



Episode Forty-Two

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Boxer Falls: Episode 42

By: Xara X. Xanakas

Rider Cotten was not a stupid man. Irresponsible? Yes. Self-absorbed? Absolutely. He was, after all, a Cotten. "All for me" might as well be a Cotten clan motto. But stupid? Never.

But the pages he'd been staring at all morning just didn't make any sense to him. GTACTCA, TAGCATA, the characters went on and on. The test results dove into every molecular detail of five different donors, according to the reports that had been sent over.

Ever since finding out Zach was a long-lost Cotten, Rider was dying to know how he was related. The resemblance was unmistakable, now that he was sober enough to notice. If Conrad had another son he'd tossed aside in his quest to satisfy his dick, Rider didn't know what he'd do. Cut ties with the old man? Insist that Zach be welcomed? Would Zach even accept their hospitality once he found out? Rider just didn't know.

Thoughts of how to handle welcoming Zach were pushed aside by the latest wrinkle in the Cotten fabric. Rider shuffled the documents again, looking for any possible explanation for the anomalies the lab found.

He'd been careful when he collected the samples – a few hairs from Conrad's brush, some from Oz's comb, minus the longer red ones of Quinn's, and some from his own head. The cum-stained shirt Adam and Zach had used to clean up in the cabin during the storm. All individually packaged and labeled for testing.

DNA didn't lie. Except when it did, apparently. The lab tossed out one unrelated sample. Adam's DNA from the shirt, Rider presumed, as he read the report.

It was the rest of the findings that were troubling Rider. Some of the results he'd expected. Oz was definitely Rider's brother, for example.

There goes the 'I'm adopted' fantasy, Rider thought bitterly.

Zach, on the other hand, was not their brother. He shared markers with them, but he had more in common with Conrad's DNA. Well, Conrad, and Unidentified Donor #1, the results said. The unknown donor's DNA was a nearly identical match for Conrad's, but there was a slight genetic mutation. At first, Rider thought it was a mistake, or maybe the aftereffects of a bug Conrad had contracted during his abduction.

This was different, though. One of Conrad's hairs showed Werner Syndrome, a rapid-aging disorder. Rider would have missed it completely, but something about the way Conrad had been acting since coming back from Salem made Rider request a full evaluation. Conrad hadn't been quite the same. Some might even say he'd been *nice*. "Nice" and "Conrad Cotten" didn't belong in the same sentence, especially when his sons were involved.

With his father's money and power to throw around, all Rider had to do was sit back and wait for the lab to report back. It had taken longer than he'd expected. The lab requested another batch of samples to verify their results, pushing the final report back until Rider finally received it at the beginning of October, three months after he'd

started the process. The TV shows where they caught the murderer hours after he committed the crime had it all wrong.

“Trick or treat,” Rider mumbled as he re-read the results yet again. This was going to be some Halloween.

“Order up,” Adam called as he set plates on the counter in the Whispering Ridge kitchens. With the Bear and Bones still under reconstruction, money had been getting tight. He’d already burned through his meager savings account and was down to his last few bucks when Conrad Cotten called him to offer him a position in his restaurant. Adam suspected it was more to thank him for his part in the rescue than his cooking prowess, but he didn’t care. Money was money, and the Cottens had it.

“Hey Bobby, I’m going to take a--” he started to say as he turned around, but no one was there. Well, no one who belonged in the kitchen anyway. Blake Hartnett had always given Adam the creeps, but as he stood at the deserted pass, Adam couldn’t stop a shudder.

“Hey, kid. Nice work in Salem,” Blake said as he casually took a bite from a carrot he’d picked up from the vegetable station.

Adam wasn’t sure how to respond. “I was just there to help Zach,” he said with a shrug.

“And you convinced the SWAT team to follow that fool Grady in. Don’t sell yourself short,” Blake said. Something in his expression put Adam on alert. It was predatory, and it made Adam uncomfortable. Blake blinked, and the look was gone, replaced by an easy smile that didn’t quite reach his eyes.

“If you’ll excuse me,” Adam said as he maneuvered around him to start on the next order. Blake took a couple of steps over and leaned back against the counter.

"Shame about what happened to Torres."

Adam's knife slipped and he cut his finger. "What?" he asked as he wrapped a towel around his hand. His fingers were cold, and with the way his blood rushed through his ears, he barely felt anything in his hands.

"Torres, the guy who was visiting the day of the disaster?"

"I don't know who you mean," Adam said.

Blake stared at him for a minute, and Adam knew he could see through the lie. Finally Blake nodded. "Well, it's a damn shame about him anyway. I was there when Old George came through the place and the glass shattered. I was so focused on the chunk that hit Elliot, I didn't even see the one that sliced Torres's throat. But it tore through his neck like butter." His eyes were cold as he stared at Adam.

"That's awful," Adam whispered as he turned to wash his hands. He stared at the blood mixing with the water as they swirled down the drain. He closed his eyes, and the scars on his back burned in memory of that night under Torres's blade.

"That's the way it goes sometimes. Couldn't have happened to a nicer fella. Anyway, have a nice day, kid." When Adam turned back around, Blake was gone again. A CD with Adam's name written on it laid on the counter where he'd been. Adam grabbed it and started for the door.

"Where are you going?" the chef asked as he passed him on his way back in.

"Cut myself. Be back later," Adam called out, holding his hand up as he left.

Sheriff Neale hung up the phone and scribbled more notes in the file he was working on. He'd checked every psychiatric facility within five hundred miles and none of them were missing anyone resembling Reverend Jordan Moses John Malachi Smith Cotten Jingleheimer Shit or whatever he claimed his name was today. It was like the man appeared out of thin air just to make things a little more crazy around Boxer Falls. They had no cause to hold him, but Vic couldn't exactly cut him loose either. Something hinky was going on in Boxer Falls, and the Reverend may have the answers Vic needed. He wanted to keep Smith somewhere close enough to question as Vic unraveled the mystery.

He'd been staying at the community center since Deputy Sanchez picked him up, but since most of the residents had gone back to their rebuilt homes, the temporary shelter was being closed. Vic had managed to get him a bed at the clinic over in Lenox Ridge, but he wasn't looking forward to the drive. The fact that his dick had been hard all afternoon and his balls were aching didn't help his mood any. Now he had to get the loon up to the clinic before their intake hours were over, chewing up any free time Blake might have had before he had to get back to some kind of job for old man Cotten.

"Fucking great," Vic muttered as he looked down at his crotch. His dick throbbed inside his pants, and the teeth of his zipper dug into the sensitive flesh. "Sanchez!"

"Yeah Boss?"

"I'm taking the Reverend to Lenox Ridge, then I'm off for the night."

"Drive carefully, and try to do something about that, will ya?" Sanchez looked at directly at Vic's cock, bulging hard against his trousers. "It's scaring the rookies."

"Everyone's a fucking smart ass." Vic picked up his keys and walked out, shaking his head. Just when had his deputy developed this supposed sense of humor? It must have something to do with getting laid regularly. It appeared Diego finally managed to convince Tony daddies weren't the only authority figures around town. *Good for him*, Vic thought, even as he grumbled about missing his own disciplinary consultant.

The Reverend was in one of his thoughtful moods, and Vic was glad for the peace and

quiet as they drove out of town and began the trip around the mountain. He eased back in his seat and stretched his legs out as much as he could and let his mind wander. What was keeping Blake so busy these days? It had been over a week since he'd had been able to spend any real time with Vic, settling for hard and fast dry fucks over the kitchen counter before taking off again. The quick rub-offs had eased some of the tension, but the last bruises had faded, and Vic missed the strain in his muscles that a long session with Blake could provide. Their sex life wasn't exactly vanilla, but it was a far cry from the thirty-one flavor sundae he'd become accustomed to. Sure, Blake had tied him up that morning, using his own handcuffs to secure him to the bed. But once Vic was trussed up and unable to move, Blake sat back on his heels and jerked off. Vic had tugged against his restraints wanting to touch, to feel, to dear lord taste Blake as he stroked his cock, but he ignored Vic's pleas. The veins in Blake's neck stood out as he came, shooting thick, hot cum all over Vic's balls. Vic had bucked his hips against Blake, just needing a little friction, and Blake slapped his thigh.

"No. I want you just like this," Blake said with a stroke to Vic's aching dick, "when you get home tonight. Don't touch it. Or else." The look in Blake's eyes nearly made Vic come right then and there. Vic didn't know which he preferred: the brutal retribution if he came, or the diabolical rewards Blake had in mind if he obeyed.

Damn, the things Blake could do with just a belt in the moment. Giving Blake the space and time to plan had Vic aching in anticipation. Overly scripted scenes had never interested Vic much in the past, but then again, neither had fucking the same man twice in a week. But the thought of Blake plowing him hard and fast had Vic dropping a hand to his crotch to press down on his hard cock.

"You know, it's been nice to see Bryce around town," his passenger said, snapping Vic back to the present. He jerked his hand back up to the wheel and checked the rearview mirror.

"Bryce? You mean Conrad, don't you?"

"No, Bryce. My son."

Vic shook his head. Reverend Smith-Cotten-Whatever was convinced Conrad Cotten was his son. They'd ran a quick blood test to confirm he could be related, but the full

DNA report was backlogged at the state forensics lab. There were real crimes to be solved before they could help a podunk town like Boxer Falls determine if a drifter was related to the most powerful family in town.

"I bet you were worried when he was abducted," Vic said, mostly just to fill the time and keep the old man from spouting more of his theological mission to save Boxer Falls from itself.

"He wasn't abducted."

"Yes he was. From here, and taken to Salem?" They had been through this story before, but the old man just couldn't seem to get it.

"That wasn't Bryce," the Reverend said with a shake of his head.

"Oh, okay." Vic grinned. If the Reverend wanted to believe that, he wasn't about to try to convince him otherwise. Besides, he wasn't a trained professional. That was something for the doctors at the hospital where Vic was taking the Reverend.

"That was the other one. Conrad." The Reverend stared out the window with a blank look and a serene smile on his face. "Bryce was in Salem all along."

Adam rushed into the apartment and threw the deadbolt locked behind him. He hurried from window to window, closing all the blinds and turning off all the lights. After he was sure he was alone and sequestered away from the rest of the world, he sat down on the bedroom floor. The dim light reflected off the face of the CD.

Was it possible, Adam wondered. Was it finally over? He'd relived that night so many times. The thrill of being away with Zach, on their own for the first time. The butterflies in his stomach as he steeled his nerves to finally make a move on his best friend, followed by the crushing disappointment when Zach hooked up with a random

stranger at that party. When Gino Torres offered him a drink, Adam took a page from Zach's book and said "why the fuck not?" Except Zach's books were erotica where everyone got off in the end, and Adam's book turned out to be a gore-filled horror novel. He'd been drugged, abducted, and tortured, and Torres filmed every sadistic bit of it, from Adam's obviously stoned acceptance at the beginning to his broken begging for it to end three days later.

He stood on shaky legs to put the disc into the player and fast-forwarded through the revolting video. The cold and pain and fear seeped into his bones as he watched his younger self shiver and cry on screen. His stomach reeled, and he ran to the bathroom. After vomiting up his breakfast, he crawled into the shower, turning it as hot as he could stand it.

It's over now. Torres is dead. It's over, Adam told himself. *You survived it. You're stronger than this.* After a while, he started to believe it. He stood up and tried to wash away the grime he felt on his skin. He was just about to shut the water off when the curtain pulled back and Zach stepped in behind him.

"Hey, babe. I didn't expect you to be home so soon," Zach whispered as he kissed the back of Adam's neck.

"Something came up."

"Funny, something came up here, too." Zach clutched Adam's hips tight, and Adam groaned as Zach rubbed his hard cock over his ass.

"I can tell." Adam closed his eyes and sighed as Zach's hands continued their path around his hips down to his cock.

"Feels like the same thing came up there." Zach's breath was hot on Adam's back as he kissed his way down Adam's spine. "Maybe we should do something about it," Zach said with a stroke to Adam's cock. He took a few steps back to lean against the tiled wall, pulling Adam along with him.

"This is a new position," Adam said with a smile.

"Just wait." Zach dropped to his knees behind him and bit his hip. He nudged his knee against Adam's ankle. "Move your leg."

Adam did as Zach asked, unable to think of anything but the hand tightening on his cock and the hot tongue on his ass cheek. Zach kept bumping his ankle until he put one foot up on the edge of the tub, spreading his legs wide.

"Yeah, that's it," Zach whispered. "Now, move back just a little," he said as he sat back against the end of the tub. Adam looked down at Zach's legs, stretched out between his. He groaned when Zach's whiskers scraped along his sensitive flesh.

"Oh fuck," Adam whispered when Zach's tongue slipped over one of his balls. Zach grabbed his own cock as he closed his mouth over one of Adam's dangling balls and he swirled his tongue around it.

"Take your cock," Zach said, moving his hand from Adam's cock to cup his balls. Adam complied and started stroking himself in time with Zach's movements on his own hard shaft. "Yeah," he whispered against Adam's skin. He used his free hand to spread Adam's ass wide, and then his tongue slid along Adam's crease.

"Fuck, Zach," Adam panted as Zach flicked his tongue over his hole. He pressed his hips back to get more, but Zach chuckled and teased him. He started at Adam's balls and licked across Adam's opening, then swirled his tongue around it before pressing against it. Zach moaned against Adam's balls, and the sound reverberated up Adam's cock.

Zach pumped his cock faster and his legs flexed between Adam's. He did that curl thing with his tongue Adam never could master and pressed into Adam's hole.

"Fuck!" Adam shouted as he came onto Zach's body below him. Zach groaned and bit into Adam's ass as he lubed up his cock with Adam's cum. Adam tried to catch his breath as he watched Zach's cock spurt over his hand onto his thighs. He gave himself a

few more strokes, his body spasming as he softened in his fist. He leaned his cheek against Adam's ass and took a few deep breaths. Adam reached behind him to rest a hand on Zach's head. After a moment, Zach kissed Adam's rump and stood up. He stepped around Adam to rinse off.

"Damn, that was hot," he said with a grin. "I'll let you finish up in here." He turned around to kiss Adam before he stepped out and left Adam alone in the shower.

Adam took a minute to lather up again and collect his thoughts.

Just go out there and destroy the disc. Let it go. Zach didn't know then, and now he never has to. He stepped out of the shower and wrapped a towel around his hips. He opened the door and the tinny sounds of "You're My Best Friend" playing over the television speakers made his skin crawl. Zach was sitting on the couch with the remote in his hand.

He turned to look at Adam, eyes wide and face pale. "Babe?"

Where the fuck am I? Conrad Cotten thought for about the four billionth time. Underground somewhere. He knew that much at least. Two of the walls were iron bars, but the other two were rock. It looked like a cave that had been converted into a jail cell. It was damp, but not as cold as it would have been at home. Warm air blew through the open bars.

"Hey!" he shouted even though he knew no one would answer him. No one ever did. The guys who brought his food never said a word to him. They'd slide the tray through the wide opening in the door and walk away.

This had been going on for weeks, maybe even months. He didn't really know anymore. He remembered the ship, waking up in a container with Phil Boxer, and Phil fighting off three men before the tear gas. They'd been taken from the ship to another holding cell.

And he remembered fucking Phil Boxer. God, did he remember the feeling of Phil's tight ass around his cock. One last night on earth, the voice had said. He and Phil made the most of it, promising each other they were thinking about someone else. Grady Boxer may have been the only thing they had in common, but it was Phil's cock down Conrad's throat that night, Phil's ass he'd been buried balls-deep in. Phil Boxer had been one amazing fuck. No wonder Grady never left him, even with his infidelity.

In the morning, Conrad had been dragged out of their dark cell. The irony of meeting his fate in nothing but his boxer briefs after having been in both Boxer men's briefs made Conrad chuckle. That is, until he met their captor. A man wearing his own face, claiming to be his twin. How could he have a brother and not know it. Twins were supposed to be in tune with each other, weren't they? Shouldn't Conrad have known there was another piece of himself out there somewhere? And how could his father not tell him he had a brother? How could anyone have kept a twin a secret like that?

And what the fuck was that twin up to now? Was he taking Conrad's place at the estate? Would his sons be able to tell someone else was claiming to be their father? He snorted. Even if they did notice, they probably wouldn't give a shit, as long as the bank accounts stayed open for their use.

"Hey!" he shouted again when he heard the door open above him and footsteps on the concrete stairs. "What's going on here?" he demanded as a figure dressed in black stepped out of the gloomy light.

"Calm down, Mr. Cotten. This will all be over soon," a woman responded. Her model-gorgeous looks and looked out of place in the dirty dungeon.

"I know you," Conrad said. He'd seen her in town with that Kabir kid Rider had been so attached to. "You're the sister. What do you want?"

Aisha's smile made Conrad's blood run cold. "That's easy, Mr. Cotten. I want revenge. And you're going to help me get it."

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- *What will Adam do now that Zach has seen the video?*
- *Who is Reverend Jordan Moses John Malachi Smith, and what does he have to do with the Cottens?*
- *Are the test results Rider has real or is it some elaborate hoax?*
- *Is Boxer Falls strong enough to withstand Aisha's revenge?*
- *Will Conrad ever get inside either of the Boxer men again?*
- *Will Vic be allowed to come soon?*

TUNE IN NEXT WEEK!

Boxer Falls: The bigger they are...

AUTHOR BIO:

Xara X. Xanakas decided years ago to embrace her weirdness. A friend first described her that way to the man who's been her husband for over twenty years. That formula

fits her, and she figures if it ain't broke, don't fix it. Being Texan, her crush on cowboys comes natural, but the techie in her loves to show nerds a good time. She relishes all things different, and brings saucy style to her writing. Whether wrangling a wayward ranch hand or adding another critter to her were-menagerie, Xara strives to make the outlandish appealing. She'll make you quirk a brow and snort with laughter, and that's all right by her. Xara believes that unique is best and happily ever after is the icing on the cookies.

Give her a shout out at her website, or ~~stalk~~ follow her on twitter and Facebook.