallor and hairlessness made him feel extra naked.

The clock said it was after nine so he was already late for the Bear & Bones breakfast customers, and gonna be later still. Maybe he could lie and claim he's thought they meant nine tonight. Nah. Late was better than lying right out of the gate.

Not a second to spare, Quinn rolled to his feet and trotted to the shower. At the sink, he scrubbed his teeth on a washcloth and took a swig of Listerine to kill his morning breath. He'd have to buy a toothbrush in town once he'd met his boss and moved into his new digs. The old couple that owned the tavern wouldn't be there till Monday. Dot Boxer had loved his red hair. Her husband Ira had taken to his filthy jokes instantly. Still, no point in screwing this up for himself the first day. Apparently he would be working with the cook, but it was strictly mom and pop this place. The Boxers hired local help as they needed it but they needed Quinn to pick up the slack. He could do this shit in his sleep and a good thing, because it would take him an hour and a few cups of coffee before he was really on his game. No big: tending bar, and maybe waiting some tables during the day when it was slow.

The water in the shower felt hot and good. Quinn cracked his neck and let the spray pound his scalp while he scoured Ivory over his pale skin. As he washed his pubes Quinn winced; his rosy cock was literally sore. Luckily, he had a long-sleeved shirt for work in his backpack. He had pink patches where Vic's rough beard and chest hair had rubbed him hard. He smiled at those.

Quinn had never fucked a cop before. He'd have to do that again. And Vic had been very agreeable in the end. The guy was a big slab of meat, scruffy beard and medium brown skin but his balls were nearly black. Cock like a club. At the rest stop where they'd met, they'd fooled around a little at the urinals. Nothing special really, until Quinn had gotten a little nasty and pushed the big bastard to his knees.

*Sproing!* Once Vic's knees hit the ground, he had perked up big time, his dark shaft like iron and his hot eyes on the floor.

*Welcome to Boxer Falls.*

Quinn had crawled the brawny cop right out to the car, which is when he'd found out he'd bagged the local sheriff. A badge who wanted to be spanked and roped. Shit yeah. Filthy bastard. Kinky as hell. Without saying anything, Quinn had cuffed him and put him in the backseat of the car and driven them back to the address on the sheriff's license and fucked him right on the porch, loud as hell. Then walked him inside the house for some spanking and rope play. Vic had very sensitive nipples and got more interesting the more immobilized he was.

Quinn had taken full advantage of an excellent situation. Hell, when the big cop

had turned up at the rest stop and pinned Quinn with a penal-system glare, the place had cleared right out. Quinn expected to spend the night in custody...right up until Vic had closed the door with his back and started milking his fat black hog.

*Officer Sexpig reporting for duty, sir.*

Instead they'd actually had a groovy night acting like degenerate sleazebags with each other. Seemed like the sheriff had a thing for coppertops, and he'd gone nuts sucking on Quinn's fair skin. *How-dee.* This town was looking better all the time. The Berkshires were closeted, but obviously dudes in Boxer Falls had found the knob.

Quinn made it out of the shower in under six minutes and climbed into his clothes lickety-split. He patted Vic's big leg and scribbled a note for the nightstand with his cell and a thanks. Vic muttered something friendly but slept on. He sure was a sturdy son of a bitch.

*Jesus.*

Eight minutes gone. Downstairs, he headed straight past the living room, grabbed his backpack and snowboard in the front hall and closed the door behind him carefully. No need to wake the local fuzz before he'd made a clean getaway. Better to keep things friendly and informal. Maybe they'd hook up again, but no way did he want a big scene with awkward questions and fake interest. They'd had a swell time, but Quinn had drinks to sling and boys to bag. He loved the notion of knocking a burly cop down a peg or two as a hobby, but until he'd figured out the lay of the land he'd play it cool.

*Trees!*

A fuckload of pine trees. Needles underfoot muffled the sounds. Out on the shaded street, Quinn tried to get his bearings. On the phone, Dot and Ira had told him the Bear & Bones was in the center of town, a couple blocks south of the lake but he'd gotten here in the dark, so he had no goddamn idea where Vic lived. The sheriff's house seemed nice enough, but it was not in the center of things. The air smelled like Christmas and wet stone. And the road hooked around the base of Lenox Peak and the lakeshore towards the little town's main drag. He turned towards the sun-ish, walking in the empty road.

The GPS on his cellphone told him he was less than a mile from his new job, so he headed east and north towards his new life, following Hammer Drive along the water. A few more houses as he went, but everyone seemed to be sleeping in. Or maybe these were vacation homes. The morning looked crisp in the January light, but less cold than he'd expected. Still, he was thankful for this parka. That was the great thing about boarding gear: it packed easy and worked anywhere. A couple cars passed, but nobody slowed. Hitchhiking wasn't normal around here. Good to know.

The lake was pale silver under the foggy morning. Pretty town. Yards well-kept and a lot of Victorian architecture that hadn't been pimped too much. This town had started to pick up a reputation with gay travelers as something a little stylish and hidden, and still small enough that the straights and the crooks hadn't fucked it up yet. The locals were lucky the train was a couple towns over.

Quinn's breath smoked in front of him. His board bounced on his back and the gentle scrape of his boots was the only sound he could hear, really. Beautiful place. Good for the winter at least, though the water was probably sweet when things heated up. Close to the art festivals in Tanglewood so there'd be good music and cool people to bone.

He hoped the cook at the tavern wasn't a pain in the ass. Adam Parish his name was. The Boxers had said he was twenty and talented, which could go either way at that age. Quinn figured he'd either have a stick up his ass or want Quinn to put one there.

Of course, it wasn't until Quinn got to Cherry Street and turned towards the Bear & Bones that he remembered he'd forgotten to unlock Vic's handcuffs.

Welcome to Boxer Falls.

\* \* \*

Where was the new bartender?

Adam got to his kitchen later than he should have. It was already nine when he got to the Bear and Bones, which was opening for a Saturday morning. His breakfasts had built Dot and Ira's little dining room a reputation. Some weekends he found tourists waiting.

This Saturday morning, luck was with him. No customers. And locals wouldn't show for an hour yet. And that Quinn guy had flaked.

*Great.*

At least Adam wouldn't get busted, which meant Zach might be in the clear as

well. Adam had about fifteen minutes to do an hour of prep. He started cracking a couple dozen eggs into the big mixing bowl and whisked them roughly.

He'd gone out drinking with Zach at the Falls: a bottle of Jack and a joint or two. They'd snuck out to Whispering Ridge on the Cotten Estate where Waterfall plunged right towards the lake. Perfect view. Perfect night.

Zach had broken up with Mr. Wrong Again. The sixth "serious" guy this year. At least this douche had only lasted a couple months: married, four kids, and cheating on all of them with Zach. *Real prize*. All fall, Zach had been sneaking off to fuck this guy in barns and hunting racks all over town. Sure the sex was good and the texting almost made it seem like a real relationship, but Zach had felt like shit the whole time and Adam had made sure of it.

*What's new?*

Pausing at the burners, he dropped a cube of butter in a fresh pan letting it liquefy while he worked.

Adam kept trying to get Zach to focus on settling down, on landing a real job that would let him save money. They could go to Boston together, maybe. But they needed to save enough. Zach was nineteen, Adam only a year older, but way more realistic. Plenty of times since graduation, Zach told him to go on his own, to blaze the trail, that he'd follow Adam when he'd gotten his shit together.

*Fat chance*. Instead Zach spent all his time chasing losers in this dead end town, and apologizing without understanding what he was sorry for.

Adam scowled at the ingredients on his counter: red, green, pale orange.

Now that the holidays were over, the vacationers headed back to Boston and New York.

Adam knew better. He'd overslept and it was his fucking fault. He needed the cash and Dot and Ira did as well. Townies came in for late breakfast year-round and daytrippers headed up Lenox Peak for rock-climbing stopped here to fuel up. The Bear & Bones breakfasts were legendary.

If the Boxers knew he'd been out with their grandson till all hours they'd dock him a half-day. Zach had enough problems finding steady work locally without getting a reputation as a drunk and a stoner.

Adam had plenty of options and Zach had none.

In the past six months three restaurants in Boston had come to make offers. With his culinary experience he should be cooking for dignitaries, not running a Tavern in the backwoods Berkshires.

Not Zach: He had barely finished high school. He had never held a steady job. Most of his money came from hauling shit for his two dads at the B&B across the street. All he had was that hot bod and a crooked smile and Adam's dumb heart.

Glancing at the clock, his hands whipped through the *mise en place*, blocking out the salmon, slicing scallions and tomatoes. He was gonna make it. The Boxers would never know. Last night but Zach had needed him badly, and that trumped everything else.

Truth was, Adam didn't even like getting trashed, but anything with Zach always sounded good. Ever since they'd been in grade school. And when it got cold, out on the lake, and they were smushed together leg to leg watching the water foam and churn, chatting and laughing, the whiskey buzz was just about heaven.

*Best friends.*

Zach had the worst taste in guys. Seriously terrible. And that was some consolation. If he didn't want Adam it meant that Adam probably deserved him, because none of the other shitbags deserved him.

*Ow! Shit!*

He'd nicked his hand. Not deep, but blood welled in the wound. Another scar. He was so fucking pale and skinny but he had these scarred hands like a sailor. The blood ran down his finger and pooled in the palm of his hand. On autopilot, Adam rinsed it, grabbed a towel and applied pressure. He fished out a bandage from the kit and kicked himself again for giving in so easily last night. Zach always partied too much and Adam always tagged along against his better judgment.

What was Adam supposed to do? That moon had been so huge over the lake when they locked up the Bear & Bones and before Adam could get in his car and sack out, Zach had wandered over from his family's B&B looking like a sexy hoodlum. Zach wagged the whiskey at him and whispered an invitation. Adam literally could not make the word "no" reach his lips.

The lake had been worth it. Adam had broached the subject of Boston again and

Zach had made a lot of the right noises: he'd shape up, he'd save money, he'd stop following his dick around. Just the two of them, like that, had made anything seem possible.

He and Zach hadn't made it back to Adam's house until nearly 4 a.m, so drunk they were driving fifteen miles an hour back towards town. Thank Christ the sheriff hadn't been monitoring any of his usual traps or they'd have spent the night in a cell drying out while the deputy on duty grumbled and farted.

Of course, at four a.m. no way they could sneak into the B&B without waking up Zach's dads. So Adam had taken Zach home, tossed him on the bed without undressing him (thank you very much) and slept on the couch. The last thing he needed was to molest his best friend while they were both fucking impaired.

\* \* \*

*Knock-knock-knock.*

Someone was at the tavern's front door,. That Quinn guy must've have finally gotten his ass in gear, or maybe a customer. The kitchen looked pretty organized. Enough of the prep was finished to cover his ass. Adam looked to the clock again. Three minutes past, but no one would ever know he'd been late. He wiped his hands on a towel, tossed it over his shoulder, and walked out into the Bear & Bone's little dining room. What asshole had raced to get here this bright'n'early in January?

Zach? How had he gotten here so fast? Adam squinted, trying to make the face out. It looked like him. Longish hair, windblown and tangled. Tanned face. Cheeks

ruddy and his eyes glittering as Adam walked towards him. No. The hair was blond, wavier, and expensively styled to look accidental. He just had Zach on his mind. He laughed and waved as he threaded through the dark bar. Besides, this guy was way too tall, more his height than Zach's.

*Fuck.*

Rider Cotten. Conrad's younger son and a snaky bastard by anyone's scorecard. Rider had an even worse reputation than Zach around town and he actually deserved his. Zach had no safety net and Rider spent half his life buying his way out of trouble in cash.

Adam stopped in front of the door, squinting into the glare.

Outside, Rider raised his voice to be heard through the door. "G'morning." A lazy smile crept over his face.

Adam nodded and wished to Christ he had taken Zach home at midnight as he'd meant to.

"You open?" Rider managed to sound polite and pornographic on the other side of the pane. He hadn't even parked his Alfa Romeo Spider, just pulled up on the sidewalk. Tickets be damned, pedestrians fuck off.

Adam unbolted and unlocked the door, tugging it open.

"I'm starving." Without waiting, Rider took a step into the Tavern, right into Adam.

Adam stepped back and forced a smile onto his face. "Rider."

"And you look fucking great. Hi." Rider scratched his head and grinned, turning on the full wattage. "Adam, right? I swear you get hotter every fucking year, kid. What are you still doing in this dump?"

"Are you wanting breakfast this morning? Or just coffee?"

The coffee shop didn't open till a (more human) ten am, even in season, but locals knew that the Bear & Bones opened at nine like clockwork.

But Rider stepped around him and plopped his ass at a two-top. "You're late opening."

How did this jackass know? "You just got here."

"Nah. I came by at nine but the place was shut up tighter than a bookkeeper's asshole."

Shit. "You should've knocked."

"I did. A bunch of times. You late getting in this morning?" Rider probably just wanted to be friendly.

"I must not have heard." Adam's stomach tightened.

Rider winked and slouched back in the chair, pushing his basket forward. "And it's just you, I guess. Well...you and me." Rider looked the room over, the scuffed paneling and the tacky signs, probably finding every fault and failure of taste. He plopped down in a chair, his thighs spread, his pants tight...dressing left and not hiding that fact.

If Zach's grandparents found out he had skipped work, that he was asleep

upstairs instead of doing repairs or hustling hikers for a tour, they'd fire Adam for good. Grandson or no grandson. Adam barely saw him as it was.

Rider winked. "Hey kiddo. Your secret's safe with me." He smelled like cucumbers, fresh and sweet.

Adam stepped back towards the kitchen, not masking his irritation.

"No secret. And I'm not a fucking kid, Rider." Up close, he looked nothing like Zach. *I can't believe I mistook him at the door.*

"It was a compliment. You're in sick shape." The younger Cotten hunched his hips again, pushing the bulge forward an inch. He wasn't wearing underwear.

Adam looked away, stared toward the door.

"I thought cooks were s'posed to be pigs but you look like, I dunno, hot jailbait."

Adam froze. "Fuck off. I'm only a couple years younger."

"I was joking. Jeez."

"What are you: a kiddie diddler?"

Rider's eyes widened and he waved the suggestion away. "Peace! Peace. Okay." He rolled his eyes and grimaced in annoyance. "Giving you a compliment. My bad."

Adam grabbed the leash of his anger and tugged it back behind the fence. "Skip it."

At that exact moment, a tap at the front door announced Zach's presence. He was dressed but his feet were bare. He had to be freezing, but he didn't seem it. "Hey. Adam? Walking home to take shit from my dads. I just wanted to say thanks for last

night." He looked handsome and hopeful.

Rider chuckled, which made Zach step inside.

"I didn't know you were busy." Zach flicked his gaze between them, probably misreading the situation.

*As usual.*

"I'm not." Adam glared at Rider, daring him to open his goddamned mouth. "The new bartender is late. Quinn. He was supposed to be here before opening."

"Fuck." Rider sat forward and checked Zach out head to toe. "We could be brothers. Look at that." His eyes took in the tangled hair, the full lower lip, and the square features.

Zach looked confused and shifted his weight.

Adam was seeing exactly what he was. *Holy hell.*

"Uhh. Hardly. You're one of the Cottens. I've heard about you plenty. You must be the badass." Zach noticed him there and offered a handshake by way of greeting. He was flirting with this douchebag. "Zach Boxer. I live across the—"

"I heard of you." Some thought dawned on Rider and he turned to Adam, grinning. "This is who you thought—"

"Shut it," Adam spanned. He could see where this was headed. Last thing Zach needed was another vicious asshole to distract him. But Rider only had eyes for him. Zach had already been forgotten and hopefully Zach's creep detector hadn't gotten him interested.

*Nope.*

Luckily, Zach had leapt to the wrong conclusion as usual. He raised his eyebrows and grinned at Adam knowingly. "I should let you get back to breakfast." He glanced between Adam and Rider, like he was mapping an imaginary cobweb between them.

*Idiot.*

Zach gave a little wave and went to the door. "Your new bartender a redhead?"

Adam shrugged. "No idea."

Zach pointed up the block. "Well...Here comes the cavalry." He winked goodbye and padded back across the street on his bare feet.

"I get it." Rider's voice made Adam turn. "You two are friends."

What had he seen? "Breakfast. What can I get for you?"

Rider opened his mouth.

"—From the kitchen, jackass." Adam wiped his hands roughly on his apron and crossed his arms.

"I know. Okay, Shit."

*Stop it.*

The Bear & Bones needed the business. The Cottens had that new resort opening up and they could steer thousands of dollars in business this way. Or not. He made himself smile like a mannequin.

Rider acted like an adult. "I was gonna ask if you could do an egg white omelet

and whatever juice is fresh. And that can be to go. I'm not in a hurry or anything." He ran a hand into his hair and looked up at Adam, looking thoughtful. "I didn't mean anything."

"And you don't." Adam nodded. "Gimme a few minutes." He pushed back into the kitchen and prayed that Rider wouldn't take too much of an interest in either of them. Last thing they needed was another thing between them and the goddamn exit.

In the dining room, Rider was muttering to himself. "Shit. First day and you fuck it up. Open mouth, insert foot." He sighed and tipped his head back to stare at the ceiling beams.

"Welcome to Boxer Falls."

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With the resort's grand opening six weeks away, Conrad couldn't afford the half hour he'd stolen to come out here to the fishing cabin in the middle of the day. His divorce was final; the papers on his desk seemed like a relief and an accusation at the same time. She had taken less than she should have, and with no one steering the course of his life, at 52 years of age, Conrad was finally free to live and love where he pleased.

*Wasted time.*

Two days later, he'd moved his whole life to the Berkshires, to the family's country house, with big plans for it. He had loved this little town since he was a boy. To him, Boxer Falls meant holidays and no pressure and stolen fun. His parents had been

kind and patient here. He'd been happy out on the lake.

Trip had left word for him last night. A few words on a card in with the mail. He must have driven out from Boston. Since he'd lost his job, his time was wide open. Must be nice, to be young and unshackled.

A risk worth taking.

Conrad looked at his watch, weighing the danger. He had to meet with his architect, a catering company and eyeball the furniture deliveries that had been coming in all week. He'd spared no expense on converting Whispering Ridge from a vacation estate to a luxury inn. They were on schedule for the Valentine's opening. His sons were out of the way for the morning. Oz had scheduled a test of the hot water tanks with the contractors. Getting the kinks out. Most likely Rider was impregnating one of the maids or sending nude photographs of himself to the local rag.

Still, for this half an hour Conrad was happy to belong to someone else.

As he left his office in the main house, he saw Tony moving the spruce away from the back terrace and Oz arguing with the plumbers in the driveway. At this distance, his older son looked exactly as he had at 29, ash blond hair, heavy muscle, unclouded brow: a handsome scion with worlds to conquer.

*Shit.* Conrad headed around the west garden. Last thing he needed was Oz catching sight of him in this state. Or spotting Trip Whitlock anywhere on their property.

At the back of the house sat a small dock with a launch; about 40 yards out on

the water sat a small island with a small fishing cabin, and a big temptation. A perfect place to make promises. With practiced stealth Conrad piloted a small boat across the glassy water in silence. How many times had he snuck out here to meet Grady when they were still in school? How many times had they planned their amazing life until Grady betrayed him? Fifty? A hundred?

*Maybe Trip can help me forget that.*

The inside of the cabin was dim, lights off, curtains drawn, but the door was wide open. Conrad's heartbeat knocked between irritation and anticipation.

*Bastard.*

"Mr. Cotten." His voice was a polished baritone like a young senator.

Conrad turned. "Don't call me that, Trip. I already feel like a pervert."

"You are a pervert. I used to be a clean cut, god-fearing republican before you seduced me."

Trip looked the part certainly. A twelve hundred dollar suit and loafers from London.

Conrad felt so old in front this sleek man, keenly aware of his own silver hair and white beard.

"I seduced you?"

"Well...until I seduced you then. I keep forgetting which it was." Trip stepped into the light from the window. His close-shorn head and big doe eyes shone like poison. "Rotten memory." He grinned and stood his ground.

Across the water Conrad could hear the big mower as the workmen readied the grounds for the landscapers. He had so much to do, but he couldn't make himself go do it. "Did you drive all the way from Boston?" Conrad tried to keep his voice level as Trip licked his lower lip in the half-light.

Trip took off his jacket and draped it over the back of a chair. "I'm in the Berkshires this summer." There was no tie, but with easy grace, he unbuttoned his shirt so it hung open, exposing his lean torso, the crisp T of hair there. His nipples stood stiff in the chilly air. He paused, as if waiting for Conrad to do something.

*Right.*

"I'm almost 20 years older than you." Trip and Oz had known each other in Boarding school and later in Boston. "You went to school with my son. Your whole life is —"

"Twenty-two." Watching Conrad's mouth, Trip unbuttoned his cuffs. Every move seemed calculated for maximum impact. "And I think it bothers you. Hot and bothers you. Gets you worked up in the worst way. Sir."

*So wrong.*

For half a moment, Conrad considered leaving, walking away before this got worse and something permanent happened to destroy his family. Oz and Rider never needed to know. This was just sex and Trip had no proof that they'd been intimate.

*Does he?*

"I'm a grown man. I know what I want." Trip stepped close, knocking his hip

against Conrad's. His voice was melted sugar. "I know what you want too."

"Christ." Conrad took a shuddering breath, but his cock shifted in his shorts under Trip's fingers.

"I don't want to make trouble." Trip's wide grey eyes managed to look wounded at the idea.

*Yes you do. But so do I.*

"Too late."

"I've only got the afternoon. No one needs to know." Trip shrugged. "Unless you want me to stay."

Conrad shook his head but he didn't look away from the lips. "I'm going to find a way to explain to Oz and then maybe this won't seem so terrible. Maybe I won't feel like an ogre."

"You're not. I've wanted you since college." Trip fumbled with his buckle, popped his trousers open.

Conrad snorted. "Bullshit."

Trip had been impossible when he and Oz had been at Duke. Conrad had sent legions of lawyers and letters of apology to bail them out of all kinds of dumbass scrapes. True, it was usually Oz who got caught, but Trip had been the instigator. His nature. His family didn't have the same kind of resources and he had a habit of cutting corners.

Conrad knew all about that.

Trip knocked the jacket to the floor and tugged the tie down so he could unbutton Conrad's shirt, headed south with his hands. "I used to jerk off when you'd visit our dorm. The first time I stayed in your house I spied on you fucking your wife —"

"Impossible." But secretly Conrad hoped it was true 'cause it made him feel about twenty years younger. His cock was iron. Filthy fucker. "You had all those boyfriends in college, frat parties, and I was an old man."

"Not old." Trip kissed his mouth, punctuating his words: "Strong. Smart. Strict."

Conrad stiffened under those soft lips. "If you call me Daddy, then I definitely have work to —"

Another kiss, coaxing this time. Trip touched Conrad's boner through his briefs, traced it.

"No. Not like that. I jerked off in your closet. I whacked it with your moisturizer while you fucked her, rinsed off, and then fucked her again." Trip rubbed their erections together through their underwear. "I could see your crack and your big balls bouncing."

Conrad swallowed before he could find his voice. "Well even if that's a lie, it's a good one."

Trip didn't smile. "Why would I lie? Then he laughed. "Actually why would you believe me?"

*A match made in hell.*

With a groan Conrad grasped the back of the cropped head and pulled their mouths together, sucking and chewing at the sweet mouth.

"Soft. God." Trip rubbed against his beard, tugging their shirts up to press their bellies together. He reached into Conrad's shorts, fishing for his boner. "Will you take me? Will you take me?"

"I'll take you right now." *This is awful. He's ruining me.* But Conrad knew what was coming; he had already flirted with the idea of asking.

"As your date." Trip closed his eyes and rubbed his forehead against Conrad's beard. "Sir."

*Cutting corners again.*

Conrad knew what Trip wanted, and they both knew that he wouldn't say no. "To the opening?" He'd have to come clean. He'd have to tell Oz. He'd have to admit what they did together, and then the entire town would know. Even Grady...all these long years later. With his husband and his kid and his rickety life. He'd know.

*Welcome to Boxer Falls.*

Trip knelt and kissed his way across Conrad's chest and belly, his dark crewcut against the grey fur.

Conrad closed his eyes and focused on the lips dragging over his hot skin.

Conrad wondered if he cared about Trip or if their appetites had dragged them together. Love? Lust? Did it matter in the end, to either of them? At his age, he knew better than to bet on long shots. Trip could have what he wanted and damn the consequences. Conrad could settle for scratched itches and a little control over the rest of his life.

He stroked Trip's head. "Your father and mother will know then. Everyone will. Do you understand?" Conrad had ruined the Whitlocks, though knowing Trip, maybe that was part of the attraction. "If we come clean."

"Clean. Dirty. Whatever you want." Trip stood against him full length, then turned slowly, bumping him from shoulder to knees. He bent over the desk. "Mmmph. I don't care about that."

Conrad took a step back.

If Trip used him to cut some corners, maybe Conrad could do the same. Thirty years since he walked away, Grady Boxer would look at him with this stud beside him and regret. Grady would regret the future he'd thrown away before their lives had started. Grady watching Trip pressed against him in front of 300 guests.

Conrad liked the idea of showing up at the Valentine's launch with a stud on his arm. Romance and revenge. Shame the naysayers and make it clear that he was out, proud, and getting exactly what he wanted.

Trip arched his back and grunted, stretching across the desktop and holding his cheeks wide with his hands. His pants and then boxers fell to his knees and the cool curve of his muscular backside and the base of a glass plug were exposed to the half-light and Conrad's stare. "Hurry, sir. We don't have much time."

Unashamed, Trip turned his head and pushed the plug out, letting it fall right to the floor.

*Thunk.*

"Is that all?" Conrad stuck two ungentle fingers right into the heat of him and pulled them out just as quickly. Trip had greased himself like a goddamned whore. "Is that what you want? You're certain?"

*But is this his fantasy or mine? I can't tell.*

"The opening." Trips face was turned on the table, turned towards the main house, towards Conrad's staff and his sons, but his eyes were closed like he was dreaming behind dark lashes. His pulse knocked under his jaw and he licked his lips, impatient. "I'm tired of waiting. I'm tired of hiding. Aren't you?"

"Look at you like that." Conrad rolled the condom onto his dick and tucked his hips close. He set his damp knob here like a bulb in a socket. No prep. No stretch. Trip liked the burn. "My opening."

"Don't you want me there? Mr. Cotten." Trip raised up to press his back to the silver hair on Conrad's chest.

"God help me." Growling, Conrad just rammed his cock into the willing flesh, cradling his son's old roommate from behind, hard muscle under his rough hands.

Trip opened his mouth wide and sucked air into his lungs. He closed his grey eyes. He swallowed. "Will you let me come with you?"

Conrad kissed the smooth, turned face and hissed in his warm ear. "If you ask nicely."



- *Has Conrad fallen for one of his son's oldest friends and worst enemies? What is Trip really after? Will the Cotten boys find out?*
  - *Does Quinn get fired on his first day? Why does Vic troll rest stops in his uniform looking for rough sex? Who will set the sheriff free?*
  - *Can Rider seduce Adam? Will Adam save Zach from his own worst impulses? Is Zach blind to his best friend's feelings? What do Zach and Rider share?*
  - *Does Grady still care about Conrad? And with six weeks to go, could the big Valentine's Day opening for Whispering Ridge come together without any mishaps??*
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**TUNE IN NEXT WEEK!**

***Boxer Falls: The bigger they are...***

**AUTHOR BIO:**

Damon Suede grew up out-n-proud deep in the anus of right-wing America, and escaped as soon as it was legal. Though new to M/M, Damon has been writing for print, stage, and screen for two decades. He's won some awards, but counts his blessings more often: his amazing friends, his demented family, his beautiful husband, his loyal fans, and his silly, stern, seductive Muse who keeps whispering in his ear, year after year. You can get in touch with him at:

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