



Episode Twenty Six

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Boxer Falls: Episode 26

by Ellis Carrington

Sam sneered openly at one pissed-off Oswald "Put it on my Amex" Cotten.

Oz tried to look all big and bad. "You're gonna have to dock that thing elsewhere, Kabir." He jerked a thumb toward busted-up, burnt-out rear of the resort. "The workers and guests need to be able to get through. And good God, how did you ever get my brother into bed? You must be compensating for some serious shortcomings."

Sam shifted left to right against his black H2. "Bend over, Cotten, I'll show you how small my dick is." Sam's hands remained in the pockets of his cargo shorts, but his fingers curled into fists. If he had to, he'd go through the guy. "Now, Rider called me. Let's do this the easy way, huh?"

There on the front steps of the resort path, Oz's smile was shark-like. "My brother was just released from the hospital. He's not the best judge of what he needs. He sure as hell doesn't need you."

My teeth are sharper than yours though, asshole. He took a few casual steps forward to remind Oz Cotten, whose muscles were only gym-built, which of them was the bigger

motherfucker. "Howsabout you and your creepy asshole dad stop trying to keep his balls in a jar and let him handle his own fucking life?"

They bumped chests. "So you can fuck him up again? I don't think so."

"Oz!"

Sam and Oz turned toward Rider, who was headed down the concrete walkway that led from the mansion to the parking area. He wore a plain T-shirt and sweats that hung loosely on his hips. His face was pale and lined.

Sam hardly recognized him. His chest burned. *Goddammit, Rider.*

Oz stepped toward his brother. "Rider, you know your doctors said —"

"We're just going for a drive in Sam's new Hummer, Oz."

Sam's body vibrated with the force it took to keep his feet still.

Oz held up a hand. "No stress, remember?" The guy gritted his teeth.

"Excuse me, Mr. Cotton?"

Sam grinned. Saved by the bell-ringer. Walking up the drive was Dean Cummings, Sam's tan, eager, secret weapon for his new business venture. The kid was awesome: overqualified, discrete, and willing to work for peanuts.

Dean approached Oz with a hand extended. "Hi sir, I'm told you're the man to talk to. We're in pre-production for a new tourism video in Boxer Falls. I'm drumming up models and locations for filming. Getting all the appropriate release forms signed." Dean squinted up at the mansion "Whispering Ridge here would be a fantastic location for shooting and I'm betting with the recent fire damage, you could use the business."

Sam turned to Rider, whose eyes were wide like he couldn't quite catch up. The second Dean had Oz cornered with his clipboard and his glossy informational brochures, Sam slid his hand into Rider's. "Come on baby, let's get out of here." He opened the door of the still-running vehicle and helped his friend inside. They were going again before Rider finished buckling up.

Rider was silent for awhile. They meandered down curtain way, and Sam let his friend fuck around with the XM stations while tension crept into his back and shoulders. Nobody changed his stations.

Rider finally flipped off the radio – thank fuck – and flopped back in the seat. “Thanks for coming to get me. I’m sorry about all of that.” He exhaled a dry laugh. “I guess they kind of have reason to be worried.”

Sam licked his lips. “No big.” He shrugged. “We could go check out some that abandoned estate I bought. I’m starting a new television thing. You could see the setup. Maybe get something to eat.” Please, something to eat.

“I promise I’ll get ya home safe and sound. And no drugs. I’m outta that. I found out from a bug I planted in the sheriff’s office that the shit I gave to Zach Boxer was fake. And my last personal buy was tainted.” He shrugged slightly. “Probably for the best, I’m too pretty for prison.” He flashed a smile at Rider.

Rider smiled back. His hazel eyes sparkled in the early morning light that filtered through the car window, and a dimple popped out on his cheek.

Sam forced his eyes back to the road. The burn in his chest returned. *Yeah, see, that’s the real problem here, babe. The prospect of doing time doesn’t make me wanna heave half as much as the fact that it could have been you dead in the woods instead of those fucking loons I heard about. This wasn’t supposed to happen with you, Rider.*

“I’m not sure I’m hungry,” Rider mumbled from the passenger seat. “Seeing the estate sounds cool though. You kept saying you’d take me out there.”

Sam frowned. “You gotta eat, man. I can practically see through you.”

Rider blew out a breath. “Yeah, It’s just... the meds kinda take my appetite, and I started running. Sort of as a replacement for some of my... bad habits. Help me handle my nerves. I’ve got anxiety and compulsive issues on top of everything, turns out.” He laughed awkwardly, scratching his neck. “I guess I figured I’d rather be skinny than nuts.”

That info settled funny in Sam’s gut. Wasn’t like Rider, being down this way. Wasn’t rehab supposed to mellow you out or something? So Sam went for lightening the mood. “Well, hey, “ he said, sliding his hand over Rider’s thigh. “You could always give me road head. Lots of good protein in jizz, you know.”

But Rider pushed Sam’s hand off his knee. He’d never pushed Sam away. Ever.

They were passing the Junior college. Good thing it was Saturday, and the parking lot was dead fricking empty. Sam, suddenly hot all over, veered into the lot and killed the

engine. "Okay, what's the deal, did I piss you off? It was a joke, you know."

Rider turned in the seat. Jeeminy Christmas, Sam's skin shrank up tight on his body. This was Rider. His friend and sidekick and his fuck buddy and whatever else they were to each other. They'd been through Hell and back together. Right now the guy's eyes were wide and his shoulders were hunched. Rider pressed against the passenger door like he was afraid of Sam or something, and Rider was the one person who never had been.

Sam's fingers itched to grab this stranger by his cheap, shitty T-shirt and demand that he give him his buddy back. To pull what was left of Rider into his arms and kiss him, and fuck him, and beg him not to slip away. Because that vacant look in Rider's eyes... He needed Rider to be okay. He wanted Rider to be Rider again. Sure, he wanted him to be healthy, but this new guy didn't seem to care much for Sam.

Rider threw a hand up over his head as he turned to look out the window. "Look, maybe this was a bad idea." He rubbed his thumb over his temple. "I just needed a break. The house was loud with the construction and someone's always got an eye on me there now, and I called you because you're the one I always call..."

"Of course you can always call me," Sam said quietly. He'd always fixed things for Rider.

Rider leaned his elbows on his thighs. "Thing is, I've decide to be... celibate for awhile."

Sam's eyes must have shot to his hairline. What in the holy fuck? "Celibate?"

"Don't laugh."

Oh, he was most definitely not laughing. "Why?"

"I—" Rider pressed his lips together. Dammit, he was so pale.

"I don't get it. Is this your way of trying to give me a drama-free kiss-off?" Sam's heart pounded. His fingers dug into the orange leather of his seat. "I meant what I said about no more drugs. If you're worried about temptation, you don't have to worry about it from me."

Rider shook his head and banged his fist against the window. "You don't get it, Sam."

"So school me," Sam ground out. "Holy cow, kid, we've bailed each other out and cleaned puke off each other and you're clamming up on me now?"

"I don't like sex!" Rider's abrupt shout echoed around the inside of the large vehicle and clanged inside of Sam's brain.

What the...? Sam could only stare, waiting for the red to fade from Rider's face. He played him and Rider together — over and over together — going at it like dogs. Falling asleep together. What had all of that been, then? Rider dug sex more than any guy he'd ever met. "I don't underst —"

"Everything everyone thinks they know, everything you like about me, is a lie. I dealt drugs because it was a reason to hang with you. Fuck knows I didn't need the cash. I pretend to be a smartass and I pretend to like getting high and I pretend to like to fuck and I send pictures of my own pecker to the local media because that's who people seem to want me to be, Sam."

You don't have to be anyone, Rider. "I don't want —"

"Do you remember that summer you went to Istanbul for some study abroad thing and I stayed on campus to repeat my core classes, back when I thought there was a chance I could get my degree for real?"

Sam remembered. That had been the summer two sheltered rich boys had come out of their shells, Sam had thought. He'd discovered Turkish hash when he was supposed to be studying modern Islam. A week after his return he'd encountered a half-naked Rider getting blown by a German student on the balcony at a mutual friend's party. Skinny rich boy, all grown up. He gave Rider a short nod. "Yeah."

Rider picked at an invisible something or another on his sweats. "Yeah, well, Oz and his buddy Yoshi visited that summer." Rider's gaze got a hazy, far off look. "Man, I thought that guy was cool. Taught me all sorts of stuff about myself in bed, yanno? Filthy, bad in a good way stuff." Rider blinked, and his expression turned stony. "I sweatted him hard, too. I thought I was honestly special to him. Turned out he was into Oz hardcore, and Oz saw him more in a brother from another brother way." Rider sighed. "So I was a revenge fuck. The evil little shit plastered some photos of me jerking it with my face in a pillow and a purple dildo up my ass for the whole dorm to see, and to save face I started making like I was 'that guy'."

Sam hardly even blinked when Rider followed up his air quotes by kicking the dashboard of his brand new eighty thousand dollar car. His fingers curled tighter. "Why didn't I know about this?" *Jesus, Rider, I would've helped. I always fix things for you.*

"Come on man, you and I didn't talk about stuff like that back then. You thought I was fun. I wanted you to like me. But it doesn't matter anymore. All that skanking and

slutting was to give the finger to all those assholes who laughed at me. To Yoshi for thinking he could humiliate me.

“ And all that talking, talking, *talking* they do in rehab makes you feel like a total douche canoe but it also made me realize I’m pretty jammed up about what I do and don’t want out of fucking so I’m just not going to do it for awhile.” Rider pressed his hands over his eyes. “Compulsive tendencies, one of the therapists called it. I just call it proactively fucking everyone so nobody can screw me over.”

The look on Rider’s face was naked and raw, and Sam dug his nails into that seat, expensive as shit to replace Hummer orange leather be damned, because all of the alternatives lead toward madness.

“It was a joke, the road head thing,” Sam said again.

But Rider’s body got stiff and closed up. “See, you don’t get it. I knew you wouldn’t.”

Only Sam got it better than he wished he did. Yoshi violated Rider’s trust, and broke the kid’s heart back when he was young enough to still believe in that puppy love shit. And despite all these years Sam and Rider had been friends, Sam had made a point of holding his friend at arm’s length. Now Rider was sitting over there saying goodbye because he figured that if he wasn’t gonna blow Sam or help him sell product anymore then Sam wouldn’t want him. Shit-heel that Sam Kabir was, that might have once been true. The shame burned hard--but this wasn’t about Sam.

“Rider –”

“You know the real kick in the nuts was he didn’t stop with just me. After me he went after my mom too, stole Precious Heirloom, and then came sniffing around my brother at Whispering Ridge. Fucking insane, is what he is. I’m supposed to be working on my anger but he got what he deserved. I can’t believe I ever thought I loved him.”

Love? Sam swallowed a mouthful of acid. “What...what heirloom?”

Rider sighed. “Precious Heirloom, my mother’s Samoyed bitch. He stole her while she was pregnant. Those puppies go for like a grand a pop, too. Never did get the poor dog back.”

Son of a whore. When Rider opened the Hummer door, Sam grabbed the guy’s leg again. “Where are you going, dude? I’m serious, we’re friends. We don’t have to screw or get high to be friends. I won’t ask you to blow me again. I was kidding about that.” *I thought you trusted me.*

Rider bounced his legs for awhile, then pushed the door wider. "Look, I'm sorry for unloading all that. Thanks to all those fucking group sessions I don't seem to have an 'off' switch lately. I think I'm just gonna walk back. I need to work off some energy. And it's not you I have a problem trusting. It's me. I meant it when I said I can never say no to you." And then he was out the door.

It's not you, it's me. F' real? Sam's blood sang in his ears. He paused with his hand on his keys, ready to go after Rider, but he stopped. The guy wasn't ready to listen yet, judging from the steel rod in his spine. But Sam wasn't going anywhere, and he resolved to show Rider as he threw the Hummer in reverse and peeled out of the lot. Fucking Yoshi...

Blake found some kitschy little head-shop type of hole in the wall near enough to the Boxer B&B that he could see in the back windows and do the clicky-clicky with his fancy new camera. The dusty store lined with old cases of decorative glass bongos and attractive beads saw so few customers it was hard to fathom how it stayed in business. So for a hundred bucks a day Blake could hang out and "keep an eye on the place" while old Jimmy who ran it napped in his Laz-y-boy in the back.

Perfect setup, except for one thing: after a week of watching, the only thing Blake knew for sure was old man Cotten was going to have an aneurism over Blake's report.

For two married old dudes with an inn full of guests, Phil and Grady sure were managing to canoodle like newlyweds. Blake had caught them going at it in the upstairs attic, the master bedroom, the master bath, the study, the kitchen, and the pool late one night after the guests were all asleep. Not once had he caught Phil Boxer dipping his wick anyplace other than his own husband (unless a Fleshlight counted), and according to Blake's other man Tony hadn't successfully made contact in days.

This whole thing was a waste. Conrad Cotten needed to find himself some Zen and move on. Not that Blake wanted to rip up his meal ticket by telling the guy outright.

Movement across the way in the master bedroom drew Blake's attention. "Well hell, maybe it's not a total waste," he said quietly. Even as he lifted his camera, Blake's cock rose to the occasion. No question, these two were fun to watch.

Blake could take watching two hot and heavy silver foxes any day of the week. These guys, they took care of themselves. And you couldn't deny, watching them together, the kind of history these two had made their fucking fluid and effortless in a way Blake

hadn't witnessed in a long while.

Over in the window, Grady was giving Phil the kind of kiss that made a guy know he was a man. Stubble scraping and chest bumping, and Blake's balls throbbed pleasantly. He pulled his phone out and sent a text to Vic: *What are you up to?*

Paperwork. You?

Blake paused with his thumbs over the keyboard. The guys across the way had been tugging at his heartstrings some. Still, his pulse and adrenaline spiked a little when he dashed off his reply and hit send: *Missing you.*

Blake sighed. He ran a palm over the hard length of his cock through his pants, and smiled as he lifted his camera again. They'd gotten to the part where Grady would lick and kiss Phil all up and down. Scar worship, Blake figured. Thoughtful. Hot, too. 'Specially since it usually led to...

Bingo.

Blake's phone beeped: *Miss you too. I'll be off at ten. Want me ready?*

Blake smiled. Over in the Boxer's master bedroom, Phil's head dropped back while his man sucked his brain out through his dick.

Blake replied to Vick's text: *Wait until I get there.*

Back to the zoom lens. Grady got Phil good and worked up, tongued his balls, burrowed into his ass a little... Blake shifted in his seat. Looked like Phil was the one getting spread out and served up on this sunny Saturday afternoon. Sure enough, after some more ass nuzzling and even a little toe sucking Grady slicked up while Phil flipped onto his belly, stretching out like a contented cat.

Blake licked his lips thoughtfully and blew out a sigh. What if he went to Vic tonight and wanted to make love like those two? No cuffs, no paddles. And hell, Blake was no sub but maybe Vic could do the damn fucking once for a change.

Hell.

Maybe Blake was experiencing a case of Dom drop. Before meeting up with Vic again, he hadn't really been with anybody long term since... his eyes squeezed shut. "Or maybe I've been stalking monogamous married men all week," he muttered to himself.

Jimmy's loud buzz-saw snore answered from the back room.

Over at the Boxer place, Phil and Grady were getting into it. Grady fucking Phil with Phil on his back, Grady standing by the bed, driving him steady but hard, holding the guy's legs – but most importantly his stare – the entire time. Phil seemed like he was loving it so much he was too busy saying things to Grady and pounding the bed covers with his fists to even whack himself off.

And hours to go yet, until Blake made it hom – over to Vic's house.

Grady was running his tongue around Phil's toes again. Blake had never been a foot guy, but the way Phil got off on it was gorgeous. He was so engrossed he took a beat to react when the chime over the door rang.

"Good afternoon, sir."

Some sweaty, young, tanned kid with a clipboard and a water bottle carabinered to his denim shorts. Blake hadn't seen him in town before.

For a professional, Blake did a shit job of making it look like he'd been doing something other than peeping on two guys fucking with a boner and a long-range lens, but hell. Nobody ever came to this store but the occasional stoner teenager.

"Hi there. Dean Cummings." The kid had his hand out. Sweat gleamed on his skin in the store's fluorescent light. He cruised Blake – fast and efficient, but it was there. Too damn bad he so babyfaced, because Vic might have enjoyed a playmate.

"Hi Dean, I'm Blake. Listen, I don't think –"

"Don't worry sir, I won't take much of your time. We're doing some groundwork for a new tourism video and I just – Holy shit, are those two guys fucking over there?"

"Oh hell yeah." Blake checked it out again with the power lens. Grady was really putting his back into it now. Knuckled down over Phil, grunting and straining face on, snapping his hips hard. "Check it out." He handed the camera to the boy. What the hell, right?

"Fuck." The kid dropped his clipboard and didn't bother picking it up. "They're really hot, for old guys."

Old guys. Blake wasn't exactly a spring chicken himself. "Give me back my camera, kid."

Dean handed it over and bent to retrieve his clipboard.

Mm. Cutoff shorts. Tanned, tight, hairy legs. Nice. Blake was a leg man, all the way.

The kid stood and pushed his tousled, brown hair from a sweaty face. "So other than being an old perv, what are you watching those guys do it for?"

Blake pursed his lips. "No reason at all, kid."

No reason at all...

It was a good thing Quinn had just come from the bathroom when he let Oz Cotten into his apartment.

They'd fallen into a weird groove, Oz either coming by the bar or showing up to fuck at Quinn's place after hours. Occasionally Oz ate dinner at the bar while Quinn served drinks, which was the closest they'd come to having a meal out together. Every now and again, Quinn didn't give Oz shit about wanting to go to sleep *before* driving home, and rarer still they had an actual conversation outside of bed. Still, the fact that the guy walked in carrying a bouquet of flowers might actually have made Quinn piss himself if he hadn't *just* drained the lizard.

"Dude, daisies? Are ya fucking kidding me?"

The bouquet hit Quinn's arm with a prickly -thwap—before Oz threw the bunch unceremoniously on the breakfast bar in the kitchen. "Of course I'm fucking kidding you. I'm not that stupid." He threw a quick, bright smile at Quinn before dropping an overnight bag on the floor and stripping off his shirt.

"You mind if I use your shower? It's been a day and a half and I need to wash the whole thing off of me. My brother went and called his old fuck-up fuck-buddy and then was surprised when the whole encounter went south. I had to pick him up from downtown because he started to walk home and then got too upset and confused to finish the trip. He was a mess when I got there. And don't even get me started on the latest construction mishaps, which of course we have to pay extra to fix since it's Saturday."

"Uhuh, I'm sorry to hear about that." Quinn was still stuck on the overnight bag. Black leather. Burberry. "Oz, I think we need to talk, man."

Oz backtracked out of the bathroom, shirtless. Quinn's cock and ticker both gave a little lurch at the sight of all those peach-fuzz covered ridges.

Quinn put his hands to his hips, nodding toward the bag. "What, are you moving in now?"

Oz frowned. "I've spent the night a few times now. I figured this way I don't have to borrow your Listerine or wear the same clothes home. What's the difference?"

Nothing, except that this... *relationship* had already progressed about seventy steps past the line Quinn had drawn in the sand. If Oz started bringing his jammies and leaving shit for next time? The thought sent a bolt of cold through Quinn's body.

Elliot Quinn did not play house.

"Besides," Oz said as he undid the fly in his khakis. "An old business acquaintance of mine is the new chef at the Farmhouse Table Restaurant up on Lenox Peak?"

Quinn lifted an eyebrow. "I'm familiar." Quinn hadn't eaten there because the place was pretty ka-ching and all that, but the owner had come sniffing around Adam Parish more than once.

"All right, so." Oz smiled that smile again, and pushed his pants and underwear to the floor. "The guy makes a really excellent Beef Wellington. Serves two. I was hoping I could take you to a nice dinner. He agreed to stay open late, it'll be quiet. Easy to talk." He pointed to the bag. "I have to change clothes though."

Well, how about them fucking apples? Quinn told his stomach's little flip-flop to fuck off. "Oz Cotten, are you asking me on a date? Tonight?"

"Yeah." Oz's blue-eyed stare held his.

Quinn's iPod shuffled to "Brilliant Disguise" over in the kitchen, and Quinn took it as a good reminder to school his face. *No. No, I don't want to go out to dinner with you. Definitely not to a swank-ass hundred-dollar a plate restaurant where you paid your rich chef buddy Ganesha only knows how much money just to stay open late. Let's see, what pisses me off more? That you're throwing your cash around? That you're finally going out with me for real, only it's someplace nobody will see us? That I actually want to go at all? Ding, ding, ding! I think have a winner.*

Instead, he said, "Sounds Peachy, Oz." Quinn crossed his small apartment. "Just one problem. There's a naked guy in my bathroom I need to take care of first."

Oz laughed. Those firm, smooth lips gave way under Quinn's. Their tongues met in the middle. Oz's, as usual, tasted like wintergreen. The guy would probably die before committing the social faux pax of leaving home with bad breath.

They rocked against the sink. Quinn reached to turn the shower on and then pulled off his shirt. They were just getting to his kilt when Pink's "So What" came blasting out of Quinn's phone from the other room.

"You've got to be kidding me," Quinn muttered against Oz's lips.

"What?" Oz looked up. "Since when do you listen to Pink?"

"Ignore it, Oz. Let's get in the shower."

But Oz had already pulled away. Dimpled, muscular glutes flexed their way into the bedroom area. "Who's Cade?"

Quinn groaned. His hard-on sighed and pulled a "better luck next time" as Oz came back in holding Quinn's phone. "He's calling again. Is this important?"

"No. He's some moron who programmed his number into my phone last shift because he couldn't take no for an answer." Quinn pulled back the shower curtain. "Now. Didn't you say you needed a shower?"

Without another word, Oz dropped the phone on the bed. Something in Oz's chest loosened. Whatever. Not his problem if Oz had issues.

Finally they both got naked, furry chests rubbing. Pebbled nipples scraping. Truth be told Quinn really dug all the expansive, golden muscles on Oz's body. He could run his tongue over them for hours. Man.

They were about to step under the spray when the phone blasted again.

Oz pulled away. "Dude how many hookups have your number?" Cheese and rice, those blue eyes had managed to go from looking like tropical waters on a warm day to looking positively glacial.

"Oh good freaking grief." Quinn flipped Oz around against the sink, making eye contact with the guy in the mirror. "Come on, man. Live in the moment, why don't cha?"

Oz was stiff against Quinn's body, but after a minute or two of Quinn rubbing off on him the guy started to loosen up – and harden up. Oz's muscled ass pushed back and Quinn's dick rode the crack of his ass, its way slicked by plenty of precum. Quinn gripped hips and pecs and wished he had more hands while blue eyes kept right on starin' at green in the mirror.

Oz's ass pushed out, doubling his body over far enough that his breath fogged up the glass. "Weren't...weren't we going to get in the shower?"

Quinn breathed a laugh. "Right." The water was still running. Hard to recall when Oz had his legs akimbo and that sweet, pink pucker had just winked right at him.

Oz turned around and opened up for a kiss. Hard cock rubbed against hard cock.

The doorbell rang.

Oz slapped a hand over his face. "You've got to be kidding me!" But Oz had already turned off the shower and reached for a towel, so Quinn did too.

The kid at the door was young and handsome, and Quinn really had half a mind to pop him one just for cock-blocking. Not to mention the horrible cutoffs. Totally eighties much?

"Good evening, sirs, I'm Dean Cummings and I'm working with – Oh, you again."

A quick glance from the clipboard-toting, Daisy Duke-wearing teenie-bopper to Oz Cotten, and it looked like Oz wanted to give the kid a shiner also. Or maybe set him on fire.

Oz crossed his arms over his chest. "Yes, me again. I didn't want to sign your forms then, I don't want to sign them now. Thanks anyway. Please go."

The kid swallowed. "I haven't spoken yet to..." Sure as hell, Daisy-boy had the changes to give Quinn the once-over right there with Oz next to him in a bath towel.

Now Quinn, strangely, had the urge to set the kid on fire. He and Quinn were finally, almost, kinda sorta getting somewhere. Somewhere he didn't wanna go. Except he was going to get a really choice cut of steak out of it...

Quinn held up a hand. "Listen, Dean, I don't want to be rude. Okay, yes I do. No means no, all right sparky?" He pressed his lips together and ignored the hurt puppy look on Dougie or whateverhisnamewas's face. "You shouldn't be out past your bed time, and

Mom and Dad need to finish our adult conversation, aight?" Quinn pushed the door shut as he spoke, so the guy didn't really have room to give a rebuttal.

He blew out a breath. "Okay, let's get in the show...er. Oz?"

Oz's expression was focused somewhere off in the middle distance, and his hands just opened and closed over and over. "I don't think I've ever felt like a bigger idiot in my life, Quinn."

Quinn approached Oz and gave a firm tug on the guy's towel. "I'm a pretty big idiot too, Oz, I need more info here."

Oz sat, naked and apparently unseeing, on the foot of the bed. "With you I mean."

Well. *There* was a real sweet compliment.

"I never thought I got jealous. For a year my primary relationship was with a hotel auditor who flew all over the damn place so we kept it casual. And then I dated this woman once who had a sex addiction and she kept meeting guys online and flying places to fuck them while I was on business trips." Oz jammed a hand into his hair. "I didn't get pissed about it until the time she flew the hookup to *her* and booked him a room at my resort using my employee discount." He shook his head. "I just didn't give a shit. That guy gives you the visual 'hey how's it going?' and I'm ready to set him on fire."

And what did it say that Quinn had called it right on the arson thing?

Quinn couldn't swallow around what it was Oz seemed to be implying. "You can't flip every I get looked at sideways, Oz. You think the shoe won't ever be on the other foot?"

Oz tapped his fingers on his chest for a minute. "I know. You're right. I'm being juvenile. I'll get used to it," he said finally. Oz rolled off the bed. "You still up for showering with me?"

Quinn's stomach cramped. "You know, I'm actually pretty tired. Rough week at the bar. Maybe we can eat out another time?"

Oz hiked up one shoulder. "Sure, okay." Oz sent a text message from his phone. Hairy, striated legs carried him to the shower.

Quinn's foot bumped that ominous, pricey overnight bag again, and he closed his eyes.

Shit, he liked Oz Cotten. More and more each day he liked him, in the passing notes during science class, doodling in the margins sense of the word.

Maybe it was time to nip this thing in the bud.

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**What will happen with Sam and Rider?*

**Are Oz and Quinn on the Rocks?*

**What's up with Dean and his Daisy Dukes?*

**Have Phil and Grady straightened out their marriage for good?*

**Is Blake looking for love in all the wrong places?*

TUNE IN NEXT WEEK!

Boxer Falls: The bigger they are...

AUTHOR BIO:

Ellis Carrington was born after the Christmas of 2010 when she was gifted a Kindle and

discovered the gay romance category on Amazon that same day. Sometimes her heroes are human and sometimes they aren't, because angels and vampires deserve love too. Her favorite things are great friends, great music, and books that make her weep copiously. Find out more at <http://EllisCarrington.com>