



Episode 6

by Mary Calmes

For a second, as he sat there on the couch beside his sated husband, Phil thought about just getting up and walking out. He had swallowed Grady's cum, wiped his lubed fingers on the dishtowel he had brought from the kitchen, all that was left to do was leave. The simple truth was if he and Grady were no longer together, then he was no longer a cheater. He didn't have to bear the burden of his guilt. They could all start over fresh. Conrad could have Grady and Grady could finally know what it was to be with the man he pined over.

Be careful what you wish for...

But Phil had never been the kind of man who gave in or gave up. As long as he lived, however long that turned out to be, he was keeping the man he loved. He could too because he knew what buttons to push, what words to use, how to play the selfless martyr. Conrad might have romance on his side but Phil had history and he could wield it like a whip.

He knew what he was about to do was selfish, the words already calculated for maximum effect, but there was no way to change it, he couldn't, didn't want to. It had been too late to walk away the moment his eyes had locked with Grady's all those years ago.

"What the hell is going on?!"

Phil turned to the man he loved, ripped from the past to the tense, rippling present where his husband had just discovered that what usually turned him on, had not. Or... could not.

Grady had just come in Phil's mouth as Kevin pounded him so hard and so good that Grady had been lost in the kind of spine tingling orgasm that he had not experienced in months. He had needed it, desperately. But when he had offered to jerk Phil off or take him down the back of his throat, to reciprocate the ecstasy, the cock he had reached for, that he had expected to be iron-hard, was flaccid.

It wasn't possible. Phil's libido, his absolute joy when he made love, when he came...

"Phil!" Grady was suddenly terrified and he wasn't even sure why. "Talk to me!"

"Don't yell at him," Kevin nearly snarled, angry as he rose to the feet, and discarded the condom. His hazel eyes, so similar to Phil's, were blazing heated green now. "Don't you ever fuckin' yell at him!"

Grady turned from his husband to the man who just fucked him exactly as he'd needed. He wanted to roar out his own indignation but staring at the flushed young god, the sheen of sweat on his tanned skin, the long, hard chiseled lines of him, and those flashing eyes, he could barely breathe. When had that boy become so beautiful?

"Don't," Phil lifted his hand to stop Kevin's venom. "Just get out."

"Not before I hear you tell him the truth" he growled at Phil. "That was part of our agreement. I get to see his face."

Phil's jaw clenched tight as he turned to Grady who was still breathing hard from his orgasm, still shivering with now faint aftershocks.

It hit Grady then that the boy knew something about Phil that he didn't. How in the world had that happened? How had the chasm between them gotten so vast that a guy who only sometimes worked on Phil's construction crew knew a secret?

Phil cleared his throat. "We uhm, don't talk like we used to and I know why."

Grady squinted at him, holding his breath.

"You don't want to know stuff; you don't want to hear me lie so we don't talk. I get that."

It was a lot of honesty to hear in the aftermath of having another man inside of him.

"But so you know, I don't fuck around on you anymore. I can't."

Can't? "What?"

He sucked in a breath. "I deserve what I get, for what I've done to you, and what I've got is a brain tumor--cancer--that's probably gonna kill me."

Grady's eyes were huge with fear.

"Just so you know though, all those times this past year that you thought I was too tired from fuckin' hot guys like this--" he gestured at Kevin, "--to touch you....that's not how it was. I was seeing Dr. Higgins trying to figure out what the hell was wrong with me."

"No-no-no," Grady's breath caught as every bit of guilt over Conrad Cotten buried him under an avalanche of regret.

Yes, there was infidelity, he knew that, had always known, but Phil's lovers were disposable. Grady realized his husband never saw anyone twice. There was no love, no longing, only fucking. The very idea that Grady could be replaced in Phil's life was ridiculous and he was more than aware of that fact. It was a truth, an absolute. There was never a doubt in his mind. Phil's body might wander, but his soul, that was Grady's and that was forever.

But for him...

Grady lusted after Conrad, a man who could take Phil's place in his bed, at his side, in his life. One infidelity was meaningless and one, though never acted upon, meant everything. The epiphany of a life-threatening event made everything clear.

"If you don't fuckin' want him," Kevin said into the silence, and Grady heard the young man's husky voice, the sensual timber of it. "Tell him because he has other options."

Grady knew that Kevin, who was really Tony Frost, who he had watched grow up, had always carried a torch for Phil. Until that moment though, he had no idea that the young stud was full of heat and longing for his man. Grady watched Tony's eyes rake over his husband and saw Phil clearly for the first time in years. His annoyance and anger and bitterness had blinded him for so long but now....through Tony....

God, Phil was a gorgeous man, powerful, virile, with hands roped with veins from hard, strenuous work his whole life. How could he have forgotten, the feel of those calluses on his skin, the smell of sweat, and salt, and the passion that flared between them?

Grady was reeling with new information, with the warmth in Tony's gaze and the hunger he saw there directed at Phil. This man, half Phil's age, would obviously submit to anything his husband asked of him. Phil had told him to fuck Grady, and he had. What wouldn't he do?

"Don't leave me for Conrad," Phil whispered, lifting up off the couch. "Wait 'til I'm dead all right? Then you too can put the B and B and the resort together and live happily ever after."

Grady looked horrified and that was exactly what Phil wanted. As he turned for the kitchen, hearing Grady's breath hitch behind him, he knew....he'd won....at least for

now.

"Get your shit and go Tony," Phil ordered, almost to the swinging kitchen door.

"No, first I get what you promised when you called me."

Tony had been at the Bear and Bones, still tired from the night before, absently flirting with the hot new twinkie bartender, the red-haired kid, when he had received Phil's call and then a text with directions. And he had seen Phil's son Zach out of the corner of his eye too, the one he'd let suck his dick at the club, but compared to his old man, the son was a cheap imitation.

Phil stopped and turned, looked at his husband, now standing up, quickly straightening his own clothes, before turning his attention to the strapping hunk that was suddenly in front of him, silently waiting.

"Why?" He asked after a moment, scowling at Tony, straining to understand.

"Because I fuckin' want it," he whispered, his eyes locked on Phil's mouth, hands fisting on the front of the long-sleeved T-shirt Phil had changed into after he took a shower. "And you promised that I could touch you since you scared the shit out of me the last time and told me that you'd never call me again."

"I lubed your cock for you," he reminded the younger man.

"You swore," Tony insisted.

Phil's eyes met Grady's across the room. "Listen, he just wants a kiss okay? When I agreed, that he would fuck you, give you what I can't... this was the price."

One kiss?

Christ, could Grady feel like a bigger ass? Phil had done all this for him, brought a hot stud over to deliver the sex he couldn't, just to keep him, to try and make him happy so he didn't abandon him and all the Adonis wanted was a kiss?

Phil was standing there, waiting for permission, and that too made everything worse. Grady had all the power and yet no control of any of it. He nodded quickly so he wouldn't scream instead.

Gently, Phil wrapped a hand around Tony's throat, his thumb sliding over the strong, square jaw before he tipped the younger man's chin up and bent forward at the same time.

The second the firm lips met his, Tony moaned deep in the back of his throat and opened for him. Phil's tongue swept inside of his hot, wet mouth, tasting, sucking, and ravishing him. One of his hands cradled the back of Tony's head, the other slid to the small of his back, pressing him forward.

Grady watched Tony wrap his arms tightly around Phil's neck making sure the bigger man could not pull away from him. He understood then with absolute clarity that if he ever decided that he didn't want Phil anymore, if he let him go, beautiful, young, Tony Frost would take his man off his hands no questions asked.

Oh fuck that...

* * *

"So did you know this guy was gonna be dead?"

"What?" Oz gasped, swallowing hard; really trying not to lose the lunch he had earlier in the day. He liked stuffed cod, would like it even more if it stayed the hell down.

"It's a reasonable inquiry," Vic sighed. "I'm looking at a dead man which begs the question, did you ask me to come with you because you killed this guy and you're trying to cover it up?"

"Fuck no," Oz nearly hyperventilated because unlike the sheriff, this was the first dead body he had ever seen. "It's exactly like I told you, this guy called me, he said he had information for me about my father and...shit."

Victor figured Oz Cotten for a liar until he turned his deep dark eyes from where they were perusing the victim to the stricken face of the striking man at his side. There was no way to fake the gray pallor, big round eyes, and rapid breathing. He was lucky he didn't have vomit on his hiking boots already.

Reaching out, Victor placed a hand on Oz's shoulder, liking that even though he had put more force into the motion than he intended, the man didn't have to shift his stance. Oz was built solid and strong and that was a nice change from the twinks he'd been with lately. It might be time to trade up.

Oz could feel the warmth radiating from the sheriff's hand through the Prada jacket and the Dior dress shirt he was wearing. It was, in fact, the only thing that anchored him and kept the shivering at bay. The blood pooled around the body did not

look like it did in the movies.

"Get out of here," Victor ordered him. "I'll take care of this and call the coroner. I'll find out exactly who this guy is, go through his shit, toss his room at the B and B if he's got one, check him out and let you know what I find out."

Oz's eyes met the sheriff's. "Thank you Vic."

He nodded quickly and knelt to the body, pulling the radio from his left shoulder at the same time.

Oz tried not to run from the boathouse but it was hard. Someone had stabbed the man and then left the murder weapon right there as well as a crystal pendant lying right on top of the guy. What the hell was that supposed to mean?

* * *

There had just been no way. Adam was terrified but really, with the short notice he was given plus the fact that they were understaffed, it had been impossible to get the night off. And the new guy, Quinn, the bartender, was a total dickhead who did only his job and nothing more. He was not interested in helping anyone else out. They were a family at the Bear and Bones, everyone pitched in where they needed to. Quinn apparently had not gotten the memo. He wanted to flirt with anything with a pulse; this seemed his main purpose in life. So Adam was screwed, badly. He still didn't have the money he needed to pay Gino off so he had no choice but to submit to the man again.

Last time he had wiggled out of the meeting claiming he had the flu, the no accepted without question but Adam had no illusions that the scenario could be repeated. The man had already told him so. Hopefully his "payment" wouldn't take as long as the last time, or the one before that. He had to work after all. Being trussed up for days was not an option. He had gotten so dehydrated tied to the metal chair Gino had bound him to, and he shuddered with the memory of the ropes and the icy cold tile floor. The man was brutal, and not in a good way. Adam's safe word had to be screamed before Gino heard him, ceased, and let him breathe. And he had stopped, but Adam was by no means certain of the man's control.

"Adam," Quinn called from the door, the bored snarl in his voice ever present.

"Some guy out here for you."

His stomach gave a violent lurch.

"He said to hurry the fuck up."

Tilting his head at his sous-chef to let her know he'd be out for a minute, he walked through the swinging door toward the bar. The place was a zoo, it was nine after all, but still, even in the sea of people, he saw Gino Torres at the end of the bar, sitting alone. His hungry eyes watched Adam as he moved forward.

"Sir, I--"

"You knew what to expect," Gino said, cutting the younger man off, grabbing his wrist and twisting it painfully as he yanked him forward, bending him across the bar.

"And when you close tonight you will see me."

Adam broke out in a cold sweat, and shivered hard. God he hated being terrified, hated that he had ever accepted that last drink because he was heartbroken, again, over his best friend. But most of all he hated him, he hated Zach.

They had been in New York for a weeklong vacation, Zach's fathers having sprung for the trip for their son and his best friend. *Together*, Phil had made them promise, stick together. Both of them had nodded their agreement.

When they got to the party, Zach had sworn not to leave without Adam since neither of them knew the host, having been invited by someone they had just met. When Adam had woken up alone, naked, tied down and freezing, he had screamed before he'd been reminded, with the playback on a video camera, that he'd been the one to say yes. Yes he wanted to play; yes he would go along, yes, whatever, yes. It was the word of the night. And for several more after that. The whole time he was there, for those three days where he had been taught about his limits and promised that next time...they could go further... that whole time his phone had rung. And when it was done, when he had limped back to the hotel, he had changed the ring tone he used for Zach on his phone. He could never hear *You're My Best Friend* by Queen again without retching. He still remembered Zach pulling back the shower curtain and poking at his bruised skin.

"You fucker," Zach cackled. "Must have been one helluva fine hook-up. You totally ditched me."

Ditched him?

Adam had stayed under the hot spray until the water ran cold, the whole time hoping that finally he could get over Zach but knowing, even then, that it wouldn't take. All of him wanted all of Zach and nothing, it seemed, could change that.

"Hey," the snapping fingers in Adam's face startled him.

"Please sir," Adam whimpered, sick that he was about to beg. "I'm so close to having the money and I just don't want--"

"Who gives a fuck what you--"

"Gino."

They both turned to the voice and Adam would have seen simply a man but two things happened to change his mind. First, Gino Torres let go of his wrist, and second he turned to face the stranger, all of his attention removed from Adam. It was a fucking miracle and the man, whoever the hell he was, was his savior.

"What are you doing out of your cage, dog?"

Adam was riveted watching the man who had terrorized him for the last two years, just sit there.

"I have nothing to say to you Kabir," Gino almost snarled. "You have no--"

"I make a call to Frankie and we both know what happens to you," he smiled flashing twin rows of perfect, white even teeth. "So, I ask again, what are you doing in Boxer Falls?"

He closed his eyes, the muscles in his neck cording with the strain to remain calm, and the man who was fast becoming Adam's favorite person on the planet, turned

to him.

"Let me guess, he has pictures of you? Naked? Maybe bleeding? And you're too much of an idiot to know that pictures like that would send him to prison even if they got splashed all over the internet?"

"They can't be on the internet," Adam sucked in a breath. His family could not see him like that, not ever. Those pictures would hurt them and his career, should he ever actually get one.

"What's your name?"

"Adam."

"Adam what?"

"Parish."

He nodded and for the second time that night Adam was treated to the killer smile but this time to a version slightly more sinister. "You work in the kitchen? You the chef?"

"Yes."

"Okay chef," the dark haired, dark skinned man nodded. "You go in there and I'll go with Gino here and tomorrow I'll be back with everything he's got of yours and you never have to see him again."

Adam squinted so he didn't cry as he tried to calm his racing heart and keep his breathing even. "Tell me," he coughed, "what I need to do for you."

"I will," the man smiled warmly. "Later. But don't worry okay, fucking isn't on

my list."

Adam swallowed hard.

"Or killing people" he teased. "Nothing illegal, that serves no one."

Finally, Adam took a breath. "Who are you?"

"Sam," he answered, reaching out and cupping Adam's cheek. "Sam Kabir."

Adam nodded, all he could do not to lean into that comforting hand like a cat.

No one ever protected him or saved him or gave a fuck about him. Even Zach...even though he was his best friend....even Zach would leave him, had left him that fateful night, to get laid.

"You're safe baby."

The endearment would have seemed odd but it was more comforting than anything else. More importantly was the one word.

Safe.

Before Adam swore fealty for life, he'd wait and see if Sam delivered the promised files but so far...he was ready to make an oath if it were asked of him.

As Samantaka Kabir grabbed Gino Torres' bicep and led him out of the bar, Adam pivoted around and walked back into the kitchen. Outside, they walked the length of the parking lot but as they neared the far side where Gino had parked his car, Sam let his arm go as they stepped into the deep shadows.

"You son of a whore," Gino rounded on him, smiling wide in the darkness.

"My mother resembles that remark," Sam smirked at him.

Quick bark of laughter from the heavier muscled man. "What the fuck is your angle in all this? Seriously?"

Sam waggled his eyebrows for him.

"This town? Why are you here?"

"I have my reasons," he chuckled, the wicked gleam in his eyes making Gino take a quick breath. "But what did you do to that kid? I told you to scare him, he looked petrified in there."

Gino gave a dismissive wave in the direction of the bar. "I indulged myself, you didn't say I couldn't."

"Poor fucker, I think you scarred him for life."

Gino shrugged. "Kid's got a tight ass I'll tell you that and his mouth ain't bad either."

"Charming," Sam exhaled sharply, tired from his flight across the Atlantic the day before. "So what, do I have a file? Did you make any prints? What can I give him?"

"Everything," Gino yawned. "You've got it all on your private server and no, I didn't make any prints. You know I'm only into reliving my work when I get to use knives these days."

So not a discussion Sam wanted, or needed, to have. "Okay, as long as I'm not missing anything. For this to work there has to be truth mixed in with everything else. I'm never lying to this guy, that way he'll always be on my side."

"Why do you care?"

"I don't, not about him."

"Whatever, I can't follow all your cloak and dagger crap. I thought you were out of the family business, going legit in TV or some bullshit like that."

He stared at Gino until the bigger man put up his hands in surrender.

"Fine, I'll just shut the fuck up."

"So your plane ticket's in the glove compartment," Sam tipped his head at the car.

"You're going first class all the way to Paris. Have a nice vacation."

"Call me if you need me."

"I will," he said, leaning in to hug his friend goodbye. "Thanks."

"My pleasure," he teased Sam, squeezing tight, thumping him gently on the back.

"I'll give your mother your regards."

Sam scoffed. "Yeah, do that."

When they parted Gino was still smiling.

* * *

Oz was sitting in his car by the park waiting, wondering what the hell was taking the sheriff so long when the door opened and Victor climbed into the front seat of the sleek black BMW.

"You're late," Oz said, inhaling the sheriff's amazing scent. It was like musk and smoke and sweat all wrapped up together. He had noticed it even in the midst of

looking at a dead man earlier in the evening.

"I have a murder on my hands," Victor replied snidely.

"Who was he?"

The sheriff passed Oz a manila envelope, reaching above his head to flip on the overhead light at the same time. "The man's name was Kurt Brandt, he was a private detective."

"What was he doing here?" He asked as he undid the clasp on the envelope and took out glossy black and white 8x10 photographs. "What the fuck is this?"

"I would have brought you the camera but it's in evidence lock-up for the state police to pick up day after tomorrow.

"I don't," Oz took a breath, looking at picture after picture of Adam Parish and Zach Boxer. "This was taken in New York."

"Yes I know."

"But this was taken," he turned to look at Victor. "By that occult store, uhm, *Beltane*?"

Victor nodded.

Oz let his hands fall to his lap and the photos with them. "So what?"

"I don't know, maybe you can tell me?"

Oz was aware of how small the car seemed, how much of the space the sheriff took up and how, for some reason, his palms itched.

"Well, all we've been able to tell is that Brandt was taking lots of pictures of

Adam and Zach and I have no idea why."

As they sat in silence, Oz trembled just slightly.

"If you're cold turn on the car and crank up the heater."

He did but he left the headlights off even as he killed the overhead one.

"So did you question the people at Beltane about the weird dagger and necklace?"

"No," Victor chuckled. "You don't know the difference between fake pieces and real magic?"

"There's no such thing as real magic sheriff?"

Victor grunted. "You know all about it do you? Know all about hoodoo and everything else?"

"Voodoo is--"

"Not Voodoo, not a religion, but hoodoo, as in spells."

Oz turned to look at the big man, at his face in the moonlight and realized that he shouldn't have. He couldn't remember ever wanting to touch anyone so desperately.

"Don't discount what you know nothing about," Victor cautioned him. "Those pieces were props, they weren't real. The folks at Beltane would laugh at me if I carried that shit in there."

Oz took a quick breath. "Okay."

Victor grunted. "I have two men keeping an eye on Trip Whitlock 24/7 from now on. Whatever there is to find, we will."

"Thank you sheriff, I appreciate it."

Silence for a moment.

"So?"

Of course, Oz thought smugly. "What would you like sheriff? How much?"

Victor rolled his head so he could see the younger man's eyes. "I don't get paid in cash Mr. Cotten."

"Then what?"

"You'll owe me."

"Owe you?"

"Yep," Victor said pointedly.

"But I can pay--"

"Nope. I'll be your man Mr. Cotten," he smiled lazily, opening the door, illuminating the interior suddenly, making Oz squint in the sudden light. "And maybe, one of these days, you'll be mine."

And then he was gone and Oz watched him walk back toward his patrol car. It was amazing that such a big, strong heavily muscled man could move so fluidly, gliding instead of walking. Just for a moment Oz imagined what it would be like to be the one he was moving toward, to be reached for and have those hands slide over his skin, hold him down, make him do whatever he wanted.

"Fuck," he groaned, shaking away the thoughts as he started the car. At least the sheriff was now watching Trip. Oz would know whatever was going on soon enough.

Everything done in darkness would come to light. He was definitely looking forward to dragging whatever it was out into the bright, judgmental sunshine. If only he could figure out what the hell Brandt was following around worthless Zach Boxer for. That just made no sense...

* * *

Conrad looked up from the paper he was reading, some new drivel that Trip had written, to find his son Rider and... *Jesus*.

He had never been caught in such an absolute molten gaze before in his life. The eyes were rich chocolate brown and fringed with long, thick lashes and just--*sex*. It was all he could think about. He felt his groin fill and put the paper down, discreetly over his lap.

Dear God who was this?

"Dad," Rider called his voice as grating as ever. "This is my buddy Sam, from school, Samantaka Kabir, you remember?"

"I don't," he squinted as the two young men closed in on him. He noted the predatory smile that curled Sam's lush lips and was suddenly wary. He was not looking at a kitten; he was being eyed by a sleek, jungle cat.

"Mr. Cotten," Sam greeted him, offering the older man his hand. "Pleasure sir."

The firmness of the grip, the way the gaze met his and held it, everything about

the younger man was steady and grounded. He was no older than Rider but there were oceans of experience between them. Clearing his throat nervously, he licked his lips without thought.

"Pleasure to finally meet you," Sam said, covering their joined hands with his other for a moment, squeezing tight, before he released both. "Ry always speak so highly of you."

He smirked. "I doubt--"

"And my parents of course, adore him. When they took us to Bali last year for our birthdays, they basically told him he can go back and live with them if he wants."

"And where is that?"

"They divide their time between Mumbai and Paris."

Conrad nodded realizing, just that second that the kid standing in front of him came from money, lots and lots of money. "So you say you and Rider met at school?"

"Yes sir," he grinned easily.

Conrad found he could not tear his eyes from those sinful dark lips. They were full and dark and pliant... Conrad could only imagine what they feel like sliding over his shaft.

"We met at Exeter," he grinned suddenly and the older man felt his pulse ratchet up just a little bit higher. "And then we bummed around Europe for a while before ending up at Uppsala."

Conrad was so caught up admiring the chiseled features, and the dark glossy

black hair that he hadn't realized Sam had stopped talking.

"Sir?"

It was mortifying to be caught. "Oh so you both got degrees?" He had thought Rider's boast that he graduated was simply another empty boast in a long line of them. Never had Conrad thought to even check.

"Yes sir, your ex-wife, Mrs. Cotten, Lucinda, she was there."

Conrad didn't doubt it. He and his ex had barely spoken at the end, what she did and where she went had been a mystery to him. That she had not gutted his life was a blessing, that she had abandoned her sons as quickly as she'd left him had been the only surprise.

"Lucinda was at your graduation?"

"Of course," Sam said like it was expected. "You couldn't come, that's what Rider said." He turned to his friend. "You said he couldn't come that's why he wasn't there."

"Yyy-yes," Rider was nodding now, catching up like he had to with Sam a lot of the time. "That's exactly what I said."

Conrad looked between them but settled on the one he could actually see himself liking. "So, Sam, you graduated from a university in Stockholm?"

"We both did," he almost purred and Conrad decided right then that he wanted this beautiful man bent over the desk in his office. "As I said, from Uppsala."

But then he saw the dark, perfectly shaped brow arch with agenda and he understood that it would not be Sam face down on the furniture, it would be him. He

shivered with just the thought of it.

"I need to grab something out of my room," Rider told his father, patting Sam's shoulder at the same time. "C'mon you wanted to email that friend of yours anyway."

"I do," Sam agreed, giving Conrad a last brilliant smile.

The dimples were visible that time...Jesus, dimples too?

As the patriarch of the Cotten clan watched the two young men leave the room, he realized that he had never been so glad to be sitting down.

"See you later Dad," Rider yelled and Sam followed close on his heels.

For the first time ever, Conrad envied his youngest, worthless, son.

Upstairs, Rider had enough time to close and lock the door before Sam grabbed him, and slammed him hard back up against it.

"Fuck Sam," he whimpered, spreading his legs as he was trained to do whenever he was in the same room as his friend. "Now my father's gonna go look at their website 'cause what did you say it like ten fuckin' times, Uppsala, Uppsala and--"

"And he will find your name on the list of graduates and anyone that wants to download your diploma, with your permission of course, may."

Rider tried to turn his head but Sam had his hand fisted so tight in his hair that he couldn't. "You did that for me?"

"For me. I need you matriculated and legitimate. You can't take over things if you're the only Cotten without a degree. You have to be an appropriate heir."

"Sam," he whined. "My mother never even met--"

"Oh baby I know your mother."

"You do?"

"Of course. Why do you think she didn't take your father to the cleaners? Why do you think you still have walking around money?"

"What are you--"

"You know I hate questions."

Rider gasped as he was released because he knew his place, had been shown it often enough, had begged enough, and done whatever Sam ever asked of him. The depths of his devotion had been continually tested, and always Sam had been pleased. Rider would do anything, and Sam knew it.

"On your knees."

Rider went fast, yanking at his clothes, pulling them off, even as Sam slowly unbuckled his own belt, worked open the top button of his vintage jeans and dragged the zipper over the impressive length of his thick, cut cock.

The deep, aching whimper made Sam smile because shit, this was Ryder, the only person on the planet he never had to watch. He couldn't keep up the whole serious scene with a guy he had passed out in a bathtub with.

"You're such a douche," he told him, squatting suddenly and taking Rider's face in his hands. "I missed you asshole."

And Rider, who had realized at sixteen that since he couldn't have Sam all to himself that he would just fuck everything in sight, leaned in for the kiss he would die if

he didn't get.

Sam's lips melted over his and scorching heat pulsed through Rider as it always had, heating his blood, flushing his skin and making his heart pound loudly in his ears. He loved it, loved the claiming, the taking, the hands everywhere at once, the way Sam's tongue tangled with his, how softly his stomach was rubbed, and the tug of the fingers knotted in his hair.

When he felt like he couldn't breathe another moment, he tried to ease free, and the bite, so hard it drew blood, that too was craved. He took a gulp of air when Sam lifted his lips free and the room whirled as he was spun around and shoved face-first down onto his bed. He didn't even need to point; Sam knew where the lube and condoms would be.

"Grab the pillow, don't make any noise."

"Please...this time...no condom..."

Sam laughed, "in your dreams slut," and shoved two lubed fingers hard and fast, deep inside his friend.

"Fuck!" Rider yelled into the pillow, as always taking direction well.

"Too much?" Sam teased, even as his other hand began a slow, sensuous stroking over Rider's drooling cock.

"Oh God," Rider was slowly coming apart under his friend's rough hands, the dueling sensations breaking down what little control he had left. "Nobody treats me like they own me except you Sam. No one else ever has."

"Maybe because you're only mine," he told him, squeezing Rider's cock tight in his slick fist even as his fingers curled forward and slid over his prostate.

Rider jolted beneath him. "I swear to God if you don't fuck me already I'm gonna scream. I will howl your name so loud that--"

"That what?" Sam asked, ripping into the condom he had grabbed with the lube, in a hurry to get it on.

Rider craned his neck so he could see Sam over his shoulder. "Oh baby please."

Sam grabbed a fistful of thick hair and yanked hard and fast, bowing Rider's back, as he gripped his hip tight with the other.

"You won't say stop?"

"No," Rider whimpered, the whine following fast as he wiggled in the powerful grip, trying to ease back, to align Sam's impressive erection with his needy hole.

"Please."

Sam loved to watch his dark bronze flesh slide into the creamy white of Rider's ass. It looked so decadent, so gorgeous, and he was enthralled each and every time. As he breached him, Rider called his name and the hoarse moan made Sam forget to be careful.

He buried himself to his balls in one long smooth stroke and as he held there a moment, waiting for Rider's body to adjust, the pleading to simply take what he wanted began. Sam needed no other permission.

The thrusting was hard and hammering. Even if Rider had not started panting

and gasping, the tell-tale signs of his release obvious, feeling the muscles in that glorious tight ass squeezing him would have been enough to let Sam know his friend was close. Rider came hard, spurting over his silk bedspread as Sam fucked him through his shattering orgasm and his own. And because Sam knew, like no one else did or took the time too, he fell forward over him, pinning Rider down under him to the bed.

"I'm gonna stay here buried in your ass until I feel like moving, you understand?"

And Rider nodded, the press of skin, the heat, the sweat, the stickiness, the total sensory overload so much like coming home that he almost wept.

No, Sam never worried about Rider Cotten, the golden man belonged to him. So much so that later, as Rider slept, coiled around him, Sam simply sent emails from his phone to make sure that his deliveries were on schedule and would not be early. It wouldn't do to have production starting before he even got moved into his new house on Lake Fergus. The old abandoned Sherwood estate had suited his needs perfectly and the mayor had seemed quite pleased to finally have a neighbor.



- *Who is Sam, really, and what is he up to? Will he manage to wrap the whole town around his charming and well-oiled finger?*
 - *Why was the late Kurt Brant following Zach Boxer, and what's with the fakey magic props left on the body?*
 - *Will Vic use Oz's debt to lure him out of the closet, or will a fight for the bottom keep these two Alpha stags stuck in a horn lock before they even get started?*
 - *Will Adam get over his trip to New York without brain bleach and years of intense therapy? Will getting tangled up with Sam send him further down the rabbit hole?*
 - *How will Grady and Phil handle the strain of Phil's tumor? And what about Tony? Will three be company or a crowd?*
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TUNE IN NEXT WEEK!

Boxer Falls: The bigger they are...

Author Bio:

Mary Calmes currently lives in Honolulu, Hawaii, with her husband and two children and hopes to eventually move off the rock to a place where her children can experience fall and even winter. She graduated from the University of the Pacific (ironic) in Stockton, California, with a bachelor's degree in English literature. Due to the fact that it is English lit and not English grammar, do not ask her to point out a clause for you, as it will so not happen. She loves writing, becoming immersed in the process, and falling into the work. She can even tell you what her characters smell like. She also buys way too many books on Amazon.

Check out her blog: marycalmesbooks.blogspot.com