

Against a Wall at O'Malley's Pub

A Q for Quarantine Encounter

Lauren Alsten



Changeling Press ENCOUNTERS

Encounter: Against a Wall at O'Malley's Pub

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It's Christmas, and Qyra and Josh are back at their favorite spot -- O'Malley's Pub -- to relive a memory.

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It's almost Christmas, and O'Malley's Pub sparkles with lights. I smile at Josh and think about the first time we'd met here, nearly two years ago.

I had spied Joshua L. Donovan listed in the commencement brochure, but I didn't see him at the ceremony. Since I had a new life to start and a wedding to plan, I tried to forget all about him. And I managed, for nearly six years. Until that night...

* * *

Ginny lived downtown and was a diehard Cubs fan. From our barstools, we watched the game on three monstrous flatscreens. A raucous bunch of patrons conglomerated under a *Congratulations* banner off in a darkened corner. Law school grads frequently hung out here, and since bar exam results had recently been released, we figured they were newly minted lawyers.

Perfect for me, since I had ventured downtown not only to visit Ginny, but to scope out a quick and well-deserved one-night stand. A year and a half since my divorce, after meticulously tracking every carb, calorie, and crunch for two years, I'd finally reached my goal weight. My own celebration was long overdue. I'd enjoyed a handful of lovers before Enzo, but it was time to clear the slate and get back in the game. My skirt was mini, my hair highlighted, and my purse stocked with three Trojans. I wanted a night to remember. I was tired of being *The Good Girl*. With my vibe set to *Knock 'em Dead*, I sipped my drink and surveyed the men-u.

Not twenty minutes in, the universe rewarded me. From across the bar, Josh's beautifully cheekboned face appeared like a gazelle to a hungry lioness in the barren desert. I smiled as I watched him, and the past ten years of *Three Strikes, You're Out* suddenly turned into *Fourth Time's the Charm*.

When he caught my gaze, Josh flashed a grin so big his eyes squinted. As Ginny argued with the bartender about a bad double play call, I made my own play for Josh.

We met in the middle of the dance floor. Before the *Queen of Dorks* could mutter “What’s up, Buttercup?” Josh bear-hugged me for a quick second. He pushed me back and his gaze raked over me.

I returned the favor. Instead of the shaggier caramel-toned hair of college days, he wore a darker, more conservative cut. I remembered he was “all about technology” and probably not a newly minted lawyer, so I didn’t congratulate him. Instead, the few beats of awkward silence stretched into a comfortable lull of shy glances and tentative nudges.

With his body heat so near, I simultaneously felt right at home, and horny as hell. Especially when he leaned in next to my ear and said, “You’re definitely a sight for sore eyes. You look great.”

My cheeks heated. But the bar was so loud, I had to practically yell back. “So do you. How the heck are you? You’re not a lawyer now, are you?”

He tossed his head back and laughed. “God, no. Just here with some friends.” He looked around a few times, tilted his head toward the back hallway.

I figured it was so we could talk without screaming. While I followed in his wake, I noticed he smelled clean and masculine. Like leather mixed with sunshine. In a remote corner by the pool tables, I checked out his crimson shirt, pressed khaki pants, and dark tan oxfords. I was about to ask him if he could get me his Target employee discount when he leaned back in.

“So glad to see you again. You know, I stopped by the pizza place that night. Totally bummed about the note. But I guess you’d already decided...”

“Wait, what? My boss wrote the note. I was there at ten. But you weren’t, so I figured you blew me off.”

His mouth gaped open. “Hell no. But everything happens for a reason, and we’re both here now.”

I beamed back up at him. “Yep. Here we are.” As I stood in front of him, no texts, no raindrops, no crossed wires/buses/evil exes between us, I was again a magnet to his steel.

He took my hand and led me further down the dark hallway, where he turned around abruptly. I walked right into his chest.

He nuzzled my cheek. His mouth -- warm and flavored by beer and desperation -- met mine without apology. His tongue skimmed the seam of my lips.

With a chance to redeem missed opportunities, I opened for him. He took control. His lips caressed me with just the right amount of pressure, his tongue leading me into the most delicious kiss. Finally, he pulled away, his arm curving around my shoulder as he tugged me around a corner. We ended up next to the manager's office, where cases of bottled beer stacked five-high and two-deep provided us cover for what I'd first thought would be another private conversation but instead turned into lust gone wild. Neither of us could keep our hands off each other.

Our kisses grew frantic. His tongue rubbed mine so decadently it made me question every other lip-lock I'd ever had. When he brushed my bare stomach, I moved his hand up to my breast. He growled, following my lead, tunneling under my shirt to knead and pinch. My panties were already soaked, and we were barely rounding first base. But I didn't bother setting my sights on second. I wanted a home run.

My purse fell open as I dug around for the condoms. It had been a few years since any man had touched me, and I wasn't about to waste this perfect opportunity to break my self-imposed slump.

He heard the crinkling of the wrapper and pulled away to look down. "Right now, here? You sure?"

I nodded and stuffed the foil square into his palm. "Please!"

He looked around for a second before tearing it open and inching up my skirt as I pulled his zipper down. I knew it was risky -- sex in a public place. But the universe had finally smiled on me. We were hidden by stacks of beer. There was nobody else back here. I wanted him, he wanted me... And oh, he wanted me bad.

Reaching into his jeans, I dug inside his briefs to grip his rock-hard cock and swipe my thumb across the slippery head. He drew a quick breath and rammed the

condom on. As he angled between my legs, he peered down at me. I wiped a wet thumb across my lips. My tongue followed.

I could barely see his eyes in the low light, but I could sure as hell feel his stare. "You're fucking killing me --"

"Come here." Snaking my fingers through his hair, I pulled him in for another kiss while the head of his cock pressed against my panties.

His fingers pulled them aside. I shifted forward. So did he. With both his arms underneath my thighs, he hiked me up and pinned me to the wall with his hard chest. His cock slid past my clit, sinking slowly into me while my legs wrapped around the backs of his thighs. I drew him in deep as he buried himself in me over and over again. Maybe it was the angle, maybe it was the roughness, maybe it was how Josh was actually fucking me -- grinding up against my clit with every stroke -- that had me nearing my first-ever, penetration-only orgasm. As he bit into my neck, I held on tighter, my insides coiling toward a release I needed so bad I could taste it.

He was a lot more buff than he was in college, and I relished his weight against me. "Oh God, Josh, don't stop!"

* * *

The memory has me as hot now as it had back then. I look up at Josh and grin. The Christmas lights twinkle in his eyes, and he grins back. Sometimes I think the man can read my mind...

Read more about Qyra and Josh in *Worth the Weight (Q For Quarantine 1)*

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