

*A Sip...*



*A Torquere Press Short*

***Cowboy Christmas: A Roughstock Short***  
***By BA Tortuga***

Dillon Walsh had thought his days of having to work the Fourth of July were over. Really, that was why he was on the big tour now, where they had a break for the Fourth.

Right?

Right.

Cowboy Christmas. Him and Coke, hanging with the puppies, sucking down beer and shooting roman candles into the sky. Possibly riding a horse or two, slowly.

For fun.

Early in the morning before the heat became a living, breathing, evil, awful thing.

That was the plan. That was the goddamn *deal*.

So why was he outside, in 104 degrees, in a tiny Texas arena, sweltering in a barrel on the holiday that should mean a cold pool and a hot grill?

Dillon glanced over at the bullfighters, dressed old-style in tattered denim and striped red and white cotton, faces painted wildly. Two of them were young, bouncing, lean and mean. The other one was a block of pure muscle, craggy face wreathed in a happy grin that Dillon could see from where he was.

Oh, right. Coke.

Some buddy from ten thousand years ago had called begging a favor and Dillon had known -- known -- he should have turned Coke's ringer off because Coke had never said no to anyone in forty years and viola.

Rodeo.

Jesus.

Coke only had to work the bullriding section. Dillon? He hadn't planned to work at all. He'd shown up in Coke's favorite T-shirt, the one that clung a little, and his best Wranglers. Then old Teague Newcombe had seen him and lit up like Christmas.

"Dillon! Thank God, boy. Fallon Ryan is laid up, and he was supposed to be our entertainment. Could you?"

One puppy dog look from Coke's gray eyes, one borrowed make-up and outfit, and one call to Sandy at the league to get permission, and Dillon was cracking jokes with a rodeo announcer so old he had been there when Moses had gotten bucked off a rabid camel.

Coke owed him.

Big.

Blowjobs.

Steaks.

Foot rubs.

Possibly begging and pleading.

They'd picked up the barrels for the girls, and it was time for Coke to go to work. That actually boded well for Dillon, who had to stay in the hot barrel, yeah, but he got to be quiet and still.

Coke was moving good, bouncing around, hollering at the guys. Dillon thought, maybe, there was a little resentment in the working men, because they weren't on their shit like Nate and Coop would be.

There were no grumbles, though. Coke was the damned law when it came to the bullfighters. The one they all looked up to.

Dillon just liked to look at Coke's ass.

They zipped through the rounds, slick as shit through a goose. Coke was bouncing and laughing, sending the guys up into the fence, tagging the bulls.

Then he heard the announcer say bullfighter competition.

Dillon groaned, and he started climbing out of the barrel, intent on going and telling Coke not to even think about it. Not even.

There would be no leaping over bulls, damn it.

Of course, then a little Mexican fighting bull came out of the chute, one of the younger bullfighters going for it.

Christ.

Dillon slid back down in the barrel, knowing he was about to go for a ride. These kids always made the bull go for the barrel. Helloooooo puke.

The bull came running at him, Coke jogging after it, going for the tail. Dillon watched, a sudden, sharp fear hitting him that the bull would turn, take Coke head on. They didn't need that right now. He'd just gotten Coke healed up from last year. Hell, the man already couldn't turn his head worth a damn, and--

The bull came for the barrel and Coke jumped, grabbed one horn and pulled, hard, turning the little bull sharp to the left. "He's mine, Mister. Let him be."

Dillon's mouth dropped open, and he almost forgot to duck into the barrel when one hoof came flying back his way. Then he grinned, hiding in the dark for a moment.

That was enough to make a man stupid, really, how much Coke loved him.

He heard some shouting, a few whistles, and then someone was banging on the barrel, telling him it was safe. Dillon popped up like a jack-in-the-box, looking for Coke.

Coke was between him and the chutes, solid as a rock, grinning at him. The man jogged over, sweaty and grimy and happy as a pig in shit, makeup running in rivulets down his face. "You ready to go home, cowboy?"

"I am. You owe me a cookout. We owe the dogs a sausage. And I think you owe me something even nummier." He could feel his make-up running, too. Jesus, it was hot.

"Yeah? You think?" Coke bounced a little, on his toes, shuffling in the dirt as they rolled the barrel back toward the chutes.

"I think. Is there a place to clean up?"

"Not to speak of, no. But there's a little bathroom so that I can at least put my jeans on and get this shit off my face. I don't see how you can stand it." Coke didn't hold with the dangles and torn up costume, not really. If pushed, in fact, the man could lecture about professionalism for hours and how cowboy protection was *not* entertainment and they weren't clowns.

Dillon thought he could possibly be offended by that, if he wasn't making more money in one event than Coke did all season.

Possibly.

Or not.

"I'm used to it."

The bathroom was locked, but Coke waved down an older cowboy -- that knew Coke by name and reputation, apparently, and was obviously related to Cotton because damn, look at that shock of red and white hair -- came and unlocked the big Master lock, let them in to change up.

"How's Marsha, Glenn?" Coke asked, running water into the ancient metal sink for them.

"Not bad, Mr. Coke. The pleurisy has her a little down, but that's nothing new."

"Yeah? I'm sorry to hear that. She here today?"

The old man shook his head. "It's too damn hot." Those blue eyes cut over to him. "Pardon my French."

God, they all thought of him as some kind of celebrity. Or a Yankee. He never really knew. "You know how it is with that damn Texas French. No apology needed."

The cowboy chuckled and Coke hooted, stripping down, quick as you please. "Well, sir. If you'll give me a holler, we're playing in San Angelo in September. That's inside and I'll find good tickets for you and Marsha. The two grandbabies, too, iff'n you want."

"Four."

Coke stopped, looked over. "Whut?"

"Denise and Jackson? They done had twin girls a month and a half ago. You oughta see them, they're something else."

That led to back slapping and looking at pictures and arrangements for tickets and all.

Dillon watched it with a great deal of fondness. His bullfighter was just...

Damn.

There weren't words.

They got themselves all cleaned up, bought a couple of corn dogs, two beers, and big bottle of water, before wandering through the little path of vendors toward the exit. They were parked in the back, near the cattle trailers.

When they were almost there, a little boy in a clown get up stopped him. "Sir? Sir, are you really Dillon? I mean, from the big show?"

Coke chuckled. "He sure is."

"Can I have you sign my hat, please sir? I wanna be a barrelman one day. I worked three junior rodeos already."

"Good for you." He took the kid's straw hat, scrawled his name across the brim, hoping no one else was wanting autographs. That could suck up a huge amount of his Fourth.

He had serious plans for the rest of his day.

Naked plans.

Man, man. No naked thoughts with the kids around. Damn.

The kids started coming, though, like he'd been afraid of, and he signed for about ten minutes, sweltering out in the heat.

Coke watched the whole thing from a few steps away, bouncing idly, waiting. A couple of bullriders stopped to chat, then the ropers started wandering over, each one just talking over

cattle and horses and chutes and cowboy stuff and that had to be more fun than signing "Dscribblescribble" over and over.

Finally the crowd eased off and Dillon mopped his neck, shook his head once the kids left, and tilted his head toward the gate. "Let's go."

Now.

"You don't want to stay for the fireworks?" Look at those gray eyes dance.

Dillon was going to beat the teasing asshole.

"I want fireworks at home. With you." Dillon stepped close, lowered his voice, letting it go all throaty-sexy-kitty. "Your mouth. Your ass. We might even use the pulleys."

Coke stopped bouncing, eyes wide and hot-hot. "Truck. Home. Now."

Oh, hell yeah.

"Kay!"

They didn't even stop to get paid at the gate, Coke waving at Teague and hollering, "You know my address!"

Dillon thought that was a pretty good deal: Dillon more important than cash.

Coke had him strapped in the bright red duallie, George Strait blaring along with the a/c, and had them moving down the highway at a strong clip.

His head spun a little, feeling a little light from going from heat to air conditioned cab in zero point nothing. "You have fun?"

"Yeah. Yeah, them kids didn't have their heads on all the way, but it was nice enough. The bulls aren't bad there."

"It went fast." The bullriding, anyway. "Getting to watch your ass helped."

Coke's cheeks went pink. "Not bad for an old man, huh?"

"Inspiring." He could write odes. Wait, he had.

"I like inspiring, I think. You miss working the little rodeos, ever?"

"Sometimes." He had to admit it. Dillon loved his job, and at its most pure it was all about the small rodeo. The fans there were so loyal. So salt of the earth. Like neighbors.

"Yeah. I like the little shows, although the boys need us more at the big tours."

"Yeah. And we get paid more." It went both ways. You did the big show, you could fly instead of spending forty hours a week driving.

"Well... some of us don't..." Coke winked, rolled his eyes. "Mr. Moneybags."

"Oh, bull." Dillon chuckled, reaching over to pet Coke's leg.

"No. Bulls are bigger." Coke grinned. "I got steaks marinating. Cold beer in the fridge. We're loaded for bear."

"Do we have plenty of lube?" That was important. Really.

"We do. I bought new." That heavy thigh jerked under his hand, the muscle hard as a rock.

Woo-hoo. "Well, then. We're set. We give the bassets bones. I give you one..."

Coke hooted, but that big muscle tensed again and Dillon could smell how much Coke wanted him.

"You smell good, babe. Really good." He would just eat Coke for supper, thank you.

"You're making me all... I'm fixin' to have a spot on my jeans." Hell, yeah.

"Well, you yelled at me the last time I tried to suck you in the car." It had been on I-35 at rush hour, but still.

"Biscuit and Jonesy were driving next to us."

"Uh-huh. You just didn't want CB to get all upset because he'd pulled his groin again and couldn't do it."

"That son of a bitch has Sam Bell's luck. Shit, I'd hate to have to deal with the mess left down there."

Yeah, after the last rounds of surgery, CB's groin was... ew.

"Jonesy likes dealing." Those two were a pair. Really, you met the most interesting guys in bullriding.

"Sports medicine guys are weird."

"You think?" Dillon kind of agreed, really. Especially Jonesy, who was still on Dillon's shit list. Shooting a man with a muscle relaxant was cheating, no matter who you were.

"Uh-uh. I know. You should see Doc, trying to hit on the bunnies."

Oh. Ew.

"He hits on them?" Doc was... asexual.

"Used to. Mary Ann put a stop to it."

"Good for her." Behind every faithful cowboy was a possessive ranch wife.

Coke chuckled, nodded. "You should have seen that cat fight. It was something else."

"Oh, man." Dillon could just see Mary Ann with her jacked up hair and cotton candy lipstick, kicking ass and taking names.

"Yeah." Coke chuckled, looking damn wicked.

"She's a woman after my own heart." Dillon traced the seam down the inside of Coke's thigh, the denim starched and stiff. "I'd kick ass for you, too."

"Yeah? I seen you whap Nattie that once."

"That gave me great pleasure." Interfering man. Nate still didn't like Dillon, necessarily, but he'd gotten over the whole jumping to the wrong conclusion thing. Thanks to a fist to the nose.

Coke's balls were warm, all caught up in the jeans. "It was kinda hot, too."

"It sure made me feel better." There was something about teasing Coke while he was driving, the capable, square hands steady on the wheel even as Coke's breath caught in his chest. Coke drove through the twisty roads, hips starting to shift a little, rock.

Dillon breathed deep, the smell of sweat and pre-come just delicious, happy-making. He had a happy, for sure.

"I want you, cowboy." He knew it, bone-deep, but he loved hearing it, in that sandpaper rough voice.

"I'm glad." He'd be willing to make out in the truck in the drive, but Coke's back and neck wouldn't deal well with that. He'd have to be patient enough to let the dogs out.

"You having a good Christmas, so far?"

"Hell, yes." A judicious application of Coke made everything better, and cowboy Christmas was just like heaven. "We almost home?"



"Ten minutes, give or take." Coke looked over at him and grinned. "I'm gonna tear your fine ass up, once we get there."

"Okay. You can have it. All yours." Dillon bounced a little, his ass wanting to shake and shimmy it was so happy at the idea.

Coke nodded once. "Yep. Mine. I explained that to Mr. Donaldson, too, by the way. That he didn't need to be using pet names for folks he wasn't married to."

Dillon's jaw dropped. "You talked to David? About me?" Hell, David had been his ex before he and Coke had hooked up. "What did he say?"

"That y'all were just friends and I didn't have nothin' to worry on." Coke shrugged, the move deceptively casual. "I told him I wasn't worried a bit, that I was just explaining the way of things."

That was... quite possibly the hottest thing anyone had ever done, and Coke hadn't even touched him. Dillon moaned, popping the button on his jeans. "Hurry, Coke."

"Uh-huh. You hold on, cowboy. That's mine." Jesus, those eyes were hot, dragging over him like he was a banquet and Coke hadn't eaten in days.

His hand hovered over his cock, his other still on Coke's leg, high up. "I... I'm not sure I can wait."

"You can." Coke's hand slid under his, solid and hard, hot as a brand even through the boxer briefs.

"Oh." His head fell back, his body shaking. Oh, damn. "Love your hands, babe."

"Love you. Push your shorts down a little. Ain't nobody on this road."

"Uh-huh." Dillon lifted his hips and pushed everything down enough for his cock to pop right up.

"Oh, fuck, cowboy." That hard, callused hand wrapped around his cock like it was meant to be there, thumb working the shaft as Coke squeezed and tugged.

"Coke!" Dillon stared out at the road, like the force of his gaze would keep them on the road. Not that he cared. Coke's hand was his whole world.

"I got it. I won't let you fall, Dillon." No. No, Coke wouldn't.

"I know. My hero." He wasn't joking. Not now. His hips pushed up, his cock sliding through Coke's closed hand.

"My cowboy. Want you to ride me. Wanna watch you." Coke was growling now, hand working him but good.

"I will. Promise. Ride you so hard you fly, babe." Dillon panted, his balls pulling up. God, Coke got to him like he was a kid again.

Coke turned into the long, long driveway, both of them breathing hard. Dillon swore by all he held holy, if they pulled up and Jason or Nate or Balta or ANYONE was in the driveway, he was going to kill something. Probably whoever it was.

Thankfully, there was no one there. Just them and the truck and... "Coke!" Dillon squeaked when Coke pushed hard against his slit.

Coke stopped the truck, popped his seat belt and yanked him close. Dillon made sure Coke wasn't twisted up too bad before he dove in for a kiss. It was so definitely love if he was capable of that level of not-selfishness. Tongue and hand, Coke worked him, making the inside of the truck feel as hot as the air outside.

Dillon kissed Coke harder, remembering that he had hands, touching that beautiful man everywhere he could reach. God, yes. Coke's thumb rubbed the tip of his cock hard, tracing the ridge, pushing him.

"Coke. Coke, please." He would go inside and ride like he had his spurs hung in the rope. He just needed to come right now.

"Come on, cowboy. Wanna see." Coke's eyes were hot as fuck, staring at him.

"It's dark..." It wasn't really that dark, though. Mid-summer, just gone nine, Coke could see him fine. Dillon grinned, popping off like a bottle rocket.

"So fucking fine, Dillon." Coke eased up on the touches, pushed hard on the kisses.

He blinked, his eyes feeling dry from forced openness. He hadn't wanted to miss any of that. It was one of the hottest thing he'd seen, Coke licking his fingers clean of his come.

"Did you really tell David not to call me Lonnie?"

"You fucking know it. You ain't his, Dillon, and I'm not gonna say I'm sorry for it, either, 'cause I'm not."

He reached up to touch Coke's cheek, taking one more long kiss. "I'm not either. Come on. I'm gonna show you how much I like it."

Good thing the little rodeo was over. The big show was about to start.

Cowboy Christmas

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Printed in the United States of America.

Torquere Press, Inc.: Sips electronic edition / July 2009

Torquere Press eBooks are published by Torquere Press, Inc., PO Box 2545, Round Rock, TX 78680