



Episode Forty-Seven

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Boxer Falls Episode 47

By: Poppy Dennison

After months of captivity, Conrad Cotten had given up hope that his rescue was imminent. In fact, he'd almost given up hope altogether. A spark remained alive, and pushed him to figure out a way to save himself.

The chance came later, rather than sooner. Conrad feigned weakness and slumped forward in the chair he'd been tossed into. Another round of torture awaited. How he'd been able to resist so far astounded even him. Part of him wanted to give Aisha the codes and deal with the consequences later. He didn't think he'd have the chance though. If the situations were reversed, the moment he had the information, he'd kill her. Hell, he'd love the chance to kill her.

When her thugs tried to tie him up, Conrad turned his wrists slightly to the side. Not enough to garner their attention, but enough to give him some wiggle room while they left him to ponder his fate. Fortunately for him, they left the tools of the trade on the table across the room from him.

As soon as they closed the door behind them, Conrad staggered to his feet. A taser became his weapon of choice. He squeezed the sides together and tried to withhold his

flinch at the too-familiar buzzing sound.

Dressed only in his boxers, Conrad turned the doorknob. He smirked when the door opened. Maybe this wouldn't be so difficult after all.

He crept down the long hallway, his heart racing at the slightest sound. His breath came in gasping pants, his vision blurred. Such a short walk, and he'd already grown so weak he had to lean against the wall and rest.

When Conrad heard footsteps, he feared his escape plan had been foiled before it even started.

Quinn sat across a dilapidated kitchen table from the thug hired to beat him bloody. The guy really didn't have the heart for his work. Jerry was his name, a ham-fisted dock worker that damn Yoshi Pollack's dad had drug up from somewhere to do his dirty work for him.

When Quinn got his hands on that old geezer's neck, he'd show him what a real beating felt like. Jerry, on the other hand, had no idea what to do with himself.

"I need a drink."

Jerry stared at him, blinked a few times, but didn't seem to know how to react.

"Listen, I know you've gotta do this thing. Whatever, man. I didn't do jack-shit, but you got paid, yeah? So how's about this. You untie me, I go over to that little cabinet of booze right there, and make us both a nice fat glass of whiskey."

"I can't do that."

"Jerry, come on man. You gonna make me take a beatin' with a clear head? Least you can do is let a fella get drunk first. Then you've done your job, but you've let me get nice and fucked up so it's not quite so bad for me. It's a win/win, yeah?"

"That doesn't sound so bad."

"Right. So, untie me. It's not like I can go anywhere, right? You're a helluva lot bigger than me. What exactly can I do?"

Jerry nodded. "I could use a drink."

"Good man."

Jerry, being the big-hearted fella he was, untied Quinn and allowed him to serve up the booze. He didn't seem to notice that his glass had twice as much whiskey in it as Quinn's.

"I can't believe I did it." Conrad smirked at the unconscious guard at his feet. Staring down at his own near-naked body, he took the opportunity to strip the man of his shoes, pants, and shirt. Dressed again for the first time in months, some of his Cotten confidence began to return.

He patted the many pockets of the black utility pants and found a wallet and keys. The boots were too big, so he carried them. His bare feet were quieter anyway.

Conrad made his way toward the exit, picking up his pace the closer he came to freedom. Not much further. Black spots appeared in front of his eyes and his leg gave out. "Fuck."

He stumbled against the wall and forced himself to breath. He couldn't give up now. Not when he was so close.

Just a few more steps.

Pushing himself to the end of his endurance, Conrad shoved open a final door and gulped the first breath of fresh air he'd had since the day he'd been kidnapped.

He fumbled for the keys and hobbled to the few cars parked nearby. After matching the insignia on the key to one of the cars, he tried the lock and let out a laugh when it opened.

Months of captivity, finally at an end.

Now he just had to make it back to Boxer Falls.

Conrad Cotten wanted his life back.

Jerry slumped against the table, his life story pouring out in the saddest tale of woe

Quinn had ever heard.

“Man, that’s just the worst thing I’ve ever heard. Your mama actually shot your dog? That’s crap, big guy. How could she?”

Jerry blathered on. His wife wouldn’t sleep with him. Apparently his dick was about the size of his fists and he didn’t fit so well. Quinn shivered. He couldn’t blame her. Damn, that would leave a mark.

“You’ve got the worst luck, fella. How’d she go and marry ya, lead ya on that way, and now she won’t even do her duty in the marital bed?”

Jerry choked out a sob about the time Quinn heard a vehicle pull up outside. *Shit* he thought. *Time’s up.*

As Jerry wailed on, his face buried in his arms on the table, Quinn grabbed the near-empty bottle of whiskey and hid behind the door. He had the bottle raised, ready to strike, when he got the shock of his life.

“Fuckin’ hell. What happened to you?”

Never in his life had Conrad been so happy to see a familiar face. Even if that face belonged to his son’s lover, Elliot Quinn.

He’d passed empty a long time ago, though, and barely managed to slide down the wall before he landed in a heap at Quinn’s feet.

“Shit,” Quinn said. “Do I need to call an ambulance?”

Conrad shook his head. “No. Don’t call anyone yet.”

His eyes were drawn to the sobbing man at the table. He looked up at Quinn. “Is this your new...”

“Oh fuck no. The dimwit actually kidnapped me. He’s been supposed to beat me up and shit but he can’t seem to find the balls. I ended up convincing him to have a drink with me.”

“Never try to outdrink the bartender.”

"Don't you know it," Quinn smirked. "'Course, he didn't seem to think of that. Poor bastard is three sheets to the wind. Oh, and his best friend's poking his wife 'cause his prick won't fit. And his daddy ain't his daddy, because of some shit or other."

Conrad dropped his head back against the wall. "I believe I could use some assistance."

"Right. You happen to have a phone on ya?"

Conrad shook his head. The one thing he hadn't been able to find in the pants of many pockets was the guard's cell phone.

"Damn. Guess we'll have to use his. Hold on a sec."

Quinn went back to the table and slumped down across from Jerry. "Hey, Jer. Man, you gotta let me use your phone for a sec."

Jerry raised his head and wiped his dripping nose on the sleeve. "Can't do that. You might call for help."

"Aww, fuck that. I'm calling that asshole of a best friend of yours. Gonna give him a piece of my mind. You can't treat a guy this way and get away with it. Come on. Hand it over. I gotta do this for ya brother. It's in the man code."

Jerry sniffed and handed over the phone. "You're the best friend I've ever had."

"Yeah. I know, buddy. You just hang on in there. Didn't you say his name was Tom? Cause I'm gonna speed dial him right now."

Jerry nodded.

"That's right. I'm on this."

Quinn rolled his eyes and shook his head at Conrad when Jerry's head thumped back down onto his arms.

"Hey, Tom. This is Quinn."

Quinn came closer to Conrad and knelt down beside him. Conrad could hear Oz's voice on the other end of the line.

"Quinn? Where are you? Are you okay?"

"Yeah, Tom. You're a jerk, that's what I have to say to you. And if you think Jerry here isn't the best friend you'll ever meet, then I'm not stuck out here in this cabin on the other side of town. Damn place is cursed, what with the dead guy being here a while back and all."

"I have no idea who Jerry is, but I got ya. Do I need to bring Vic?"

Conrad shook his head.

"Nah, you don't need to do that. But you do owe Jerry an apology next time you see him. He's all broken up over you."

"Uh, right." Oz snorted. "I'm on my way."

Conrad ran his hand over his chest.

"You need some water or something?"

He nodded. Quinn returned a moment later with a glass and Conrad swallowed it down. He'd stopped for gas, using the cash he found in the guard's wallet, and he'd bought a couple bottles of water as well. He couldn't seem to get enough fluids.

Oz barreled into the cabin, gun in one hand and baseball bat in the other. He'd planned to toss one weapon to Quinn as they overtook whoever this Jerry character was. Instead, he slid to a stop as the scene unfolded before him.

A guy was passed out at the kitchen table. His snores reached sonic boom level and if Oz hadn't been armed and dangerous, he'd have plugged his ears in self-defense.

Quinn, on the other hand, sat on the couch beside his father of all people. To say that Conrad looked less than healthy would be an understatement. Dark circles formed bags under his eyes, bruises marred his neck, and his hands shook as he tried to spoon soup into his mouth.

"Dad? What the hell?"

Quinn burst out laughing, which drew a frown from Oz, but caused the giant in the kitchen to move his head and the snores lowered to a dull roar.

“Seems we’ve got a bit of a problem here.”

A bit? Oz had just seen his dad a few hours ago. No way he could look this bad in such a short period of time. He looked like he’d lost a good twenty pounds since the morning.

“What...I don’t even know what to ask.”

Quinn pushed to his feet and crossed the room. Oz’s breath caught in his chest. Fuck, he’d been so scared. Quinn leaned into him, took the gun from his hand, and pressed their bodies close.

Oz responded. Conrad or no, he needed to know Quinn was okay. He wrapped his free hand around Quinn’s back and jerked them together. He plastered his mouth to Quinn’s, pushed inside to tangle their tongues together. The bright tang of whiskey on Quinn’s tongue had him diving deeper, getting another taste.

Quinn pulled away after a moment and cocked a brow at him. “Feel better now? Staked your territory and all that? Gonna piss on me next?”

“No.” Oz answered. He ran his hand down Quinn’s arm. “You sure you’re okay?”

“Never better. ‘Cept that dead prick Yoshi’s pop had me kidnapped by Jerry over there, who I got drunk. Oh yeah, and that guy who’s been saying he’s your dad? Yeah. That’s not your dad. Seems ole Conrad has a twin.”



- *Can Conrad get some of that cheese to go with his soup?*
- *Has Quinn finally found something to bond with Blake over? (or something)*
- *Will they make it out of the cabin before Aisha sends her thugs to finish Conrad off?*
- *Will Jerry move to Boxer Falls, bringing all he has to offer?*

TUNE IN NEXT WEEK!

Boxer Falls: The bigger they are...

AUTHOR BIO:

A sassy southern lady, Poppy Dennison developed an obsession with things that go bump in the night in her early years after a barn door flew off its hinges and nearly squashed her. Convinced it was a ghost trying to get her attention, she started looking for other strange and mysterious happenings around her. Not satisfied with what she found, Poppy has traveled to Greece, Malaysia and England to find inspiration for the burly bears and silver foxes that melt her butter. Her love of paranormal continues to flourish nearly thirty years later, and she writes steamy love stories about the very things that used to keep her up all night. If her childhood ghost is lucky, maybe one day she'll give him his own happily ever after.

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