

Pairing: Spike/Xander

Rating: NC-17

Disclaimer: No they are not mine. This is absolutely not for profit, just fun.

Claimer: Characters that are created by me are owned by me.

Warnings: MPreg; Drama; Slash.

Summary: Spike and Xander have a baby. Based on a challenge from Sparky.

Challenge: Spike and Xander are in a committed relationship and Xander is immortal (like [Highlander](#) or not, as long as he and Spike can be together forever). Then, Spike gets pregnant somehow (prophecy, Xander is just really fertile, I don't know). Has to have a happy ending.

Blood Borne

by
Jenny

1 Warning Signs.

Spike woke up slowly, stretching sore muscles and sighing happily. He was alone in bed but didn't mind, he could hear his lover out in the kitchen, whistling softly. The Vampire rolled over and snuggled back into

the still warm covers, inhaling deeply his [mate](#)'s scent. The familiarity of the morning warmed Spikes dead heart. Up until two months ago, he had lived in a constant state of fear, though he had hidden it well. His lover's mortality had loomed over their already troubled relationship, and every time they patrolled, every time the human was injured, Spike was barely able to contain his fear. Even a year into their relationship, with a well-established consort bond as protection, the Vampire had still feared for his love's life. Now, though, that was all fixed. No longer Vampire and consort, they were Vampire and Immortal Consort, and suddenly Spike could breathe without fear of his love being taken from him. Well, okay, not breath exactly, but...

"Spike! Breakfast!" Xander's voice floated in from kitchen. Spike smiled and levered himself out of bed.

"Whoa!" As Spike stood up the room began to spin, and he sat back down with a thump. "Huh? That's odd."

Spike ignored the fact that he was talking to himself, just another bad habit picked up from Xander, and instead concentrated on the strange things his body was suddenly doing. *That's weird. I'm not hurt. No concussion. So why'd the room spin?* Spike reviewed the

past two days, looking for signs of possible injury. *Lets see, Friday night, patrolling then sex; Saturday, sex; Saturday night, a little torture (of the good kind), followed by more sex; Sunday, cuddling and sex. Hmm, maybe I let the whelp take too much blood last night.*

Even though Xander's immortality made the protection of the consort bond unnecessary, they still shared blood during sex, for the closeness it brought them. Spike stood up more slowly this time. The room wobbled slightly but he remained standing, so Spike just shrugged it off and headed, slowly, out to the kitchen.

Xander was at the stove, flipping pancakes. Spike snuck up behind him and slid his arms around the brunettes waist. "Mornin luv." He whispered, placing a kiss on Xander's shoulder.

Xander chuckled and patted Spike's hand. "Good morning yourself, sleepy. Hungry?"

Spike growled teasingly and gnawed on Xander's shoulder with blunt teeth. "Hungry enough to eat a human."

Xander shuddered and spun around, pulling Spike into a fierce embrace. "Didn't you do enough of that this

weekend?"

Spike stared up into warm brown eyes, "It's never enough", he answered honestly.

Those wonderful eyes softened and Spike found himself pulled into a passionate kiss. When they finally came up for air Xander whispered fiercely against his cheek, "Love you."

"Love you too."

Xander sighed happily and gently shoved Spike away. "Go on, sit down. You'll make me burn breakfast." Suddenly the brunette stopped and stared at his mate, "Are you all right? You look paler than normal, if that's even possible."

Spike shrugged, not worrying, so not wanting to worry his lover. "It's nothing, probably let you take too much blood last night, s'all."

Xander herded Spike over to the table, then set about fixing a mug of blood.

"Well, luckily that's easy to fix."

The microwave pinged and Xander brought his lover the steaming mug, then went back to the stove. Spike took the mug eagerly, but before he could drink, something stopped him. He was still staring at the mug suspiciously minutes later when Xander brought over two heaping plates of pancakes.

Xander eyed the blond, "Spike, Blondie, what's wrong?"

Spike pushed the mug towards Xander, "I think its gone off."

Xander stared at the mug. "Couldn't have. We just picked it up two days ago." The human took the mug and sniffed it. "Smells normal to me. Are you sure?"

Spike took the mug back and sniffed it again. "Dunno, just smells funny to me." He took a tentative sip, shrugged, "Tastes okay, I guess."

Xander rolled his eyes at the Vampire, "Tell you what. On the off-chance we got a bad batch of pigs blood, I'll stop by Willy's and pick you up some human on the way home from work today."

Spike tried to make grateful eyes at his mate from behind the mound of pancakes he was devouring, then stopped suddenly, fork halfway to his mouth. "Whad'ya mean work?"

Xander laughed. "What do you think I mean? Work. You know, that thing I do when the sun is up that pays for your blood and our sex toys? Its Monday, on Mondays I go to work."

Spike eyed the clock, 10:30 am. "But, aren't you late or something?"

Xander shook his head. "Nah. They're pouring concrete this morning, so I don't have to be there till noon. Besides, this way I got to make us breakfast. I figured it was a good way to end our weekend."

They shared a sappy smile. It had been a wonderful weekend. It was the two-month anniversary of Xander becoming immortal and they had celebrated by locking themselves in the apartment for the weekend, unplugging the phone and loosing themselves in each other. Xander wrenched himself away from his lover's eyes and turned back to his food. Spike yawned hugely and Xander glanced back up at him with a smile, "Tired

still?"

"Well, you wore me out this weekend."

Xander snorted, "That has to be a first, usually it's me that's begging for extra sleep."

Spike looked at his mate with wide eyes, "What, can't I get tired for once? The undead need their sleep too."

Breakfast went on as normal, and Xander finally left for work. Spike headed immediately back to bed and crawled under the covers. The truth was he was more tired than normal, but he chalked it up to the exertion of the weekend. He did spare one final thought to worry as he slid back into sleep; Vampires can't get sick, can they?



Saturday morning rolled back around to find Spike lying in bed moaning for an entirely different reason than last Saturday. He pulled the covers over his eyes and tried to ignore the rolling in his stomach. He didn't know what was wrong with him but he was starting to get

worried. Furthermore, Xander was starting to comment on the dark circles under his eyes and extra pale skin. Tuesday Spike had gotten out of bed to find the room spinning again; on Wednesday he'd been blessed with spinning and nausea. Thursday the nausea had been so bad he'd been afraid to stand up, it had taken him an hour to get out of bed. Friday Spike had woken up and run straight for the bathroom, throwing up the remains of whatever was in his stomach. If he hadn't felt so bad he would have laughed. Spike hadn't thrown up since he'd been turned. It was definitely a strange experience, and not one he was ready to repeat. Unfortunately, it looked like his body had other plans, because the more conscious the Vampire became, the more sure he was that he had better get to the bathroom fast. Finally he couldn't stand it anymore. Spike launched himself from the bed and ran to the bathroom, skidded to a stop on his knees in front of the toilet and began retching.

His quick exit from the bedroom must have woken Xander, because a few seconds later his mate came stumbling into the bathroom, rubbing his eyes. "Spike, what's going on? Why'd you run?" Xander finally woke up enough to take in the scene in front of him. "Spike! Oh my god, Spike! Are you okay?"

Xander fell to his knees behind the retching Vampire and began rubbing his back and making soothing noises. When it seemed that Spike had finished, Xander grabbed a wet washcloth and began cleaning his lover off, whispering soothing nonsense. Spike trembled under the touch and Xander pulled the blond against his chest. "Spike, sweetheart, what's going on? Please tell me."

Spike managed to rasp out, "Water."

Xander leaned up and filled the glass they kept next to the sink, handing it to the shaking man in his arms. Spike drank gratefully. "I don't know what's wrong, really. Beginning of the week I woke up dizzy, and it's just gotten worse. Threw up for the first time yesterday. I'm exhausted, but sleeping all the time, I can barely eat."

The vampire trailed off and Xander stroked his blond hair soothingly. "Why didn't you tell me?"

"Didn't want you to worry?"

Xander's arms tightened protectively around his lover,

"Well, I'm worried now."

The brunette picked his trembling lover up and headed back to the bedroom. He tucked Spike back under the covers then sat down next to him, grabbing the phone. Xander dialed the number from heart and sat, more patiently than he felt, stroking the blond hair of his mate while he waited for someone to pick up. Finally someone did. "Giles? Yeah it's me. Look, can I ask you something weird? Uh huh, no not like last time. Listen, its important. Can Vampires get sick? Like flus and stuff. Shit. All right then, can you get whoever you need to help over there? We'll be there soon. Yeah, thanks, bye."

Spike had barely registered the conversation, he must have been fading in and out, because the next thing Spike knew, he was being gently dressed in a pair of Xander's sweats and slippers slipped on to his feet. The woozy vampire eyed the pink bunny rabbits that had taken up residence on his feet. "Get em off."

Xander ignored him.

"Don't want them seeing me in bunny slippers."

The brunette rolled his eyes, "I'm not taking the time to lace you into those boots, and you don't have any other shoes."

Spike watched Xander dress hurriedly. He tried to stand up, but suddenly Xander was there, grabbing his arm and forcing him back onto the bed. "No. No way are you walking anywhere. You're sick; I'm taking care of you. Now don't move again unless I tell you to."

Spike waggled his eyebrows at that statement, but his heart wasn't in it. Truth was he felt too exhausted to even tease Xander about sex, which actually worried him. He was never not in the mood to tease Xander about sex. It worried him enough that he didn't protest when Xander finally wrapped him in a blanket, scooped him up, and hurried out to their car.

Xander had draped a heavy blanket around Spike, including his head and feet, and the Vampire was bundled out to the car regardless of the sun. Once Spike was belted into the seat, Xander drove as fast as he dared to Giles'. Not too fast, getting pulled over was not what he wanted. Sorry officer, if my partner comes out from under the blanket he'll catch on fire. Yeah, that'd go over well.

Xander glanced at Spike's still form worriedly. Just when everything was finally working out, this happened. Xander silently cursed whatever fate or demon had decided to fuck with them yet again. Gods, why can't we ever get a fucking break? When we first got together, it was all I could do to keep Buffy from staking Spike. Then the consort bond happened and the gang didn't talk to us for like, months after that, all so worried I was being manipulated or turned or something. We finally all make nice, then Spike starts freaking out every time I patrolled. The over protective episodes anytime I got hurt almost broke us up. Finally, finally we don't have to worry about it anymore, I can't die and Spike can't turn me, just when it seems we get happily ever after and this happens. Hell, I don't even know what this is, but there is no way it's not serious. Xander glanced reached over and grasped Spike's shoulder, squeezing reassuringly, "Don't worry Spike, it'll be okay." Xander just hoped that it would be.

2 Examination

With a relieved sigh, Xander pulled up to Giles' apartment. He gathered up his lover and hurried Spike inside. Giles was waiting at the door and thankfully had already pulled all the blinds. Xander glanced up to see Willow and Tara already there. Xander gently set his lover on the couch and pulled the blankets off of Spike's face. Willow and Tara made gasps of concern when presented with the pale, clammy Vampire.

Spike smiled weakly at the Witches, "Hey Red, Ducks. How's it going?"

Willow sat down next to Spike and rubbed his hand reassuringly, "Don't worry Spike, we'll figure this out."

Willow, Tara and Giles gathered spell ingredients and discussed possible causes of Spike's sudden illness, but Xander only had eyes for Spike. "Are you comfortable? Do you need anything?"

Xander tried to sound calm but his nervousness must have shown through, because Spike began stroking his hand along Xander's arm and sighed. "I'm fine luv, really. Just a little dizzy and weak, s'all. The Witches will

figure it out and have me right in no time."

Xander positioned himself on one end of the couch and pulled Spike's upper body into his lap. He stroked one hand through the blonde hair and tried not to panic. It wouldn't do for him to be more freaked out than his lover; he wasn't the one who was sick, after all.

Distracted by worry, Xander finally noticed that Willow was asking them questions. "Hmm? Sorry Wills, missed that last one."

The redhead shot him a gentle smile, forgiving him his inattention. "I was just asking if you two had run across anything weird while patrolling?" Xander and Spike both shook their heads.

Giles walked up next to Willow, carrying a large book, "Well, thanks to Xander, we know what a demon illness looks like, so we should probably start there."

Giles took a seat at the table and started leafing through the book, while Willow and Tara started chanting softly.

Xander was just about to ask Spike something that had been bothering him all morning when the front door flew

open and Buffy and Dawn tumbled through, arms laden with shopping bags.

"Okay, this had better be good. I'll have you know we were in a shopping groove..."

Buffy's slightly annoyed voice trailed off as she spied the two men on the couch. "Wow Spike, you look like death warmed over."

Xander rolled his eyes and Spike made a face, "Ha, ha Slayer, very funny."

Dawn looked up from where she had been setting down her bags and seemed to see the Vampire for the first time. "Oh Spike! Are you okay?"

The little brunette threw herself at the couch, wrapping her arms around the startled Vampire. "Are you gonna be okay? What can I do? Do you need blood? You can have Buffy's."

Spike gingerly lifted the babbling girl off his tender stomach and shook her gently. "I'll be fine nibblet. Just feeling a little under the weather. The witches will fix me right up." He quirked an eyebrow at Dawn, "Shouldn't

you ask your sister before you go offering up her blood to strange Vampires?"

Dawn snorted, "She's got plenty. Plus. it's Slayer blood, so it'd be extra potent and you'd only need a little. Besides, you're not strange Vampires, you're family."

Xander smiled at his shocked looking lover as the Vampire pulled the teenager into a fierce hug. "Thanks Dawn."

Buffy flopped down into a chair, eyeing the trio on the couch. She looked a little miffed at having her blood offered up by her sister without her consent. "So, what's going on? How can we help?"

"Spike's sick. Like flu kinda sick, 'cept Vampires don't get the flu. Willow and Tara are doing some sort of spell, and Giles thinks it might be a demon flu, like I had that time." Xander explained.

The Watcher in question wandered over and dropped a book into the lap of his scowling Slayer. "You can help by researching. Look for anything relating to Vampires and illness."

The blonde slayer scowled. "Isn't there anything I can slay?"

Spike snorted, "If this keeps on much longer, I might ask you to dust me. Don't think I can take much more of this yakking and fainting and such."

Buffy looked a little too excited at the thought of having to dust Spike and Xander wrapped his arms protectively around his mate. "Mine." He growled at the petite Slayer.

Buffy rolled her eyes, not the least bit threatened by his protective display, and started leafing through the book Giles had dropped on her.

Dawn looked around from where she was sitting, still being hugged by Spike. "What can I do?"

Giles glanced up from his text. "Sorry Dawn. Would you kindly make some tea? I believe that there is some chamomile in the cupboard, which might help settle Spike's stomach."

Dawn bounced eagerly into the kitchen, glad to be allowed to help. Soon she came back with a steaming

mug of yellow colored tea. Spike eyed the cup warily, but took a sip when Dawn pouted at him. He swallowed then made a horrible face. "Yak! What is this crap?"

Dawn pouted more, "It's chamomile tea. It'll help your stomach. Drink it."

Xander laughed at his lover's obvious reluctance. "Spike, you drink blood! How bad can a little tea be?"

When the cup was thrust at him, Xander obligingly took a sip, then pulled back in horror. "Oh gross! You're right, don't drink it."

Eventually however, Dawn's pout won out and Spike finished off the mug of bitter tasting yellow tea.

Two hours later, Giles and Buffy had come up blank, and

while Willow and Tara had ruled out that it was not a demon flu, curse or spell, they still didn't know what was wrong with Spike.

Xander was holding a glowering Spike in his arms and trying not to freak out, while Giles paced the short length of his living room. Willow was going down a list of possible spells to try, with Tara, Buffy and Dawn considering and vetoing each one in turn, when suddenly Giles stopped and slapped himself on the forehead. "Of course! Why didn't I think of it before?"

The group stared at the watcher as he fished around in his wallet and pulled out a card, then quickly made a phone call.

As Giles hung up the phone, the questions started, with Spike's voice somehow rising above the rest, "Oi, Rupes! What was that about? Who exactly did you call?"

Giles flopped down in a chair, looking relieved. "I called a friend. I believe she can help us."

Buffy looked around the group, "Um Giles? Aren't all of us here? Who do you know besides us?"

The Watcher looked annoyed. "I do have a social life outside of this group, you know."

Dawn shook her head, "No, actually we didn't know."

Giles looked exasperated but refused to answer any more questions. Twenty minutes later there was a knock at the door.

Giles quickly got up to answer it. He opened the door and ushered a woman inside. The group eyed the newcomer suspiciously. She was very plain looking: not too tall, not too short. Medium brown hair, glasses, pale. She was dressed in a nondescript suit jacket and skirt, and carried a black bag with her.

Giles presented the woman to them with a smile and made the introductions. "Everyone, this is Dr. Graves. She's a specialist in demon illnesses."

The woman smiled warmly at the shocked group, her smile changing her face from plain to friendly and engaging. "It's so nice to meet you all."

Buffy sized up the newcomer. "Where did you find her?"

Dr. Graves made shushing motions at the stuttering Watcher and answered Buffy, "I moved to town a few months ago to set up practice. I've come into the Magic Box several times for supplies or books. Giles and I have talked about my practice. That's how he knew to call me."

Xander nodded, accepting the explanation, though Buffy still looked suspicious. He knew Giles wouldn't let anyone near him or Spike unless he trusted them. In a show of good faith, Xander stood up and shook the doctor's hand. He quickly returned to the couch though, this time taking a seat on the arm next to Spike's head.

Spike smiled wanly. "A demon doctor, huh? Just when you thought Sunnyhell had everything."

Xander brushed his lips across Spike's clammy forehead, as Giles led the doctor over to the couch. "This is Spike. The Vampire I told you about on the phone."

Dr. Graves smiled and came over to kneel beside the Vampire. "Spike, it's nice to meet you. Why don't you tell me what's been going on?"

In a voice still shaky and weak, Spike related the past week of dizzy spells and nausea.

The doctor listened and nodded, "Have you recently come across any ancient relics, tombs, any curses?"

Spike and Xander both shook their heads.

"When are the symptoms worse?"

Spike thought about it for a minute. "They hit me randomly throughout the day, but it's definitely worst when I first wake up."

The Doctor nodded and pulled the blanket back, "I'm going to do a physical examination now, is that okay?"

Spike nodded and tried to relax as the doctor began poking and prodding. He still had the occasional flashbacks to his time as lab rat for the Initiative and it made him uncomfortable. Xander must have sensed his fear, because he began stroking Spike's hair and murmuring softly. Spike tried to relax, but then hissed in pain as the doctor prodded his stomach. "Oi! That hurts!"

The doctor just raised an eyebrow, "Is it a sharp pain, a dull ache, tender?"

Spike shrugged, "It's just sore. Any wonder? I've been barfing for days."

The doctor sighed and stood up. "Giles, could you possibly help me prepare a scrying spell?"

The Watcher motioned for the Witches to help him, and the three headed into the kitchen.

Xander looked confused, "What do you need a scrying spell for?"

Doctor Graves smiled at the worried brunette, "Do you see an x-ray machine anywhere nearby?"

Buffy looked at the doctor thoughtfully, "Do Vampires x-ray? I mean, they don't photograph and all."

The doctor shook her head seriously, "They actually don't show up on any kind of film and that includes x-rays, there are other demons that don't work well with medical equipment as well. Most physicians in my line of work are well versed in small amounts of magic, enough

to take the place of medical technology, but unfortunately magic is not where my talents lie."

The doctor moved over to the table where Giles had set up a large black bowl and Willow and Tara were filling it with water.

Xander ignored the preparations; he bent over Spike and captured his lover's lips in a gentle kiss. "How ya doin'?"

Spike smiled weakly, "Just peachy. Give me a mo' and we'll head over to Willy's and trounce some demons."

Xander allowed himself a small laugh before meeting the fearful blue eyes with his serious ones. "Do you think this is because of?" He almost couldn't say it; the thought was too horrible, but he had to, he'd been thinking it all day. "Because of me, my blood?"

Spike shook his head vehemently, "No luv, don't think that. Sure, your taste changed a little, after, but not much, the blood just became stronger, more virile. I've been around enough to know what bad blood tastes like, and your's aint it."

Dr. Graves voice floated over from the table, where she

and the Witches were staring intently into the bowl. "Now Spike, please lie still and try not to move."

Spike settled bonelessly onto the couch, his tight grip on Xander's hand belying his calm appearance.

The Witches chanted and Giles sprinkled something into the bowl. Dr. Graves leaned over the bowl and murmured something into it. Xander glanced over at them nervously, just in time to see Willow make a face. "What? What is it?"

Willow waved aside Xander's fears, "Don't worry Xan, nothings wrong, I just didn't realize how gross internal organs are."

Spike managed to drag up the energy to look offended. "Oi! I'll have you know my organs are lovely, thank you very much."

Dawn giggled and Buffy did a passing imitation of the famous Watcher eye roll.

The doctor didn't glance up at the verbal byplay, her eyes remaining fixed on the bowl and whatever it was showing her. The rest of the room fell quiet, and Xander

could feel the tension in the air. He rubbed Spike's hand unconsciously and then practically fell off the arm of the couch when the doctor gave a sharp, triumphant laugh. All eyes turned to the grinning woman, who was shaking her head and laughing to herself. Giles was the first to break the silence.

"Gwendolyn, what exactly have you found?"

Xander raised an eyebrow at the realization that the proper Watcher was on a first name basis with the woman, but ignored the twinge of curiosity in favor of finding out what was wrong with his lover. "Yeah Doc, what gives?"

Dr. Graves turned towards the pair on the couch and smiled, "Don't worry, Spike will be fine."

The room visibly relaxed and the Vampire eyed the doctor questioningly, "So what's wrong with me?"

The woman had a smile so big Xander was sure her face would split in two.

"Gentlemen, I believe that congratulations are in order."

The occupants of the room looked at her in confusion. "Why?" Willow ventured.

"Because," and now the doctor's grin got even larger, "Spike's pregnant."

3 Diagnosis

THUMP

Xander fell off the edge of the couch.

Spike was sitting up, staring in shock at the human who had just said...

"Wait. I'm what?"

The doctor approached the couch and perched on the edge of the coffee table, taking a pale, limp hand in hers. "Spike, you are pregnant."

The Vampire stared at her with a fish-on-dry-land expression.

A slightly hysterical sounding voice drifted up from the floor, "Um, Doc? Sorry to burst your bubble here, but Spike's a guy. How can he be pregnant?"

The doctor shrugged at the shell-shocked young man who was staring up at her from the floor. "I'm not sure how Xander, but I am positive that he is pregnant. The scrying spell can't lie. And his symptoms are congruous with pregnancy."

Spike was still reeling, but noticed that the doctor didn't seem very upset by this announcement, in fact, she was grinning like the cat that ate the canary.

"You seem awfully happy about this, doc." He growled.

Dr. Graves raised an eyebrow at the Vampire. "Spike, I can understand how you're feeling right now, but please don't mistrust me. In over ten years of practicing demon medicine, I have never once encountered a case like this. You may be the first. And I discovered it. It's just a little professional pride, that's all."

Willow and Tara came and sat down in the living room. "Um, Dr. Graves," the redhead queried, "Just what does this mean, I mean, for Spike?"

The doctor considered the question.

"Well, I'm not sure. Obviously, Vampires don't get pregnant, even female ones, so for a male Vampire to wind up pregnant is not just an accident. Something made this happen."

Buffy snorted, "Yeah, it means they have way too much sex."

Spike glared at the Slayer.

Xander finally gathered his wits enough to get up off the floor and sit down on the couch. He pulled Spike against his chest and held his lover tightly.

The doctor was obviously thinking very hard. "We should check prophecies. Anything concerning a human and Vampire and a pregnancy."

Giles cleared his throat and Dr. Graves turned to look at him. "Actually Gwendolyn, we should look for

prophecies concerning Vampires and Immortals."

Dr. Graves gaped at the Watcher. "Im...immortal?"

Xander nodded and addressed the doctor. "Um, yeah. I'm not just your average human anymore."

The doctor looked as if she wanted to examine Xander under a microscope, but was just barely restraining herself. "How did this happen?"

Xander sighed and settled Spike against him. Spike started the now familiar story. "Well, the Whelp and I, see, were concerned about his safety, living on the Hellmouth and all."

Dawn laughed, "Concerned? You freaked if a demon or fledge so much as breathed in his direction. Or not breathed, whatever."

Spike mock-growled at the teen, "As I was saying, we wanted to keep him safe, and I won't turn him, even if he wanted me to."

Buffy snorted disbelievingly at this, but the Blonde ignored her. "And even marked and sharing blood, it

wasn't enough to keep him with me forever." Spike grew quiet momentarily, remembering the turbulent time in their past.

Xander kissed the bleached blonde locks and picked up the story. "Willow and Tara researched spells for us, but they couldn't find anything. Then we thought of the cave. There's a demon that grants wishes, we figured if there were anyway to make me immortal without any freaky catches, it would know it. Spike went there before, to get his soul."

Dr. Graves eyed the couple as if they were speaking another language. "You...you have a soul?"

Spike nodded. "Yup, got it back before the boy and I got together. Thought at the time it would be a good thing to have." The Vampire and Slayer exchanged a small, knowing smile. "Anyway, as the boy was saying, there's this cave, see, in Africa. There's this demon, like, that grants wishes, if you go through the proper trials and whatnot. So Xan and I went there. Scared me more than anything, the sight of him walking into that cave alone."

Xander pulled his lover back for a kiss, both of them lost in the memories. The doctor clearing her throat

interrupted the moment too soon.

"And it turned you immortal? Just like that?"

Xander smiled at her disbelief. "I may look like the geeky guy next door, but I can be pretty determined if I want to be. So yeah, I went through the trials and asked to be immortal. I mean, I can die, from like, beheading, but that's about it."

Even though he had heard the story several times before, Giles looked to be deep in thought, "Xander, did the demon say anything to you, when it granted your wish?"

Xander's eyes unfocused for a moment as he tried to remember. "I'm not sure, I mean, I was half delirious with pain and stuff, but I remember it saying something like, it expected me or something. Maybe that it knew I was coming?"

Giles looked at the boy with exasperation, "An ancient, wish granting demon tells you that it was expecting you, basically implies that it was your destiny to be there, and you forgot to tell us?"

The brunette shrugged, "As I said, I was a little delirious

at the time and then I had other things on my mind." He smiled and buried his face in bleached locks.

Dr. Graves spoke up for the first time in several minutes. "How long ago was this?"

Spike shrugged, "Two months ago, give or take."

The doctor nodded, "That would seem to have affected the situation then."

Dr. Graves ignored Dawn's sarcastic, "Ya think?"

"Now, I don't know yet what sort of timeline this pregnancy will take, not until I've observed you for a few weeks, but from the look of the fetus and your symptoms, I would place you at just about four to six weeks."

Willow looked at the doctor, "So, what should we do? Should we treat Spike like we would a pregnant human, or demon, or whatever?"

The doctor nodded, "Yes, for now. But I'll need to observe him closely, until we know how his body is handling the pregnancy."

She turned and looked at the frightened looking men on the couch. "I'll give you some basic instructions for self care, then I'd like a blood sample from each of you, and we can call it a night. I'll set up an appointment to see you next week. Perhaps by then the blood samples will tell me something, or Giles will have found a prophecy that can tell us more."

Ever ready, Willow pulled out a notepad and pen and began to take notes.

The doctor smiled at the eager redhead and began to tick off points on her fingers. "First off, I know that you are nauseous, but you have to eat. For now, eat blood, human if possible, and regular food. Lots of vegetables and grains, no junk food."

Xander snorted in disbelief, "No junk food?"

The doctor shook her head, "Not if you want a healthy baby."

Xanders mouth snapped shut and his eyes widened in fear at the word baby.

She smiled gently at him and continued. "Keep a box of crackers by the bed, in fact keep a couple boxes around the house at all times. If you feel sick, or like you can't eat, then eat a couple of crackers first, it'll settle your stomach and keep you from vomiting. Second, you should be extra careful for the next couple of weeks. If you were a human woman I would tell you to keep the physical activity down to a minimum during the first trimester, that means about four to six more weeks. And physical activity means fighting, lifting heavy objects, and sex."

"Now wait a minute here, doc. You gotta be kidding me!"

The doctor ignored the Vampire's outburst, "I didn't say no sex, just be careful and gentle. The first trimester is a delicate time for a normal pregnancy, and this is definitely not a normal pregnancy. Third, no alcohol, cigarettes or other drugs for the duration of the pregnancy."

Spike groaned and buried his head in his hands. "And exactly how long is a normal pregnancy?" the Vampire moaned.

"Nine months, or approximately 36 weeks. But there is no guarantee that this will be a normal pregnancy so I couldn't say how long it will be."

Xander held the softly moaning Vampire in his arms and rocked him gently. He turned worried eyes on the doctor. "But, Spike will be okay, right? I mean, even when we have to...to deliver the baby?"

Dr. Graves patted the brunettes hand, "Don't worry, the child will be delivered by c-section. It's a very normal procedure, even for humans, and with Vampiric healing, Spike shouldn't be in any danger whatsoever."

Xander nodded, looking relieved.

The doctor fetched her bag and removed two syringes and two capped test tubes. She efficiently swabbed spots on the men's upper arms and took a sample of each of their blood. Returning the test tubes to her bag, she gathered the rest of her stuff and turned to the group. "Well, its been lovely meeting you all. I'll get to work on these samples right away, and hopefully we shall all know more soon." The doctor handed Spike and Xander a card with her contact information and Giles walked her to the door.

The girls spread around the room all stared at the shell-shocked couple on the couch.

"So," Buffy ventured, "I guess you're gonna have a baby."

Spike gave a half-hearted snort.

Suddenly Dawn looked excited. "Ooo! Does this mean I get to be an aunt?"

The rest of the girls perked up and Willow started to bounce slightly. "Yeah!" the redhead piped up, "We all get to be aunts now!"

Spike scowled at the women and Xander had a sinking feeling that the only expression his face would ever hold again would be the one of complete shock still plastered across his features.

Giles must have sensed the men's discomfort; he seemed to take pity on them and quickly redirected the suddenly eager women. "Right, Willow, please get on that infernal machine of yours and start researching anything relating to Vampires and pregnancy. Tara, Buffy, Dawn, come help me start looking through these books."

The women groaned but obeyed their Watcher, it was hard not to when he used his stern librarian voice.

Xander and Spike remained cuddled on the couch, lost in their own thoughts. Xander idly stroked his hand through his mate's blonde locks, Spike's eyes were closed, and it was hard to tell if he was sleeping or just lost in thought. Xander wasn't sure how much time had passed when Dawn approached the couch, holding a tray.

"Um, Spike?" Her voice was soft and unsure.

Spike's eyes drifted open, "Yeah nibblet?"

"I, I brought you some food. I'm not sure if you've eaten

today, and the Doctor said you had to keep your strength up."

She set down the tray on the coffee table. "You too Xander."

Dawn handed Xander a plate with a sandwich on it, which he took gratefully, after allowing Spike to sit up on his own. Then she handed Spike a plate with crackers on it. The Vampire eyed the crackers warily. "What are these for, nibblet?"

Dawn rolled her eyes, "Did you forget what the doctor said already? It's a good thing Willow took notes. If you're feeling nauseous, eat crackers first, it will make your tummy better."

Spike smirked at Dawn's mothering attitude but handed the plate back, "Maybe later, huh Dawnie?"

The teen glared at the Vampire in what Xander thought was a fair approximation of Willows 'I'm the mom and you'll do what I say cuz I know best' glare.

To Spike's credit he held out for five whole minutes before folding. Xander had never lasted more than two

minutes, tops.

Spike began to eat a cracker and Dawn nodded, satisfied that they would obey, before heading back to the table and the pile of books waiting there.

Xander inhaled his sandwich, only now realizing that it was afternoon and he hadn't eaten yet. That had to be a record.

The brunette looked over at his lover, who had polished off the crackers and was working his way through the first of several mugs of blood.

"So the cracker thing worked, huh?"

Spike nodded, then whispered, "Yeah, but don't tell the nibblet that, kay? Don't want her thinking she can boss me around, even in my delicate condition."

Xander tried to laugh, he really did, but the phrase 'delicate condition' brought all the fear and uncertainty rushing back to envelop him in a black wave of terror. He felt his body sink back onto the couch and he let his mind sink back into that quiet place where the world made sense and he could figure out what to do with this new

mess.

Spike didn't seem to notice his mental checkout; the Vampire seemed equally terrified by the phrase that had just passed his lips. They settled back onto the couch together, ignoring the activity going on around them.

Spike was scared. Really, really scared. In his entire unlife he couldn't remember if he had ever been this scared. Here he was, a hundred and thirty something year old Vampire, and he was terrified of a baby. But not just any baby. His baby. His and Xander's baby. And didn't that thought just beat all. In all of Spike's most sappy, romantic fantasies about the life he and his mate would share together, children had never entered into it. Unless they were playing indulgent uncles to Dawn's future pack of hellions. Or maybe if the Witches decided to spawn, but the thought of being responsible for creating and caring for another life was almost too much for his undead gray matter to wrap itself around. He was a Vampire, for hells sake. He took life, he didn't create life. He didn't nurture life. What did he, an evil, albeit souled, demon have to offer a child? He hadn't even created Vampire childer, that was how un-maternal he was. Spike's brain was starting to hurt. He needed to be held, he needed to be comforted, he needed to think and

plan. Plus he and Xander really needed to talk. He turned eyes bright with pain and fear on his lover. "Can we go home now?"

Xander looked equally overwhelmed. He blinked a few times at Spike before his mate's words penetrated the fog overtaking his brain, then he nodded and stood up. "Giles, girls, sun's down, we're gonna head home. Call us if you find anything, okay?"

Giles looked up. "Oh, of course. You must both be in a great deal of shock. There's absolutely no reason for you to stay here. Go home and get some rest. We'll call you in the morning."

The two men gathered themselves together and headed for the door. Spike thought idly as they left that no one had even commented on his bunny slippers.

4 Baby Showers

The trip home was fast and made in complete silence. The silence continued as they shuffled slowly into their [apartment](#). Finally, when the door was safely shut and locked, Xander turned to Spike, "So, uh..."

Spike just shook his head and moved into Xander's

arms. They closed about him and the Vampire sighed happily, finally starting to relax. They stood that way for several minutes before Spike withdrew gently and began walking towards the bedroom, pulling Xander behind him.

"Um, Spike? What..."

Spike glanced over his shoulder at his [mate](#), "Please Xan. I just, need to be held, okay?"

Xander nodded, "I can do that."

Spike kicked off the slippers and lay down on the bed. Xander pulled off his shoes and jeans before joining his lover and pulling the covers up over them. Spike rolled over, settling himself up against Xander's chest. Finally, feeling safe and secure for the first time all day, Spike felt he could talk.

"Xan? What is this? I mean, is the [doctor](#) bint right? Am I? Are we gonna have a..."

Xander stroked strong fingers through his lover's blonde locks and sighed. "As scary as it is, I believe her. It's just the how that gets me. That and the whole having a baby

thing. Okay, actually everything about this scares me. What idiot god chose us as parents? Plus, you know, is it gonna be human? Vampire? Demon? Good or Evil? The list of things to be scared of is endless."

Spike shuddered in his lover's arms. "If this is some evil prophesy, if our child is evil, or gonna wreck havoc on the world or whatnot, I'll stake myself."

Spike felt Xander's arms tighten around him suddenly in a crushing grip. He raised his eyes and met brown eyes dark with turbulent emotions. "No." Xander's voice was rough with fear, "You won't get hurt. Neither will our child. Nothing that comes from us could be bad, and I won't lose you, no matter what."

Trembling with the force behind those words, Spike leaned up and gently kissed his mate, trying to put his love and trust into the kiss. Spike tried to keep the kiss soft and gentle, but Xander crushed their mouths together, fear making the kiss desperate. Their tongues intertwined, Xander mapping out every inch of his mouth, as if to reassure the human that his lover was still there, still real. Spike understood the need for reassurance; it was exactly what he needed too. Spike wound his arms around his lover's chest, hands running

up and down the strong back, slipping under the tee shirt to caress warm skin. When Xander came up for air he seemed to start to pull back, but Spike held on tight, begging softly. "Please, Xan. Need this, need you. Need to know this is real."

Xander nodded mutely and quickly broke out of Spike's grasp, ignoring the Vampire's whimpers and stripped, removing Spike's clothing as well before settling back down on the bed and rolling Spike over so they were laying on their sides, facing each other. Xander pulled Spike back into his arms and Spike went willingly, wrapping his arms around his lover and twining their legs together as well. Their kisses became more frantic and touches more needy, both trying to desperately push away all the fear and confusion of the day.

Spike let himself become immersed in the sensations of touching and kissing his lover, his Xander. Warm hands stroked and kneaded his cool flesh, leaving a warm tingle wherever they touched. A hot mouth was slowly working its way down the column of his throat, pausing to suck and nibble on that spot that always got him hot.

Spike gasped and threw a leg over Xander's waist, pulling his lover as close as possible. He thrust his aching cock

into the soft, warm flesh of his lover's stomach, groaning at the sensations. One of Xander's hands drifted down to grasp Spike's ass and pulled the Vampire even closer. Xander recaptured Spikes mouth and they kissed desperately as they thrust against each other. Suddenly, Xander tore his mouth away and gasped out, "Please Spike, need you, need to be inside you."

Spike groaned. "Yes, luv, please, need to feel you."

That was all the encouragement Xander needed. He rolled over just enough to grab the tube of lube off the bedside table and quickly slicked up his fingers. He resumed his plundering of Spike's mouth as he began to prepare his lover.

Spike moaned and whimpered in need as the first slick finger entered him. Another quickly followed it, the two slick digits crooking forward to stroke his prostate. Sensations exploded through his body, Spike moaned into the kiss and murmured what he hoped were words of encouragement as two fingers became three.

Finally Xander drew his hand away and quickly slicked up his cock. Spike held still as Xander moved down his body slightly and positioned himself at the Vampire's prepared

entrance. Xander looked up and caught Spike's eye, the blonde nodded and Xander slowly pushed forward and up, sliding into Spike's tight, cool channel. Once he was fully inside, Xander pulled Spike back against his chest and kissed the Vampire hungrily before finally starting up slow, shallow thrusts.

Spike whimpered into the kiss and thrust back, arching in an attempt to get more of his lover's hot cock inside. Hands roamed freely, touching every inch of flesh possible, tongues frantically twined and Xander kept up a steady pace, driving himself into Spike as the two men tried to taste and feel as much of each other as they could, as they tried to prove to themselves that everything was okay.

Spike sucked his way down Xander's neck, and the brunette bared his throat in a wordless entreaty. Spike eagerly morphed into gameface and bit, sucking down a mouthful of passion-laced blood. The bite drove Xander over the edge, with a soft cry he began to thrust faster, crushing Spike to him and trapping the Vampire's cock between their stomachs. Spike withdrew his fangs as he felt his mate's orgasm near. He grabbed onto Xander's shoulders and began to thrust back. As Spike's orgasm hit him he arched up into the warm body of his mate,

shaking and crying out as his release was torn from him. Vaguely he felt Xander shudder and cum, heard the human's cries of completion, but he was too far-gone to react.

Eventually Xander pulled out and rolled onto his back, pulling Spike against him and tucking the Vampire into his side. If Xander noticed that Spike's post-orgasm shakes turned into silent sobs, he didn't say anything, just held his love closer. If Spike noticed Xander's breathing hitch or heard the human's quiet sobs, the only sign was the almost automatic stroking of his mate's chest. Eventually both stilled as the lovers cried themselves to sleep.



~~~Six weeks later~~~

Spike stood in front of the full-length mirror, eyeing it as if he were actually reflected in it. The Vampire turned left and right, examining his un-reflection. Finally

curiosity got the better of Xander and he gave in, walking up and standing behind his lover. Now Xander was reflected in the mirror, but nope, still no Spike.

"Um, Spike? Sweetie? What are you doing?"

Spike frowned at the mirror, then looked down at his stomach. "Am I getting fat?"

Alarm bells sounded in Xander's head. With Anya, this was always where things had gone very wrong very fast. "Um, no. Not at all. Why do you ask?"

Spike scowled at the mirror, "My jeans are getting too tight. I can't button them."

Xander sighed in relief. "Blondie? Dr. Graves told us this would happen. We'll go to the store tomorrow."

Spike turned and glared at the brunette. "So you're saying I'm fat then?"

Xander sputtered, "Spike!"

"Well, you said you were gonna buy me new clothes. If I need new clothes, then that means I've grown out of my

old ones, which means I'm fat!"

Xander groaned and collapsed on the bed. "Spike, luv. You are not fat! You are pregnant. If you're pissed off at having to get new clothes now, just wait till it looks like you swallowed a beach ball!"

Spike paled and turned big, sad eyes on Xander. "Will you still love me when I'm fat?"

Xander very firmly quelled all desire to throttle his pregnant husband, he did have to put up with this for nine whole months, and if he couldn't deal with an only slightly emotional Spike now... Instead Xander stood up and took Spike into his arms. "Spike, I will always love you, no matter what. And you're not fat."

Spike nodded and snuggled into Xander's arms. They stood that way for several minutes, then Spike's brain backtracked and he looked suspiciously up at his lover, "Why tomorrow?"

"Huh?"

"Why are we going to the store tomorrow? Why not tonight?"

Xander shrugged, "Willow made me promise that we'd both be home tonight."

Spike looked interested, "Why? Did they find a prophecy or something? What's going on?"

"I don't know, sweetheart. She wouldn't tell me. I'm sure it's nothing bad, Will just said we were to both be home at eight tonight, on pain of death."

A worried frown passed over Spike's face, "Maybe they found something. Maybe it's really bad and they want to break the news to us gently. Maybe..."

Xander stopped the worried babbling before it could go any further. After six weeks they still didn't know what was going on other than what Dr. Graves could tell them. Spike was pregnant, it was progressing like a normal human pregnancy, and so far everyone involved was healthy. But as to the whys and hows, they still had no clue. Xander sighed and willed his brain to stop before he became as neurotic as Spike, and they both just curled up under the covers and didn't come out for nine months, or was it seven months now...

Shaking his head at his own musings, Xander leaned down and kissed Spike softly, "I have to go to work, are you gonna be okay?"

Spike looked annoyed, something Xander actually considered a good sign lately. It was better than scared, or tearful, or raving psychotic...

Spike growled softly, "I'll be fine, moron. I'm just gonna go back to bed and sleep till you get home."

Xander produced his best eye roll. "Or you could clean the apartment, since we have company coming?"

Spike scoffed, "What? Me clean, in my delicate state? I'm not supposed to lift anything heavy, remember?"

Xander laughed and kissed the lips pouting conveniently in his direction. "In Vampire terms I think that means no lifting cars and things, not no lifting vacuum cleaners or dish washing detergent."

Spike managed a put upon sigh. "Well, you'll just have to ask the doctor that won't you? And since we don't see her for another week, I'll just be going back to bed now,

thank you very much."

Xander stifled a laugh and tucked his lover back under the covers. "I love you, blondie. I'll see you tonight, okay?"

Spike kissed him back and turned over, already drifting off. If Dr. Graves hadn't told them what to expect these past few weeks, Xander would have been concerned about how much Spike was sleeping. Well, he'd also be more concerned if he didn't know that the blonde Vampire would be up in a few hours watching Passions. Chuckling softly to himself, Xander left for work.



At 8:00pm on the nose there was a knock at the door. Xander answered it, only to have several trays of food shoved into his arms. Willow graced his confused expression with an only slightly evil smile as she began directing traffic with the ease of an army general. Xander was told to set the food up on the dining room table, and the rest of the Scooby gang began

tracking in and out, setting up more food and piling stacks of brightly wrapped presents on the coffee table in front of where a shocked looking Spike sat. Once his task was complete, Xander wandered over to the couch and sat next to his mate, watching the proceedings bemusedly. Within no time at all, food and drinks were set up, presents were stacked neatly ready for opening, and streamers and balloons were scattered about the living room. Soon the entire Scooby gang was sitting around the room, smiling at the two shocked looking men, so, to their astonishment, were Angel, Cordy and Wesley.

Xander took in the scene in front of him and wondered if he should be afraid or excited. Spike beat him to the question already forming on his lips.

"Just what the bloody hell is going on here Red?"

Willow smiled, "Can't you tell Spike? It's your baby shower!"

Spike clutched protectively at his slightly rounded stomach. "Baby shower?"

Buffy rolled her eyes at the Vampire, "Spike! A baby

shower is a party, for you. Where we give you and Xander presents."

Spike began to relax slightly, "Presents?"

Dawn nodded enthusiastically, "Yup! Presents for you and the baby."

Spike uncurled from his protective position and reached for the pile of presents, "Well why didn't you say so? Hand 'em over."

Willow smacked the Vampire's hand and ignored the resulting pout. "Hang on Mr. Greedy, there's an order to the events of the evening."

Spike gaped at her, "But you said it was my party!"

Willow gave the Vampire her best 'but don't you love me?' face. "Food, then games, then cake, then presents, then movies."

Spike protested, but not for long, and Xander was relieved to see that he wasn't the only one who that face worked on.

Suddenly, Xander remembered something he'd heard once, "Wait a minute? Isn't a baby shower for girls only?"

Giles gave a long-suffering sigh, ignoring the girls giggles. "I believe that that is the custom, Xander. However, it seems that the girls have decided since both parents are men, that this is to be an all-inclusive baby shower."

Spike eyed the L.A. crew suspiciously, "What are you lot doing here, peaches? Don't you have hopeless gits to save?"

Angel looked about to snap a retort when Cordy's haughty voice beat him to it. "Really, Spike! That is Angel's grandchild you're carrying! We couldn't very well stay away."

Angel managed to pale at that and Cordy continued on. "Or is it his great grandchild?"

Any retort Spike could make was cut short by a plate of food being shoved into his hands by a sheepishly smiling Tara. Spike's mouth immediately snapped shut as he eyed the food. "Oi! What's with the slimy green stuff?"

Willow turned around from where she had been filling plates for people. "What? Spike, those are vegetables. You know, the healthy stuff you're supposed to be eating?"

Seeing the Vampire's disgusted look, Willow turned her best glare on Xander. "Xander Harris! What have you been feeding your pregnant husband?"

He knew he was in for it, but Xander still tried to bluff his way out. "Um, food?"

Willow glared at him but turned a sweet, innocent smile to the blonde, who was poking the pile of steamed vegetables with a fork and wearing a dubious expression.

"Spike, sweetie, what did you eat for dinner last night?"

"Hmmm?" Spike was distracted by the foreign vegetable matter and so wasn't aware of the trap he was falling in to. "Oh, um, pizza, I think."

"I see," Willow's sickly sweet tone was causing Xander to think thoughts of happy things, like death and

dismemberment. "And what did you eat the day before?"

Spike turned to eye the red head, only now realizing the danger he was in. "Um, Chinese food? I think there were vegetables in that. There were definitely noodles..." The Vampire meekly trailed off.

Willow turned a stormy expression back to Xander. "Xander Harris! I cannot believe you! This is your child's health we're talking about! Don't make me come over here and start cooking for you two, because trust me, you definitely won't like it!"

As Willow berated her best friend since childhood, the rest of the party guests went about dishing themselves up plates and chatting about the party decorations and piles of presents.

Finally the Witch let her friend go back to the party, with a stern, "We'll talk later." Xander gratefully accepted the plate handed to him and slunk back to the couch, surreptitiously placing Spike between him and Willow.

After food was consumed, and several rounds of silly games were played, most of which Xander couldn't see the point of, including an embarrassing moment when

Buffy produced a dry erase board and bets were placed as to the time and date of the birth and the gender of the child, the cake was finally served and the gang settled around to watch them open presents. Xander eyed the pile of presents in front of them and suddenly felt extremely grateful for his friends and family, "Y..you guys didn't have to..."

Willow clucked at him, "Nonsense, of course we did. Not only are you both family, you're also the first to produce offspring! We had to celebrate."

Spike looked knowingly to where Willow and Tara were holding hands, "Bet we won't be the last though, eh ducks?"

Tara blushed bright red and Willow stammered a bit. "Well, I...I mean, we are still young and..."

The room broke out into laughter. Spike chuckled and smiled fondly at the Witches. "Relax red, you two'll make great moms someday."

Willow smiled hugely at the Vampire and pressed a present into his hands, "Here, open this one first."

Spike eagerly ripped into the package and pulled out, "Pajama pants?"

Dawn laughed, "They're yoga pants! They're nice and soft and comfy and have a draw string waist, so you can wear them when you start to get big."

Spike fingered the three pairs of soft, dark cotton pants and smiled a pained smile at the teen, "Thanks bit."

Dawn beamed.

Xander accepted the package Willow handed to him. "Thanks Wills."

He opened the package to find, "A cookbook?" Xander turned the book over and read the title, "Eating for two."

Willow smiled a slightly more evil smile than earlier. "It's a cookbook for pregnancy. So now you can take care of Spike correctly."

Xander wasn't sure what his reply would have been, it was cut short by Spike's exclamation of horror. "Oh bloody hell!"

Xander turned and eyed the book sitting in his mate's

lap. "What to expect when you're expecting?"

Tara nodded, "It's a really great book, very informative. Willow and I read it and the cookbook already and highlighted all the really important stuff."

Xander took both books and set them aside, "Um, thanks, I think."

The rest of the presents were a mixed bag as far as the men were concerned. They ranged from practical: bottles, cloth diapers, something called a burp rag, and other assorted baby paraphernalia, not to mention a dozen baby outfits in different colors, from Cordy, of course. To silly: baby toys, a baby holder that either of the men could wear like a backpack, a cushion that Spike was supposed to sit on to support his back, and the stack of tweed diapers from a smirking Giles, which had sent them all into hysterics. To emotional: when Buffy and Dawn rolled in a baby crib that had belonged to both of the girls. "Mom kept it in the attic. I'm sure I won't be needing it, and Dawn had better not need it for ten years at least." Buffy explained, trying to joke her way past the tears in her eyes. Tear filled hugs had been exchanged all around after that.

Finally, Angel stepped forward and handed Spike a small box, the type that rings were kept in. Spike stared at his grandsire and pointed to the matching gold and silver bands on his and Xander's left hands, "This better not be a proposal peaches, I'm already taken."

Angel scowled, "Just open the box, William."

Slowly, Spike did, only to drop the box with a soft gasp. Xander scooped the box up, looked inside, and then stared questioningly at the older Vampire. "How did you get this?"

Buffy bounced impatiently in her seat. "What! What is it?"

Xander clutched the box in one hand and held onto his lover with the other, "It's the Gem of Amara."

Gasps filled the room. Giles sent an apologetic glance at the men on the couch then turned to Angel, "Regardless of Spikes condition, do you really think that it's wise for anyone to have that ring?"

Spike growled softly but quieted when Angel motioned for the younger Vampire to calm down. "Giles, I

understand your concern. But think about it. Regardless of any prophecies, Spike and Xander's child will be special. There's very little lore about it, but what there is claims that the child of a human and Vampire will be very powerful. The child will probably have Vampiric speed and strength, without the allergies to sunlight and holy objects. But this is the hellmouth, and regardless of any special abilities, their child will still be that, a child. They will both have to protect the child, at all times. I won't have it on my conscious if the child is hurt because it was attacked during the day and Spike couldn't be there to help."

Giles nodded, "Very good point Angel. Thank you."

Spike locked gazes with the other Vampire, "Thank you, Sire."

Angel smiled, "You're welcome, William."

With shaky fingers, Xander removed the ring from its box and slid it onto Spike's right hand. Then he kissed his lover softly.

The group remained silent, most still in awe of the gesture, when after several minutes Giles cleared his

throat. "Um, Angel's gift brings up a good point. Xander, Spike, your child will be special, and you both must be able to protect it. This then brings up the question of Spike's chip."

Most of the room looked shocked.

Willow nodded. "Giles is right. With everything that's happened over the last couple of years, with Spike getting his soul, then he and Xander getting together, numerous apocalypses, we kind of forgot to work on removing it."

Angel coughed uncomfortably and carefully didn't look at Giles, or at the couch, where two men were blushing and furiously trying to not look anyone else in the eye. Giles sat down with a thump and furiously began cleaning his glasses, "Xander, Spike, would you care to explain what is going on here?"

Xander sighed and shot Willow an apologetic glance. He was about to bring up a painful subject that they had pointedly avoided talking about.

"Well, remember when Spike and I first decided to do the mating bond thing and we weren't talking to you guys

much?"

Giles rolled his eyes, "I believe what you mean to say Xander, is if we remember when we told you that you were insane to bond with a Vampire and your soul was in danger, and in reaction you and Spike left town for three months?"

Xander looked abashed, "Yeah, that."

Spike rubbed Xander's back and murmured encouragement, he was over it, but he knew that the fight and following estrangement had been hard on the friends and they didn't like to bring up such a painful period in their lives.

Xander took a deep breath and continued, "Well, anyway, we went to L.A. to see Angel. We, um, we wanted his blessings, and there was a ceremony and stuff..."

Giles interrupted, going into Watcher mode, "Really? A Bonding ceremony? What does it involve? I haven't read any references to it."

Xander blushed furiously and pointedly ignored Spike's

smirk. "Um, yeah, a ceremony, its uh..."

Angel came to the human's rescue, before Xander could burst into flames from embarrassment.

"I'd be happy to fill you in sometimes, Giles, but for now lets just say it's private."

Giles nodded and Angel tried to ignore Buffy's speculative expression. He continued, "As I was saying, while I approved of the mating, I was concerned about Xander's safety. Granted, the bonding gave him certain benefits: increased speed and strength, enhanced senses, and the like, but this is the hellmouth, and being the Mate of a Master Vampire would leave him likely to be a target. I wanted to make sure that my Childe and his Mate had every chance possible, so I had the chip removed."

Gasps echoed about the room for the second time that night. Xander clutched Spike's hand tightly and gave his mate a shaky smile. They knew that this information would have to come out eventually, but neither was sure of their friends reactions.

Surprisingly, it was Buffy who broke the silence, "Well, I think that's great! Now we don't have to worry about

them being able to protect each other and the baby. That means I can concentrate on the normal hellmouthy stuff."

Dawn seconded her sister, bouncing over and kissing Spike soundly. "Congratulations! I'm glad you're a whole Vampire again."

Spike pulled the teen into his lap and began tickling her mercilessly, "Actually, little bit, I was thinking I feel quite hollow, maybe a snack will help." Spike shimmered into gameface and pretended to consider where would be the best place to bite the giggling and squirming teen. Dawn laughed delightedly and tried to tickle back.

Buffy rolled her eyes at her sister and the Vampire wrestling on the couch and went to help herself to another piece of cake.

Xander extracted himself out from under a squirming Dawn and went over to Willow. "I'm sorry I didn't tell you, Wills. Are we okay?"

Willow thumped him fondly over the head then pulled her best friend into a hug. "Of course we are, moron. Do you think I'd like it if either you or Spike had been hurt

because it was a bunch of humans who attacked you, instead of demons?"

The two friends hugged, then turned back to the living room, covered with wrapping paper and other assorted debris. "Thanks Wills, this is great."

Willow kissed him on the cheek. "You're welcome, you parental guy you."

The redhead eyed the apartment questioningly. "Have you thought about where you're gonna put all this stuff?"

Xander shrugged, "Not really. I suppose I should talk to the apartment manager about getting switched to a two bedroom, or something. This place was getting kinda small anyway."

Giles heard the last comment and excused himself from where he had been talking with Angel and Wesley. "Um, Xander, I wondered if I could speak with you for a minute?"

Xander nodded, "Sure G-man, what's up?"

Giles smiled at the resurrection of his long ago

nickname. "Actually, I wanted to discuss your last comment with you. It seems to me that a child would be much happier growing up in a real home, with a yard and dog and all those very American things, not trapped in a small apartment."

Xander frowned, "You're right, I mean, I haven't really thought about it, but yeah. It's just, I mean, the promotion I got last month has helped, I just don't think we could afford a house. It's not like Spike has a regular paycheck or anything."

Giles rolled his eyes and placed a hand on Xander's shoulder. "Xander, listen very carefully because I'll only say this once. My family is very well off, and now that I'm back in favor with the Watchers council, their stipend is very generous, and the Magic Shop is doing quite well."

Xander nodded, not quite sure he was understanding what the Watcher was saying.

Giles favored him with another eye roll. "Oh for heavens sake Xander, here. And I won't take no for an answer."

Xander accepted the pile of papers thrust into his hands. He could tell that they were legal documents, but

what caught his eye was the picture, of a small, two story house with a nice, big yard, a sold sign on its front, and the pair of keys resting next to it. The shocked brunette turned wide eyes on the man he had come to think of as his father. Giles smiled at his shock and softly murmured, "Congratulations Son, I'm quite proud of you."

Xander thrust the papers into Willow's hands and threw his arms around the Watcher's neck, surprising them both by kissing Giles soundly on the lips. He then buried his face in Giles shoulder, chanting, "Thank you, thank you, thank you," over and over again.

Giles patted Xander's back and laughed softly. "You're welcome, Xander."

Xander's exclamation of joy followed by his kissing of the Watcher had shocked the room into silence. Spike pried himself away from Dawn and Tara, who had been trying to show him how cloth diapers worked, and stalked over to the two embracing men. "Oi! Watcher! What do you think you're doing with my man?"

Xander tore himself away from Giles and grabbed Spike around the waist, hoisting his lover in the air and

spinning him around in circles. "A house, a house, Giles bought us a house!"

Spike laughed at his mate's enthusiasm and examined the papers that were handed to him as he was set down. A bouncing Xander looked over his shoulder as the Vampire looked at the papers. "Hell Watcher, I'm tempted to snog you too. What brought this on?"

Giles smiled and laid a hand on Spike's shoulder, "You are both family, and family takes care of each other."

Surprised at himself, Spike blinked back tears, and was grateful when Willow took the papers from him and turned to show the rest of the group, who were all crowding around to see the pictures.

No longer the center of attention, Spike pulled his mate into his arms. Xander understood the emotions in his mate's eyes. "Yes Spike, they love us. We're family, remember. That means you too, silly Vampire."

Spike nuzzled Xander's neck, breathing in the scent of his mate, he sighed contentedly. "Hmmm. Family. That sounds nice."

Xander kissed the top of Spike's head and hugged him tighter. "Yeah. That sounds very nice."

## 5 Moving

Spike glanced up suddenly from where he was crouched over a box, the book he was packing slipping from his hand. Vampiric senses stretched to their fullest, he scanned the apartment, searching for the source of the disturbance that had been teasing the edges of his senses all day. Growling and still unable to locate the source of the tiny sounds, Spike paced the perimeter of the apartment for what must have been the fifteenth time all afternoon. "Bloody 'ell! What the fuck is it?" Spike paced back and forth and swore at the top of his voice, not caring if the neighbors complained, they'd be moved out by the end of the weekend anyway. "I must be going crazy! Hearing things now, I am. Stupid pregnancy, making me lose my mind..."

The rant trailed off as realization suddenly swept over

Spike. Instead of training his senses outward, searching for the sounds, he trained his senses inward, listening intently. A gasp escaped Spike's throat as he finally heard it, a small, soft thud-thud. Claspng his hands to his softly mounded stomach, Spike slid bonelessly to the floor, tuning out the rest of the world and focusing in on the sound of his child's heartbeat.

Xander fumbled with the keys, cursing loudly, and almost dropped the armload of cardboard boxes before he finally got the front door open. Once inside the apartment he thankfully let the empty boxes tumble to the floor before hanging his jacket up and tucking his keys away. "Spike! Have you finished packing yet? The gang will be here in an hour or so to start moving stuff and we've barely packed anything..."

Xander turned around and trailed off after seeing the silent apartment. Where was Spike?

"Um, Spike?"

Worried, Xander began to search through their tiny living room, checking behind the couch and the pile of boxes stacked haphazardly around the furniture. No Spike.

"Oh shit."

Scared now, Xander headed back to the bedroom and almost tripped over Spike, sitting quietly in the hallway, clutching his stomach, a strange look on his face.

Xander crouched down next to the silent Vampire, reaching out a shaking hand to touch Spike's arm. "Spike? Spike, what's wrong? Talk to me."

Spike just shook his head.

Almost frantic, Xander scooped up his mate and gently moved them to the couch, sitting down and clutching Spike to him. "What's wrong? Spike, please tell me. Has something bad happened?"

Again Spike shook his head, then moved his mouth. Even with better-than-human hearing Xander had to lean into his mate to catch what the Vampire was saying.

"...a heartbeat. The baby has a heartbeat. I can hear it."

Confused and flushed with adrenaline, it took several minutes before Xander understood what Spike was saying. "Really? You can hear a heartbeat?"

Spike nodded. Gently, Xander moved Spike back so the Vampire was reclining on the couch. Xander lay down and placed his ear on the mound of Spike's stomach, resting his head gently, trying not to place too much weight on his mate. Closing his eyes, Xander took a few deep breaths and stilled himself, training all his focus on simply listening. For several seconds he didn't hear anything, then, faintly, a soft thump-thump drifted to his ears. Xander gasped, excitement coursing through him, he wanted to jump up and down, shout, call Willow immediately, but he didn't dare lose the sound. The two men lay on the couch, immobile, lost in the sound of their child's heart.

Giles led four griping women up the stairs to Xander and Spike's apartment. Ignoring the complaints of forced physical labor, and the insinuation that it was his entire fault for buying the men the house in the first place, he mumbled softly to himself. "By all the gods, I hope that I survive this weekend in one piece."

Slayer hearing caught his sarcastic remark, "Of course you'll survive Giles," Buffy smiled sweetly at him, "We won't kill you until after you help us move them."

Rolling his eyes, Giles pushed the door open and stepped inside, followed closely by the women. They all froze in shock at the scene that was presented to them. In the years of Spike and Xander's relationship, all of them had interrupted sex at one time or another, to the point where none of them were fazed by it now. This scene however, was entirely new. Spike lay on the couch, hands resting on Xander's head, which lay on Spike's stomach. Both men had their eyes closed and focused expressions on their faces.

Willow was the first to break the shocked silence. "Um, guys? What's going on? Is everything alright?"

Xander lifted his head up and smiled a huge, goofy grin. "The baby has a heartbeat. We can hear it."

Various cries of joy and relief greeted his statement. Dawn however, looked confused. "Uh, why? I mean, yay, good for you, but why is everyone so happy about it?"

Spike's ice blue eyes, bright with unshed tears, focused on the group. "Because nibblet, it means the little one's human. It means it has a soul."

Spike's smile of relief and joy left no doubts in anyone's mind what a relief this was to the couple, the Vampire especially.

"Sweetie? I'm home!" Xander shoved the door closed with his hip and maneuvered his way through the boxes still lining the living room, heading towards the kitchen. They'd been moved into their new house, their new house!!! Xander tried to wipe the dopey grin off his face, for a month now and they still hadn't unpacked all the boxes yet, except for the baby's room. That had

been accomplished the first week, with much help from the overly design-minded Aunts. Xander set the grocery bags down on the kitchen counter and scanned the front room. "Spike?" There was no sign of the Vampire.

Vaguely worried, Xander wandered upstairs, heading to their bedroom, "Um, Spike, this isn't funny..." A soft growl was all the warning he had before a snarling, naked Vampire pounced on him. Xander shrieked in a very unmanly way as he was tumbled to the floor. "Spike! Um, whoa, hold on!"

Spike looked up from where he was licking Xander's stomach, "Hmm?"

After unsuccessfully trying to untangle himself from Spike, Xander just gave up and flopped back onto the floor. "So, how was your day? Do anything interesting, like unpack boxes maybe? And what, exactly, is this all about?"

Spike rolled his eyes and returned to his task of unbuttoning Xander's shirt. "Fine, no and stop asking me to, and I dunno, just horny."

Xander tried to process the responses, then gave up and

helped Spike's cause by kicking off his shoes and undoing his belt. Xander sat up enough to allow Spike to push his shirt off of him and was surprised to find himself shivering as cold air hit his skin. "Spike, sweetie? Why is it so cold in here?"

Spike looked at his mate like he was an idiot, "It's not cold, it's hot in here! That's why I turned the air conditioners on."

"The air conditioners!?! Spike, it's April! It's like, barely 70 degrees outside."

The Vampire just shrugged as he continued to strip Xander. "Well it's bloody hot inside, init?"

Any reply Xander would have made was lost in a gasp as Spike yanked Xander's boxers off and deep throated his semi-erect cock. "Oooh, god. Don't stop."

Spike chuckled, the vibrations doing interesting things to the fellatio process, and continued sucking. Just when Xander was moaning and grasping the carpet, preparing for release, Spike released his mate's cock with a wet slurp and climbed up to straddle Xander's chest. The brunette glared at his mate accusingly. "Why'd you

stop?"

Smirking, Spike just knelt up and positioned Xander's cock at his entrance. "To do this."

So saying, Spike sat down, impaling himself on Xander's cock in one quick motion.

The breath was torn from Xander's throat and it was several minutes before he could speak again. Xander glared up at Spike, when something dawned on him. "You were already lubed up and naked, just waiting for me to get home, weren't you?"

Spike managed to look sheepish. "Well, yeah. Told you I was horny." Then he began to move.

Xander resigned himself to being breathless and surrendered to his lover.

Spike rode him hard, rising up and slamming down in long, hard movements.

Xander's hands were gripping his lover's hips in a painful grasp, his mouth was hanging open, gasping as Spike's movements drove his hard cock deeper into the

Vampire's warm, slick channel. Briefly Xander wondered why Spike felt warm, but the thought was swept away as the blonde riding him changed positions and began a series of quick short thrusts that wiped out Xander's ability to think.

Spike's head was thrown back, his eyes squeezed shut in concentration. Sweat gleamed on his pale skin and his hands gripped Xander's shoulders in a crushing grip. Spike was speaking, but it took several minutes for the words to penetrate Xander's lust fogged brain.

"Oh gods, so good. Please Xan, please. Touch me. Please..."

Xander let his right hand release its death grip on Spike's hip and move around to grasp the Vampire's leaking cock. Spike moaned as his lover began to fist him in time to the frantic thrusts. Spike began a sharp rocking motion, grinding Xander's cock deep into him, and Xander felt his orgasm suddenly looming.

Xander began to stroke Spike faster, with the hard, short strokes he knew his mate loved, and with his other hand drew one of Spike's wrists near his mouth. Xander licked along the sensitive skin of his lover's wrist then bit down,

hard. Lost in the taste of his lover's blood as it flooded his mouth, he barely heard Spike screaming his name. He did feel the warm cum as it splattered over his chest. And he had enough presence of mind to release Spike's wrist as his orgasm slammed into him and the world went gray as what felt like every last drop of cum was ripped from him.

Xander came back to himself to find that he was laying spread eagle on the floor with Spike curled up at his side, blonde head resting on his shoulder. Idly he licked the last of the Vampire's blood from his lips and stroked the blonde hair gently. "So, have some extra energy to work off, did we?"

Spike snorted, "Do you blame me? I've barely been out of the house in weeks! I had to do something if I was gonna sit through another night of failed cooking attempts and must see TV."

Xander ignored the jab at his cooking. In all honesty his attempts to recreate the recipes from Tara and Willows cookbook hadn't been all that successful. And with the whole gang feeling protective of the Vampire, Spike hadn't been patrolling in months. "Well, luckily for you, that's not what we're doing tonight."

Spike sat up and bounced a little with curiosity. "It's not? What're we doing, then?"

Xander smiled and levered himself up into a sitting position. "Well, first we're gonna shower. Then we have a doctors appointment. After that, if we get the okay from Dr. Graves, we're meeting Buffy and the gang for patrol."

Spike began to bounce harder. "Really? We're actually going patrolling? Can I kill things?"

Xander held back a laugh, barely. "Yes, you can actually kill things. Some unknown wannabe big bad has been

recruiting and there's a huge nest of fledges to take out. Even five months pregnant you can easily take out half the nest by yourself. With us helping Buffy slay, the Witches can do some spell to find out who's been doing all the recruiting. Besides, I feel kinda bad that you've been so cooped up lately."

Spike jumped up and yanked Xander up after him. "Well, come on then, get a move on. We've got places to go and things to kill."

Laughing, Xander followed his mate down the hall to the shower.

~!~

Spike lay on the table, trying not to squirm as the doctor poked and prodded at his stomach. Dr. Graves smiled

happily to herself as she listened with a stethoscope and made some notes in a chart. "Well gentlemen, I must say, everything seems to be going swimmingly. Both mother and child seem very healthy."

Spike snorted at the mother reference, but let it slide.

"Doctor?"

"Yes Xander?"

"Um, I just, I've noticed something weird about Spike lately."

The doctor turned her full attention to Xander. "What is it?"

"Its just that Spike feels warmer."

Spike arched an eyebrow at that. "I feel warmer?"

Xander shrugged. "It's the only way I can describe it. But you can't deny that something's different, you had the air conditioners running at full blast in April."

It was Spikes turn to shrug, "I felt hot."

"Exactly." Xander smiled.

Dr. Graves laughed. "Well, I've never treated a pregnant Vampire before, but in human pregnancies, as well as several other species, the mother's internal body temperature goes up during the pregnancy. I see no reason to doubt that this would happen to Spike as well."

Xander looked confused, "But couldn't being warmer hurt Spike somehow? I mean, he is a walking corpse after all."

"Oi! You're the one that sleeps with this walking corpse!"

Xander patted Spike's hand but otherwise ignored his mate's outburst.

The doctor smiled at the obvious worry the immortal man showed for his mate's well being. "I'll take his temperature, but I seriously doubt it will affect him adversely."

Dr. Graves found a thermometer and stuck it under Spike's tongue. After checking it she nodded to herself

and made a few more notes. "Spike, the reason you feel so hot is because your body temperature has risen at least 10 degrees. You aren't quite at a human body temperature, but you are close. It will probably be uncomfortable for you on occasion, but your body temperature should return to normal once the baby is born."

Spike rolled his eyes, "Everything about this is uncomfortable. How much longer do we have, doctor?"

Dr. Graves smiled reassuringly at the Vampire. "Just four more months, then it will all be over."

Spike groaned and flung his arm over his eyes. "Four months, I'll never bloody make it."

The doctor laughed at the Vampires melodrama, "Look on the bright side, the second trimester is often accompanied by a sharp rise in libido. You should enjoy it while you can."

Xander suddenly felt very suspicious, "What do you mean, enjoy it while we can?"

"Well, for the last month or two, sex will be the furthest

thing from Spike's mind."

Spike snorted incredulously, "Impossible."

Dr. Graves continued, "And then the first couple of months with a new baby, you'll both be lucky to eat regular meals and sleep more than a couple hours a night, let alone think about having sex."

Xander paled at the doctor's words. "Oh, yeah, new baby. Sometimes I forget about that part of it. But, but we'll be okay, right?"

The doctor patted Xander reassuringly on the shoulder, "You'll be fine Xander. It will be overwhelming at first, but before you know it, being a parent will be second nature."

Spike broke through the fog of uncertainty clouding Xander's brain. "So, doc. Do you think I can go kill things now? What with me being so healthy and all."

Dr. Graves nodded and closed her chart. "Certainly. As long as you're careful, there's no reason you can't exert yourself a little more. If that's all the questions for now, I'll see you gentlemen in a month."

They thanked the doctor and made their way to meet up with the gang for patrol, Spike bouncing all the way.

The fight was fast and vicious. Buffy and Xander took out several fledges each early on, while Spike was still trying to find his balance and figure out how to move with the extra weight and girth. As soon as the Vampire found his balance, all Buffy and Xander had to do was sit back and catch any that tried to run, as Spike took out months of frustration on the hapless fledges. Willow and Tara completed their spell just as Spike was dusting the final stragglers. Buffy and Xander made their way over to

where the Witches were set up.

"So, anything?" Buffy called out, casually reaching out and grabbing a fledge had Spike missed, staking it without losing stride.

Willow and Tara shook their heads, disappointed looks on their faces. "No, nothing. Whoever it is, they've got some serious shielding spells going on."

Buffy shrugged, "Well, whoever or whatever it is, they haven't done much except create some fledges. We'll figure it out eventually. Then I'll slay them."

Spike sauntered over, brushing dust from his leather duster. "How'd the mojo go, Red? We find out who the big bad is?"

Willow shook her head and angrily began packing up their supplies. Tara answered for her annoyed girlfriend. "No luck. They have too many shielding spells in place. We'll have to try again later."

Spike shrugged. "You two'll figure it out, you always do. Now if you don't mind, the Whelp and I have business of our own to attend to. See ya." Spike

grabbed Xander's arm and practically drug the brunette out of the cemetery.

Xander didn't protest, just allowed himself to be drug along home. After years together, he was very familiar with a post-fight Spike. Fighting made Spike horny. Of course everything made Spike horny, but that was one of the perks of being mated to the blonde.

They reached the house and Spike hurried them through the door, tossing their coats aside and pushing Xander into the living room. Xander allowed himself to be led into the room and positioned behind the couch. Guessing the game, Xander toed off his shoes, spread his legs as wide as he could and grabbed onto the back of the couch for support.

Spike smirked when he saw his mate assume the position. Xander had read his mood perfectly. Humming a Sex Pistols tune under his breath, Spike got out his switchblade and began cutting Xander's clothing away. As the knife gently slid between fabric and skin, Xander's breath quickened. A few quick slices later and Xander's shirt was no more. Teasingly, Spike slid the knife lightly down Xander's back, raising a red welt but not cutting. Xander moaned and tried to arch towards

the blade. Spike placed his other hand flat on his mate's broad, warm back in warning. "Shhh, pet. Easy now." Whimpering, Xander subsided.

Spike was practically bouncing on his heels now, it had been so long since they had done this! The Vampire eyed his mate's pants speculatively. Satisfied that they were an old pair that could be sacrificed, Spike began slowly, teasingly cutting Xander's pants off. By the time he was naked, Xander was a panting, moaning mass of need. Spike tossed the knife aside and knelt down behind his lover, grasping the firm ass cheeks in his hands and spreading them.

Xander almost collapsed when Spike began rimming him. Chuckling, Spike worked his tongue deep into Xander's ass, relishing the taste of his lover. Xander bucked and moaned, and Spike grabbed on tighter, sure that he would be leaving bruises but not caring. Bruises were just part of the game. As Spike flicked his tongue in and out of Xander's ass, the brunette began begging. "Please, oh gods Spike, please fuck me."

"Well, pet, since you asked so nicely..." Spike released Xander and stood up, unzipping his fly and pulling his aching cock out. Without being asked, Xander broke the

pose enough to lean down and fish the tube of lube out from under the couch cushion. He handed it back to Spike and resumed the spread-leg position he had been holding this whole time. Quickly Spike slicked up his cock and slid home. Xander moaned, low and deep as Spike thrust into him, bucking his hips back a little to encourage his lover deeper. Spike began a slow, steady rhythm, keeping firm hold of Xander's hips, not letting the brunette lean forward to gain friction by rubbing against the couch. It was his call if and when Xander came tonight. Spike licked and sucked his way down the back of Xander's neck and across the human's shoulders, stopping every so often to nibble on all his favorite spots.

It was a long ride and both men were covered with sweat and barely keeping upright on shaking legs when Spike finally decided to end it. Snaking one hand around, Spike grabbed hold of Xander's cock and began fisting it. Xander began a quiet litany of "pleasepleasepleasepleaseplease." Spike quickened his thrusts, angling to hit Xander's sweet spot. Leaning forward, annoyed at finding his stomach getting in the way a little, Spike shifted to gameface and sunk his fangs into Xander's neck, eagerly slurping up the blood that welled to the surface. Xander screamed and came,

arching back into Spike's embrace, hips bucking as cum was ripped from his body. The taste of his mate's blood, thick with love and lust, and the feeling of Xander's inner walls rippling and clenching around his cock, pushed Spike over the edge. He removed his fangs just as his orgasm slammed into him. Spike howled and thrust as deep as he could into Xander as the human's inner walls milked him dry.

The two stood leaning against the couch for several minutes, panting as they recovered from the moment. Xander was the first to move, stepping forward so that Spike's now limp cock slipped out of his body. The brunette turned and wrapped his arm around Spike's shoulders, maneuvering them towards the stairs and bed, shedding Spike's clothes as they went.

As they fell bonelessly into bed, Xander gathered Spike against his chest and murmured softly into blonde hair. "Did you have a good day, beloved?"

"Mmmm, yeah. Thanks for taking me on patrol."

"No problem. Now that the doc has given her okay, you can go out whenever you want. Just promise me you'll be careful."

Blue eyes glanced up and met warm brown ones, "Of course. 'M not an idiot."

Xander grinned sheepishly. "I know, I just don't want anything to happen to you, to either of you." The last was said with a hand placed protectively over Spike's mounded stomach.

Instead of answering, Spike just kissed his lover gently. With a soft sigh, they settled down to sleep, both drifting off to the quiet but strong beat of their child's heart.

## 6 Prophecy

Xander gingerly eased through the door, careful not to bump the large, wrapped objects in his arms against anything. He set one down in the living room, now thankfully box free, and then made his way up to the bedroom to set his other burden down. In the weeks

since Spike had been given the go ahead from the doctor to patrol, the Vampire had been out almost every night, kicking demon ass. Still Spike was coming home full of energy and horny as hell. Xander didn't think he'd had as much exercise in his life as he'd had in the past weeks. Spike was starting to complain that Xander wasn't lasting as long as he should be. Xander patted his pocket and did his best evil smirk (as patented by the Big Bad). He had finally come up with a way to wear his insatiable lover out. Or so he hoped.

Xander had just gotten everything arranged when Spike arrived home, banging through the door, singing loudly. "Oi, Pet! Get your sweet ass down here!"

Smirking, Xander made his way downstairs. "Hey Sweetie, was patrol good tonight?"

"You bet!" Spike tossed his duster on a chair and wrapped his arms around the brunette. "The Slayer and I took out a couple of fyarl demons. Bloody buggers didn't stand a chance!"

Xander kissed his excited lover and allowed for a few minutes of groping before pulling away and leading Spike into the living room. "What's going on, luv?"

Xander gestured towards the large, wrapped object sitting in the living room. "I have a present for you. Two actually. This is the first. I made it, have been making it I mean, at work, during down time..."

Xander trailed off, he knew he was babbling, but couldn't help it. The other present he knew Spike would like, but this one was a gamble.

Spike just stared at the babbling brunette standing before him for a few minutes before slowly walking over and unwrapping the object. "A rocking chair?"

Xander shrugged. "We needed one for when the baby comes. I...I thought it would be nice."

"And you made it? All by yourself?"

Xander nodded, "Yeah. Decorative carving and all."

Spike ran his hand over the curved back, sensitive fingers reading the intricate carvings like Braille. Finally, the blonde turned to his nervous lover and embraced him. "Thank you luv, it's beautiful. I love it."

A relieved grin flashed across Xander's face before he kissed his Vampire thoroughly. "I'm glad you like it. I love you."

Eventually Spike let his human up for air and eyed him thoughtfully. "Did you say you have two pressies for me?"

Laughing Xander led the blonde up the stairs towards their bedroom. "Yup, and I think you're really gonna like this next one."

Xander led the way into the bedroom and did a taa-daa style flourish with his arms towards the thing hanging in the corner.

Spike eyed the hammock/chair thingy for a minute then turned to his slightly bouncing lover. "Luv, it's great, but what is it?"

Xander looked amused. "You mean you've been around for a century and a half, shagged demons of all shapes, sizes and genders, and you don't know what a sex sling is?"

Spike snorted, "Sex sling? Now I know you're making

things up, but, if it involves shagging, then I'm all for it. How's it work?"

Xander quirked an eyebrow, "I'll show you."

Xander wished he could slither down Spike's hard body, making the undressing a little bit more fun, but Spike's belly was coming close to basketball proportions and having to gingerly avoid Spike's stomach would not be sexy. So Xander settled for dropping down to his knees and removing Spike's boots and socks, then sliding Spike's pants off and giving the pale erection a lick or two before standing up and removing Spike's shirt. Kissing Spike gently, Xander walked the Vampire backwards over to the chair. Xander sat Spike down in the chair, making sure his mate was arranged comfortably, then knelt between Spike's spread legs. Xander slowly kissed along the inside of Spike's thighs before licking up the swollen length of Spike's cock. He twirled his tongue around the tip, licking away the precum, before swallowing Spike down to the hilt.

Spike moaned and arched up into Xander's hot mouth, trying to get deeper.

Xander lifted Spike's feet up off the floor and rested

them on top of his thighs, then, relaxing his mouth and throat, gave the chair a gentle push. Slowly, softly the chair swung back and forward and Xander let the motion of the chair guide Spike's cock in and out of his mouth.

"Oh, bloody hell. That's good."

Xander would have smiled if he could, Spike obviously liked the chair. He'd like it even more later.

Spike got the idea and used the leverage of his feet on Xander's thighs to set the pace. Xander just relaxed and lost himself in the sensation of Spike fucking his mouth. When Spike began to increase the pace and pant slightly, Xander reached beneath the chair, where he had set his stash of goodies. Quickly he uncapped the lube and slicked up a couple of fingers. The loose weave of the rope forming the chair gave Xander perfect access to his lover's ass, and Xander used the motion of the swinging chair to impale Spike with a slick finger. Spike howled and bucked up into his human's hot, wet mouth and came, shooting down Xander's throat. Xander swallowed happily and continued preparing Spike's ass as he licked the pale cock clean. When Xander was satisfied that Spike was prepared for entrance and that every last bit of him had been licked clean, he sat back with a

smile. Spike was staring at him with an astounded look plastered across his face. "Luv, this chair is bloody brilliant!"

Xander stood up and began to undress. "Yeah, it is. And that isn't all we can do with it."

Spike began to harden again as Xander slowly stripped. "Th..there's more?"

"Yup. I'm getting just a little tired of you complaining lately that we aren't having enough sex. So I came up with a way to tire you out."

That statement was met with a derisive snort, "Bloody 'ell Xan, fighting and fucking every night for the past couple o' weeks hasn't tired me out yet. I'm telling ya, this child of ours is bloody insatiable."

Xander dropped his boxers to the floor with a grimace. "Spike, please don't ever mention our child and sex in the same sentence again, okay?"

The Vampire laughed unapologetically.

Xander ignored the laugh and bent to pick up the last

two tricks up off the floor. "Come on, stand up."

Spike looked at him questioningly, "But I thought we were gonna use the chair some more?"

"We are. Just a different position this time."

Obediently, Spike stood up and waited for Xander to tell him what to do next. Xander tried to hide his smile, when would he ever get a chance at an obedient Spike again?

Xander settled himself in the chair, being sure to sit way back, giving Spike plenty of lap to balance on. Xander patted his lap and Spike sat down on his knees. This next bit was awkward, but Xander managed to reach around and lift Spike's legs into the stirrups they had yet to use.

"What're these for?"

"They're stirrups, Spike. For your feet."

"Stirrups? What are you, a bleedin horse?"

"No, silly, but you do get to ride me."

"Oh."

Smiling, Xander leaned back and opened the jar of salve the Witches had given him. It was to desensitize his cock, so he wouldn't cum so soon. Granted, talking to Willow and Tara in the first place had been embarrassing as hell, but hopefully the results would be worth it.

Successfully lubed, Xander lifted Spike gently and slid the Vampire down onto his waiting cock. Spike hissed and arched against Xander, getting used to the penetration. While the blonde was momentarily occupied, Xander reached around and snapped the cock ring around the base of Spike's cock.

"Oi!"

"Calm down, Blondie. It's all part of the game. You'll get to cum again. Don't worry."

Spike settled down again, resting against Xander's chest, and slowly Xander began to rock them back and forth. The gentle motion allowed a slight thrusting, just enough to keep them on edge but not enough to put them over that edge. Xander groaned softly at the sensation, and began kissing and nipping along Spike's back and shoulders, while every once in a while stroking Spike's cock.

They rocked like that for an hour, soft groans mingling with the creaks of the chair. Eventually even that gentle motion had them both covered in sweat and panting. Spike was writhing on top of Xander, a litany of soft, breathy pleas falling from his cool lips. Xander spared a thought to remember to thank the Witches for the salve, he had cum twice already without shooting his load; deep, bone shaking orgasms that would have had him on his knees if he wasn't already sitting. He knew that the same was also true for Spike; he had felt the Vampire shaking and heard the soft cries of his lover's passion.

Spike was begging now, a desperate babble of "please" and "oh, god, Xander", filling his ears. Xander felt the salve beginning to wear off, could feel the pressure building in his aching cock, and began to speed things up accordingly. Planting his feet firmly on the floor, Xander quickened the rocking while he reached around and began fisting Spike's cock in earnest. Spike grasped Xander's thighs tightly, digging his nails in and drawing blood.

"Oh gods, luv. Please!! Now!!"

Xander pulled Spike back against his chest and sunk his teeth into his mate's pale shoulder, licking up the blood that welled to the surface. At the same time, and Xander could never figure out later how he had been this coordinated, he unsnapped the cock ring and gave Spike's purpled cock a few hard strokes. Spike arched back and screamed Xander's name, as his cock pumped stream after stream of cum over Xander's hand and the floor.

Xander gave Spike a few seconds to recover then slid a hand down to Spike's waist, pulling the blonde back hard against him in quick, sharp thrusts. It was enough, Xander's world suddenly exploded around him. He was vaguely aware of screaming Spike's name, but all he could do was bury his head against Spike's back and let the orgasm shake him as his world went gray.

It was with monumental effort that Xander resisted passing out right there in the chair. Spike hadn't resisted so hard. Xander gingerly shifted Spike around so he was easier to carry, then levered them both out of the chair, carrying his unconscious mate. Xander laid them both down on the bed and pulled the covers up, sparing a moment to perform a mental victory dance and give

Spike a quick kiss, "Ha! I told you I could wear you out!" before succumbing to the desperate urge to sleep.

---

In the middle of some of the most restful sleep Xander had gotten in weeks, the phone call they had been waiting six months for finally came.

Xander blearily reached over and grabbed the loudly ringing phone off its base. "Mmrph. H...hello?"

"Xander? I'm terribly sorry to wake you. It's Giles."

"Yeah, G-man, I can tell. Seems I've memorized what your voice sounds like in the almost decade we've known each other."

"Yes. Well. Anyway, I have some, hopefully, exciting news. Wesley and I have been working on translating an ancient prophesy, and it looks like it pertains to your and Spike's situation. Wesley is on his way up from L.A. If you two could meet us at the shop in an hour or so, it would be most appreciated."

"Yeah Giles, we'll be there. Thanks."

Spike rolled over and eyed his lover as Xander hung up the phone. "What was that about?"

"Sorry Vamp of mine, no more beauty sleep for us. Looks like they finally found the prophecy."



The bleary eyed couple stumbled into the Magic Box an hour later, with Spike complaining bitterly about the time. "It's four in the bloody morning! Couldn't they have let us sleep and called us in a couple of hours? It's not like I have to worry about the sun anymore."

Xander drug his complaining mate over to the table and helped an unwieldy Spike lower himself down into the chair, then gratefully accepted a mug of coffee from a sleepy Willow. Soon they were all gathered around the table: Buffy, Willow, Tara, Xander and Spike. Buffy had left Dawn home because she had school in the morning. Finally, just when Xander was starting to get

nervous, Wesley and Giles came out of the back office and set a pile of books and an old scroll on the table, both men were smiling.

"Oi! Watchers, what's the news?"

The others didn't give any indication that they noticed, but Xander could hear the tremors of fear in his lover's voice. Reaching over he grasped Spike's hand in comfort as Wesley began to speak.

"Mr. Giles and I have been searching every prophecy we could find since learning of Spike's pregnancy. I admit that when I first learned of the event, it seemed to remind me of something I had read, but it wasn't until recently that Mr. Giles remembered..."

"Yes, Wesley, thank you." Giles interrupted the younger ex-watcher with a grimace. "What Wesley is trying to say is that I remembered a legend from school that was popular among young Watchers. It spoke of a companion to the Slayer, like a Watcher, but immortal and able to fight alongside the Slayer, an equal in strength. Many young Watchers claimed the prophecy spoke of an end to the Watchers Council. Needless to say it wasn't popular among the council. It wasn't until

my last visit to England that I learned that there really is such a prophecy." Giles patted the scroll in front of him.

Xander eyed the smiling ex-watchers, "So what exactly does the prophecy say?"

Giles looked chagrined, "Oh, well, yes. It translates roughly:

And on the mouth of hell, opposites shall meet, and from this meeting a child

Child of dark and Child of light, Child of day and Child of night,

Borne of blood and undying love, the companion of the chosen one.

There's a bit of superfluous poetry and garble, but it comes down to this...And the child and the chosen one shall fight, side by side, to vanquish all evil and close the mouth of hell forever."

The room was silent. Wesley was the first to speak. "So, you can see why the council hid this particular prophecy. It seems, if your child is the child of the

prophecy, and the chosen one the Slayer, of course, that the birth could herald the end of not only the evil of the hell mouth, but of the entire Slayer/Watcher society."

Buffy stood up and began pacing. "So let me get this straight, this baby is supposed to be a new kind of Watcher? To be my companion?"

Giles stood and strode over to his Slayer, grasping her arms gently. "Yes Buffy, this child could be an immortal, super-powered Watcher. But it could be the companion to any Slayer."

No one voiced the silent suggestion that she could very well not be around to see the child grow old enough to assume the duty.

Finally, Spike snapped out of his openmouthed shock. "Bloody hell, you mean to tell me that my child, me, William the Bloody, Scourge of Europe, slayer of Slayers, my child is supposed to be the prophesized companion of the Slayer?"

Xander laughed, though in truth he was scared as hell, "Well, you can never say that fate doesn't have a sense of humor."

Spike growled at his mate and Xander instantly dropped the humor defense, instead going to stand behind his mate, resting his hands on Spike's shoulders and squeezing reassuringly.

"Giles, are you sure? Is this prophecy really about us and our child?"

Giles took off his glasses and began rubbing the lenses. "I really couldn't say for sure, but all the signs point to yes."

Willow turned sympathetic eyes on her best friend. "Xand, I know it's a lot to take in, but it really does seem like this prophecy is about you and Spike. On the mouth of hell, the hell mouth; opposites shall meet, well obviously you and Spike are complete opposites," and here Willow blushed, "Well, except for your gender, but, you know. Anyway, child of light and child of dark, day and night obviously that could be talking about a human and a vampire, the whole undying love part, what with you both being pretty much immortal. Not to mention that there has to be some reason you got Spike pregnant."

Xander had to smile at that. He walked around the table

and gave Willow a hug. Suddenly there was a loud crash behind him. Spinning, he saw that Spike had stood up too fast and knocked his chair over. Xander didn't like the expression on his lover's face. "Spike? What..."

Spike shook his head and stepped away from them. "No, this is ridiculous. I'm a demon, damn it! I can't give birth to some great defender of good! Besides, no matter what, I'm not going to allow the fates, gods, or anyone else to just lay out some predetermined fate and expect any child of mine to fall in line and give up their life for the greater good! You can take your fucking prophecy and shove it!"

With that the shaking Vampire turned and fled into the predawn light.

Shocked silence followed Spike's impassioned speech. Suddenly Willow gasped, "Xander, we have to go after him! It's almost dawn, he could get hurt!"

Xander shook his head and tightened his hold on his friend, he understood Spike better than any of them, and thought he knew what this was about. "It's okay, Wills. Spike's wearing the gem so sunlight won't hurt him. I'll go after him, I think he just needs a little while to

cool off."

Tara stepped up and patted Xander on the arm, "Do you need a locator spell?"

Xander shook his head, "No, thanks though. I can find him, don't worry."

Still disconcerted, everyone managed to calm down and take a seat at the table again.

"So Giles," Xander shot a wiry grin at the Watcher, "What else does this prophecy say about my kid?"



Spike was sitting atop his old crypt, watching the sunrise, something he'd been doing since Angel gave him the gem and he never tired of it. It was more a tingling in the back of his mind than Vampiric senses that warned him of his mate's approach. "So," he began without turning around, "What else did the Watcher's have to say about the fate of our child?"

Xander sat down next to Spike, in touching distance but

not quite touching yet. "Oh, you know, the usual. Fate of the world rests in your hands, good versus evil, all that sort of stuff."

Spike snorted, "What, no apocalypse?"

"Nope. Not this time. But if this prophecy is true, then there will be an awful lot of bad guys out there that won't want to see the baby born, let alone live till adulthood."

The Vampire shuddered. "Don't you think I know that? Hell, every demon this side of the hell mouth will be gunning for the child the second word of the prophecy gets out."

Gripping Spike's hand firmly, Xander tried to put all his passion and conviction into his next words. "Word won't get out Spike. No one and nothing is going to hurt our child. Not only does it have us to protect it, but the Slayer herself and two powerful Witches. Willow and Tara are already brainstorming protection spells and wards to help keep the baby safe until it can defend itself."

A soft snort, "Witchy godmothers are one thing, but what happens when the Watchers Council finds out that this prophecy they tried so hard to hide is coming true?"

Xander shook his head, "It won't happen. Wesley and Giles have already sworn secrecy. Besides, neither of them have any loyalty towards the council, and both would rather see the council go down than our child get hurt."

Spike sighed and leaned against Xander, resting his head on the warm shoulder. "I just don't like the idea that our child's life is determined before it even starts."

Xander kissed the top of Spike's head and held him close, "I know love, I know."

They sat watching the sunrise for several minutes before Xander voiced his main concern. "Do you really hate being one of the good guys that much? Do you ever wish you had never gotten chipped? Never started working with us?"

Slowly, Spike sat up and turned tumultuous eyes to meet his lover's. "No love, for all the bad, all the pain the chip brought me, it gave me you, and that's the best gift of all. I could never regret getting to be with you."

Spike leaned over and gently brushed his lips against

Xander's. "But, even with the chip and now the soul, the demon is still there. It's still in me, and sometimes, sometimes all the touchy-feely, white knight stuff is a little hard to take."

Xander chuckled and kissed Spike softly. "I'm sorry sweetheart, what with the soul, and you being so sweet and all, we sometimes forget your evil roots."

Spike harrumphed and pretended to be offended, "M' not sweet."

Xander licked his way from Spike's collarbone to ear and nibbled suggestively, "I dunno, you taste pretty sweet to me."

Groaning, Spike captured Xander's lips with his own. When the kiss broke, Spike eyed his lover seriously. "Don't you ever doubt again that I'm not glad that things ended up the way they did. I wouldn't trade you for the world. You've always accepted the demon in me as well as the soul, and I'm grateful for that. Now though, even stronger in me than the soul or the demon, is you. You're in my heart Xan, and you matter more to me than anything."

They kissed again, softly.

"So," Spike eyed his lover amusedly, "What do you wanna do about this prophecy thing?"

Xander sighed, "Take it one day at a time sweetheart, just like we always do."

He stood up and offered Spike his hand, "C'mon Blondie, let's go home."

## 7 Waiting

Spike groaned as he lowered himself into the rocking chair. He was past the eight-month mark now, and moving was becoming more and more difficult. He'd had to stop going on patrol two weeks ago, when his belly got too big and unwieldy. *Plus I must weigh like twenty pounds more!* Sighing, the bored Vampire flipped around the TV, not finding anything interesting on. Xander had gone away for the weekend, claiming he had a special errand to run in L.A., and Spike was forbidden to go along. Of course Xander telling Spike that he couldn't do something usually meant that Spike would do it immediately, but his [mate](#) was saved from any unnecessary diversionary tactics by the fact that pregnancy had gifted Spike with horrible motion

sickness. He could barely ride two blocks in the car without throwing up. Of course that meant that Spike had spent the whole weekend alone in the house and bored out of his mind. Buffy and Dawn had visited once, and Willow and Tara had brought him dinner last night, but still, it was really boring.

Idly, Spike picked up the 'All about pregnancy' book the Witches had given them, but he'd read through it three times already. He knew it by heart. From now until the birth he'd be uncomfortable, hot, tired, grumpy and uninterested in sex. It was the uninterested in sex part that was the kicker. Spike hadn't believed it at first, until he'd woken up a week ago, and couldn't for the unlife of him get in the mood. And he had always been able to get in the mood for sex with Xander. Somehow it was hard to get past the sore back, [swollen feet](#) and hot, sweaty summer heat to want to have sex. Plus there was that sneaky suspicion that somehow this was all Xander's fault.

The Vampire spared a glance at the other book on the coffee table; all about what to do after the baby was born. Spike had read through the first couple months of life, but it scared him too much to continue. A baby was so much work! It seemed ridiculous that after one

hundred plus years of traveling the world and striking fear into the hearts of mortals, taking care of one little baby scared him so much.

Spike leaned back into the chair, grimacing as the baby began kicking violently. When the baby had first started kicking, Spike and Xander had been in awe. The men had eagerly awaited every sign of movement from their child. Soon though, the tiny kicks had grown stronger, and now it was just painful. Spike had remarked to Xander that it was like that scene in the movie 'Alien', only without the blood and gore.

Briefly Spike considered going out to the back yard and sunbathing, something he could do now that he had the Gem of Amara, and something he had done a lot of at first. But now it was mid-July and horribly hot, and the idea of being even hotter than he already was quickly changed his mind. For lack of anything better to do Spike closed his eyes and attempted the deep breathing exercises that Dr. Graves had taught him. Last week, in preparation for the birth, Dr. Graves had begun teaching Spike some breathing exercises to cause him to go into a deep trance. Her concern was that the birth would be by cesarean section and the amount of drugs she would have to give him to bypass Vampire physiology and put

him to sleep would harm the baby. When Spike claimed that having his stomach cut open was something he could deal with, he was a Childe of Angelus after all, the [doctor](#) had explained that pain releases endorphins and even if Spike could tolerate the pain, the baby couldn't tolerate his body's reaction to it. So here Spike was, learning to be calm and patient and to go into trance. Calm and patient were two words that had never described Spike.

Spike had given up on his breathing exercises and was indulging in his new favorite pastime, introducing their child to modern music, when Xander finally got home. The brunette walked into the living room and winced at the noise. He opened his mouth and tried to say something, most likely telling Spike to turn the music off, but not even Vampiric hearing could distinguish his mate's voice from the blaring vocals of Sid Vicious. Exasperated, Xander strode over and turned off the stereo.

"Oi! The nibblet and I were listening to that!"

Xander rolled his eyes, "Spike, sweetheart, love of my life, when the baby book said playing music for the baby was good for development, I don't think they meant the

Sex Pistols. I'm pretty sure they were talking about Classical Music and stuff."

Spike snorted. "Classical music? That's bloody boring! Who wants to listen to that rubbish? No child of mine, that's for sure."

Laughing, Xander strode over to the couch where Spike was lying down, and picked up his mate's feet, sitting down and placing them in his lap, and began rubbing them gently. Spike moaned gratefully. "Thanks, luv. How was L.A.? Super secret mission accomplished?"

Xander passed Spike a manila envelope. "See for yourself."

Spike took the envelope and opened it curiously. Several papers and cards fell out. Picking a small, plastic card up, Spike turned it over and gasped. "Th..this, this is..."

His mate took pity on his gob smacked state and explained. "Yeah, it's you. William Harris. There's a driver's license, birth certificate, green card, the works. Not to mention the bank cards and stuff." Xander smiled shyly, "I wasn't sure if you would want my last name or your old one, but I figured if all

three of us have the same last name, it will make any legal stuff easier."

Not taking his eyes off the driver's license he was holding, Spike reached out and grasped Xander's hand, squeezing it hard. "Thank you love. This is, wow." Spike glanced suspiciously at his lover, "How'd you get all this?"

Xander smiled, "Angel's got that whole 'running a law firm' thing going now, so I had them draw up the papers. As far as anyone is concerned, you were born in London in 1977, came to the states in '97 and became a citizen in '99. The dates for our commitment ceremony and everything are the same. Oh, and you have a degree in literature from UC Sunnydale. You're a writer and do freelance work, which explains your small and infrequent income. Apparently Gunn, the Lawyer guy, says the IRS doesn't have a way to claim income stolen from demons after you kill them."

Spike swallowed around the lump in his throat, "Thank you Xan, you thought of everything."

Xander smiled sheepishly, "Well, I have to protect the people I love." His face hardened, "If something were to happen to me, I don't want you losing custody of the

baby just because you don't legally exist."

Spike levered himself into a sitting position and wrapped his arms around his mate. "Nothing is going to happen to you, never even think it." Spike placed a gentle kiss to Xander's cheek, and then pulled back. "And I'm honored to be William Harris. I couldn't think of a better person to be."

Blinking back tears, Xander leaned in and captured Spike's mouth in a gentle kiss.

Xander's warm lips slid over his and Spike moaned softly, he had missed Xander, even though it had only been two days. As Spike's hands ghosted down Xander's chest, the brunette groaned and pushed his mate away. "What is it, luv?"

Xander smiled ruefully, "Spike, sweetie, since we got together, I don't think I've gone more than two days without sex, tops. Now it's been a week, and while I understand and am prepared for the celibacy, you touching me isn't going to help matters."

Spike smirked, was his human frustrated and horny? Well, good thing Spike was evil; he'd come up

with quite a few ways to keep Xander satisfied while he himself was unavailable. Sitting back against one arm of the couch, Spike leeringly traced his eyes over the brunette's hard body and affected his best Master voice. "Stand up." He commanded.

Shuddering from the knowing gaze raking his body, Xander obeyed.

Spike smirked, "Good boy, now strip."

With shaking hands, Xander slowly began removing his clothing, eyes never leaving Spike's. When he was completely naked, Spike spent several minutes just enjoying the sight of his lover's tan, well-muscled body and jutting erection before giving his next command. "Now, run both hands through your hair."

Slowly, Xander obeyed.

'Good. Now stroke down your face, gently now.'

Spike watched, fascinated, as Xander's strong, tan fingers ran over his eyes, down his nose, and traced along the outline of his full mouth.

"Now down your neck, touch your scar for me love, remember what it feels like when I bite you there." Moaning softly now, Xander traced gently down his neck, fingers brushing lightly over the claiming scar. At the touch on his scar, Xander's cock jumped and hardened even more. Chuckling, Spike let his lover trace along the scar a few more times before moving them along. "Now, boy, run your hands down your chest. Stop and play with your nipples now. That's right luv, pinch them hard, I know you like that."

Xander's moans were coming louder now, and his hips bucked forward as he twisted and pinched his hardened nipples. Spike groaned softly at the erotic display his mate made. Emotionally and mentally, Spike was incredibly turned on, but physically his body was acting as if nothing was going on. Spike inwardly cursed and spared a snarky thought for the child sitting restlessly in his abdomen. I hope you appreciate what we're doing for you. Making your Da and I go without sex! Of all the things!

Xander's hands had begun to trail lower, leaving his nipples and brushing along his trembling sides. Spike brought his attention back to his lover. "Good pet, very good. Now keep on touching yourself, only no touching

your cock till I say so."

With a whimper, Xander's hands changed course and traced around his belly button, down the trail of hair on his stomach, and stroked along his thighs. His deep brown eyes were hot with love and passion.

Spike knew he was close to drooling at the wanton picture his mate presented, but he managed to control his facial expression, not losing the imperious, smirking, Master face.

"Now, love, come and kneel next to me." Spike indicated the floor in front of where he sat and on shaking legs, Xander came and knelt in front of him.

"You're being a very good boy Xander. And good boys get rewards. Give me your hand."

Xander extended his right hand to Spike, his left never ceasing its slow exploration of his chest and thighs. Spike took the proffered hand and brought it to his lips, slowly extending his tongue. Xander gasped in pleasure as Spike began to lather the long fingers with his tongue, thoroughly coating each one before moving to the palm. Once Xander's entire hand was damp and the

brunette was moaning from the blowjob Spike had given his fingers, the Vampire released his mate's hand. "Now, touch your cock. One finger only, mind."

Xander ran one wet finger up the length of his cock, circling the head and trailing back down the underside. His left hand wandered up to his chest, tracing around his nipples.

"Good boy, now two fingers."

Two fingers began to trace the human's hot, heavy cock, rubbing lightly up and down. Xander was shaking and moaning, and while it had been a full week since he and Xander had had sex, Spike wasn't about to be merciful. Spike fully intended to make Xander beg.

Spike let Xander touch himself for a few minutes more before coming to a decision. "Give me your left hand."

Taking the fingers of Xander's left hand into his cool mouth, Spike bathed them in his saliva, biting his lip and adding a little bit of blood before releasing them. "Now put these inside yourself."

Eyes wide and pupils dilated in passion, Xander reached

around and began working a finger into himself. Xander quickly had both fingers inside himself and began jerking back onto the fingers, and jerking forward into the light friction of his fingers on his cock.

"Mmmm, very good pet. You look positively edible."

Panting, Xander closed his eyes. "Oh gods Spike, please, please, more please."

Spike chuckled, "More what pet?"

"Please let me touch myself more. Please Spike!"

"That's right pet, let me hear you beg."

"Please Spike, I need it, I need it so bad."

Taking pity on his desperate lover, Spike relented. "Use your whole hand now. I wanna see you fist that gorgeous cock of yours."

With a thankful groan, Xander wrapped his hand around his aching cock and began stroking up and down the length.

"That's right luv. Just like that. I wanna see you come for me, I wanna hear how much you like it."

Whimpering and moaning, eyes having drifted shut in his passion, Xander jerked back and forth between his fist and the fingers he had impaled himself with. Spike groaned at the tempting sight before him and leaned over, licking and kissing along his mate's neck and shoulder. Just when scent and sound alerted Spike that Xander was reaching his climax, Spike Vamped out and bit down, fangs slicing into his mark. The blood, thick and sweet with passion, exploded along his tongue, and as Xander's orgasm was torn from him with a hoarse scream, Spike felt it as well, little explosions through his body, leaving him shaking and stated. Gently Spike withdrew his fangs and leaned back into the couch.

With an exhausted groan, Xander collapsed forward across Spike's lap, panting softly. "That was, wow, Spike. That was great."

A happy smile on his face, Spike carded his fingers through Xander's passion dampened hair. "Mmhmm, it was, wasn't it? You looked so hot, touching yourself like that for me."

They stayed that way for a while, before Xander finally levered himself up off the floor with a groan. "I'm gonna go wash up."

Spike stayed sprawled out on the couch, listening to the sounds of his mate pattering around the bathroom. Finally, clean and dressed in a pair of cut off shorts and an old tee shirt, Xander wandered back into the living room and flopped back down onto the couch, resuming his prior foot rubbing position. Spike sighed happily.

"So, anything happen while I was away."

Eyes closed, Spike shook his head, "Nope. It was bloody boring around here. The Slayer and nibblet came by Friday night, brought over some movies and a bunch of baby name books. They kept suggesting the most awful names, and by the way, we are not naming the child Buffy! Then the Witches brought dinner by last night and looked through the books too. They had some slightly better suggestions for names, but still none I liked."

Xander looked thoughtful, "You know, I hate to admit it, but I haven't thought about names at all."

Spike gestured to a pile of three books on the floor next to the couch, "Feel free to have a look. I haven't come up with anything either. And since we don't know if its a boy or girl, we have to have one of each chosen."

"Or just one that could work for either." Xander was silent for several minutes. "Spike?"

"Hmm, luv?"

"Do you think it's a boy or a girl? Which one do you want?"

"Pet, at this point I'd settle for a chaos demon, as long as it gets born soon." Sighing, Spike held Xander's eyes in a direct gaze. "Honestly pet, with this whole prophesy thing, I could care less about the baby's gender, as long as it manages to live to adulthood without being kidnapped and sacrificed by some sorcerer for some apocalyptic ritual."

Xander dropped his gaze, one hand protectively resting on Spike's belly. "I know." Xander sighed, "I worry about that too. But look, if our child will be in that much danger, who better to have as parents than a Master Vampire and an all-around kickass immortal? Not to

mention having the Slayer and a couple of scary powerful Witches as Aunts."

With another sigh, Xander returned to rubbing Spikes feet. "Seriously though, The Slayers always a girl, so the fabled companion to the Slayer could be either. It would be nice to have another boy around in this estrogen drenched family of ours, but truthfully, I kind of hope it's a girl."

"Why's that luv?"

Xander smiled, "Because I've been raised around and with girls. I know how to take care of them. I've been doing it practically my whole life now. If I can keep Buffy and Willow happy all this time, not to mention solving Dawn's teenage crises, I doubt there's much else a daughter could do to phase me."

Spike snorted, "That's true luv. You do have a knack for dealing with the birds."

Glancing at the clock, Spike groaned and began levering himself from the couch. "You'd best start getting ready luv, the Watcher wants us over at his place in an hour, some dinner party or something."

"Is something going on?"

Spike shrugged, "I dunno, the Witches just said to be there at six tonight. I think Rupes found some more stuff about the prophecy, but I get the feeling that it's just one of your Scooby gang get togethers."

Xander sighed, "Well, I guess we'd better then. Besides, the less I have to cook, the better."



They arrived at Giles to find not only all the girls there, but Dr. Graves as well. She greeted them warmly, fussing over Spike and helping him to get comfortable. Once everyone was involved with mingling, Xander leaned over to his mate and whispered, "What is she doing here? I mean, she's our doctor and I like her and all, but..."

Spike snorted and whispered back, "She and the Watcher are shagging."

Xander tried not to spit his soda out all over the couch. "They're what? How can you tell?"

Spike favored Xander with his best 'duh' look. "I can smell it on 'em. I don't think it's serious though, I think they're just fooling around."

Xander looked sheepish, "Right, sorry, I forget about the super senses sometimes. I'm gonna forget about them sleeping together now, that's an image I don't need."

Giles called everyone to the table to eat, and they managed to all squish together in his dining room. As plates were being filled Giles stood up and lifted his glass. The watcher removed his glasses and put them back on, then cleared his throat several times.

Finally Buffy rolled her eyes in exasperation. "Giles! Whatever your toast is, I'm sure we'll all love it, just get on with it. It's not like you haven't spoken in front of us before."

This elicited several giggles, and Giles blushed faintly. "Yes, well. Thank you Buffy for your astute observation. I simply wished to note that we are at the end of an era. This is perhaps the last time we shall all be

gathered together like this. And while we have all gone through many changes in the past couple of years, this newest addition to our family signifies an irreversible change in direction for you all. While I am sad to note this ending, I am thrilled to welcome what I think of as my first grandchild, and hope that we can all continue this happy family of ours, for many years to come."

Silence and the blinking back of tears met his toast, followed by a round of hugs and reassurances.

Xander smiled at Giles, "Thanks Giles, that means a lot."

Dinner commenced with no more emotional moments, and soon plates were cleaned and the group was gathered in the living room with drinks and cookies. Buffy and Willow exchanged a conspiratorial grin and turned to the men curled up together on the couch. "So, Spike, Xander. We've all come up with a list of names, since you two seem to be so behind on things."

Spike groaned, "Not more bloody names! Very well Slayer, let's hear 'em."

Willow pulled out a sheet of paper and put on her best

authority face. "Now, the rest of us have given these a lot of thought, so pay attention you two. If it's a boy the name choices are as follows: John; Bob; Greg; Adam; and Tom. For a Girl: Alice; Sarah; Karen; Amy; and Lisa."

Xander and Spike stared in shock at the innocent looking women, "Um, Ladies, did you purposefully choose boring names? Please tell me you did."

Buffy and Willow exchanged glances, then they broke out into hysterical giggles.

Sighing in relief, Xander relaxed back against the couch. "Thank gods, I thought for a minutes you were serious."

Dawn grinned at him, "Nope, do you honestly think that with names like we all have that we'd think those were good ones?"

Willow chimed in, "Seriously though, if you two don't come up with something soon, I think whomever wins the birth date pool should get to choose the name."

Spike mock growled at the redhead, "I'm not letting someone named after a tree name my child."

"Better a tree than being named after an implement of torture." Tara quipped.

Spike glowered and Willow rewarded her girlfriend with a kiss.

Giles smiled fondly at the lot of them. "Well, yes. Naming aside, I have found a little more information on the prophecy that Wesley and I have been working on."

The giggles quieted down and all eyes turned to the Watcher.

Spike grasped his mate's hand. "What did you find?"

Giles shuffled through some papers. "Well, we were correct in our assumption that it will be possible for your child and the Slayer to permanently lock down the hell mouths. It also seems that the pairing of the Slayer and your child could change the Slayer line permanently. We are not sure in what way, but the link means that were the child to fall into the wrong hands, the child could be used to end the Slayer line forever."

Several gasps met that announcement.

Buffy looked grim. "The baby will never fall into the wrong hands, we'll see to that. But can anything else be done to keep the bad part from happening?"

Giles nodded, "Yes, there is a bonding ritual that should be preformed soon after the child is born, where blood is shared with the Slayer. That will ensure the child's bond to Slayer line and make it more difficult for any negative rituals to take place."

Xander placed his hands protectively over Spike's belly. "Whoa, whoa, whoa. There will be no rituals, blood letting, or blood sharing with our baby!"

Giles rolled his eyes, "No harm will come to your child, I assure you Xander. It is simply a ritual to bind the child to the Slayer line, so that they will always protect one another. It will simply assure your child's safety."

Willow bounced a little in her seat. "Tara and I have been researching bonding and protection rituals. We want to come up with a spell that will bind us all to the baby, so if he or she is ever in trouble, we'll all know right away. Since we're gonna be godmothers anyway, it will

be just a little extra insurance."

Dr. Graves clapped her hands and beamed at the group. "You are all so protective of one another. It's wonderful. This baby will have such a good life."

Xander blushed and smiled back, "We hope so."

Talk continued for a little longer on the subject of magical and non-magical protections for the baby. Eventually the doctor excused herself and Giles saw her out.

Xander took the opportunity to change topics; he wasn't very comfortable with all this talk of the all the bad things that could happen to his child. "So, Buffsters, anything hell mouthy going on lately?"

Buffy scowled. "Willow and Tara found evidence of someone poking around the old school. We think someone might be looking to mess with the hell mouth. There was a little bit of a magical signature, but we couldn't trace it. I think it's the same someone who was recruiting earlier in the year."

Xander shrugged, "That's pretty vague, but I'm sure you'll

figure it out. You're the Slayer after all."

Talk quickly turned to other matters, and the evening sped by. They were all reluctant to leave the cozy event, only breaking apart when it was too late to keep making excuses to stay.

---

Two weeks later, Xander awoke to Spike shaking him roughly.

"Wh..what is it?" Blinking bleary eyes, Xander could just make out his mate sitting straight up in bed, clutching at his stomach. "Spike, what is it, what's wrong?"

Spike turned eyes wide with excitement and fear to his lover, "Xander, it's time."

## 8 Time

"Xander, it's time."

Xander blinked in confusion. "Time? Time for what?"

"The baby! The baby is coming!"

Xander's jaw dropped. "Oh my god! Um, um" Frantically he looked around the room. "Just hold on, I'll call the doctor. Just, just stay right there."

Xander lurched out of bed and fell to the floor in a tangle of sheets. Grunting, he drug himself out of the sheets and grabbed the phone in one hand and a pair of jeans in the other. Swearing and cursing, he dialed the number.

*"Hello?"*

"Doctor? It's Xander. Spike says its time."

*"Excellent, just come over to the office, I'll meet you there in twenty minutes. And Xander?"*

"Yeah?"

*"Remember to breath dear."*

"Right, breath, sure." Xander hung up the phone and finished pulling on his jeans. Searching the room quickly he found his shoes and a shirt and pulled them on. Then he turned to the bed. "Spike? Are you ready? The doctors gonna meet us at her place. Are you alright?"

Spike nodded, eyes turned inward, attention elsewhere. In the darkness Xander could see his mate's belly ripple and heard the sharp, indrawn breath that followed.

"Spike? Are you all right? Does it hurt?"

The blonde glared at him as he eased into the clothing Xander was holding out for him. "Yes it bloody well hurts! My body's trying to push the nibblet out, only there's nowhere to push out of!"

Xander grimaced in sympathy and tried to refrain from manhandling Spike out the door. "Come on, let's get going. I'll call Willow from the car, she'll call everyone else."

Gingerly, Xander maneuvered Spike out the door and into the waiting car. After making sure his mate was safely settled in, he hurriedly climbed in and set off at as

fast a pace as he thought he could get away with. Glancing worriedly at the harshly breathing Vampire next to him, Xander flipped open his cell phone and prayed that Willow wouldn't need a lot of explanation.

"Willow?" he gasped out as the line was picked up. "Yeah, it's me. Look, it's time, we're on our way to the doctors." Xander held the phone away from his ear as his friend squealed in excitement. "Let everyone know, will you. Great, see you there."

Xander tossed the phone in the back seat and returned both hands to the wheel just in time to avoid rear-ending the car in front of him. Cursing he steered around the car and a few more corners before pulling into the driveway of the doctor's office.

Xander practically fell out of the car in his haste to go help Spike out. Thankfully the doctor was already there, the light was on and the front door was open and she was waiting for them in the doorway.

"Welcome gentlemen, you must be so excited!"

Xander carefully maneuvered a now moaning Spike into

the doctor's office. He was so intent on his lover that he never noticed the sound of his cell phone, lying in the backseat of his car, ringing.

---

The doctor led them into the examining room, set up now to look more like an operating room. Off to the side sat a bassinette and blanket, waiting to wrap the baby in. Baby, oh gods, we're gonna... "Spike! Sweetie, we're gonna have a baby!"

Spike growled at his mate. "I bloody well know that! It's trying to push its way out of me as we speak!"

Xander had the grace to look sheepish. "Sorry, it just hit me, is all."

The doctor smiled knowingly and directed Xander to help Spike up onto the examining table. "Sit just up there please. Then remove your clothing." She handed them a robe that opened in the front, "Put this on instead."

Spike grimaced, but did as he was told, anything to get

the agonizing pain over with soon. It felt like he was being torn in half from the inside out.

Xander helped him out of his clothing and into the robe. As he gingerly lay back on the bed, Spike heard voices in the front room. The rest of the gang had arrived.

Dr. Graves went out front and directed the excited bunch to please wait quietly. She came back into the room and walked over to where Spike lay on the table, Xander hovering anxiously next to him. "Now Spike, while I get ready, please start your breathing exercises."

The doctor moved efficiently around the room, gathering her supplies and putting on an operating gown and gloves.

Spike tried to focus on his breathing, but it was hard with the painful contractions rippling through his body. Xander seemed to sense his distress, the brunette stood next to Spike's head and began massaging his temples, whispering soothing words and dropping the occasional kiss to his forehead.

Spike looked up into his mate's worried eyes. "It'll be

okay." He whispered, before he felt the trance overtake him, and then all Spike knew was darkness.

---

Xander saw the exact moment Spike fell into the trance. He breathed a sigh of relief and stepped back, accepting the gown the doctor handed to him with a nod of thanks.

Dr. Graves laid a blanket across Spike's legs and another across his chest, and pulled a table full of surgical tools over next to her. She nodded to a pair of surgical gloves on the table, "Put those on please."

As Xander did, Dr. Graves opened the gown Spike was wearing so his belly was bare. "Now Xander. We've talked about this before, but please remember. I'm going to make a small incision in Spike's abdomen. There will be a bit of blood, but don't worry. When I remove the baby, you'll need to be ready with the towel to take the child, so I can cut the umbilical cord and sew Spike back up. Understand?"

Xander nodded and fought back a wave of nerves. This was it! Nine months of preparation and he couldn't believe how scared he was now.

The doctor must have read something in his face, she smiled and patted him on his arm. "Don't worry dear, everything will be fine."

Then the doctor turned to Spike and reached for a scalpel. Later on, Xander wouldn't have been able to say how long it actually took, he could just remember flashes of images.

The doctor slicing into Spike's skin.

Blood.

Hands reaching into his lover's gut.

Something seemingly too large being pulled from a small incision.

The first sight of his child, red, blood covered and wrinkled, screaming loudly.

Then the impossibly small baby was in his arms, and all

he could see was a red wrinkled face and a damp shock of hair, tiny hands waving about angrily. He barely noticed the doctor tying off and cutting the umbilical cord, or the hasty stitches she closed Spike up with. His whole world was overwhelmed by the vision of his child's face. Out of the corner of his eye he saw the doctor reaching for something.

**\*FLASH\***

A bright flash of light blinded him momentarily. When Xander blinked his vision clear, Spike was still unconscious on the table and his arms were empty. The doctor and his child were missing.

"Oh gods, no."



Willow squeezed Tara's hand excitedly. Dawn was sitting practically in Giles' lap, nervously twisting strands of hair around and around her fingers. Buffy paced back and forth, trying to look as if she could control the situation even though there was nothing to slay.

Willow jumped and shrieked as her cell phone rang. "Oh Goddess, I'd forgotten I left it on."

Willow brought the phone to her ear, "Cordy, hi! I'm so glad you called. It's happened, Spike's in labor! It shouldn't be too long now. It's so exciting!"

Cordelia's anxious voice cut through Willow's excited babbling. The redhead's happy smile changed to a frown as the seer began talking. "What? You had a vision? Cordy, I don't understand..."

**\*FLASH\***

Shaking her head, Willow tried to clear the sparks of light from her eyes, she was vaguely aware that the others were doing the same. Cordelia's voice was frantically calling her name over the phone and suddenly Willow sensed the faint traces of a spell drifting around them. "Oh Goddess..."

Xander came barreling out of the office, pulling the surgical gown off, his face set in grim lines. "Where did they go? How much time did we lose?"

Willow broke through Cordy's babbled explanation, "Cordy! How long was I out?"

She nodded as she heard the answer, "And where did the vision say they were? Right, thanks Cordy, we'll call you later."

Willow stood, pulling Tara up with her. "We only lost about five minutes, Cordy says they're at the school."

Xander was already heading for the door, Buffy right behind him. Giles grabbed Xander's arm as he passed. "Xander, I..."

"Giles, Spikes still out."

The Watcher nodded, "Dawn and I will see to him."

Xander took a moment to really look at the older man, "Giles, she..."

Giles simply nodded, "Do whatever you have to Xander. Just see that your child comes home safe."

Xander gratefully clasped his hand over the one resting on his arm and then he was headed out the door, right

behind Buffy and the Witches.

The four piled into Xander's car. He directed Buffy to the bag of weapons in the back seat and then peeled out of the driveway, heading as fast as he dared to the old high school.

Tara caught his eyes briefly, "Go as fast as you can Xander, no one will see us." Then she and Willow clasped hands and began chanting.

Xander didn't question it, just slammed his foot on the gas and drove for all he was worth.

They peeled to a stop in front of the burned out hulk of their old high school and Buffy dispensed with weapons and directions. "Willow and Tara, whatever spell she's doing, stop it. I'll handle whatever army she's got going. Xander, get to the baby as fast as you can."

Nods were exchanged and they hurried into the building, not caring about stealth at this point.

As they neared the old library, Xander heard chanting. "Oh shit."

Willow spared him a sympathetic glance before grabbing Tara's hand and whispering to her.

Buffy kicked the already crumbling doors open with a crash, and everyone paused briefly as both sides assessed the other. Xander saw immediately that about thirty assorted Vampires and demons were gathered in a group to one side. Dr. Graves stood in front of a table, next to the hell mouth, holding a large book and chanting. And on the table...his child, wrapped in a blanket and screaming.

Willow and Tara shouted something, and a bright ball of light appeared, instantly all the Vampires were dust. Buffy launched herself at the remaining twenty or so demons with a yell. Xander took a firm grip on the axe he was holding and began hacking his way through the crowded library, towards the altar.

Willow and Tara had taken a defensive position near the doors, flinging lightning bolts and levitating books and tables and generally doing everything in their power to disrupt the spell casting.

Buffy was quickly laying waste to the remaining army. Xander hacked at anything that got in his way as

he advanced slowly on the doctor. She, meanwhile, had continued chanting, and a sickly shimmering red light was forming above the opening of the hell mouth.

Finally, Xander made it to the edge of the circle and was blocked by an invisible barrier. He hacked ineffectively at it with his axe and screamed in frustration. Just there, only three feet away was his child, and he couldn't move, and all he could hear was his child's screams.

Suddenly Willow and Tara were there. Chanting, they touched their joined hands to the invisible barrier, and Xander felt it collapse with an almost audible snap. The doctor screamed in anger, screams which were quickly cut off as Xander punched her in the face, knocking her to the ground. Willow grabbed the spell book she had been holding, quickly scanning it. Xander grabbed the baby off the table, holding it close to his chest and breathing a sigh of relief. Buffy was by their sides again, glancing around the library, quiet now except for the sound of howling wind coming from the sickly red light hovering near them.

"Willow! What is it?" Buffy wrapped an arm around Xander and the baby and eyed the red light worriedly.

Willow glanced up, fear on her face. "It's a portal. Oh goddess. She was going to release a demon of some kind. I can close it but, but it needs a blood sacrifice. Oh Buffy, what are we going to do?"

Xander eyed the portal grimly. Then he turned and handed his child to Buffy. "Get back, stay safe."

Buffy didn't argue when she saw the look in his eyes, just clasped the baby to her chest and retreated out of the circle.

Xander turned and grabbed a wicked looking knife off the altar. "Start the spell, Wills."

The redhead nodded, eyes wide and scared, and she and Tara began chanting.

Xander stepped over to the groaning form of the doctor, grabbing her by the hair and dragging her up and over to the edge of the hell mouth. "Just say when, girls."

The doctor looked up at him with eyes dark with madness and shadows. "You wouldn't hurt a human, your lot is too good to sully your souls with murder."

Grimly, Xander tightened his grip on the knife and her hair. "Just watch me."

She must have seen something in his eyes, because she began struggling and shrieking, clawing at him and trying to break free.

Xander kicked her feet out from under her, forcing the doctor to her knees. He pulled up and back on her hair, forcing her to bare her neck in a painful arch. The Witch's chanting sped up, and the red light began pulsing quickly. The sound of a fierce wind was louder now, so loud it was almost drowning out the sound of the two women chanting. Dimly, Xander heard Willow scream, "Now Xander!"

He bent down and shouted into the doctor's ear. "Tell them in Hell. Don't ever touch what's mine." Dispassionately, he slit the doctor's throat. The blood spurted out in an arch, pulsing as the life drained from her. The red light grew, covering the opening to the hell mouth, the blood hitting it on every spurt. Xander pushed the body forward, and it tumbled into the light. There was a loud flash and a clap of thunder. Then everything was silent.

---

It took several seconds for sense to return to Xander. Sound was the first to come back. There were soft groans that sounded like Willow and Tara. The magic had probably taken a lot out of them. Then he heard it, the quiet snuffles of a weakly sobbing baby. Blinking as his sight returned, Xander ignored his watering eyes and turned to find Buffy and his child, coming out from behind some shelves where they had taken cover. He ran to them, taking the baby into his arms and holding it close.

Buffy relinquished the child and went to help Willow and Tara up from where they had collapsed on the floor.

Xander brushed his fingers across the shock of now dry dark hair and down the side of the pink face, murmuring softly. The child's hiccupped sobs eased and steady breathing took their place. Willow, Tara and Buffy came to stand around him and the baby. They all stared, spell bound at the sleeping child for several minutes before Buffy took charge. "Come on guys, let's go home."

Xander let Buffy drive them back to the others. He sat in the passenger seat, eyes never leaving the face of his sleeping child. Willow and Tara were draped over each other in the back seat, quietly napping.

As they parked and walked up to the doctors office, they could hear raised voiced coming from inside. Buffy smiled wryly, "Sounds like Spike's awake."

They made their way inside, Buffy in the lead.

Giles looked up from where he was trying to physically keep an enraged Spike from jumping off the table and going in search of his child. "Buffy! Thank heavens. Is everything okay?"

Buffy stood to the side and let an exhausted Willow and Tara, and finally Xander, blood splattered and holding the sleeping baby enter the room. "All accounted for. Demons slain, portal closed."

Xander immediately went over to where his mate was sitting up on the table, eyes full of fear. "Hey Spike. There's someone I want you to meet."

Giles and Dawn stepped back as Xander gently placed

their child in Spike's outstretched arms. Spike gazed down at the sleeping child and choked back a sob.

Xander placed his arm around his lover and gazed down at their child, fingers gently stroking through the baby's soft, dark hair. "Spike, I'd like you to meet our daughter."

Spike smiled, eyes full of happiness and unshed tears. "She's beautiful. Hello, nibblet."

The little girl suddenly opened eyes the same ice blue as her Vampire father's and gazed seriously at them both before yawning hugely and falling back asleep.

Spike gave into his tears, clutching their daughter close as he sobbed. Xander sat on the edge of the table, arms around his mate and daughter and rocked them both gently. Tears fell from his eyes as well as he took in what he had and how close he had come to losing it all.

Giles quietly ushered the women from the room, shutting the door and giving the new family some time to themselves.

---

Two hours later saw the whole group gathered in Xander and Spike's living room. Xander sat on the couch, arms around Spike, who was resting against his chest. Spike held their daughter. In fact he hadn't let go of her since they'd gotten back. The men sat quietly, as everyone gathered around them ate pizza and listened to Buffy tell the story of what had happened at the school.

Giles looked up from the spell book in his lap. It was the one Dr. Graves had been using to summon the demon. "Fascinating, all this time she had managed to hide the fact that she was a magic user from all of us."

Buffy nodded, "That's not all she was hiding. From the look of the gang she had with her, she was the one who had been recruiting all the demons these past months."

Tara looked at the ex-Watcher questioningly. "Any idea what she was planning to do, Mr. Giles?"

Giles gestured to the book in his lap. "Well, this is a very complicated ritual that summons a very powerful higher demon, practically a demi-god. It seems she intended to

bind the demon to herself through blood sacrifice and use it to take control of the hell mouth."

Buffy rolled her eyes, "Ah, the good old world domination plan."

Giles smiled, "Yes, well, just because one is evil does not necessarily mean one is creative." The Watcher eyed his slayer. "Still, evil or not, it must have been a difficult decision for you to kill a normal human, Buffy."

Buffy shrugged, "It wouldn't have been that hard at all, seeing as what she had done. But I didn't kill her, Xander did."

The room fell silent and all eyes fell to Xander. Xander tightened his hold on his mate and child. He tried to smile and shrug it off, but he knew the look on his face was probably fierce. "She tried to harm my family. Nobody touches what's mine."

Spike growled softly in his chest and turned his head to kiss Xander possessively.

Giles cleared his throat and looked away.

Dawn broke the silence with the question that was on everyone's mind. "So, guys! The suspense is killing me. What's her name? Cuz you know, Tara came closest in the baby pool, so if you guys don't have a name, she gets to choose one."

Xander smiled as his friends gathered around. "Actually Dawnie, we do have a name, we just hadn't decided on the order yet."

Spike scowled at his mate. "My way's better."

Xander rolled his eyes and kissed Spike on the nose. "Fine. You win."

"Damn right I do." Spike smirked and held up their daughter for everyone to see. The little girl opened ice blue eyes and stared at the people gathered around her.

Willow gasped, "Spike, she has your eyes."

Tara nodded, "And it looks like Xander's hair. And his nose too."

Xander touched his own nose in surprise. "Really? How can you tell?"

Dawn bounced in her seat. "Come on guys! Her name

already!"

Xander laughed and gestured to his daughter. "Everyone, we'd like you to meet Ashlynn Jessie Harris."

The entire Scooby gang gathered round and welcomed the newest member of their family.

## Epilogue

Two teenage girls stood back to back in the moonlight, heads up in haughty defiance of the five fledgling Vampires circling them. The Vampires hurled insults and threats, confident in their ability to take down the two girls, but the girls never flinched.

They were a sight to behold. One tall, long sable hair pulled back into a braid, pale skin illuminated in the light of the full moon. Her eyes flashed a startling icy blue as she laughed her defiance at the predators, but the set of her whipcord thin body belied her casual affect. The

other, petite and curvy, mousy blond hair wafting on the spring breeze, her normally warm brown eyes were hard as she sized up her opponents. Both pairs of eyes remained focused on the Vampires circling them, neither glanced towards the three adults hidden in the shadows, watching.

There was no noticeable communication between the two, but suddenly they launched themselves at the fledges, each taking one out in the surprise move, before settling down to the serious fighting. The girls fought seamlessly together, each move flowing into the next, both appearing to be aware of the other at all times.

Xander tensed as he saw a fledge attempt to sneak up on Ashlynn, but she had anticipated the move, tossing a stake over her shoulder with deadly aim, never breaking her stride. She must have heard his indrawn breath, because she turned briefly in his direction and winked before returning to the fight. Xander chuckled to himself, reaching down to grasp hold of the cool arms that were sliding around his waist. "I think Buffy must have taught her that move."

Spike snorted softly, "She definitely taught her the attitude."

Laughing, Xander turned to press a kiss onto his mate's cheek, "Of course she did. Our daughter couldn't have gotten that snarky, king of the world attitude from anyone else, certainly not her Big Bad father."

"Of course not." Spike watched the two girls, they had finished off four of the five fledges and were now tossing the last back and forth between them, playing with it. "I may have taught her that, though."

"Of course. All good Vampires, and daughters of Vampires, know how to torment their opponents."

The two girls finally tired of playing with the Vampire and dusted it, then turned to the crypt and the adults hidden in the shadows.

"Any more of them tonight?" Ashlynn called to her parents.

Xander grinned, "No sweetie, I think you two cleared the place out for the night."

Ashlynn bounced, something Xander swore she didn't learn from him. "Cool! It's Friday, can we go to the

Bronze?"

Xander glanced at Spike and his mate answered, "Sure, luv. But the Slayer has to ask her Watcher, and you come straight home afterwards."

Ashlynn put on her best pout, something Spike swore she didn't learn from him. "But I wanted to spend the night at Kira's."

Spike must have hesitated, because Xander wiggled a little in his arms, reminding the Vampire why having an empty house for the night would be a good thing. "Sure, luv. If it's okay with Dawn."

Kira, the newest Slayer, turned to her Watcher. "Please Dawn, can we go out and can Ash come spend the night afterwards?"

Dawn Summers laughed at her young charge. "Yes to both. Just be careful and all that parental stuff I'm supposed to say."

The girls squealed and bounced, then threw kisses at the adults and hurried off hand in hand, eager for an adult free evening.

Dawn smiled indulgently at the girls and turned to her companions. "Kids. Was I ever that young?"

Spike and Xander both nodded gravely, "Yup, and not that long ago either."

The Watcher rolled her eyes, "Please, you two were still hanging out at the Bronze until last year when the girls forbade you from going there anymore."

Xander tried to look innocent, "That's because we both still look like we could fit in there. Unlike some thirty-something year olds I know."

Dawn mock growled at the men, "I swear Xander Harris, immortal or not, I am getting Willow and Tara to come up with some spell to make you look older than 26, it just isn't fair."

The three laughed, it was an old argument.

Dawn sighed and glanced at her watch. "Well, I'd better get home to warn the husband that we will be invaded by teenage girls, and make sure the house is well stocked with chocolate and soda, I don't want a rebellion on my hands."

Waving goodbye, Dawn walked off into the night.

Spike shook his head, "I'll never get over how much the Watchers Council lets her get away with. Married, kids, and Watcher to the Slayer."

"Spike, Giles is the Watchers Council. And Dawn might as well be his daughter, she could do anything she wanted."

The two headed out of the cemetery and towards home. "Isn't that a bit incestuous pet? Dawn as his daughter and sister-in-law?"

Xander lightly slapped his lover on the shoulder, "Ewww, Spike! Incest is not an image I wanted, thanks."

Xander thought fondly of his father figure. Buffy and Giles had surprised them all a few years after Ashlynn was born, by becoming a couple. Her duty as the Slayer had always shadowed the relationship, but as her Watcher, Giles was able to deal with the constant near-death experiences. Then Buffy got pregnant. When their daughter was born, Willow and Tara had given the happy parents the best gift of all by finding a way to call up a new Slayer and pass Buffy's duty onto her successor

without Buffy having to die. Now they lived in England, with Giles running the Watchers Council and Buffy training potentials, both enjoying the role of doting parents. Dawn, whom Giles had already been training in Watcher skills, stayed in Sunnydale and took over as Watcher to the new Slayer.

"Spike, how long has it been since we've seen Buffy and Giles?"

Spike thought for a moment. "Two years maybe? Caitlyn must be nearly four by now."

Xander nodded, "We should visit them soon. We always say we will, but somehow we never make it farther than L.A. before some new apocalypse comes up."

Spike stopped in the middle of the street and turned to face Xander. "You know pet, Ash and Kira graduate this June. Come fall they'll be starting college. Dawn's here, the Witches are just a phone call away. There's not much holding us here anymore."

Xander's eyes widened at that revelation. "Gods, I can't believe our daughter is about to graduate high school!" Shaking off his shock Xander grabbed Spike's

hand and started walking again. "You're right though. Between the two of them, and Dawn, they don't really need us anymore. Hell, Ash has even picked up a bit of magic from Wills and Tara, pretty soon they might not even need the Witchy duo anymore."

"Ha ha, like Red and Ducks will ever not be here to help. Tara's oldest is the Slayer for hell's sake. No matter how much magic our Ash learns, Willow and Tara will still be hanging about, ready to help."

Xander grinned at that particular memory as he tugged his mate into the house and up the stairs to their bedroom. Willow and Tara had finally left Sunnydale and moved up to Berkley, starting a school for training young Witches, supplemented of course by a lucrative computer consulting business. The two Witches had been the next of the group to follow Spike and Xander into parenthood, with Tara giving birth to Kira when Ashlynn was just one. Willow followed soon after. Xander had been the father of Willow's first, and several other of their numerous brood, by artificial insemination, of course. When Willow had asked him, she had said she couldn't think of anyone she would rather have for the father than her best friend. For a couple of years Willow and Tara had taken turns being

the birth mother, until they had a regular Brady Bunch. Xander hadn't fathered them all, Kira, Tara's oldest, for instance, was fathered by a close friend of theirs in Berkley, some other magic user. Tara had hoped that Kira would follow in her footsteps and work in magic, but the girl had surprised them all by becoming a potential slayer, then being called when the spell had passed Buffy's duties on to her successor. Tara had been frightened at first, but they all reasoned that no other Slayer could have been so well prepared or so cared for. Besides, if the prophecy was correct, Kira could very well be the last Slayer. All of the former Scooby Gang had been devoting their lives to training 'normal' people to fight the demons and vampires and things that go bump in the night. It would all hopefully mean that young girls giving up their lives to save the world would no longer be necessary.

All thoughts of his friends and their kids were quickly wiped from Xander's mind as Spike closed the bedroom door and drew him into a passionate embrace.

"Whatcha thinking about, luv?" Spike asked as he nibbled up Xander's throat, sucking on his earlobe.

It was suddenly very hard for Xander to think. "Mmmm,

nothing. Just thinking about our friends and kids and stuff."

Spike turned an amused eye on his mate, "Well, maybe I can get your mind on other things, hmm?"

So saying Spike pushed his lover back against the wall and yanked Xander's pants down to his knees, kneeling swiftly as he did so.

Xander's only answer was a groan as Spike deep throated him.

Spike sucked Xander fast and hard, expertly working his throat muscles around his mate's hard length.

Lacing his fingers through the Vampire's blonde hair, Xander moaned and thrust deeper into the intense suction. Vaguely Xander became aware of a cool finger rubbing against his opening and he eagerly spread his legs to grant Spike better access. The brunette couldn't last long against his mates double assault. Jerking himself back onto the fingers stretching him and rubbing his prostate and forward into the cool wet suction of Spike's mouth quickly did Xander in, he came screaming Spike's name and collapsed weakly back against the

bedroom wall.

"Y...you are too good at that." Xander managed to pant out.

Spike just grinned and licked his mate clean, before standing up and removing his boots and tee shirt, but leaving his jeans on.

Xander whimpered in anticipation, then gasped as Spike roughly spun him around and pushed him face first against the wall. Chuckling softly Spike ripped Xander's tee shirt off and tossed it aside, before forcing the brunette's jeans from his knees down to his ankles. Xander stood, trembling against the wall, not looking back at his lover. He heard Spike growl, low and deep, before feeling the first prick of fangs on his shoulder. Fangs began to prick him all over; just enough to break the skin, let a little blood run in small trickles down his back. Xander was shaking and moaning now, begging Spike to please, just do anything. Suddenly the fang pricks stopped and Xander had just a split second warning of fingers on his ass telling him to relax, before Spike slid home in one powerful thrust.

"YES!!" Xander screamed out, insanely glad that they

were alone in the house. Then all he could do was ride it out as Spike took him hard and fast, hands on his hips in a viselike grip, talented tongue licking up rivulets of blood up and down his back. Xander was remotely aware that he was babbling, but didn't care; all he could feel was Spike's mouth on his shoulder, Spike's cock filling him. Eventually Spike's pace began to grow ragged and one hand snaked around to fist Xander's cock in time with their thrusts. Spike sunk his fangs into the consort mark on Xander's shoulder and it was enough to push Xander over the edge. He came screaming Spike's name, painting the wall with stripe after stripe of sticky whiteness. Spike followed him over the edge, pushing them both hard against the wall as he buried himself as deeply as possible inside his mate.

They stood there, panting harshly for several minutes, before Spike finally pulled out with a groan. "I'll go run a bath." Spike mumbled and wandered into the bathroom. Xander just nodded and collapsed onto the bed, trying to get his breath back and his brain working again. The sound of the bathwater running drifted in and Xander managed to pull himself up and wander into the bathroom. Spike had stripped out of his jeans and was pouring some bath salts into the rapidly filling tub. "Spike, did you steal Ash's bath stuff again? You

know she's gonna be upset with you."

Spike snorted, "Please. Getting yelled at once a week by my own daughter is enough, thank you. This is stuff she bought for me so I would stop borrowing hers."

Xander laughed and shut off the water then climbed into the steaming tub with a grateful sigh. He spread his legs and patted the floor in front of him. Spike climbed in and scooted back to rest against Xander's chest. "Mmmm, 's nice."

Laughing, Xander kissed Spike's neck and lazily ran his hands over the familiar, beloved body. "Yeah, it is."

Xander relaxed back into the water and sighed happily. He found his fingers tracing the now familiar scar across Spike's abdomen and was brought immediately back to his earlier thoughts of their daughter and their friends.

Spike noticed where his fingers were tracing and snorted in disgust. "Vampires shouldn't scar like that! You'd think after decades of being lavished with the attentions of Darla and Angelus and not getting a single scar I could get through one damned c-section without one."

Xander wrapped his arms tightly around Spike and pulled his mate close. "Do you really think she doesn't need us anymore?"

The Vampire sighed and patted his mate's hands. "Xan, luv. She's our daughter; she'll always need us. I just think that the hell mouth doesn't need us anymore. Between Ash and Kira, no demon or Vampire has stood a chance this last year. Dawn's a very competent Watcher; she can translate ancient prophecies, make with the mojo, and fight alongside her Slayer. Taught her to fight myself, didn't I?"

Spike turned slightly to face his lover. "You've been tied to the hell mouth your whole life Xan. You and Red and Buffy were the best protectors it could have. But there's a new generation of protectors now. Everyone else has passed on the torch, why can't you?"

Xander closed his eyes and let his head fall back with a thump. "Because, Spike. I have eternity, they don't. It may seem like a long time now, but fifty years from now, everyone we know will be dead and gone, earlier than that for some. I want to be with my family while I can, not off traveling the world while they fight evil without me."

Spike sighed and curled up in his lover's arms. "Xan, luv, let me remind you that you aren't the only immortal one here. Me and Ash will be around just as long as you will. Hell, we don't even know if the whelps you and the Witches bred are gonna get the supernatural gifts or not. And we'll always have family. All you lot bred like rabbits, and those kids'll be around for a while and then have kids of their own. You've got tons of family just waiting to be born." Spike twisted again until he was lying on his stomach, chin resting on Xander's chest. "Besides idiot, who says that all the evil needing to be fought is here in Sunnyhell? There are plenty of good fights to be had out there in the great wide world."

Xander had the decency to look chagrined, and Spike upped his attack. Gently he began to float back and forth, letting the water do most of the work, rubbing lightly against Xander. "Besides, I didn't mean we'd just up and leave for good. We'll start small. Giles and Buffy want us to bring Ash and Kira to England for a visit this summer, a graduation present of sorts. We'll take them to Berkley first; spend a week or two with Kira's moms and your brood there, then off the London for a month or two. See the sights, show the girls around the old haunts, teach them to fight some European demons, you

know, fun stuff."

Xander laughed, "Well, of course Kira would have to go too, they're inseparable."

Spike smirked, "More than that luv. I have a feeling that they're following in their parents footsteps as far as taste in lovers go."

Xander choked and coughed. "Spike! Are you telling me that they're dating?"

At Spike's nod, Xander looked thoughtful. "Huh. Well, it's not like I have a problem with Ash being gay and I'm sure that Willow and Tara won't mind. And I guess it would make sense, seeing as the prophecy talked about immortal companion to the Slayer. Makes sense they'd be more than just friends."

Suddenly Xander grabbed his lover by the hips, lifting Spike up into a sitting position and turning him around. Spike gasped and threw his arms around Xander's neck, holding on as Xander maneuvered them into position. "Spike," Xander growled, "What're the rules for talking about our daughter when were naked?"

Spike smirked and ground against Xander's lap. "Um, not to?"

"Tease." Xander gasped out and slid into the Vampire's cool channel. They paused as Spike adjusted to the intrusion, then Xander began to move, gently at first, sliding in and out of his lover.

"This whole conversation was to get me thinking about this trip to England, wasn't it?"

Spike just nodded, too caught up in the feeling of his mate thrusting into him, owning him, to answer.

Xander leaned back against the tub again, thrusting lazily up into his mate. "Well, you succeeded, sneaky bastard. We'll go to England this summer, take most of the summer off. Then, once the girls are settled in school, after the holidays, we'll look at taking some more trips, short ones. Winter's slow and the company doesn't need me to do more than phone consultation anyway."

Xander didn't mention that the real reason he had stopped being the active head of his construction company and retired to just CEO and call-in consultations

was that there were employees who had been there from the beginning who would notice that he still looked 26 instead of 43.

Xander pulled on Spike's hips, urging his lover to move. Spike began to ride his mate, hands grasping his shoulders, forehead resting against Xander's as they moved together.

Spike managed to pant out between thrusts that took his breath away. "Thanks luv. We'll take it slow, I don't want to rush you, I'm just ready to see more than Sunnydale, you know?"

Grinding up into Spike's tight channel, it took several seconds before Xander could formulate a reply. "I know. I'm ready too. And honestly, as long as were together, that's all I need."

Spike began bouncing hard, each thrust hitting his sweet spot. "Oh gods, Xander, please."

Eager to comply, Xander began grinding up into Spike, pulling the Vampire down hard on each thrust.

Spike morphed into game face and buried his face in the

crook of Xander's neck, at the same time pulling Xander into the same position. Fangs slid into warm flesh at the same time blunt teeth sunk into cool flesh. Blood flowed strong between them; twin pulls that mirrored the thrusting already taking place. Spike came first, wrenching his fangs from Xander's shoulder, head thrown back, eyes squeezed shut and back arched, screaming Xander's name. The shuddering and clenching of Spike's channel around him ensured that Xander followed soon after. Spike's name was torn from his throat and Xander collapsed back into the water, breathing heavily.

Spike climbed off him and snuggled down along his side, head resting on Xander's chest. They lay curled together in the tub, getting as much time out of the hot water as they could.

Xander turned and kissed Spike on the top of the head, "I love you Spike, you and Ash are the best things that ever happened to me. I guess I'm just reluctant to accept that she's grown up and getting ready to move on. We've been doing the parent thing for so long it's weird to think that we can do anything different."

Spike squeezed Xander tightly, "She may be growing up,

but we'll always be parents. And I mean always, our daughter is immortal after all." Spike pulled Xander down for a tender kiss. "We'll be a family forever. Don't you ever forget that."

Xander smiled into the kiss. "Forever."

The End