

Warnings: Darkfic AU, non-con, m/m rape

No Quarter

By Scribblesinink

His head was yanked back hard enough by the fingers twined in his hair to make his eyes water, and the knife pressed coldly against his throat. Jake didn't dare move, didn't dare swallow. Heck, he hardly dared draw breath for fear the deputy would open his jugular.

He rolled his eyes until he found Eric's gaze; it was up to his brother now. Jake didn't want to die, but he wanted even less for Eric to give up Jericho for his sake. He tried to tell him so with a look, but even if Eric got the message, Jake wasn't sure whether he'd agree. Jake couldn't even guess what *he'd* do if their positions were reversed. Could he have watched Eric get murdered before his eyes? Watch his throat get slashed because he refused to talk? Could *Eric*?

With a click, the door behind Jake opened. The pressure of the knife let up a little as the guy holding it glanced back over his shoulder.

Constantino walked into Jake's field of vision. "How're things progressing?"

Perkins shrugged. "They won't talk." He waved at the man holding the knife, and the deputy twisted Jake's head back even further. "We thought—."

"Hm." Constantino's gaze switched from Jake to Eric and back. Fear slithered through Jake's belly as that pale gaze raked him up and down. He thought he'd been scared the night before, when he and Eric had been presented to the angry crowd of muttering townspeople. He'd expected Constantino's speech to whip them into a frenzy, until they lynched him and Eric on the spot. But the fear he'd felt then was nothing in comparison to the cold terror traveling along his spine at the way Constantino looked him up and down now.

Finally, Constantino seemed to come to a decision. He jerked a thumb at Jake. "Take him to the cabin."

"What about him?" Perkins nodded at Eric.

Constantino shook his head. "Put him back with the others. He's been gone from Jericho for months. Anything we'd get out of him is likely old information, anyway. No...", he turned back to Jake, lips curving up in a grin that was devoid of humor, "Jake here is

gonna tell us all we need to know."

The knife had dropped from Jake's throat, and some of his courage returned. "I'm not gonna tell you a damned thing," he spat, even as his hands were uncuffed and he was yanked roughly to his feet, before the cuffs were clicked around his wrists again.

"Jake...?" Eric looked up at him miserably, one eye swollen half-shut, his split lip already scabbing over.

"I'll be fine." Jake tried to put as much confidence as he could into his words as the unnamed deputy started manhandling him from the room, Perkins on their heels. As they reached the door, Jake called out over his shoulder, "You just hang in there, Eric."

They hauled him down the hallway and out of the jailhouse. An old, rusty squad car sat waiting at the bottom of the steps. Jake glanced around the square while they dragged him over to the car. Where the hell was Hawkins? He was fairly sure that he hadn't abandoned him. *Fairly* sure, but not entirely.... After all, to Hawkins, the mission—protecting his bomb—came first.

He saw nobody but the armed men guarding the bullet-riddled City Hall, and then they reached the squad car. Perkins got in behind the wheel, while the other man shoved Jake in the back. Right before he was about to shut the door, there was a dull *bang* in the distance that made the ground shake.

"What the hell...?" Perkins half-climbed out of the car again, gaping at the cloud of flame and smoke that billowed up to the south, from the direction of the factory.

Jake allowed himself a grim smile of satisfaction. He'd been right: Hawkins hadn't gone home.

The deputy who'd shoved him into the car slammed the door shut. "Let's go!" With a gesture, he urged Perkins to start the engine, while he jumped into the shotgun seat himself. As they drove off, Jake twisted in his seat to watch panicked guards running away from City Hall, heading for the factory and the explosion.

Looked like blowing up the factory had been a good plan; with half of the guards gone, Hawkins would stand a better chance of breaking into the jail and getting Eric out. But, Jake thought a little bitterly, the help had come too late for *him*....

oOo

It didn't take long to get to Constantino's cabin. Fifteen minutes after they'd left City

Hall, the car rattled over a covered wooden bridge, twisted around a patch of trees, and the cabin came in sight.

Jake blinked. When Constantino had said 'cabin', he'd expected, well, a cabin. Maybe a hunting cabin, like the one that had belonged to his grandfather. What he didn't expect was a sprawling complex with a large ranch house and several outbuildings.

"You people call this a cabin?" he couldn't help sneer at the two men in front.

"Shut your trap." The deputy in the passenger seat twisted around and glared at Jake through the wire mesh dividing front from back. "Or I'll shut it for you."

Jake huffed, and went back to staring out of the window. The ranch didn't look too different from most such places in Kansas. Very like the place his family owned near Jericho, in fact. Except it was much bigger—and back home, they didn't have men with guns and flak jackets guarding the premises. He did a quick count, and came up with half a dozen guards. And those were only the ones who were visible; he was convinced there were more men he couldn't see. What did Constantino have to hide that required so much security? More munitions manufacturing, maybe?

Perkins drove up to the smallest barn. A few of the guards watched with uncaring gazes while Perkins and his buddy dragged him out of the squad car and through the double doors. Inside, the place smelled much like any barn: a mixture of hay and manure and horse, though there wasn't an animal in sight. But, underneath the barn smell, there was another stench, newer, and less pleasant; a smell he couldn't place right away.

Jake swallowed hard once he did recognize it: it was the stink of fear. What the hell was Constantino up to?

It abruptly dawned on him that he might be in really deep trouble. Back in New Bern, in the jail cell, there'd been at least a veneer of civilization, a pretense of doing things by the book, despite the way they'd beat up Eric to get answers out of him. But here.... Here he'd be subject to Constantino's every whim.

The two deputies shoved him into one of the empty horse stalls. Old hay covered the floor and thick cobwebs hung in the corners. They removed the cuffs, giving him a moment of hope, but then they tied his hands with a rope to a metal ring set about waist-high in the wall. After they checked he was secure, they left, Perkins offering him a last, meaningful smirk that reminded Jake uneasily of what he'd done to Perkins, what he would've done if Hawkins hadn't stopped him, when Perkins had been the one tied up.

Once he was alone, Jake experimentally tugged on the ropes, but the knots were tight and

the ring was sturdy, originally designed to hold half a ton of horse. He realized, not liking the feeling one bit, that he was quite helpless. His only hope was that Hawkins had managed to get to Eric. Eric knew where they'd taken him so, no matter what, he'd just have to hold out until rescue arrived. He could do that; Eric wouldn't let him down.

Knowing he wasn't going to be able to escape without outside help, Jake tried to make himself comfortable—or as comfortable as he could—and conserve his energy.

He wished Eric and Hawkins would hurry up.

oOo

They came for him hours later, after night had fallen. Jake's eyes had gotten used to the darkness of the barn, so he blinked owlily into the glare of flashlights and the warmer glow of oil lamps. In the gloom, he counted five of them: Constantino, Perkins, the deputy who'd held the knife to his throat, and two more he didn't recognize.

"Last chance." Constantino stood over him, his eyes hooded. "What are Jericho's defenses like?"

Jake glared up at him from the half-crouch he'd settled into. "If you want to kill me, go ahead." He gathered what little moisture he could muster and spat. It landed near Constantino's boots. "I'm not telling you a damn thing."

Constantino shook his head, almost sadly. "I don't want to kill you, Jake."

Behind him, from the shadows, someone muttered under their breath, "'Cause that'd be a goddamn shame." The words were barely loud enough for Jake to pick up, but Constantino caught them as well.

"Shut up, Steve." He stepped back. "Get him up."

Perkins cut the ropes and yanked Jake to his feet. He hissed as his stiff and aching limbs protested the change of position, biting his lip to keep in a moan. The renewed blood flow into his hands made them tingle painfully, and he clenched and unclenched his fists to work out the sting.

Under Constantino's watchful eye, they half-dragged, half-carried him from the stall, his legs not quite willing to support his weight. In the center of the main section of the barn, they'd set up an old sawhorse, its wood dark with age. They hauled him over to it, turning him around so he faced the sawhorse. Jake glanced around, searching for the horse whip he was certain had be around somewhere, but none of the men seemed to be

carrying one.

Shoring himself up mentally, Jake couldn't help but think that Constantino didn't know him as well as he thought he did. He'd experienced pain before: the agony of that piece of shrapnel slicing through his hip in Iraq, and the apparently never-ending jolting trip back to somewhere with the medical facilities to handle it. He'd made it through that; he could deal with whatever Constantino decided to hand out. He had to; Jericho's survival depended on it.

Still, he wasn't about to let them take him like a lamb to the slaughter. Collecting his strength, he tried to fight them. His sudden resistance was enough of a surprise that he managed to connect a clumsy fist with someone's nose, eliciting a curse of pain. He felt a brief moment of triumph, before they punched him in return and he saw stars.

They were too many, though, and he was too weak with lack of food and sleep. Within minutes, they had him lashed to the sawhorse. And when they shoved his jeans to his ankles, strong hands holding him down, it dawned on Jake what they *really* had planned.

He panted in fear and anger as Constantino moved up behind him, and something hot and hard brushed against his naked buttocks. Next thing he knew, cruel fingers dug into his flesh, and the hot hard thing—*cock*, his mind whispered with a strange, clinical detachment—was rammed home.

Jake screamed then, unable to hold on to the appearance of bravery and contempt in the face of the agony that shot through him. He struggled against the hands and the ropes—it was impossible not to—even though something told him resisting would only make it worse. But the men holding him knew what they were doing, and his efforts were in vain.

"Not so tough now, are you, Jakey?" someone taunted. He thought he recognized Perkins' voice. Behind him, Constantino grunted and puffed, his breath hot on Jake's neck, his weight heavy against him.

Finally, Constantino was done, and he leaned forward, his voice soft and menacing in Jake's ear. "Ready to tell me what I want to know yet? Cause we can do this all night long." Somewhere, someone snickered: a hateful, obscene laugh.

Constantino pulled out, and Jake whimpered. Tears streamed down his face, but he didn't care. He wasn't gonna tell them anything. He couldn't. If he did, Jericho would be defenseless. And the longer he held out, the better the odds that someone would manage to get back home and tell them about New Bern's plans. He hoped now that Eric had done the smart thing, that Hawkins had: that they'd gone back to warn Jericho, and not

hung around in hopes of rescuing him.

It was far too late for that now, anyway.

He swallowed convulsively, trying to find his voice. "Screw you," he croaked, hoarse from screaming.

Constantino's chuckle was low. "Think you got that backwards, boy. Steve? Your turn."

There was the sound of a zipper nearby. Jake sensed more than saw Constantino step away and another man take his place behind Jake. He squeezed his eyes shut and braced himself.

oOo

"We've no time for that!" Eric blew out a frustrated breath, clearly struggling to keep his voice low. "Lord knows what that bastard will do to Jake. He might've killed him already, for all we know."

They were parked a few miles from New Bern, in the shelter of a couple trees, the underbrush shielding them from curious eyes. The good news was that Johnston was fairly certain, after careening them several miles down the railroad track Russell said wasn't guarded, that they were beyond the town's perimeter.

The bad news was that the track that brought them to safety had led them out of the wrong side of town. Once Eric had told them Constantino'd had Jake transported to some place he'd called 'the cabin', Johnston remembered the guard using the same words to refer to the sprawling ranch where he'd met Constantino when he'd first arrived in New Bern.

Hawkins glanced up at Eric grimly, reaching to snatch his shotgun from the back of the truck. "In that case, there'd most definitely be no reason to go in half-cocked and get ourselves killed."

"But—," Eric objected.

Johnston put a restraining hand on his arm. "The man's right, son. We need to play this smart, or we won't do Jake any good at all."

Eric hung his head. "He came for me," he whispered.

Johnston's eyes stung with sudden tears. "I know he did." He patted Eric's shoulder

awkwardly. "And now it's our turn; we'll get him back, Eric. We will."

They just needed a proper plan.

oOo

They found Jake in the last stall in the barn, filthy and bleeding, his clothes torn and his arms bound together behind his back. For a long moment, Johnston could only stare down in horror, distantly glad they'd sent Eric ahead to warn Jericho while he and Hawkins went back for Jake. This wasn't something Eric should have to see.

It wasn't something anyone should have to see.

Jake barely stirred when Johnston knelt beside him. He reached out to brush some strands of hair from his son's face. Jake flinched violently at the gentle touch, murmuring something unintelligible.

"Shh. It's me," Johnston cooed softly, unsure how much his son was aware of his surroundings. "I've come to take you home."

Jake moved, blinking rapidly as his gaze slowly cleared and focused on Johnston's face. "Dad?"

"Yes, son. You're safe now."

Safe was about as far from the truth as it could be, and Hawkins reminded him with a softly hissed, "Hurry up. We gotta go." But Johnston felt he had to say something to reassure Jake—even if it was a lie.

He cut the ropes and helped Jake up, grunting as Jake's knees gave and his son's full weight fell against him.

Jake clutched his arm. "Dad, I told them—."

Johnston shushed him before he could finish. "Never mind that."

Whatever Jake had told Constantino, they'd deal with it. Later. First, they had to get out of here, and back to Jericho. Once they got home, they could fix things.

As he helped his son stumble from the barn and to the pickup they'd stolen, Johnston shoved away the thought that maybe this was something he *couldn't* fix. Steering Jake around the crumpled body of the guard that Hawkins had killed, he made himself a silent

promise. The next time he met New Bern's sheriff face to face, it wouldn't be under a veil of civility. He wouldn't shake hands, or exchange false pleasantries.

No, the next time Johnston saw Phil Constantino, he'd kill him.

Disclaimer: this story is based on the Junction Entertainment/Fixed Mark Productions/CBS Paramount Television series *Jericho*. It was written for entertainment only; the author does not profit from it nor was any infringement of copyright intended. Please do not redistribute elsewhere without the author's consent.