



## Episode 7

by Amy Lane

"Grady?" Phil mumbled, the insistent pain in the base of his skull waking him up in time for his painkiller, like it always did. Usually, Grady was asleep next to him— Damn, the man slept like the dead sometimes. As Phil's headaches had worsened, as his vision blurred, as his diagnosis had come in, Phil had learned to hate him for that. Christ, what he wouldn't do to sleep like the righteous.

God. Tony. Well, maybe he could stop playing with Tony's poor Labrador retriever heart for one.

Phil groaned, and felt for Grady again. How many years had they lain side by

side? Those early years, it had felt like their hearts beat together, like Phil couldn't breath without Grady's own chest rising and falling to the same beat. But Grady's side of the bed was cold and there was a determined, animal pacing in the small study connected to their bedroom.

Fuck. Grady was going to make a big deal about this, wasn't he?

Phil went to the bathroom and copped a painkiller, then went to confront his husband.

Sure enough, gait stiff from his bad back, Grady was on his umpteenth million round around the study.

"Grady – "

"No," he said grimly.

"I've been to the doctor's – "

"I don't accept that."

"I know you think you can change anything – "

"Have you even *tried*, Phil!" he snapped. "Have you even *tried* to find an oncologist or a specialist or someone to take it out?"

"I have a meeting tomorrow," Phil confessed. "I went in for the MRI and there's the results... I wasn't going to tell you – "

"You weren't going to *what*?"

Oh God. Grady was really pissed, and something in Phil brightened. You couldn't be that pissed if you didn't give a fuck, could you?

"I just thought..." Phil shrugged.

"Thought what? That I wouldn't care? That all our years together equals jack-diddly-squat? I mean, honestly, tell me. What was your plan here?"

"I don't know," Phil snapped, unable to contain his hurt. "I step out a couple of times and you go running back to Conrad Cotten the minute my back is turned?"

Grady flushed and looked away. "It was a lot of youthful stupidity, Phil. I don't know what to tell you. But it wasn't sex. And it wasn't... God. It wasn't a big pine box, either." Grady looked up, his hurt a tangible thing. "Yeah. Sure. I'm going to get all misty eyed when Conrad comes back. But do you really think that means I want to imagine a life without you? Even for a minute?" Grady ran hands through his silvering hair. "Like I said. No."

Phil grimaced, and stepped closer. "Grady – I mean, let's be honest. You're never going to forgive me for – "

"Forgiven," Grady snapped. "Sing a new song."

"Just like that?"

"Yeah, Phil. Just like that. I just got fucked up the ass by a kid who would lick the come off your toes – and you know what? I liked it. It was glorious. I haven't come like that in months. And you just sat there and held me as I came. And the whole time, I was thinking I wished it was you. It's going to be you again, Phil." Grady looked at him, some of the fight leaching from his back, his brown eyes tired and bloodshot. "Please, please tell me, I can make an appointment with someone, and we can do that again. I

don't feel old. I don't. I still feel twenty, and you're still the most fucking beautiful man I've ever met. I'm not ready to just give it up, okay?"

Phil found himself nodding. "Yeah," he said gruffly. "Yeah. Fine. Got an appointment tomorrow, but..." He gnawed his lower lip, and for a guy who liked to swing it around a lot and show all the kids how it's done, he was suddenly a lot weaker than all that. The admission was painful, it made him vulnerable – it's the whole reason he'd planned not to tell Grady a damned thing. But it was inescapable.

"Grady, man... I don't want you to see me like that. It's the only reason I'd even try to go it alone."

Grady sighed. "Phil?"

"Yeah?"

"Do I have to be fucked by someone else to get a fucking hug or something? Cause if I do, get someone on speed dial, okay?"

Phil laughed with only a little bitterness and stepped into his space, wrapping careful arms around his shoulders.

Grady sighed and melted into him. It wasn't complete trust. Phil would always be jealous of Conrad Cotten. Grady would always be jealous of Phil's last fuck. But it was Grady in his arms, seeking comfort, seeking to give comfort, and Phil buried his face in Grady's neck.

"You're a real piece of work, you know that?" Grady whispered.

"I'm sorry," Phil mumbled. "I'm sorry. I'm so fuckin' sorry..."

He waited for a "me too" but it wasn't coming, so he made himself content.

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Late shift, eleven p.m. Quinn wiped the bar for the umpteenth time and felt dismally for his tip placket. Awesome. Fuckin' tourists. Could save their pennies to come to this fleaspeck town and get their toes licked, but couldn't tip their bartender to save their lives. Some people shouldn't get service, they should get *serviced*.

"Hey, redheaded guy!" Some yahoo down at the end was shouting. He was hot, Quinn would give him that. Hispanic, Puerto Rican or Dominican maybe, with swarthy skin, shorn nappy hair, and an accent you could cut beef with. He had wide cheekbones, pillow lips, and a swagger that made you think of pounding thrusts over a car fender.

Quinn wasn't buying. Yeah, sure he bottomed. But he kept that little act private and reserved. The closest this guy would come to Quinn's ass was when Quinn lifted his kilt, dropped his boxers, and made that assclown kiss it.

"Yo, Town Boy," Quinn snapped back to that nice little piece in the kitchen, "you got that order for table twelve ready yet?"

"No...no." God, the kid had been off all night. Whatever the fuck had gone down earlier, when the kid had taken a break, had sure made this guy break into a sweat. Quinn sighed. God. The only one in the front of the house even remotely interesting

was the Sheriff he'd bugged on his trip in. The guy kept shooting Quinn dirty looks, and Quinn was pretty sure he hadn't forgotten that whole handcuff key thing, and Quinn couldn't really blame him. Well, one and done, and Quinn wasn't looking for seconds and he figured Sheriff Spank-Me-Fuck-Me-Twist-My-Nipples-Til-They-Pop wasn't either.

Quinn looked deliberately at the asshole calling him "redheaded guy" and turned his back, going into the kitchen to help the field mouse with the shaking hands and the twitching whiskers.

With brisk movements he threw some chips into the fryer and breaded some zucchini to go in next, and mouse boy pushed the sauté pans around with lackluster movements and a habit of jumping six feet whenever something popped.

"Jesus, kid!" Quinn snapped after a couple of minutes of chopping veggies. "You're making me punchy just looking at you. I sweartagod, you tell me where the big bad wolf is, and I'll kick him in the nads just to make sure he doesn't eatya!"

Adam looked at him through haunted eyes. "Aren't you the guy who doesn't give a fuck?"

"Yeah. I'm the guy who doesn't give a fuck, but you? You give a giant fuck. Man, you're buddy's not here tonight, okay? He's sleeping it off somewhere or getting some tail. Whatever's going on here, there's no knight in shining armor who's gonna save your skinny white ass, so maybe nut up and act like you can sock it in the jaw, okay?"

For a minute, Quinn thought he'd succeeded, and was going to go make a note of

that as the peptalk of all time, because the kid's shoulders straightened and his movements became more sure. He dished up two pasta dishes with some serious aplomb and garnished them with style, and then put them in the window and went to plate up the next thing that was ready.

"You're wrong," the kid said though, quietly. "Sometimes the knight in shining armor does show up."

"You think so? Cause I gotta tell ya, if he's askin' for a blowjob, you might want to check the lease return on that fuckin' armor."

"I think he owns the whole damned suit," Adam said, but he wasn't being shitty about it, and his new demeanor never changed. Awesome. He looked like he could stay all strong and happy like that, which was great. Quinn could get back up front where the tips were, and he could depend on his damned chef not to melt into a puddle of very attractive butter. Jesus, if this kid had the slightest bit of backbone, Quinn might go for it, but he didn't like fainting gay-dens.

"Well whip-spiffy for him. You all caught up now?"

Adam shook himself and looked around at the various dishes cooking and prep work done. "Yeah. Uhm. Jesus. Thank you. You might not be a total prick."

Quinn rolled his eyes. "Bullshit. I am still a total prick. I just don't like serving bitchy people. Don't get behind again."

He back-assed his way through the swinging doors and grabbed the two plates of pasta from the rack, taking them out to the table where one of Boxer Falls' few het

couples sat, with eyes but no one but each other. Too bad, really, because they were both pretty and Quinn was horny, but no threeway for him. At least not tonight.

He looked around for the Sheriff, thinking that maybe if the guy was panting for it that bad, Quinn might remember to give him the handcuff keys this time, and saw that the guy was gone. So was the bossy Puerto Rican motherfucker who couldn't order a drink without being an asshole.

At that moment a choice piece walked in and Quinn wanted to kick something. Oh Jesus, what is it with the fucking scared rabbits in this place tonight!

"Hi," the guy said, and Quinn realized that not only did he look familiar, he expected Quinn to know who he was. Oh God, someone important in the community, should Quinn remember to kiss his fucking ring?

But the guy's hands were shaking as he passed them over his tres chic buzz cut, and Quinn grunted. He looked pale and scared and like he was about to throw up. Well, if any place was good for the Irish courage, it should be a bar, right?

"Can I help you?" Quinn asked, thinking that this guy didn't look comfortable so needy. Unlike the poor kitten in the kitchen, this one dressed and walked with sort of a swagger – no, he wasn't used to being the guy in need.

The guy swallowed. "Yeah. Yeah. I'm looking for the sheriff? Sheriff Vic?"

Quinn almost did a spit take. "You? Are you *sure*? I don't think so!"

"No, no – I need to confer with him about something. We've got some..." The guy flushed. "Unfinished business."

Quinn pulled up one side of his mouth and started stacking glasses from a rack of clean rack by the bar. "Really? I mean, if you *really* gotta see the guy, I think he's out back, uhm, *conferring* with some douchebag from the bar." Quinn tried to put as much innuendo in "conferring" as he possibly could – he *really* didn't want this one to go wandering around in back and see the sort of hardcore shit Sheriff Vic wanted to take up the ass, but Mr. Unfinished Business wasn't taking any direction. In an abrupt, decisive movement, he turned on his heel and went walking down by the restroom, and Quinn heard the swing of the door to the rank alley out back, which was littered with dirty condoms.

"All right," he whispered to himself. "You asked for it. Five, four, three, two..."

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Vic shuddered, grunted, and thrust his ass back harder. God. Yes. Fuck. Harder. Sometimes – hell, *all* the time, it was better if you didn't know who was giving it to you, as long as it was thick and brutal and up his ass.

This guy had a cockring on, too, something nasty, with metal bumps around the base, and every time he thrust hard, Vic wanted to shout and come, but he didn't. Not even that was enough pain to get him off.

"Harder!" Vic snarled. "Harder! Fuckin' spank me! Use your goddamned belt!"

The guy stopped, lodged to his base in Vic's ass, and Vic shuddered in ecstasy as

that nasty cockring stretched and hurt. God... God... nobody could fucking deal out slutty painsex anymore. The redhead at the bar had been close, but this guy? This guy was a master.

There was a fumbling and then the guy started to move again, and then a faint whistling as the belt, folded double, came down on his flank. Oh God... oh God... so good. So fucking good. But still not enough... still not enough... and then?

"Oh holy God!" Vic looked up, a stranger buried in his asshole, a belt smacking his ass, his cock in his fist, and saw Oz Cotten, looking at him like Vic was fucking his puppy.

Vic closed his eyes because he had to, because his entire body was exploding in orgasm, and his scream of completion in that dirty back alley masked the sound of the door slamming behind Oswald Cotten's back.

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Oz stumbled blindly to the bar, his hands shaking, his sense of disappointment so damned acute it actually blossomed like an ache in his chest. He could have had something sweet, that afternoon. He'd been in his office, the lights had been dimmed, Yoshi had been there, hands on his skin, all of those long repressed memories and yearnings from school between them, and Oz had... Oz had smiled politely, been urbane and condescending, and sent him away, disappointed, and Oz was sure,

resentful.

And all because Oz had... what? Dreamed that the guy currently taking it up the ass in the alley was going to – rescue him?

Jesus. Oz hadn't believed in that sort of shit even when he was pretending to be Prince Charming to the unbreakable chain of women he'd banged during college.

"Grey Goose," Oz said shortly to the ginger-headed bartender with the lean, gamine face and sardonically raised eyebrow. "Glass and bottle."

The young man rolled his eyebrow and when he spoke, it was pure joisey. "You got a cab there, pretty boy, or a bus, or a serf at the wheel of the batmofuckin'bile?"

Oz pulled his head out of the Sheriff's ass for a minute to actually assess the guy, and he felt himself sneering. "You knew!" he snapped. "You *knew* what they'd be doing –"

"Hey, hey!" Redhead held his hands up in front of him in the universal "cool yer jets" hand gesture. "Yeah, I knew. Sheriff Vic there was my first ride into town, so to speak. But I tried to tell you. I swear I did. I..." The guy grimaced. "Man, I don't think you were in the mood to hear."

Oz sighed. "Yeah. I wasn't. Look, if I have you call a cab in an hour, can I have that Goose now?"

"I'll give you a double," the guy said assessingly. "We'll see where it goes after that."

Oz laughed. Punky little fucking leprechaun, wasn't he?

The drink thunked in front of him, the glass cut crystal and sparkling and the

alcohol inviting. Oz had been planning to just guzzle it, but the bartender's conservative approach had him sipping, appreciative, and looking around.

Okay, so he'd seen the place before – it was his competition – very Hunting Lodge of the Outback, right? But everything was clean, and the bartender seemed to like to move and keep it that way, and they lowered the lights after ten. Some of the angry tension – and the unwanted, painful arousal – faded as the lighting and the alcohol washed it out, and when Plucky the Leprechaun came back to check on him, Oz was almost human.

"How'm I doin', Mom," Oz asked cheekily. "Can I have some more now?"

"Yeah, you think you're fuckin' funny," the guy said, reaching for the bottle. "But the whole goddamned town knows who you are."

"Yeah? Why should that matter?"

The guy poured his drink and set the bottle neatly on the shelf, like he wasn't going to have to pull it out again in a minute.

"I been in this town a week, and I know how shit works. The Cotten's don't get nothin' on their boxers and the Boxer's shit don't stink. Baby Boxer and his buddy, the Uncomfortable Growth? You alls is fallin' all over yourselves to make sure they don't grow up too quickly, which is a real shame, because Uncomfortable Growth there ain't no everyday hash-slinger, you hear me?"

Oz perked up. "He's good?"

"Guy can turn actual hash into five star cuisine. Anyway, there's them. And then

there's your baby brother, who hits on anything with a penis and a pulse, and the whole fuckin' world lets him cause what? Cause he's a Cotten? Fuckin' fabulous for him, right? And then there's you. Now the gossip says you're straight but – "

"I've heard enough," Oz snapped, swallowing his drink and holding his glass out for more.

"Yeah, Mr. Cotten. Sure you have, Mr. Cotten. I'll leave you alone now, Mr. Cotten." The pretty redheaded bartender turned around and walked away.

Oz watched him go and sighed. God. The man was actually *talking* to him. No "Yes, Mr. Cotten," or "Of course not, Mr. Cotten." Even Yoshi had been deferential, and now, knowing what he knew about the Sheriff, Oz had the feeling that all of that come-hither dominance had been a show for him too. And now, he finds the one guy on the planet who can apparently talk to him like a human being – and an equal, for Christ's sake – and Oz lets his own arrogance drive the guy off.

"Hey," he said, as the guy came back his way out of what was, apparently, damned stinking necessity, "I'm sorry. You were being decent. I got shitty. My bad."

Red eyebrows hit a bright red hairline. "I don't got no money," he said suspiciously, and Oz rolled his eyes.

"I do. I don't need to suck up to you, uhm... ?"

Bartender took a deep breath. "Quinn," he said, extending his hand. "Elliot Quinn."

"Oz. Oswald Cotten," Oz said, taking that handshake. They both stopped, as soon as their palms made contact, and Quinn's eyes got hooded, and lazy. Oz's breath

stalled in his chest, and he suddenly longed for the remaining Grey Goose in the tumbler, as his heart started doing the Tootsie Roll in his ears.

"Straight?" Quinn asked gently, tightening his hand and rubbing the inside of Oz's wrist with a callused, slightly damp finger. His hooded eyes were an intense, sparkling green and he still had freckles across the bridge of his nose.

"As a ruler," Oz mumbled, but he wasn't talking about his orientation anymore, oh no he wasn't, was he.

"Right," Quinn said, licking his lips with a pointed pink tongue. "The bar closes in an hour, Mr. Cotten-me-Straight. Howsabout I give you a ride ho —"

There was a sudden shout then, and what sounded like a gunshot, from out back, and Quinn swore, jerking his hand back and throwing himself over the bar rather than raising the moveable part that swung upward. "Adam, watch the fuckin' till!" he shouted, and went hauling ass down the hallway.

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Goddammit! That fucker tried to *shoot* him!

Vic buckled his belt then and zipped his fly and stretched his shoulder. Jesus, you couldn't even trust a fucking hook-up these days, could you?

And it had been going so *well*. He'd come, the Eduardo had come, and they'd stood, panting, in the alley, buckling their pants and laughing in exhilaration for a

moment. The guy had pulled out a cigarillo, and Vic – who was usually a cigarette man, after sex – had taken him up on it. They'd stood, smoking and talking about the sex and what made it *good*, the facelessness, the edge of pain, the things they liked when they were doing an honest to God scene (this was more Eduardo and less Vic. Vic didn't go in for too much staging during his sex – quick and dirty was just his thing,) and Vic had started getting hard again.

Eduardo had groped him and laughed, and said, "Give me a minute, big man. Tell me about your day first."

So Vic had been showing off. It's what he did. He'd done it for Oz Cotten, he'd done it for that bantam weight little bartender with the outstanding cock, and he did it for Eduardo now, who had a pretty face and the *coolest* cockring Vic had ever seen.

"Yeah," he said, trying to keep from preening. "My day was fucked up, man. It gets that way when you find a dead body in a tourist town."

Eduardo flicked his butt to the ground. "Dead body?" he asked, his voice suddenly colder than Vic remembered. Vic must have looked at him funny, because Eduardo smiled lazily and started stroking himself through his fly, like he was ready for a second round. So Vic told him about the body at the boat house, relishing every grim detail. He'd just gotten to the part where Oz Cotten had lost his fucking lunch when Eduardo said, "So, do you have any clues?"

Vic shrugged. "Just some planted bullshit pointing to the occult book – *holy fuck!* "

Because Eduardo had pulled out a gun and was aiming it at Vic and grimacing.

"My God, you talk too much for an open asshole!" he snapped, but Vic really *was* actually a cop, and he really *had* trained to disarm an armed opponent, and he'd grabbed the guy's hand in a wristlock and twisted it, hard, hard enough to make the guy drop the gun before Eduardo knew what hit him. Eduardo had apparently trained somewhere too, because he gave his hand – still in Vic's grasp – a hard tug, and when Vic overbalanced, he grabbed the back of his head and shoved him toward an oncoming knee. Pain exploded through Vic's head and he crumpled, knees down in the fetid alley. He had enough presence of mind to grab the gun, though, and fired a warning shot into the night before he leaned against the wall and let the pain in his nose sweep over him.

"Jesus!" The voice was unwelcome but not exactly unexpected. "What in the fuck happened?"

Suddenly there was a clean bar towel being thrust into his hand, and Vic took it gratefully and tilted his head back. "I almost got shot for opening my big goddamned mouth!" he snapped.

"Yeah?" Quinn asked quizzically. "That's a shame. I thought your blow jobs were top notch."

Vic grunted. "That's not when the gun came out, asshole."

"So when did it?"

Behind Quinn the door opened again, and Vic knew who it was going to be before he even turned his head over his shoulder to look.

"Someone who got *way* too interested in Oz's dead body," he said, and then gave it up and leaned back against the wall, in spite of whatever crap was on the lower part of it.

Quinn didn't seem shocked at all with that declaration. "You got a dead body?" he asked, and the Sheriff saw him turn around to Oz. "Really?"

"It was... unsettling," Oz said, and Vic laughed grimly to himself at the thought of the uptight Oz Cotten and how goddamned pale he'd been.

"Damned straight!" Quinn crowed, bouncing on his toes. "Man, the first body I saw wash up on the fuckin' river bank, I threw up so hard I saw shit I ain't *eaten* yet. No *wonder* you wanted a drink and... a drink."

The hesitation was barely noticeable – as well as uncharacteristically tactful of the usually blunt little Quinn.

"I felt like the biggest pussy on the planet," Oz confessed, and then, living up to his rep as a cold-blooded bastard, he got back to business. "What are we going to do about this, Sheriff?"

Vic turned toward him and scowled. "Well, for starters, I'm going to go back to the station and write up some paperwork for it." He kept his scowl in place and ignored the heat in his face. "I would appreciate the holy fuck out of it if the two of you would –"

"Ignore the holy fucking you were doing out here before it happened?" Quinn asked, looking delighted with himself.

"Yeah," Vic grunted, because they had him by the short hairs and everybody

knew it. "That."

"Yeah, fine, Sheriff," Oz said, not even pitching his voice to gloat. "Just remember, I have a priority too."

"Yeah, yeah. Trip Whitlock. I hear ya. Could you two... I dunno, go the fuck away or something? I'm gonna slink to my car and sit on my doughnut cushion and go do paperwork."

"Well, ya know," Quinn said wisely, "that's why you gotta save your fuckin' till the end of the day, Vic. This other thing, this ain't good for ya."

Vic laughed weakly, spattering blood on his white towel. "Quinn –"

"Yeah, yeah. Goin' the fuck away."

The two of them disappeared back down the hallway to the bar proper, and Vic grunted and made his way to his car. Holy Jesus fuck me twice, but it had been a day.

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"This isn't my house," Oz Cotten said in complete sobriety at Quinn's side. Quinn pulled Oz's seriously choice car to a stop and just looked at him.

"Did you want it to be?" he asked, and for once there wasn't any attitude in his voice. He wanted to hear Oz say it.

"I don't know," Oz murmured. He sounded tired and needy, and Quinn turned the big ol' BMW off and shifted around to look at him. The crowd at the bar had pretty

much dispersed after the excitement, and it had been Quinn and Oz, talking quietly until Quinn had finally told Adam to drag his sorry ass home.

"You had a bad day," Quinn said, "I get that. Man, I got two remedies for a bad day, and the bar just closed."

"I just wanted some comfort," Oz admitted, and then smiled mockingly at himself. "I'm not six. I can live without comfort."

Oh, he was going to make this hard, wasn't he? Well, that was okay. Quinn was getting hard just hearing his high-toned voice talking softly in this choice car. He reached out and put his hand on Oz's thigh.

"Is that comforting?" he asked, and preened a little when Oz shuddered. Oh yes, girl, boy, didn't matter. Human touch in the sensitive places, everybody wanted it.

"That shit Vic was doing in the back alley," Oz murmured. "That looked... dirty. That wasn't comforting at all."

Quinn sighed. "Well, yanno, one man's comfort is another man's stag film. He likes it that way – I don't know why. What do you like?"

Oz grunted. "Female...ahhh..." because Quinn had moved his hand up a little and grazed the package he felt growing there.

"Bullshit," Quinn said needlessly. "If you want me to touch you again, you gotta fuckin' tell me what you want."

"God," Oz groaned, straining for Quinn's hand. Quinn kept it away from Oz's package, knowing it was cruel but not caring. Yeah, Quinn fucked both kinds, but he

was damned straight about it. This guy – this guy was yearning so hard for a hard cock that it was a wonder his own wasn't just dragging him toward any available orifice, like a dousing rod for cum.

"Say it," Quinn demanded, scraping his nail down Oz's inseam. "I wanna hear ya say it."

"A kiss!" Oz muttered harshly, and before Quinn knew what was happening, one of those big, long-fingered, manicured hands was hauling at the back of his head and Quinn's mouth was being opened, plundered, and tongue fucked like he had never been kissed before.

Oh God... tongue, sweeping in and out, hand, knotting in his hair, and Oz's other hand up under his T-shirt, kneading at his chest. A fingernail lightly scraped Quinn's nipple, and Quinn yelped into his mouth.

"Sensitive?" Oz asked, surprised, and Quinn undid his seatbelt and slid the seat back so he could turn sideways and get some leverage.

"Goddamned right they're sensitive," he muttered, grasping the lapels of Oz's collared combed cotton shirt in either hand and giving them a yank. Buttons scattered across the car and Quinn shoved the tight-fitted undershirt up over a tanned, rippled abdomen and chest, and took one of Oz's nipples in his mouth, suckling hard, and teasing with his teeth.

"Oh... ahhhhhhh!" Oz gasped, and Quinn placed more kisses on his chest, his sensitive ribs, his tender stomach. He slid down in front of Oz, giving thanks that a car

like this had leg room to spare, and started working on Oz's fly.

"Kiss?" Oz asked plaintively, and something of that vulnerable man, the one who'd been straight with Quinn, showed up in his voice. Quinn looked up at him, unzipping his fly and yanking at his trousers and briefs with almost too much force.

"Sure I'll kiss ya," Quinn promised. "I'll kiss ya when my mouth tastes like your come, and you don't have a doubt in the world who's blowin' ya, and why you like it!"

Oz was hard, painfully hard, by the time Quinn pulled him out. Quinn held that piece of flesh in his hand and took a moment to appreciate a goddamned work of art, squeezing it, lapping at the head, nibbling at the crown, and then Oz knotted his fingers in Quinn's hair again and shoved his mouth down.

Quinn swallowed him until his crown was scraping his throat, and swallowed some more, just to hear Oz groan. Quinn hollowed his cheeks, tightened his lips over his teeth, and sucked, pulling up, feeling his own cock grow hard just hearing Oz groan. Oh God. Oh God, Oz Cotten was letting Elliot Quinn blow him in the front of his BMW, oh Christ, just the thought was enough to make Quinn come.

But he wasn't gonna. Nuh-nuh. Elliot Quinn knew when to hold out for a good thing. He pulled back, letting Oz's cock smack him in the cheeks, liking the way Oz squirmed and grunted and said pleading words under his breath. He spit on his fingers and thrust them back toward Oz's entrance, then stilled and just rubbed them around on Oz's rim. Oz groaned and Quinn licked a long line from his base to his tip, and sucked that tip into the cave of his mouth.

"I want ya, sure," he said, playing with that rim. It stretched like Oz was pushing against his finger, trying to suck it in, and sure enough, there went his fingertip, twitching around in there while Oz pulled at Quinn's hair until it hurt.

"Please," Oz breathed. "Please."

"Are ya sure? 'Cuz if you come in my mouth, that's just the beginning, Mr. Cotten. I'm gonna take you in my house and I'm gonna fuck ya until ya scream. Hell, I'm gonna fuck ya 'til you're *mine*. Elliot Quinn don't give no fuckin' free rides, you hear me?" He thrust his finger in a little deeper, and Oz cried out and thrust his backside down begging for it.

"God. Anything. Please... just tell me you'll kiss me when it's done."

Quinn wanted to crow. A kiss? Oh yeah. Quinn was gonna bruise those rich pillow lips and then he was gonna stretch that tight asshole and pound Oz 'til he blew again all over Quinn's bed. Quinn wanted to roll around in it, wanted to smell and taste like Oz's come, and right now as Oz begged him so pretty, Quinn gave Oz exactly what he wanted and sucked that cock right into the back of his throat again and again and again and again until Oz ripped out a groan that Quinn felt in his own balls and spurted, hot, bitter, right down Quinn's throat.

Quinn swallowed, 'cuz he was raised right and slid up, making sure his body and his clothes abraded Oz's sensitive skin and his still twitching cock. He didn't swallow *all* of it though, kept enough, just enough, to lower his head and plunder Oz's mouth, giving him back some of his come in a deep, soft, wet kiss.

And Oz? Oz wrapped his arms around Quinn's shoulders and held on, shuddering, until Quinn had no choice but to wrap his arms around that trim waist and hold on back, soothing him while he came down.

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Mmmm... Sam had forgotten how sweet Rider's body felt next to his, how safe, like a trusted dog or a new, devoted puppy. He finished checking his e-mail when the phone rang in his hand and he sighed, running his other hand down Rider's back. He wanted a repeat. Somehow, he never seemed to truly lose himself in anyone else's body like he came inside Rider.

Rider arched against his palm, even in sleep, and Sam answered the phone reluctantly.

"Eduardo?" he said, surprised. *This* man shouldn't be calling him. "You did *what?*"

Samatakya swore. Goddammit. Not this.

"Why in the hell did you do that? It wasn't our job—why would we need to do something so foolish?"

He listened again and wondered if he couldn't call back Gino and have him do a little wetwork. No, not on Sheriff Vic—the man was a buffoon, who wouldn't have been worth the bullet even if the murder investigation *had* taken him close to Sam's own plans—but on Eduardo, whose obvious interest in warning the Sheriff away just might

do what the murder hadn't.

Bring Sam into the light.

"Fuck. No. Whatever. Get yourself on the next plane to bumfuck Egypt – no, I don't give a fuck what a sweet ass the man had, I don't fuck pawns brother, and neither should you!"

Sam rang off and set the phone down next to him on the end table and Rider stirred in his sleep.

"Sam?"

"Sh, baby," Sam said, with unexpected tenderness. Something gnawed at his throat and he couldn't shy it off. He didn't. He didn't fuck pawns. So if he didn't fuck pawns, after all these years, what in the hell was Rider?

\* \* \*

Quinn opened the passenger door and slid out. "Get the keys," he told Oz, and Oz? Well, Oz did exactly like he asked. He slid out of his own car and pulled his pants up, tucking himself back in and was going to buckle his belt when Quinn turned to him abruptly and stood on his toes, pressing their bodies together and raising his mouth for another kiss.

Oz took it, surprising and tender, and ran his hands through that gorgeous ginger hair, massaging his scalp and not yanking on it, like he had when he'd been lost

in passion. Quinn still tasted like his come, still salty and bitter and sweet, but he also tasted like Quinn, like the coffee the man had been drinking and the attitude he'd been spouting and, underneath, the unexpected kindness that he'd deny if he could.

"Don't fasten your belt," Quinn ordered softly. "Yer not gonna need it tonight. You ready to ask for what you really want?"

Oz looked at him, those bright green eyes gone dark in the night, and nodded.

"I want you," he said gruffly, and Quinn's smile promised everything with a side of no-bullshit-sass.

"Fuckin' peachy, Oz Cotten. Let's go get laid."

Oz found an answering smile, and followed this bantam weight little bartender into the shitty kind of apartment that you'd have for a summer rental. He was going to leave his car parked out here. In the morning, everyone would know.

For a moment, his feet failed him, and he stumbled to a halt, then Quinn turned back around like he knew *exactly* what Oz was thinking.

"I palmed your keys while we were kissing, college boy," he said smugly, pulling them out and jingling them. "Now stop playing games and come get them."

Oz didn't have any trouble this time, making it to the door and following him in.



- *Who is Eduardo, and what is his connection to Brandt?*
  - *What will tomorrow bring for Grady and Phil? Is Tony out of their lives for good?*
  - *Can Adam man up and pull out of his tailspin without waiting for a prince to come?*
  - *What IS Rider to Sam? Are Sam's plans in town going to Hell in the proverbial handbasket before his operation gets off the ground?*
  - *Will Vic's overwhelming need to get his ass nailed to the wall end up getting his ass fired? Will he get his shit together before his case falls apart and his murder suspect blows town?*
  - *Is Oz waking up a new side of himself, or just a tourist? And WHAT is going to happen when he and Quinn get behind door number one? What will the morning bring?*
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**TUNE IN NEXT WEEK!**

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

**Author Bio:**

Amy Lane has four children and a beloved Mate and did not need her writing dragon, forcing her to write m/m fiction, but he showed up anyway. She, her family, and her cursed dragon all live in a teeny-tiny house in the pit of the Nor-Cal 'burbs where she cons her useless teenagers into doing housework and avoids as much responsibility as possible. She also knits, because it's the only way she can justify buying more yarn.

If you want to keep up with her bizarre brain functioning in an unexciting life, tune in at [www.writerslane.blogspot.com](http://www.writerslane.blogspot.com), and if you want a product list and some free fiction (most of it annoyingly het) go ahead and visit [www.greenshill.com](http://www.greenshill.com). If you want to e-mail her and tell her to stay off your lawn and stop annoying your animals, you can reach her at [AmyLane@greenshill.com](mailto:AmyLane@greenshill.com) – and she'd be more than happy to get off your lawn and stop petting your cat, even if the cat loves her best.