Xander stood on the top of the cliff, studying the rocks below. The wind stung his eye, making him squint as looked across the gray sea to the distant horizon which shimmered in the light of the full moon. He'd survived longer than he'd ever expected... over a decade. A decade of demons and prophesy and apocalypse and magic. Nearly everyone he knew had tried to kill him at least once, and now it was time for Xander to finish the job that vampire and demons and bears... oh my... had never quite gotten around to doing. Caleb had come closest, but other than the missing eye, Xander had come through it all with remarkably few physical injuries.

"No time like the present," Xander said as he stepped right up to the edge and peered down.
With only one eye, the view had a surreal two-dimensional look to it, like he was seeing a painting of the breaking waves crashing and rearing their white heads. Fear scrambled in his stomach, desperate to force him back, but Xander was long used to ignoring fear. He inched closer to his own death.

One more. And then one more. And one after that. He crept toward death in tiny increments that just drew out the pain, the uncertainty. His brain swirled around all the versions of the afterlife he'd read about. Would his soul be swept up as a warrior for the light? Would he be reincarnated? Would he end up in hell for all eternity for killing himself because technically he was. Xander's mouth was dry as he forced his muscles to just keep inching forward.

"What the bloody fuck are you doing?" a familiar voice demanded, and Xander found himself flying backwards through the air, his hands flailing as he tried to catch himself. He couldn't. He ended up flat on his back staring up at a cloudy night sky as the tall grasses swayed around him.
"Hey, Spike. Nice to see you back in town. Thanks for stopping by. Feel free to fuck off any time now."
Xander sighed as he stared up at the stars.

"What the fuck is wrong with you, Harris?" An angry face poked into Xander's range of vision, and Xander tilted his head to better focus on Spike.

"You so don't even want to know. Look, Spike, just take a hike."

"Wot? So you can kill yourself? So you can leave the bints to cry and wonder what the fuck they did wrong to drive you 'round the twist?" Spike demanded, and Xander sat up, angry for the first time. He understood Spike's motives here, but how dare he suggest that Xander would ever hurt the girls like that.

"Why the hell do you think I picked a cliff, you moron?" Xander demanded. "Hello! No depth of vision, night, cliff... what do these things spell to you?" Xander pushed himself up and closed in on Spike. Yeah, the vampire could kick his ass any day, but no way was Xander backing down to him now.
That just wasn't happening, especially not when Xander was right.

"M-O-R-O-N." Spike counted off the letters on his fingers.

"A-C-C-A-D-E-N-T!" Xander snapped back. Spike frowned at him for a second, and then closed his eyes in that expression he got when he was really fighting the urge to say something he shouldn't. He got that look a lot around Xander and Willow's newest girl. "Spike, just go away. Pretend you didn't see me."

"Right, so you can fling yourself off the cliff," Spike said with more than a little derision in his voice.

"Um, I'm actually trying to slide off it, you know, make the edge crumble a bit or something," Xander shrugged.

"You—" Spike just stopped and stared at Xander for a long minute. "That's it. Bloody rubber room time for you, mate." Spike reached out and grabbed Xander's wrist as he headed back toward the rambling old house Xander had been sharing with
Willow and what's-her-name and a half dozen baby slayers.

"What? No. Spike, dammit, stop it!" Xander fought as Spike dragged him across the ground. Xander even tried sitting, but vampire strength trumped even Xander levels of stubbornness. "Fine, wait, let me explain. If you're not ready to chuck me off the cliff yourself, I'll go back with you and agree to the whole rubber room thing," Xander finally relented as he stopped fighting Spike and instead clung to the vampire's arm. "Please, Spike, just let me explain. Please."

Spike stopped and considered Xander with a doubtful expression. "I promise, no fighting if you listen to all my reasons and you still think I should go back to the house," Xander begged. Why not, he didn't have that much dignity to start with, and life was quickly chipping away what little he'd managed to save up.

"Fine, you've got thirty seconds," Spike relented as he let go of Xander and crossed his arms over his chest.
"I’m infected with Unji eggs," Xander blurted. "And hey, that's way under thirty seconds."

"You're what?" Spike grabbed Xander and bowled him over so that once again Xander was on his back in the grass, only this time, Spike was pushing his shirt up and laying his head against Xander's stomach.

"Whoa, bad touching alert. Back off there, bloodbreath."

"Shut up, Harris."

"Yeah, nice comeback. Look, you mind just backing off with the weirdly inappropriate touching?" Xander asked as he shoved ineffectually at Spike's head. He truly hated vampire strength. Eventually Spike sat up with a slightly nauseous expression. Did vampires get nausea?

"Bloody hell, they're about ready to hatch," Spike said as he stared at Xander's pudgy stomach, but then Xander was preggers with six to twelve demons, depending on which version of the Unji's reproductive biology you read. Unfortunately, all of
the versions agreed that after nine to ten years, the buggers ate their way out of the host killing it. If Xander had an incurable demon infestation, he at least wanted to go out taking the flesh eating spawn of hell with him.

"I started getting the munchies last week," Xander admitted. "Most of Giles' books say that comes about a month before the hatching, so tonight is the last full moon before I become demon kibble. I don't know, I just thought this should end under a full moon." Xander shrugged. The moon didn't matter as much as the him dying part, but he hated having to explain any of it to Spike. Really hated.

"What did Red say?"

Xander snorted. "Oh yeah, like I'm going to tell her. When I first got bit, she was just the sweet girl who really didn't need to hear about intestine-eating demons... especially not right after we'd lost Jesse. Now she's the potential world-ending mighty witch, and you know Unji are resistant to all magic, so she's just going to frustrate herself trying to save me, and a frustrated Willow is a thing which all
living creatures should fear," he pointed out. Even Spike had to admit the logic in that.

"Fine then, what did Rupert say?" Spike asked as leaned closer. Funny, if Xander had a choice he'd be running away from the guy whose guts were about to explode like the victims from Aliens.

"That first year, Giles was still in English stick-up-his-ass mode, and when I tried to talk to him, he pretty much blew me off. Okay, so I didn't exactly tell him that it was an emergency, but I told him that something bit me on patrol, and then Buffy was off on how it went all slimesville when she slayed it, and the biting just got forgotten. When I tried to talk to him later, he just said I shouldn't go on patrol if I was going to complain about every injury. I didn't find the information on the Unji for about..." Xander thought about it... "uh, I guess it was two years later because it was during all the weirdness with the mayor. Only when I found the Unji entry, it was pretty clear that the only cure for Unji eggs was this stuff that had to be taken in the first week. And I was way past that deadline. So, I missed my chance for an abortion, and now we're doing this
the messy way. So, either chuck me off the cliff to save me some time and effort, or just take a hike until I can get up the nerve to go off the edge on my own." Xander shoved at Spike again, and this time the vampire moved back far enough for Xander to stand up.

"You bloody.... I don't even have a word for it. You've been dying all this time, and you don't think of telling anyone?" Spike asked.

"We're all dying," Xander pointed out. "Or most of us are dying, some of us are dead and therefore have the dying part out of the way, but you get my point."

"Then you get my point, you prat. There's another cure."

"What?" Xander stopped so suddenly that Spike collided with him, and Xander would have crashed to the ground if Spike hadn't caught him. For a second, Xander couldn't even catch his breath as he stared at Spike's profile in the moonlight. Hope and pessimism clashed in his brain until he didn't think he could even make sense of the words Spike was
saying. "Okay, Spike, if this is a joke, just don't. Because I've had a lot of years to try and deal with the whole death bit, and I'm not really feeling like this is a ha-ha 'screw with Harris' moment. I mean, I read everything ever written on Unji, and it all pretty much says I'm a dead man."

"And it was all written by bloody humans, moron. Demons might have a few tricks up their sleeves. But you're not going to like this."

"Spike, my alternative is throwing myself off a cliff. I don't care what this cure is, I’m going to love it," Xander insisted as hope started edging out pessimism. Spike sighed and started pulling Xander back toward the house.

"We need to go and make a little visit then, and I might need to explain a few things to you."

"Explain away," Xander invited him, and he felt almost giddy. A cure. Spike had a cure. Oh yeah, Xander was loving this already.

~*~*~*~*~
"Spike, I hate this," Xander hissed as he fought an urge to cross his arms in front of his chest and try to cover some part of him. It wasn't like he was in the best shape with the Unji demons inside, and his stomach poofed out, the skin stretching over a round belly that caused Willow's girl to make disgusted faces at him when he snagged a second helping of mashed potatoes. And now Xander's belly was on display as he walked around wearing nothing but a skirt and a leash.

"And I hate wearing a skirt," Xander hissed.

"It's a shendyt kilt."

"It's a skirt," Xander argued. It was. And it was a short skirt with no underwear, and his dangling bits were dangerously close to publicly dangling. And this was so feeling like a really nasty practical joke, and all Xander needed was the high school football team to show up and he'd pretty much be in hell. Spike tightened the leash and Xander was forced to move so close that his shoulder brushed against Spike's back.
"Egyptian kings wore the fucking things, so you can too," Spike snarled. "Now shut it before you get us thrown out before we can get you your fucking cure."

Xander forced his lips together in a tight line and held his hands stiffly at his sides. Right, this was better than jumping off a cliff. This was better than jumping off a cliff. This was... fuck it, he was about to the point where the cliff looked good, Xander thought to himself as Spike led him through a door and into a room scattered with demons. Big demons. Big, brown tentacle demons with tiny spider eyes clustered in odd spots around their bodies. Widescreen televisions showed various football games and a few naked humans wandered the room, but mostly Xander noticed the demons.

"Vampire," one of them rattled in a deep voice. Xander might have give a good 'no duh,' but Spike chose that moment to jerk the leash in a signal for Xander to kneel, which Xander did with a silent promise to himself to lace Spike's blood with Tang.
"Yeah, but got a prezzie for trading," Spike said with a calculated smile at the largest of the demons.

"We have humans," the huge blob of tentacles and eyes didn't seem impressed, and Xander suddenly realized that he desperately wanted this to work. Yeah, this was squicky to whole new levels of squick, but this was a chance to survive. He held his breath as Spike seemed to study the room.

"Yeah, ya got humans, but I'm not offering to give my human up. I'm selling what he's got in him."

A couple of the smaller demons shifted closer, and Xander watched several sets of eyes slide around on the demons' bodies so that they aligned on Xander, and that was possibly the grossest thing Xander had ever seen, and Xander had seen a whole lot of gross in his life.

"You are uninteresting," the large demon announced as though uninteresting were the worst insult in the world.

"Oi! Unji are far from uninteresting. And in case you've not been keeping up with the news, I'm a
good deal of interesting myself. Went and got dusted and came back, didn't I? Survived the bloody Black Thorn and Angel's endless brooding."

One of the smaller demons made a series of heavy grunts, and Spike gave one of his self satisfied smirks. "Bloody right I defied the odds. And I have a nice treat here. Boy's all fulla Unji eggs all ready to hatch. I'm estimating him at about two weeks out from the devouring, and you bloody well know it's hard to get humans to play host, and even when they do host, the buggers have a tendency to off themselves. When's the last time you had good, ripe, juicy Unji spawn to feed on?" Spike asked.

The room went silent for several minutes. The large demon grunted something as several more eyes slid around to the side facing Spike.

"Go on, pet, go give the nice demon a sniff," Spike said as he tugged on Xander's leash. Xander had to grab Spike's arm to help pull himself up and he walked forward with his stomach knotting in fear. Okay, the plan was to let this thing touch him. This was officially the worst plan ever. One tentacle slid
up his legs and zeroed in on Xander's asshole while another drifted toward Xander's mouth. Oh, he so hated this part.

Xander opened his mouth and let the tentacle slide in. He wanted to choke, but the tentacle slipped down his throat so fast Xander didn't have time to. And the tentacle down his throat had temporarily distracted him from the one up his ass, which he was so feeling right now. Xander shifted uncomfortably and the damn thing wiggled, which was a whole new feeling of weird.

The demon made a slow purring grunt, and then Spike was standing there next to Xander. "You keep your feeding tentacles to yourself unless ya want 'em ripped off. Yeah, I told you the boy had a nice mature set of 'em in there, so are you willing to deal now?"

"How much?" the demon currently impaling Xander asked.

"$80,000."
Xander desperately tried looking in Spike's direction. No way would they pay that. And then Xander would be back to throwing himself off a cliff. The demons were silent, and then Xander felt the tentacles withdraw.

"Right then, come on, pet," Spike said as he reached down to grab Xander's leash. Xander opened his mouth, and Spike actually reached out and grabbed Xander's cock right through the damn skirt which was enough to shock Xander into silence. Man hand on his man meat, and that was just a big old no. However, when Spike started leading him across the room, Xander really didn't have much of a choice but to follow.

They were just out the door when a rough voice called. "Wait!"

Spike stopped, finally letting Xander's cock go as he turned and glanced back at the room. "Yeah? We got a deal?" he asked calmly. Xander glared. Spike ignored him.
"$20,000 cash, $30,000 casino credit," the demon countered. Spike strode back into the room so fast that Xander was left stumbling after him.

"That's a bloody insult," he snapped.

"$20,000 cash, $30,000 casino credit, and we fix its eye," the demon offered.

"$70,000 cash and you fix its eye."

"$30,000 cash, $30,000 credit and we fix its eye."

"$60,000 cash and the eye." Spike looked like he was having way too much fun with this, and Xander wondered where the eye stuff had come from. He'd firmly vetoed the whole magical eye replacement argument. He'd heard enough Lindsey/evil hand stories to know that things that were too good to be true weren't good at all.

"$30,000 cash, $40,000 credit and the eye, or I get one of mine infested and just wait the decade," the large demon said, and now his whole front on the top half was crowded with little tiny spider eyes. Spike stopped and made a show out of thinking that over.
"Deal," he finally agreed with a smile.

"Deal," the demon echoed and then Xander watched as two huge tentacles detached themselves from the demon's body. Right, this was the plan. This plan sucked... Xander almost choked on the irony there because the plan did suck. Those tentacles would suck the Unji right out of Xander's digestive tract where they'd lodged, only it was getting those tentacles into Xander's digestive track that Xander really didn't want to think too much about. Because the sucking part of the plan really sucked.

"Go on then," Spike said impatiently as he gave Xander a push. Tottling forward on shaky legs, Xander flinched when the thick tentacle slid up his leg and pressed against his asshole. Oh, this was going to hurt. But it would hurt less than the moment when his body hit the rocks at the bottom of the cliff, he reminded himself resolutely. Xander opened his mouth as the second tentacle came to his mouth, thinning already. Spike had promised him that these things didn't kill people... well, not unless the people in question reneged on gambling
debts and then they tended to hire humans to do the killing, but Xander still shivered as his mouth filled with tentacle.

Like before, it slid down his throat so fast that Xander didn't have time to choke, but his stomach did made an attempt to throw up. Xander could feel his stomach muscles gather for a second attempt when the tentacle at his ass pushed in. Xander tried to yelp as the muscles stretched much further this time, but he couldn't make a sound with that thing down his throat. All he could do was flop his arms... and he did. Strong tentacles wrapped around his wrists, and Xander was yanked forward until his body was pressed against the demon, which gave Xander a nice up close look at several tiny black eyes.

Xander closed his eye as his stomach tried to vomit again. Okay, picture yourself somewhere else, he silently ordered himself as the tentacle in his ass thickened and bulged, stretching the muscle until it burned and Xander squirmed.
A tentacle brushed against his cock... and then it kept brushing against his cock and Xander's eye popped open. Oh no. No, he signed up for straight sodomy and Unji eating. He tried to turn his head to catch Spike's eye, but a tentacle wrapped gently around his head and pulled him close so that he couldn't do more than twitch. Xander gasped through his nose as the tentacle slowly wrapped around his soft cock and started pulsing.

Okay, the universe hated him because tentacles should not feel that good. With nothing else he could do, Xander just closed his eye again and waited for this whole nightmare to be over so he could start repressing it. The tentacle around his cock started sliding up and down the shaft, and Xander would have moaned if he could, but instead he could only twitch as cool shivers ran up his spine because damn that felt way better than it should.

The tentacle in his ass did something and suddenly Xander couldn't breathe fast enough as his cock hardened in record time. The pressure behind his cock sent him twisting as he tried to thrust into the tentacle around his cock, but Xander couldn't. He
could barely move at all, and now tentacles wrapped around his upper thighs, pressing him deep into the demon's bulk. Xander started panicking when tentacles tickled his nose, and now his helpless wiggles were in panic as threadlike appendages crept down into his lungs leaving Xander trying to sneeze.

The demon rumbled something, and the vibrations sank through Xander, making his muscles loosen in sheer pleasure, and suddenly his nose was totally blocked. It took Xander a few seconds of pure unadulterated panic before he realized he wasn't suffocating. Okay, it felt weird to not be taking breaths, but his body seemed to think it still had air. Xander opened his eye and found himself plastered to a chunk of demon with about a million beady little eyes. All of the eyes looked back at Xander and then the demon chuckled and again the vibrations filled him and made this whole weirdness... okay, it was just as weird, but it was a less-than-horrible weird.

Letting his eye close again, Xander didn't fight as the demon tugged his legs farther apart and the
tentacle in his ass thrust further in. The sudden urgency to thrust came back, and Xander strained helplessly, desperate until the tentacle around his cock start stoking him faster. Then Xander just strained in pleasure. The pressure in his butt increased, and Xander decided he officially loved his prostate gland. Why hadn't he let Anya use that strap on? Oh god. He spasmed as the tentacle around his cock explored the head and tightened just below the crown before something wet slid over the slit.

Oh yeah, this was... this was the best sex of his life, and Xander couldn't even scream in pleasure as a tentacle gently explored the shape of his balls. His knees were bent and his legs pulled even farther apart as Xander's whole face was pressed deep into the demon. For a second, Xander strained against being swallowed, haunted by the idea of the demon pressing Xander so close that one of those bulgy spider eyes popped. However, Xander never could win against a demon, and soon he found himself tucked deep into the demon's flesh.
The rumble started again, and Xander shivered in pleasure at the feeling of the vibrations slithering into his body. The pressure around his cock tightened, and for a second, Xander tried to gasp, fighting the tentacles that blocked his airway and fed him oxygen, but he had to give up and just let the demon set the pace. The demon provided air and slowly sped up the delicious stroking on his cock. The tentacle in his ass undulated, and Xander was fairly sure he was going to pass out with pleasure. He would have come except the hold on his cock was suddenly tight enough that he couldn't, and that brought an edge of pain to the pleasure. And Xander was all full of surprise today because he enjoyed that edge of pain almost as much as he enjoyed the pleasure as the demon again started stoking him.

Tentacles skittered over his back and butt and the bottoms of his feet, the only parts of him still exposed to the outside air, and Xander pointed his toes out and then flexed his foot. And then the demon took away the only movement he had left
by wrapping tentacles around Xander's feet so that he was completely helpless.

It was funny... being partially helpless made Xander fight more, but this total helplessness, this inability to move a single muscle, made him relax into the demon's care. He didn't have a choice. And that’s when the tentacles sped up their motion, pulling and teasing until Xander silently came. The pleasure rocked through him, leaving his muscles trembling, and Xander could only wait as the demon continued. Now Xander could feel the tentacle in his mouth pulsing and something was definitely deep in his guts making his stomach throb oddly, but Xander just waited in a sleepy half-awareness as the demon continued to press deeper and deeper into Xander's butt.

Vaguely, Xander worried about whether this made him gay now because he definitely liked having things up his butt. Or maybe he was just tentacle man now. No tentacles, no second base for you. But mostly Xander just lay in sleepy silence as he waited for whatever came next.
Eventually, Xander could feel the tentacles slowly pull back. His cock slipped free and then his legs were released. Luckily, the demon still held him up because Xander was fairly sure he couldn't carry his own weight at this point. The tentacle in his mouth got smaller and smaller and Xander felt like he was moving backwards. He was moving backwards and getting cold. It was definitely cold in here.

The tentacle slipped free of his mouth at the same time as the ones in his nose came out, and for a long second, Xander didn't remember to breathe as he still sagged groggily in the demon's embrace. And then the demon slowly pushed Xander back and released one tentacle after another. As Xander found himself on his own feet, he slowly sagged to his knees. It was easier to keep his balance on his knees, he found.

"Delicious," the demon rumbled. "We will record this encounter as a mutual win," he offered.

"Ta, mate. He always said he was moist and delicious." Xander blinked as he recognized Spike's voice, and then Spike was there with an arm around
Xander's waist pulling him up to his feet. "You look well-shagged, pet."

"I'm gay," Xander announced as Spike got him turned around and started heading for the exit. "And I'm skinny," Xander said as he stared down at the unfamiliar body he was still struggling to coordinate.

"Yeah, need a bit of meat on you," Spike agreed. He cursed a bit as he tried to get Xander through the door, but one of Xander's legs kept sprawling out and getting in the way.

"You skinny looks good, but I think I need less skinny."

"I look good, huh?"

"Always have. Buffy thought I was sleeping with you."

"She what?"

Xander blinked up in surprise when Spike stopped in the middle of the empty hallway that led back out to Spike's car. The vampire was giving him a strange
look, but it made perfect sense in Xander's head. "You were sleeping with the bot, but I thought you were sleeping with Buffy, so I told Buffy how hot you were and that I was okay with her sleeping with you, only she wasn't, and she thought I was sleeping with you because I thought you were hot."

"Bloody hell, you're stoned right off your head, aren't you?"

"Oh, yeah," Xander agreed with a smile. "And hey, I have two eyes," he suddenly realized as he squinted first one and then the other closed.

"This better wear off before we get back," Spike sighed.

"Spike?"

"Wot?"

"Thanks," Xander said as he laid his head on Spike's shoulder.

Spike sighed. "Whatever," he said. But his arm tightened around Xander as they started moving forward again.
"Right then, what crawled up your ass and died, mate, because I am just about through with this shite," Spike said as he dropped onto the couch next to Xander. Xander tensed up for a second, hating that instinct that he had trained himself out of years ago. But one little incident, one little case of Spike saving his ass... or not saving his ass and letting big old tentacles get his ass, and all the flinch instincts were back in play.

"Fuck off," Xander suggested as he focused on the television. When Spike's bottle sailed into the television screen in a brilliant flare of light and beer spray and a really ominous crackle of electricity, Xander didn't even blink.

"You ungrateful little prick," Spike snarled, and Xander's flinch was back. "I bloody well saved your
life, got you that eye back, kept your fucking secret, and shared the money. What the bloody fuck do you want?"

"A Spike-shaped pile of dust?" Xander suggested hopefully, and even he knew he'd gone too far. Yeah, he and Spike weren't the bestest of buds, but they'd learned a grudging respect for each other, only that was sounding distinctly unrespectful. Distinctly. And the way Spike had gone utterly still and silent was verging on giving Xander the creeps. Long seconds ticked by, time weirdly warping so that Xander stared at the VCR under the ruined TV wondering if the clock was stuck because the minutes never changed and this was feeling pretty much like an eternity.

"Nice Harris. Have a good life," Spike finally said, his voice absolutely empty of all emotion as he stood up, and Xander just knew if Spike left right now, he wasn't coming back and then there would be repercussions and angry Willow and maybe even a little guilt because Spike really didn't deserve to get kicked in the guts.
"Wait," Xander said as he scrambled to his feet. Spike offered him a two-fingered salute and kept heading for the door. "Spike, I'm sorry." Yeah, like that ever worked. Spike kept right on walking, and Xander hurried after him. "I'm an asshole, okay? Big with the assholiness, which is the whole problem, only it's not your problem because you didn't make me big with the assholiness as much as just rubbing my nose in it, so I'm really sorry."

"Wot?" Spike turned and gave Xander one of his patented looks, the kind that Spike usually only gave Angel or Willow's flavor of the month or other people who really bugged him.

"I'm an asshole," Xander repeated as he stopped near Spike, and suddenly the room felt too small. The TV room, now minus the TV, was just a corner of the basement with the rest of the space dedicated to slayer training. Only now the already small room was feeling way smaller.

"Yeah, I got that part, and I couldn't agree more," Spike said with a not-friendly glare. "Didn't quite catch the rest of it, though. What exactly am I
supposed to have rubbed your nose in? You're the one who's been acting like a fucking nob."

"Been thinking with my nob, not acting like one, and I have been listening to way too much of the weird Spike slangage if I'm making dumb jokes out of British words for penis," Xander sighed as he retreated to the couch and collapsed onto it. "Look, you deserve better than what I just said, and I'm having what Willow affectionately calls one of my poopy-head days, so just don't listen to anything I say... not that you listen to me anyway," Xander added after a second. Letting his head fall back on the couch, he closed his eyes and struggled to keep his breathing and heart rate even. It was an old trick from hanging out with way too many vampires and demons and things that went bump in the night. He'd lost a lot of kittens to Clem before he learned to control his heart rate, and he was really hoping that Willow was right about Clem adopting the cats out because if Spike had told him the truth about those kittens, he was going to hell for every kitten he'd lost to that guy.
"Spit it out." At Spike's words, Xander rolled his head to the side and opened one eye.

"Okay, I'm assuming you don't mean the pizza I just ate."

"You called Rose "Betty" and Willow fucking calls me asking if the eye I got you is cursed or something because you're acting like a first class git. So, whatever this is that I supposedly rubbed your nose it, it's turning you gormless. Now spit out whatever is gnawing at your innards before Willow calls in Buffy or Giles."

"Oh," Xander said with a grimace. But in his defense, Rose did look a lot like Betty. Willow only seemed to have two types of girlfriends: ones that were exactly like Tara, and ones who were not like her at all. Kennedy was in the "not" pile, but Rose and Patsy and a couple others could have been Tara's sisters. And somehow, that just did not feel all that mentally healthy so Willow thinking that he was off his rails was a little on the ironic side. "The eye isn't evil, and if Willow is going to change girlfriends more often than shoes, she's going to
have to learn to deal with the reality that is my brain's inability to keep up."

"What did I rub your nose in?" Spike demanded.

"Hey, rude much? We're poking at Willow's issues right now. We can come back to me later."

"Listen you little piece of shite, I'm done playing. You want to dust me, you can bloody well try, but this is over... this bit where you act like an arse wipe and then half apologize is getting old fast. So you explain it to Buffy or Willow or whoever is willing to deal with your sorry ass because I'm not." Spike stood up and headed for the door, and Xander had an image of himself trying to explain this to either Willow or Buffy... or god help him, Giles. That would damage him for life.

"It's the tentacle stuff, that's what I'm not spitting out," Xander blurted. If he had to have this conversation with someone, at least Spike would laugh at him in private and tell the girls to back off without blurting out inappropriate details.
"I figured that one out already. If you don't want me to walk out and call Willow, you'd better come up with something better than that," Spike said without even turning around. It gave Xander a nice view of Spike's ass, and that was not a view he should be enjoying. And he was so not good with shoulds, because should or not, that was a nice ass.

"I can't do this. One of the slayers may walk in," Xander said desperately as he got up and headed for the door.

Spike turned and blocked the door with his body. "Willow and Rose took them all for some ice cream and killin' things in the marsh."

"And you didn't go? Hey, I bet you could catch up with them," Xander suggested hopefully. His powers of puppy-eye had largely returned when he got the eye back, so he turned that on Spike. One arched eyebrow rose.

"The whole point of takin' them out was giving me a chance to find out what bug has crawled up your arse."
"Tentacle, not bug. Bugs I've eaten, but they have never been up my ass. Only tentacles have been there."

"And it saved your fucking life."

"I know!" Xander snapped, and Spike narrowed his eyes in a look that was way too much pre-souled Spike for Xander's comfort. "I know it saved me, but there are some things I just so very, very much did not need to know."

"Wot? The gay shit?"

"Yes, Spike, the gay shit. I mean, I'm a big fan of boobies, but a big disgusting thing shoves tentacles up my ass, and I'm coming harder than I've ever come in my life. This is freak worthy."

"So, you're self-destructing over being gay?" Spike sounded casual, but he sounded too casual, like the casual he got right before he pulled a big sword out and decapitated something.

"This is not a movie of the week, and I am not so pathetic as to be having a gay freak-out here," Xander said with more than a little exasperation.
"Ya better figure out what the hell the problem is because you're making everyone fucking miserable."

"I'm not bothering anyone," Xander objected.

"No, except when you growl and mope and act like Angel, Jr. You made one of the girls cry yesterday and you didn't even bloody notice."

Xander stopped cold at that. He wouldn't. Or he might, but he would notice. Okay, so maybe he wouldn't notice with the way he'd been feeling lately. Great, he was being a big old fuck-up again. "What kind of loser am I?" Xander demanded sarcastically as he tried to push past Spike, only to get pushed right back into the room with enough force to send him stumbling into the back of the couch.

"Obviously one who's not very good at explaining himself, and you're not getting out of this room until you explain exactly why you're twisted into knots over this."
Xander crossed his arms over his chest in his best imitation of Spike, but he suspected that he looked more insecure than decisive, and Spike really wasn't moving. "I proposed to Anya, I dated Cordelia, I slept with Faith... although really that was more Faith sleeping with me. I wasn't lying to any of them, Spike. I really loved them, only now I'm thinking I'm gay and how could I not have known this about myself? I feel like I lied to them and lied to myself, and now... now I just don't know. So, if I'm having a poopy-head day, I think I'm entitled."

"Strip," Spike ordered, and the word was so far left of anything Xander had expected that he just stood and stared at Spike. He kept staring until Spike closed in on him, using his body to trap Xander up against the back of the couch before starting to pull his buttons loose way too fast for Xander to even process.

"Hey now, bad touching, red light, back off," Xander said, his hands scrambling against Spike's arm and accomplishing nothing. Spike had Xander's shirt off and was working his jeans before Xander really panicked and started trying to climb over the back
of the couch. He had half gotten over, one leg propped up onto the couch-back, when an inhumanly strong grip caught him by the neck.

"No means 'no,' remember that? This is no!" Xander cried desperately as Spike now pulled him back, forcing him to lean into the couch as Spike pressed against his naked backside.

"What are you feeling right now?" Spike asked softly, but his hands found Xander's wrists, pinning them to the couch.

"Freaked. Panicked. A slight side of wondering just how tight your soul is pinned on," Xander answered truthfully enough, it just wasn't all of the truth. Now that he'd been stripped, it was going to be hard to hide his erection if Spike made him turn around.

"I'm not going to hurt you, and my soul is pinned just as tight as ever," Spike promised, but he pressed even harder so that Xander had to take shallow breaths and the ache of being pinned threatened to turn into pain. Holding him like that for a second, Spike made a strange sound and then slowly eased off a little.
"And how tight would that be because from here, the soul looks a little wiggly, like one of those hangnails that you chew on," Xander pointed out as he wondered just how screwed he was.

"Make ya a deal," Spike offered, his voice low and silky, like when he was trying to sweet-talk Buffy. Xander's cock was sitting up and taking notice even though Xander's bigger head panicked at words like deal. That implied dealing which implied giving Spike something that Xander might want to give Spike but he would never want Spike to know that he wanted to give Spike, and that didn't even make sense in his head. "You know I won't hurt you." Spike pulled Xander's hands to the small of his back and pinned them both in one grip, leaving his other hand free to roam across Xander's shoulder and side. Fingers skimmed over hot skin, and Xander shivered. "You be a good boy, and I won't ever let anyone know about your secret," he promised.

"Um, not having a secret here... unless you count the potentially gay thing or the tentacles, and I think we've already established that you're not going to tattle about the tentacles."
"Shut up," Spike said, and Xander swallowed, caught between fear and desire.

"Right then, if you won't promise to be a good boy, we'll just have to make sure you can't do anything bad," Spike said, and then he was pulling Xander up. Twisting his body, Xander tried to free himself, but Spike easily held his wrists while catching him around the throat with his other hand, and Xander froze as fingers tightened around his neck in warning. Then Spike was pushing him out into the training room with its thick concrete walls, wood floor, and high ceilings. Xander stumbled where he got pushed. The overhead grid of steel beams the slayers used for climbing practice had a few new additions, short chains with leather straps attached to the ends.

When they reached a spot under the chains, Spike stopped, and Xander closed his eyes in humiliation as his cock jutted out in front of him. This was so very, very bad. This was huge amounts of bad. Spike let go of one of his hands and leaped up, grabbing the grid with his free hand. Considering that Spike was holding him by one wrist, this was probably his
best chance to get away. Xander let his knees go soft and dropped to the floor... or he tried to. In reality, he ended up dangling from one wrist as Spike easily pulled him up.

"What the bloody hell are you doing?" Spike demanded as he hooked a knee over the grid and dangled down so that instead of holding Xander with one hand, he had two hands free.

"Um, I'm trying to get free," Xander said weakly as Spike buckled his wrist into the leather straps. It was a strangely formed bit of leather that came up and around his fist.

"Wanker," Spike snorted. "Give me your other hand."

"Hey, I have a better idea. Let me go and then we can both forget this."

"Give me your other hand or I'll come down, grab it, and then be in a bad mood when I decide how tight to buckle you in," Spike countered.

Xander swallowed, his thoughts running in little hamster wheel circles. He hadn't yet made up his
mind about what he should do when Spike dropped down and just grabbed his free hand. Spike gave a good snort and then leaped back up to the grid, and Xander had exactly zero chance of escape. Slowly, Spike started tightening the chains and pulling Xander steadily up onto his toes.

"Um, Spike, getting weirded out here, and the fact that you had these chains out here is really not stopping the weird from coming," Xander said nervously as Spike dropped to the ground right in front of him. When Spike pursed his lips, Xander's mouth went dry and something that might be either lust or fear crawled through his guts. Xander tried to take a deep breath, but his chest ached because most of his weight was on his arms.

"Ya aren't gay, mate," Spike said casually, but then he ran a finger down Xander's hard cock, and that really seemed to disprove that bit of stupidity. Spike was the only person in the room, and Xander hadn't been this hard since Anya... or possibly since the tentacle beast, but he wasn't thinking about that.
"If I agree with you, will you let me down?" Xander asked, his breath short and his calves starting to throb.

"Who was your first big crush, mate?" Spike asked, his fingers tracing down to Xander's balls before he cupped them in his hand. Xander tried to pull back, but he could only shuffle about an inch and then he was out of room... out of room and feeling even more strain in his chest and arms and calves. And Spike still had his balls firmly in hand.

"Spike, why are you doing this?" Xander could feel desperate tears forming. When Spike tightened his hold on Xander's balls and then brought a second hand up to sweep over his chest and stroke his exposed side, Xander felt a tear slip loose. That's when Spike reached up and brushed it away with his thumb.

"Pet, look at me," Spike said. Xander didn't want to, but his eyes focused almost without his permission. "I wouldn't hurt you, Xander. You're a right pain in the ass sometimes, but we've been through a lot together. Besides, if I can deal with Peaches without
staking him for his bloody brooding, I'm sure not going to lose my temper with you."

"Um, not feeling the trust here," Xander admitted.

"Could have killed ya or let you die easy enough a dozen times over, including when you had those Unji eggs in you. Helped ya then and I'm trying to help you now, but you need to listen to me very carefully."

"I'm not really good at listening," Xander tried joking. Spike's hand, the one that had brushed his tear away, had been stroking his cheek, but now he slipped it around the back of Xander's neck and pulled him close. Xander flailed a bit as Spike pulled him far enough away from the spot under the chains that his feet lost contact with the floor so that the chains were holding all his weight.

"You listen or I'll gag you and then say this often enough that even you have to hear it. But I'm trying to do this the easy way first." Spike slowly let Xander back down, and Xander's toes found the wood floor. He seriously considered just hyperventilating and passing out, only with as little
room as he had with the chains, he couldn't breathe fast enough to actually do it.

"You're not bloody gay. Buffy tripped your trigger, right?" Spike asked. Xander gave a little nod and then held his breath as Spike started circling, his hands trailing over Xander's back and reaching down to grab his ass. This was officially the strangest position Xander had ever been in, and his cock just got harder as the need to come started to fog his thinking.

"After Buffy, who comes next?"

"Um... Cordelia."

"Bloody scary, that one. Had balls enough to go up against Angel and Angelus, like some other bastard I knew once." Spike made it clear that he meant Xander when he came around to the front and cupped Xander's cheek in his hand, and the oddly affectionate gesture sent all sorts of mixed signals that made Xander's skin tingle. His cock didn't care if there was fear and weirdness mixed in there; it only got the signal that someone was touching him
with affection, and Xander could feel his orgasm inch closer. "Who was after Cordelia?"

"Um, probably Willow, but that was just a fluke," Xander gasped. Being suspended and needing to come were both robbing him of breath. Spike trailed a finger over Xander's chest, circling a nipple for a second before continuing.

"Willow made the first move, right?" Spike asked as he gently pinched Xander's nipple and rolled it between his finger and thumb.

"I, uh, don't know," Xander said. His muscles strained, the urge to thrust undeniable, but Spike had tied him so tightly that he couldn't do more than squirm a little, and even then the movement meant he lost contact with the floor for a second. His body spun a lazy half circle and then slowly returned before he could get his feet back under him.

"Was Faith before or after Red?"

"Maybe before?" Xander really had no idea at this point. For a second, Spike's hand rested on his hip,
and then he shoved and Xander was swinging helplessly, his cock jutting out comically, and he really hoped Spike didn't have any cameras set up for this moment of humiliation.

"When did Anya show up?"

For long seconds, Xander didn't answer as he struggled to get a toe on the ground and stop the slow swing as his body dangled helplessly in the air. Spike eventually reached out and caught him by the hips, strong hands resting there as he looked up at Xander with that single raised eyebrow that made it really clear he wanted an answer. "Senior year, but we didn't have sex until after I graduated," Xander hurried to say. If this was doing it the easy way, he did not want to push Spike into doing anything hard. Although maybe if they did this the hard way, his idiot cock would deflate because being tied up was bad enough, but the hard-on just added whole new levels of humiliation.

"Anyone between Anya and the tentacles you were so fond of?" Spike asked, his trademark smirk finally
in place, and Xander braced himself for the coming humiliation.

"No, okay? Look, whatever game you're playing, can we just get it over so I can go to bed and start pretending it never happened?"

"So, you're attracted to two slayers, a thousand year-old demon, a serious bitch who later became a demon, a witch, a demon with enough tentacles and power to turn you into a grease spot, and me. Are you seeing a pattern?"

"I'm seeing a need for therapy," Xander shot back, and immediately, he was spinning in the air, his legs thrashing in the air helplessly as he dangled like a big helpless Xander-shaped pendulum. Xander strained, but he couldn't stop or even slow down. And then suddenly Spike's arm snaked around his waist and pulled him close so that Xander's naked back pressed against Spike's stomach. A second hand reached up and smoothed his hair and caressed his chest before it slid down and fist ed Xander's cock.
Xander hissed in white pleasure. His balls drew up in anticipation, and his body tightened, but his feet were still off the ground, and without leverage he couldn't thrust.

"Spike," Xander pleaded.

"Are ya seeing what I am, pet? Are you finally seeing the forest or are you just looking at the trees?"

Xander opened his mouth, but he had absolutely no answer for that.

"You're getting off on this... aren't you?" Spike whispered the words, and they burned all the way down into Xander. He was enjoying this. His cock was hard and aching, the head turning dark and drops of white gathering at the tip. Spike ran a thumb over the slit and Xander screamed and came, his body twitching helplessly as he was held in place by the chains and Spike's arm around his waist.

And now Xander really couldn't breathe, his chest burned and his back arched as he struggled to get enough air in. When his toes touched the ground,
the weight on his arms was still too much. Just about the time the edges of reality started to go dark, Xander felt his right arm loosen, and then his left, and he could stand flat on his feet and bring his hands down so they were level with his head.

Xander used the extra slack to bend over and gasp for air. His come was splattered across the wood floor and his cock still throbbed with the intensity of the orgasm, but he noticed all that from the slightly fuzzy space of a truly mind-blowing post-orgasm. Suddenly, not even Spike's hands brushing over his back and his ass seemed strange. Without warning, Xander's brain checked out, and nothing was strange or wrong at all. Hands shifted down to push his thighs, and Xander obligingly spread his feet, his brain not even caring why Spike was moving him. In fact, Xander's brain didn't even kick on again until Spike brushed over his asshole.

With a flash of panic, Xander tried to bring his feet together, but Spike was standing between his legs, and his strong hands on Xander's hips kept him from wiggling away.
"Calm down. Just... bloody hell, breathe!" Spike snapped, and Xander felt giggles press up into his throat.

"Calm down? Um, newsflash, there will be no calm going on here because rape is not calm-making."

"I'm not going to rape you," Spike snorted, and that would be his 'Xander's being stupid' voice and really, Xander was way more on board with the 'Spike's being sadistic and crazy.' Spike sighed, and the hands at Xander's hips gentled some. "Just give me a little trust here."

"Spike?" Xander said in a shaky voice. He was bent over at the waist, his arms carrying the weight of his upper body, and Spike was still standing between his open legs. Part of Xander wanted to scream and panic and flail until something happened, and another part just wanted to freeze like a deer in the headlights, only it rarely ended well for deer in headlights.

"Why did you spread your legs for me, Xand?" Spike asked calmly.
"Stupidity?" Xander guessed.

"Bloody hell, you're as thick as Angel when you really put your mind to it," Spike snapped, but then he sighed, and when he started again, he had that calm voice he sometimes used with Dawn or the younger slayers. "Faith, Anya, tentacles, chains, me... it's all the same thing, pet. You're attracted to the power, or in your case, the lack of power. So you aren't bloody gay. You didn't lie to yourself or your birds. Ya just have a kink in there."

"And you think having sex with me is going to... what? Because I'm not seeing the plan here. Unless the plan is to seriously freak me out, in which case you get a gold star."

"The plan is to get you to admit that you're turned on by having someone in control. And maybe then you'll stop this bloody annoying self-flagellation and idiotic behavior."

"So, I say that, 'hey, I really am turned on by chains,' and you do what exactly?" Xander asked, and he had to admit that his sated cock was already getting a little excited because he couldn't actually do
anything to stop Spike. He was so very, very wrong in the head, but it felt so very, very good.

"I unchain you and tell you to stop acting like someone pissed in your milk," Spike said, as he gave Xander's ass a sharp slap and stepped back.

"You... what?" Okay, now Xander was really confused.

"I don't rape."

Xander took a deep breath to point out that he was actually okay with having sex, but Spike cut him off.

"And I'm not having sex with someone who can't figure out his own kinks. So, find someone you like and trust, and let them tie you up and have their wicked way with you," Spike said as he finally walked around and started unbuckling the restraints around Xander's wrists. Xander stood and watched silently as Spike let him go.

"Spike?" he asked, totally confused. He was even more confused by the disappointment that was quickly overshadowing any pleasure he'd found from a very pleasurable orgasm.
"I promised Willow that I'd help you pull your head out of your arse. Mission accomplished," Spike brushed it off casually, but Xander could see the bulge in Spike's jeans that suggested he wasn't nearly as unaffected by all this as he pretended. Spike leaped up to the grid and quickly unhooked the two chains he had attached up there. They clattered to the ground and the sound echoed in the silence.

Xander still hadn't come up with anything else to say when Spike shoved the chains into a small bag and vanished up the stairs. Standing naked in the middle of the training room, Xander wondered exactly what he was supposed to do from here.

Be Careful What You Ask For

Spike turned his beer bottle in his hand and tried to just not think about anything. Seemed like every
thought he had kept spinning back to the great wanker. The demon in him could smell the need to submit every time Xander brushed by him in the hall, which was why Spike was now living in a flat. The last thing he needed was one more fucked up human to ruin his unlife. He'd done that already, and while he might be dumb as a bag of rocks every now and then, he wasn't that bloody dumb.

The commercial gave way to some stupid comedy, the plot of which Spike couldn't follow, but at least the television was noise—noise that distracted him from his own pathetic thoughts. He should strike out on his own... look for something big and nasty to kill. The Ittivelay had offered him a job collecting gambling debts from demons, but he didn't want to be there if Xander showed up looking for more one-on-one time with some tentacles.

With a growl, Spike slammed the bottle down on the coffee table and got up. Fucking hell. It didn't matter what he did, he kept thinking about the idiot. He could almost smell him, and that really did suggest that Spike had gone 'round the twist. At least, Spike thought that's what it meant until the
doorbell clicked. It should have rung, but Spike had torn the box off the wall the first day, so now it just made a little click that only a vampire could hear.

Angrier than ever, Spike walked over and ripped the door open. "Wot?!" he demanded with just a little snarl in the tone. For a second, Xander stood there all wide eyes and shock, and Spike could almost see him teetering between making a sarcastic comment or slipping into submission.

"Bloody hell, you gone and got yourself knocked up again?" Spike asked with a smirk as he leaned against the doorjamb. That pushed Xander right over into sarcasm.

"Hey, I'm not the one who went and got myself killed a couple of times, so one case of Unji eggs is not that big of a deal."

Spike just frowned and waited for the idiot to say something intelligent. Then again, he knew he might have a good long wait ahead of him. At first Xander glared right back, but then he sighed, and his shoulders dropped. Spike wondered if the man even knew how his body screamed of submission.
When Spike had first seen the boy, he'd thought Xander was just young and keeping his head down in the way young men often did until they were ready to challenge someone. And then he'd stayed in the boy's basement, and the casual insults and cruel words from Tony Harris made Spike think that the boy was just trying to become invisible. However, this Xander in front of him was a man. He'd been through the end of the world a couple of times. He'd stood his ground with demons and hellgods, and he could make a slayer back away from a piece of chocolate. But even with all that, his body still screamed for a master.

"Can I come in?" Xander eventually asked.

"Don't really see the need," Spike answered coldly. He was already on bloody thin ice with Xander, and he didn't need any more temptation.

"Um, okay. Spike, this really isn't something I want to talk about on the street, not that this is the street because it's your front door, but there are people here," Xander said desperately as he glanced
around at the people walking just four or five feet away on the pavement.

"So, go home," Spike suggested. For a second, he thought Xander might. His whole body tensed and he looked uncomfortably toward the street. No one was paying him any attention, but Xander blushed as though the whole street had stopped to stare at him.

"I want to talk about what we talked about in the basement," Xander said cryptically, but Spike knew exactly what he meant, and that was the one conversation Spike was trying to avoid.

"And?" Spike asked, figuring that if he made Xander talk about it on the street, he'd flee.

"And I want to... you know." Xander looked back at Spike hopefully, but Spike didn't change his expression at all. "You're going to make me say it, aren't you?"

"If ya can't say something, you have no business playing with it."
"Hey, I was playing with my penis back when I couldn't even read the word in a biology book without having a conniption," Xander objected, and then his gaze went to the street. Spike nearly laughed. The man could handle hell-gods but not saying 'penis' in public. Some days, he wondered how Harris got through life, but then he knew that, too. Harris held on to his girls, never understanding why he needed them, but holding on for dear life, anyway. The last thing Spike needed in his life was someone who didn't understand himself and who didn't need Spike as much as he needed Spike's domination. Yeah, he'd definitely been there before, only he'd cast himself in the submissive role last time.

Giving up on just getting rid of the git, Spike headed back for his front room and grabbed his beer.

"So, what have you been up to?" Xander asked inanely as he followed, pushing the door closed behind him.

"Gettin' pissed," Spike answered as he sat down again.
"You're not going to make this easy for me, are you? You know, this could be really, really easy if you just chose to make it easy."

Spike leaned forward and studied Xander. Oh, he knew exactly what the boy meant. If he ordered Xander to strip and then suck Spike's cock, he probably would. And he could lie to himself and say it was just because Spike was strong enough to make him. And he could lie to Spike and say he really cared about Spike when the fact was that that boy just wanted a strong hand, especially now that his girls were showing signs of moving on. Really it was too bad Faith had spooked the boy so bad because she'd make a good domme for him. "Not my job to make this easy on you," Spike limited himself to saying.

"Okay, fine. I can do this," Xander said as he took a deep breath. Spike had to give the boy credit for having some big knackers. Most men would have buried this so deep in their psyches that they would have been out raping women to make up for the urge. "Spike, I really want us to be together, and I talked to Willow because she thought I was getting
depressed even if I had stopped being such an asshole, and she..." Xander stopped.

"You told Willow what?" Spike asked slowly, his fingers tightening on his bottle. Red was a bloody gossip, and whatever she thought would be all over the globe by nightfall.

Xander looked up. "I told her that you pointed out some truths to me and I realized that I was bi because the gender of the person is big with not mattering to me. And at first she was all ready to throw the rainbow parade of joy."

"But then?" Spike asked.

"Then she got the impression that I told her because I was crushing on you."

"Bloody hell," Spike sighed. If Xander did like him, Spike could work with that, but the fact was that Xander liked getting tied up—he was just too fucked up to see the difference. Back before the soul, Spike hadn't understood that with Buffy. He had believed everything she said about him filling some need for her. Now, he had the demon and the soul both
whispering in his ear, and he wasn't about to make the same mistake twice.

"Here's the funny part," Xander said, but he looked more worried than amused. "She said that vampires were into hierarchies and I might want to crush on someone else because I wasn't dom material, and she really couldn't see me playing sub. Funny, yeah?" Xander asked.

Spike took a drink of beer and tried to think his way around this mess. If he just sent the boy tottering off, he was going to get himself in more trouble then he knew how to handle. Time for another lesson. "I don't figure you can do the sub thing for long... not the way a demon would. You need to find a nice human who will leave the chains in the bedroom," Spike said, carefully wording his argument.

Xander was silent for a second, his gaze on the wood floor as he shifted his feet. "I felt safe with you," he said softly.

"You felt safe with a tentacled monster," Spike countered.
"Only because you were there."

Spike slammed his bottle down again, and the glass cracked, a spider web break going up to the neck of the bottle, and Xander physically jumped. Spike figured the only thing that was keeping him from doing a runner was the memory of what Spike had done in that basement. Xander wanted to obey, and right now, Spike was the only option giving him any clear orders. This might take a little more manipulation than Spike had thought.

"Strip your pants off," he ordered as he got up to go rummaging through a box. He had himself a nice collection of toys, sometimes to use on others to feed his demon's need for a hierarchy and sometimes to just play games with himself and remember when he was the youngest in a very horny vampire family. He considered a couple of options before he pulled two out. He threw them on the coffee table and went to search the pockets of his duster for lube.

"Spike?"
"I assume you know what to do with 'em," Spike said without any emotion as he found the tube and headed back to the couch, tossing it with the other items.

"I think so. Okay, I know in one case and I assume I can figure it out in the other," he corrected himself.

"Have at it," Spike said with a wave. He leaned back and spread his arms over the back of the couch, watching as Xander started with the butt plug. He lubed it and then struggled to get it inside. When just shoving it didn't work, Xander braced one foot on the coffee table and eventually managed to get it in with a hiss. He hadn't prepped himself properly and the thing couldn't be comfortable, but he didn't complain as he picked up the clear plastic and figured out how to separate the two halves. Spike expected Xander to give up at this point, but instead Xander got the ring behind his balls and struggled to get the cock cage over his jutting cock.

"Um, Spike, I don't think I’m doing this right," Xander finally admitted. Spike had to fight to not smirk. Instead he gave an aggravated sigh that he
thought for sure would send Xander running. While Xander's lips thinned as he struggled to not retort, he waited silently.

"You're too hard," Spike commented.

"Oh. What do I do about that?" Xander asked. For half a second, Spike considered telling him to get some ice. Instead he waved at the bathroom.

"Go take care of it," he ordered. Xander frowned for a second, and Spike waited for the objection, but Xander just wandered off to have himself a good wank and get the cock cage on. Spike sprawled on the couch and listened as Xander came in two or three strokes and then made a right mess and tried to clean Spike's bathroom with toilet paper.

Eventually Xander reappeared and Spike held up a padlock. This was where Xander realized that the fantasy of being under control 24 hours was fun and games, but the reality was frustrating and untenable. Better the boy figure this out now, and better that the boy figure this lesson out before he started looking for some other top to scratch that itch that Spike had every intention of avoiding.
"Now, pet, so far this has been about you coming, but if you let me lock this, you will not get to come for at least a week."

Xander swallowed and nodded.

"You sure? If you're looking for a way to get a lot of sex, this isn't the way to do it," Spike warned.

"I'm big with the sure. I haven't been able to think about anything else," Xander said in a voice barely above a whisper. Spike crooked his finger, and Xander came close, standing silently as Spike inspected the fit and tightened some of the pieces up before he inserted the lock and clicked it into place.

"Should get you a harness too, to keep that plug in place, but I'll leave that up to you since you're going to need to use the bathroom and I may not always be around."

"What about peeing?" Xander asked, and Spike could hear the first hint of stress in his voice.
"That's what the holes are for. You're not getting that off for a week, and even then, I may not let you come," Spike shrugged. "Put your pants back on."

Xander gave him a strange look, but he got dressed again while Spike flipped through the stations on the telly looking for something that wouldn't distract him too much. He settled on the news. Meanwhile, Xander stood near the door to the kitchen with his arms crossed looking distinctly uncomfortable. "Grab me a bottle of bitter off the counter in there," Spike ordered as he waved toward the kitchen. Xander gave him a strange look, and then headed for the kitchen.

Opening his jeans, Spike pulled out his cock and started slowly stroking it. He brushed his balls with his fingers and could feel the tingling up his backbone immediately. Some days he just about had to pull his cock bloody sore to get it to react, but today it was ready to fire almost immediately, so Spike slowed his strokes. When Xander came back in the room, he came around to the front of the couch and froze—he just absolutely froze, the bottle in his hand as he stared with his mouth open.
Spike didn't even break the rhythm of his slow strokes as he held out his other hand for the beer.

"Spike? Um, do you want help with that?" Xander asked, swallowing several times. Spike could smell the pheromones starting to cloud the room, and he flared his nose to pick up the scent. Some demon should bottle human scents because they were aromatic little buggers. Fear, lust, distress, need—it was all flavoring the air that Spike breathed deeply.

"If I wanted help, I'd have ordered you to help," Spike pointed out coldly. "Now hand over the beer, mate, and take a load off."

It took Xander a few seconds to follow that order, and even then he perched on the edge of the only chair... an uncomfortable thing that the last renters had left behind and Spike hadn't gotten around to pitching. Spike took a deep drink and watched Xander as he masturbated almost absent-mindedly. The scent in the room was enough to keep him hard, though, so he didn't need to put much effort in it, and Spike liked the slow tease better than a fast fuck, anyway.
Even when he tried to focus on the telly, Xander's eyes kept darting to Spike, and then down to Spike's exposed cock. The very end of Xander's tongue appeared, licked that lower lip, and then vanished, and Spike groaned at the sight. The boy was bloody innocent in so many ways. The demon wanted to corrupt him, slowly and carefully and so thoroughly that Xander would never look at anyone else again. His whole body would throb with need at the sight of Spike. Before the soul, Spike would have even believed that possible. He wondered what would have happened if he'd taken the boy when Angel had been offering him up as a snack.

Spike pulled himself out of that fantasy with a snort, and Xander jumped a little and then flinched as the plug made itself known. It was fine for Xander to go losing himself in fantasy, but Spike needed to keep a level head here. If he'd taken Xander back then, he'd be a minion or a rotting corpse right now. Or more likely, he'd be dust. Back then, Drusilla had been his world, and now Xander was flailing around and coming far too close to Spike's own triggers for safety. Xander might want a strong hand, but it
would be so easy to believe that Xander wanted him. It'd be so easy and so fucking dangerous because Xander didn't have the power to say no if Spike went over that line... not like Buffy had.

"What ya thinking, pet?" Spike asked. He stopped rubbing his shaft and fisted it, brushing his thumb over the now-exposed head and hissing in pleasure. When he looked over, Xander's eyes were nearly black as they watched Spike. "Pet," Spike growled.

"Oh, uh, that I would be okay with helping with that, honestly. I mean, I know that I was clueless before you hit me with the clue bus, and can I just say you drive a terrifyingly honest and accurate clue bus?" Xander swallowed, and Spike had to fight to avoid pointing out that Xander had his own version of brutal honesty.

Xander had said that he didn't feel the trust, but at least he had the balls to say it where the others just thought it. Spike understood. The group intellectually knew that Spike would stand by them, but emotionally they just didn't feel the trust. A psychologist probably would spout some rot about
him being part of their childhood fears or something, but Spike had long ago stopped lying to himself about being able to actually become part of the group. Dawn was the only one who thoroughly trusted him, and that's because the monks made her to trust him so she would have one more protector.

"I would actually be more than a little okay with helping, only I'm big with the never having done this for a guy before and my equipment is definitely not the same so if I screw up..." Xander just stopped.

Spike reached down and fingered his own balls, the pleasure-pain of it sending burning need up through his body. "If you're the sub, you don't get a choice about what you do," Spike said as he tilted his head back and arched his back so that he could reach more.

"Spike—"

"One more sound and I'll gag you, and then send you home with a gag locked on your bloody face," Spike snapped. That shut Xander up.
Spike groaned as he dug his heels into the couch and scraped fingernails over the hard shaft of his cock. The smell of human lust and the feeling of hot need burning in his flesh made Spike's fangs appear, and he caught his lower lip. The taste of blood filled his mouth. Fisting his cock, Spike wanked hard and fast, his orgasm slamming into him without warning, and then he lay there, not breathing or moving as the fire slowly eased in the aftermath.

He felt physically sated and more unsatisfied than ever. When he finally opened his eyes, Xander was on the edge of the chair, his hands fisted on his knees and his lip caught between his teeth. The boy looked at Spike in confusion, and Spike tucked himself away and sat up.

"Go home," he said coldly.

"What?"

"Go bloody home, Harris." Spike repeated as he grabbed the remote and tried to find something less depressing than the news.
"Spike, you're big with the confusing me, here." Xander didn't move at all. For a second, Spike wanted nothing more than to grab him and haul him to the door and shove him out unceremoniously. It'd be a bonus if he stumbled to his knees right there on the pavement.

"You were confused long before you got to me, mate," Spike pointed out as he put the remote down and grabbed the beer. "Look, you think you want this, so live with it for a while. You put that plug back in the second you're done shitting, you keep it in at all other times. I come over and find you without it, and this is over. When I want you, I'll ring for you, and you'll bloody come over here and do what I tell you. You don't and..." Spike let that threat hang in the air for a second before he angled his body toward Xander and really focused on him. "You don't and this is just over. You'll admit that you need to find someone else who will give you a nice weekend tumble where you can get your end off, and I'll never think about you again," Spike finished.
Xander swallowed and his fists tightened. "And if I can do that? If I can do whatever you say for as long as you say?"

"You might have the makings for a decent sub," Spike shrugged. "Now piss off, and lock the door on your way out." Spike focused on the telly, refused to look at the boy again.

He could hear Xander shift uncomfortably for a second, and then he stood up and walked all the way around the back of the couch as he headed for the entry. He paused briefly inside the door, and Spike could smell the lust and distress like a bloody cloud following Xander. If he couldn't control that, he was going to have one seriously sore cock by the end of this week. But Xander didn't say anything as he opened the door, clicked the knob lock in place, and then closed it behind him.

And then Spike was alone. Alone and trying to figure out how to make Xander see the truth about his own needs before they were both destroyed by them.
Xander knocked on Spike's door more nervous than ever. Okay, so Spike had never been one for the warm and touchy-feely feelings, but the last week, he'd been so cold that Xander had considered just calling the whole thing off. The only thing that had kept him from just asking Spike to take off the cock cage was the fact that Xander felt so much more centered wearing it... well, that and he had a feeling that Spike was making-a-point vamp, and Xander did not like getting manipulated. So, if Spike thought he'd just give up, that vampire had another thought coming.

He knocked again and tried the doorbell once or twice before leaning against the door. Okay, so Spike was being stubborn. Xander really wasn't sure what the rules were for this, but he was fairly sure
that if he wanted to do this, screaming at the top and trying to pound the door down would be bad. Satisfying, but bad. His stomach rolled, and Xander endured another wave of panic and doubt, and then self-hatred and doubt because he was way too old to be this screwed up.

He didn't know how to do relationships... any kind of relationship. He'd watched Buffy and her mom with a sort of detached confusion because he and his parents had more of a 'you stay out of my way and I'll stay out of yours' vibe going on. He and Willow had been friends for years, but their friendship ebbed and flowed according to her needs. They hadn't even spoken during fifth and sixth grade because she'd found herself a new friend, and they grew close again only after Angela moved. And now, Xander could feel her sliding away, and he had no idea what to do or say to stop that. Last time he'd been this afraid of losing her, he'd just gone and kissed her and ruined their lives, and he was pretty sure that was out.

He'd even gone to Africa thinking that maybe they didn't want him around at all, that he could make a
nice, clean, masochistic break and then suffer in silence. But then he got sick, and Buffy and Willow came to be with him, and when he came home, he was in this same half-limbo hell where he almost understood the rules and not quite. Part of him just wanted to find a nice apartment and board the door over so it was just him and his insecurities because he was just so tired of always trying to figure out where he fit. It was only with Spike that he felt comfortable. He couldn't hurt Spike no matter how bad he fucked up because Spike was just Spike. And with Spike, the rules were pretty clear.

And that was why he was standing at Spike's door, butt plug in place as he waited for the vampire to answer. He had a nasty feeling that Spike was right on the other side of the door making Xander wait and possibly seeing if Xander would just give up and walk away. If that was the case, Spike was going to be big with the disappointment because no way was he leaving. Yeah, Spike was testing him, but he could survive any test Spike could throw at him... or at least any test the souled version of Spike could throw at him. Spike minus the soul was pretty
terrifying, which was why it was pretty strange that fantasies of pre-soul Spike kept creeping into his dreams.

Xander finally just sat on the step outside Spike's place, his legs stretched out in front as he watched people wander by. No one could out stubborn him, so Spike had better just figure that out. He was nearly asleep, his head resting against the door jam, when the door finally came open.

"Right then, we're off," Spike said as he rushed past in a swirl of leather that left Xander rushing to keep up. Spike jumped in his car, and Xander had to wait at the curb as Spike sat behind the wheel and let his hand hover over the door lock without unlocking it. All sorts of very non-subby words wanted to boil over, but Xander sat on them. If Spike wanted to prove a point or test Xander or just drive Xander a little crazy before taking him on... well, Xander could handle that. Eventually, the lock clicked open, and Xander silently got in the car.

A piece of leather smacked him on the chest and fell into his lap. "Put it on," Spike said as he steered
them into traffic. Swallowing, Xander considered the gag in his hand. It had a half-moon bit for his mouth that wouldn't force his mouth too wide and it had a padded back, so Xander guessed this one was built for long-term wear. Okay, he could do this. Xander reminded himself that he trusted Spike. This was the man who had died to save the world... who had gotten tortured and still didn't rat out Dawn, who walked into an alley with Angel thinking he was going to his death. Spike and trust so went together. Xander reminded himself of that and the fact that the windows were tinted illegally dark before he slipped the gag over his head and got it settled in on his face. The front piece was curved so that it lay pretty comfortably against his lips and cheeks as he tightened the buckle.

Spike took a corner fast and then reached out and stuck a finger under the leather. "Tight enough," he said as he reached for the center console and pulled out a small padlock. "Put it on," he said.

Xander took it and used his fingers to find the loop on the buckle for the lock. After all this, Spike had better be really, really good because this was...
okay, this was hot, Xander had to admit as he sat in the seat plugged and gagged. Spike headed out of town, and Xander was saved from having to make any inane comments as he watched the landscape change. If anything, he found this relaxing, he realized. Of course, he couldn't relax too much because he still had that probationary feeling with Spike, like the vamp was just waiting for Xander to snap and decide that he had made a mistake and he didn't get off on submitting after all. Not that it would ever happen because Xander was entirely too happy to submit.

Eventually, they pulled into a long driveway that led to an industrial-looking building with an underground parking lot. Spike opened the trunk from inside. "Get out, strip, and put all your clothes in the truck and close it."

Xander raised an eyebrow at Spike who continued to just sit behind the wheel. A little, tiny, itsy, bitsy part of Xander wondered if he was about to get abandoned in some very cruel practical joke, but Spike and trust went together, he reminded himself. And if he could trust Spike to save the
world, he could almost certainly trust Spike to not abandon him naked and gagged. Naked, maybe; naked and gagged, no. He got out and did exactly as ordered. He was putting his underwear in the back when Spike finally got out and brought a bag with him. Xander slammed the trunk and lost access to any clothing.

"Hands behind your back," Spike ordered without much emotion, and Xander turned and offered his hands, not even worrying as Spike used heavy cuffs and then turned him by just shoving him where Spike wanted him. He added a leather cord to the ring at the front of the gag and then threaded the other end through one of the cock-cage pieces. When he pulled, Xander's head was forced down, his neck arched and his eyes pointed down as Spike tied the cord off. "Come on then," Spike said as grabbed his bag and started walking.

Xander had to scramble to keep up, and he couldn't see very far in front of him with his gag tethered to his cock, but he managed to make it to the elevator on step behind Spike. Spike hit a button, and Xander took a deep breath through his nose and prayed
that whoever was upstairs knew they were coming. Just standing there behind Spike, Xander could feel his cock harden and press against the sides of the plastic prison. With his head tied, Xander had nothing to watch except his cock filling the space and darkening as it struggled valiantly to harden. Spike didn't seem to even notice though as he stood a step ahead so that all Xander could see was the bottom of his black leather coat and his Doc Martins.

The doors opened, and Spike was out so fast that Xander really did have a moment of panic as he hurried to follow. Purple legs and blue jeans and tentacles and things that looked like a cross between legs and tentacles all crossed his line of sight as he struggled to keep up with Spike's coat, but he lost sight of the duster in the busy room. Truly panicked now, Xander froze, his teacher's advice from third grade echoing in his mind. If you're lost, just stay where you are. He wondered if she'd had this particular circumstance in mind when she'd taught him that rule. Demons and leatherboys and pretty whores all in a row, he thought to
himself as he caught random flashes out of the corners of his eyes. A hand caught his arm, and Xander yelled, the sound muffled by the gag.

"It's me, you nit," a familiar voice snapped, and Xander cocked his head to catch sight of Spike next to him. His heart beat slowed again, and for a second they just stood there, Spike's hand on his arm as the demons wandered by.

After a second, Spike gave his arm a tug, and Xander moved in the direction he indicated. Spike let go, but this time, he walked slow enough that Xander could keep him in sight and follow behind, which was evidence enough that Spike was looking out for him. If he were as pissy as he was pretending, he would have left Xander behind and never noticed, which would have left Xander in a very, very awkward position. So, since this was obviously a test, Xander was going to go along with whatever Spike asked.

They reached a hall and then a private room where Xander had a nice view of red carpet and not much else. Spike pressed on his shoulder, and even
though they hadn't talked about this, Xander could pretty much figure out that Spike wanted him on his knees. He carefully got down, but he still ended up banging one knee and pulling his cock hard enough to make his eyes water. He might be a fan of submission, but pain was just pain, he decided as he tried to blink away the tears. They waited for several minutes, and Xander could feel Spike's hand absent-mindedly petting his curls. He leaned into Spike's leg and the hand on his head disappeared. Xander froze, not understanding what he had done wrong to lose that comforting touch, but he couldn't ask.

Another door came open. "Is this him?"

"Yeah, it's him."

"We're ready." Something banged on the floor, and Xander was pretty much dying of curiosity at this point, only not so much with the actual death. "Put it here," the voice ordered. Spike pulled him up, and Xander tried to get his legs moving fast enough to get where Spike wanted him. When Spike stopped him in front of a bed, Xander wasn't exactly
surprised. Whatever Spike had planned as his little test, Xander could do it. He wasn't as weak as Spike seemed to think, and he just had to prove that.

Xander stood still as Spike untied the cord from his cock and then removed the cock cage. Now that his head wasn't forced down, Xander could catch a few glimpses of the room. The other demon was tall and sort of spindly, but he might pass for human if he had a bulky coat. And the bed was the only thing in the room except for a wheeled cart the demon had, and that was draped with a white sheet.

While Xander had been afraid early that he would come the second the cage was off, the addition of this third demon pretty much killed his desire. His cock had shrunk to nothing as Spike lowered him onto the bed. Only the bed wasn't really a bed. A wedge-shaped pillow supported his chest and shoved his ass up into the air. The bedding was some sort of soft netting pulled tight over the mattress, and the sides had metal rails an inch higher than that.
Spike tied the cord from the gag to the rail so that Xander couldn't pull back when Spike reached over to pet his cheek, not that he would have anyway. He blinked at Spike and tried to stay calm. Spike unhooked his wrists and then pulled his one arm to the side and locked it to the rail. The cord on the gag prevented Xander from turning his head to the other side to watch as Spike pulled his other arm to the far side of the bed and locked it in place.

The grip on his ankle pulling his legs apart was no surprise, and Xander let Spike tie his ankles to the rail as well so that he was spread eagle and ass-up on the bed. The panic was just starting to truly make inroads on Xander's trust when Spike crouched down in front of him.

"Ya think you can submit? Let's try this pet. Close your eyes. If you open them, I'll know that this is too much and you need to stop." The voice, soft and cautious, told Xander everything he needed to know. Yeah, Spike was testing him, but there was caring behind that tone. He closed his eyes and waited for whatever was going to happen. He just really, really hoped that it was going to be Spike
using his ass because the thought of another demon going up there really wasn't on his list of 'hot' things to try.

With his eyes closed, Xander could only listen to the bumps and whispered words around the bed as at least two people moved around. Something warm and wet and soft settled over his foot, and Xander nearly opened his eyes just in surprise, but he pressed them closed again at the last second. The feeling wasn't uncomfortable at all. If anything, it reminded him of the time Buffy and Dawn had dragged him unwillingly to a spa and they had done a massage thing, only with the spa massage, his naked and plugged ass had not been shoved up in the air.

Fingers trailed over his cheek, tracing the top edge of the gag, and Xander could smell the nicotine that clung to Spike's skin. He used to hate that smell, but now it was comforting, and he relaxed as more warm cloth was laid on his legs. The warmth made his skin tingle and his muscles relax, and Xander found himself just sinking into the feeling.
By the time the cloth had reached his ass, Xander could feel prickles in his feet, and he tensed at the idea of that right on his asshole. Oh, he'd handle it, but it worried him.

"Shhh, pet," Spike said, and Xander relaxed again. The demon skipped Xander's butt, leaving it naked and ready as he started laying strips across Xander's back and then over his arms. By now, Xander could feel prickles in his feet and calves, but the deep, tingling heat now soaking into his back and shoulders relaxed him so much that he really couldn't care less. This was a 'no' on the sexy scale, but the demons could make a killing in the spa industry. Xander's whole body felt like one giant relaxed noodle, and Spike's fingers brushing through his hair just made him want to melt into the bed.

"Relax your hands, pet," Spike nearly whispered, and Xander unfisted his fingers and let his open palm rest on the soft netting. Warm cloth enveloped first one hand and then the other. Oh yeah, Xander was about two seconds from falling asleep. He wondered if Spike would wake him up
before the grand finale or if Xander would just wake up with Spike's cock in him. That thought made his quiet cock twitch a little.

Spike's fingers worked the buckle on the gag, and Xander relaxed his jaw so Spike could pull it off before more strips went on his neck and then over his forehead. Now Spike stroked Xander's cheek, and Xander could only smile. See, he could be good. He could be so good that Spike got to let out the tender side the vampire tried to hide from the world, only he didn't hide it that well. Xander had seen him with Dawn and with Buffy when she cried. He'd even seen the careful way Spike stood between him and the world after he'd lost the eye. Even if he never wanted to admit it, Spike was a caretaker. And maybe Xander needed that, too.

His feet started to really itch, and Xander tensed his leg trying to shake off the feeling. The demon clicked something, and Spike's voice whispered so close to Xander's ear that he could feel the puff of air. "Lay still. Can't have you move at all right now, so just relax," Spike ordered.
Xander almost nodded, but caught himself in time as he just relaxed and waited. Spike's finger went back to stroking, so he focused on that, and not the increasing itch in his feet and now his calves. The warmth had faded in his back, but the pleasant tingles were still there, and every time Spike's finger traced a new path over his cheek, he could feel the heat gathering in his face.

"Comfortable, pet?" Spike asked, and Xander almost nodded, but Spike's hand caught his chin and held him immobile. "You can talk now, but no moving any other part."

"Yeah, weird and my ass is cold, but comfortable," Xander said as he checked in with his body. The itching certainly wasn't enough to make him give up a chance at proving his point with Spike.

"We'll heat that up a little later," Spike said, and Xander could almost hear the smirk in his words. Any response Xander planned skittered out of his brain when Spike stroked his ass, caressing the cheeks before mapping a trail from his asshole over his perineum and down to the back of his balls.
Xander's cock filled immediately, and Xander gasped for air.

"Relax and stay perfectly still," Spike said firmly, and Xander knew this was going to be the hardest test yet. He focused on not even moving a finger as Spike weighted his balls in his palm and stoked the vein on the backside of his cock. He tried to just breathe through the lust as Spike pulled his cheeks apart and blew on the sensitive skin between. And then Spike pulled the plug out, and Xander's eyes popped open against his will, giving him a clear view of his arm covered in white cloth so thin that he could see every hair and curve.

Immediately, Xander closed his eyes again, but he could hear Spike chuckle. His guts knotted. "Spike, I didn't mean to. This isn't too much, really," Xander promised.

"I figure this is right up your alley. That's alright; you can open your eyes now. If ya have a problem, you can just shout it out," Spike said. Xander slowly opened his eyes and looked at his arm. He could see fingernails and even the hangnail he'd been
chewing earlier. Patches of the white cloth were drying and turning a milky color, and Xander realized that those were the spots that itched. He could resist the urge to scratch, especially since the chains were still on under the draped fabric, but it itched enough that he couldn't quite ignore it.

"So, what are you feeling right now?" Spike asked. Normally Xander was all for diverting and joking and making with the elaborate cover stories. Right now, he didn't have the energy for any of that.

"Slightly scared, totally horny, and really hoping I pass this test because I haven't been this worried since I thought Mrs. Wright's math test was going to potentially keep me from graduating."

"Test?" Spike sounded confused, but even worse, he pushed the plug back in and stopped playing with Xander's ass. The only good part was that he walked around and squatted so that Xander could see him. "What test?"

"The test of whether I'm serious. I am, you know. This is me being all with the serious," Xander
answered as he watched Spike's frown slowly fade into a blank expression.

"I know you're serious, pet. You've needed this for a long time. Anya kept you in hand good, but since her, I don't think you've been with anyone."

"Hey, I never publicly admitted to anything kinky. I was so far in the closet, I could smell moth balls. I smelled of moth balls," Xander joked. He only stopped when Spike rested a finger against his lips.

"There's nothing wrong with needing to submit, pet. I spent a good chunk of my unlife the youngest in the clan, so I've been there."

Xander frowned, not quite understanding where that was coming from. "You know I trust you, right? I mean, you don't need to be giving the qualifications speech, and even if I was nervous, knowing you played bottom boy to Darla and Angelus is really not big with the comforting. They did things that I'm pretty much totally sure I don't want done to me."
Spike chuckled. "I never thought you would."
Xander watched Spike's hand reach up and rest against Xander's forehead for a second. "Everything about ready then?" Spike asked as he looked over Xander to the other side of the room. A series of clicks answered him. "Just make sure ya treat him right," Spike said, and Xander's stomach did a flip.

"Spike?"

"I'll be right downstairs, pet. You'll like this." Spike stood up, and Xander jerked. Okay, he tried to jerk. The white fabric held him utterly immobile. He couldn't even bend a finger. The only part of him that could move was his cock, which shrank in on itself.

"You're leaving?" Xander just about yelled.

"Quor'ta are the best, pet. You just relax and enjoy this, and they'll make you come so bloody hard you'll pass out." Spike patted his ass and then vanished, and Xander found that he couldn't even move his head. The damn things on his forehead and neck kept him completely immobile.
"But," Xander really struggled, fighting with everything he had but even though he could feel the sweat gathering on his skin, nothing budged, "you're not leaving. Spike, you can't leave me."

"I'm not leaving, ya pillock, just calm down." Spike was back, and Xander gulped air and tried to fight back the sting in his eyes. Of course Spike wouldn't leave him. "I'll just be gettin' a drink; you're safe as houses." Which was sounding a lot like Spike was leaving him.

"Please," Xander begged, willing at this point to give up on any illusion that he had any pride. "Please, I thought you were going to... you know." Xander could hear Spike sigh as the vamp stood near the end of the bed, but he couldn't see anything other than his own arm and a white wall. "I know I said I'd do what you told me, but please just don't... don't leave. If you want to share me, I'll do it, Spike, I promise. You don't have to do this to me." Xander could hear his own voice go girly high, but he'd already given up on pride, so what did he care.

"You like this."
"Liked. Past tense, Spike. I liked it when I thought it was going to be you." Xander gave up fighting and sagged, his body totally out of his control so that tensing or sagging was pretty much all he could do. "Bloody fucking hell," Spike exploded, and Xander could feel the panic burning his guts now. He was on the verge of throwing up. "What the fuck do you want from me, Harris? I'm trying to help you through this without making a total cock up of this whole thing. You fucking want a little bondage in your life; I'll help you with that, but don't go trying to pull me into your fucking needs."

"'Red,' Spike, 'red'... or 'no' or 'uncle' or whatever word you want me to use. If you want me to give up, this is me giving up. Just get me the fuck off this thing, and I'll leave you the fuck alone. Point made," Xander snapped, and then after he finished with the snapping, his brain processed the fact that he probably shouldn't be getting angry at the guy who was standing between him and a demonic rape. "I'm sorry," Xander blurted. "Please, just get me up," he said, struggling to control the fear and the anger and the shame that slammed into him. Hey, if
Spike wanted to convince him that bondage wasn't his thing, he might have succeeded because right now, Xander wanted to forget he even had a cock. He'd give up sex forever given the choice.

"Get the fuck out," Spike snarled, and Xander would have been happy to oblige if he could have moved a muscle. He only realized the other demon had been ordered out when he heard the little squeaky wheel on the cart as the thing hurried away. The door closed and then Spike was pacing in front of Xander. Four steps up and four steps down, and then Spike lit a cigarette, and Xander was pretty much about to die of a heart attack. Spike was supposed to be the one who had things figured out, only this was not feeling very well figured out.

"Please, Spike, just let me up," Xander whispered as he closed his eyes.

"I can't. Those bloody things last for an hour."

"An hour?" Xander's voice broke, and he swallowed a couple of times and reminded himself that he'd done stupider in his life. Great. He was officially stuck with Spike for an hour when the dumb vamp
wasn't even particularly turned on by Xander. The whole getting hard thing was probably just hard-wired into vampires the minute they saw chains and Xander had to go and get stupid and think that just because Spike got hard after chaining him up that the vampire actually liked him. Stupid and stupider. And wasn't the next hour going to just be a joy?

Xander felt hot tears slide over the bridge of his nose and fall to the table, and there wasn't a thing he could do to stop them.

"Bloody hell," Spike sighed. Xander opened his eyes and held his breath, afraid that Spike would leave and then Xander would just have a door keeping the demons away, but instead of walking out, Spike put his back to the far wall and slid down. His arms were braced on his knees, a cigarette dangling from one hand. "I thought you'd enjoy yourself. Quor'ta cost a pretty penny to hire."

Xander swallowed a couple of times and cleared his throat as he tried to decide if he could talk without breaking down and bawling. "I'll pay you back," he
managed, and he even got his voice to rise a little above a whisper.

"You'll pay me back for tryin' to set you up for a rape?" Spike snorted and let his head fall back against the wall. "I always tell Peaches that he can't count on a soul to keep him from going off the moral rails. Need to listen more to my own advice, don't I?"

Xander really didn't have an answer for that. In fact, he didn't feel much like talking at all. Heavy minutes crawled by and Spike stared at the ceiling and Xander stared at Spike since he couldn't move his head enough to look in any other direction. His butt was really cold, and his thighs were starting to ache from the strange position, but Xander figured he could live with it until the hour passed and they could get these things off him.

"We're a pair," Spike said to the ceiling, but Xander figured he was included in that 'we.' "I was trying to show you that the chains were what was turning you on, not the person on the other end. Maybe I should have taken you to a human whorehouse."
There's a nice dungeon in London. I'll give you the number."

"Um, no offense, Spike, but I think I'll pass. My cock is going on a little hiatus," Xander answered. Slowly Spike brought his head down and frowned at Xander.

"Won't make the need go away, Harris."

"Hey, I've been living very happily with just me and my hand, and I figure we'll be a very happy couple for the next fifty or sixty years."

"Fuck," Spike sighed.

"No thank you," Xander tried joking. It didn't seem to improve Spike's mood at all. "I didn't mean to suck you into something you didn't want to do," Xander said, and he just hoped that Spike heard the apology in there because that was as close as he was coming.

"It's not that I didn't want to do it," Spike said as he stood up and resumed his pacing. "Ya don't know what you want. I didn't want to get pulled too deep
into that before you figured it all out. I've been down that bloody road too many times."

The minute Spike said those words, the pieces clicked together in Xander's brain so fast he was surprised it didn't hurt. Drusilla needing Spike to play Daddy. Buffy needing Spike to play punching bag. Harmony... Xander was going to pretend that Harmony just never happened because Spike and Harmony was high on the creepy scale.

"It wasn't the chains as much as it was you," Xander said quietly. Spike froze mid-pace. "You're confident, and you do the right thing even when the rest of us totally fuck up. You're the only one who followed Buffy after we kicked her out, and we were all debating whether or not Angel had gone all Angelusy when you were standing next to him stopping one more apocalypse. I don't always know what I'm doing, and yeah, the chains are an old sock-puppet of love fantasy of mine, but the person behind the chains isn't interchangeable. I mean, if Angel walked in right now, I can almost promise you I would die of a stroke or something on the spot, but I shouldn't have just assumed..." Xander
watched as Spike slowly turned to face him, a frown on his face. He swallowed as he totally lost track of his words.

"Only now, I'm totally getting that you were just trying to help as a friend, and can I say that you go way above and beyond in the friend category, and I will so never put you in this spot again. I promise. Me and my weird little kinks will stay on the far side of any room that we're in together." Xander could feel the tightness in his chest that was becoming a physical pain, and another tear escaped before he could blink fast enough. Xander closed his eyes tightly as he tried to just not cry. "Just, maybe you could be a good enough friend to not mention this?"

The touch on his face made him yelp and open his eyes again. Spike was there, crouching next to the bed, and Xander's chest shrank another two sizes as he looked at the confusion in Spike's eyes. That's what Xander Harris did best: fuck up the people who tried to care about him.
"Not that weird, your kinks. I'm the one with the toys," Spike pointed out.

"So, hey, we people with the mutually weird kinks will just not mention to the non-kinky friends that we had this little descent into weirdness," Xander said hopefully.

"Is that what you want?" Spike asked.

Xander closed his eyes. He didn't know what he wanted any more. Having the earth swallow him up was pretty high on his list right about now.

"I've fucked this up right and proper," Spike said, and Xander couldn't help but cherish the feeling of Spike's fingers against his cheeks. "I convinced myself that ya were using me to get what you wanted, only you were always more for the self-flagellation than anything else."

"And if I knew what that meant, I might or might not agree with you," Xander said quietly. He had no idea that shame and loss could make the body hurt so much. The last time he'd been in this much pain, he'd been standing next to a hole that had
swallowed Anya, only then, they were all so grateful that the world was still standing that the grief had been muted. Here, he was wallowing in the pain with nothing to dull it.

"Ya might want to reconsider your choice, pet, because if you're looking for me to know what I'm doing, I think I just proved that I'm not the best choice."

Xander frowned because that sounded like he still had a choice, but he thought he'd been pretty much turned down with a capital T... and a capital D. "Spike, you're still with the hot, but..." Xander bit his lip as he tried to figure out how to say the next bit.

"But I've fucked up enough to turn ya off. I got that," Spike nodded.

"No! No, you're still hot, but the thought that you're just doing this to make me happy is very much with the not-hot. It's like when I called the wedding off. I could see major badness coming, and I'm not trying to use you or pretend you're someone else, but if you're doing this because you think you need to
because I'm going all weird in the head and Willow told you to fix me, there's major badness coming. I'll stay away from the dungeons and the demons and the tentacles if you just get me out of here. You don't have to babysit me."

Spike backed up and studied Xander for a second, and Xander could feel himself blush in places he didn't normally blush. "Babysitting's not the first word that comes to mind."

"Look, I misunderstood things. I thought the fact that you got hard in the basement meant that you were into it, but I really don't want you to do this because you think I need this," Xander said as the anger started to rise up in place of the shame of a second ago.

"I was into it. I bloody near raped you myself."

"Can't rape the willing," Xander pointed out, and Spike frowned at him.

"Yeah, pet, you can. You get someone into the right space, and they'll say pretty much anything. I knew you had a kink for the chains, for being in
someone's control, and anything you said there in chains was suspect. If I'd have done it, it wouldn't have been any better than rape. I'm a bastard, through and through, but I'm not a rapist. You had to make the choice when you weren't in chains. You had to come to me.

"And I did," Xander pointed out, and Spike blinked a couple of time in surprise. "And small flaw in your logic, oh greatly flawed one: you have me totally under control and I still called a time out with the spindle demon."

"Quor'ta."

"Not caring here. The point is that I said 'no' when I meant 'no.'"

"But you said I could share you, so I'm not sure you're logic is entirely trustworthy, pet," Spike said, but at least he came close again, those fingers stroking Xander's cheek.

"Hey, I already decided on my limits, and that was on the yellow list, but if you really wanted it, I can live with it, and I'm not saying I'd ever like it, but..."
Xander tried to shrug and totally failed. Now that Spike was stroking his cheek again, that was a little hot.

"You'd decided you'd let me share you?" Spike asked, clearly incredulous.

"I was hoping you wouldn't much, but Giles' books said vampires weren't generally monogamous. His books even said you and Drusilla took other partners, and you still loved each other."

Spike snorted dropped his cigarette onto the floor and crushed it. "The watchers also thought that vampires couldn't love, so don't trust what those wankers thought."

"So, is that a 'no' to sharing?" Xander asked.

"Pet," Spike sighed, and Xander just waited. Okay, so Spike hadn't totally been on the same track he had, but they seemed to be getting close now... hopefully... maybe. "I don't let go easily," Spike warned, but Xander could tell from the expression on Spike's face that he'd won.
"Oh yeah, like I didn't know that before I went and fell in lust with you. I'm not exactly well-balanced in that department, either. In case it's missed your radar, I'm still clinging to my grade-school best friend."

"If this goes wrong, we're going to make a bloody cock up of this."

"You mean as opposed to my wedding that wasn't and how it drove Anya back to demonhood? Or hey, how about when I just about ruined mine and Willow's life and almost got Cordelia killed with a piece of rebar? I think I know something about fucking up relationships, so if this goes bad, I am one half responsible for any fuck-upingness."

"Bloody hell, how was Cordelia your fault? The wood gave way."

"Which she was standing on watching me kiss my best friend."

"That's the worst bit of logic I've ever heard. If anything, I'm more at fault for lairing up in a burned
out building," Spike said as he poked at Xander's shoulder.

"That's me, bad-logic boy who definitely feels better with a strong hand around," Xander said hopefully.

"Even if I fuck up every now and then?" Spike asked, and suddenly Xander could see the insecurity and the pain floating just there under the surface. He really was a moron for never noticing that before... for thinking that Spike could get through a hundred years of relationships and never get a crack in his armor.

"Feel free to fuck up. It just makes it easier for me to admit it when I'm a moron," Xander admitted. "Like when I should have told you that I was attracted to you... not the chains. Or," Xander corrected himself, "I'm attracted to you and the chains. The chains alone are a nice masturbation fantasy, but Willow and chains is like weirdly disturbing, and Buffy and chains... okay, I could do Buffy and chains," Xander teased. Spike gave him a slap on the ass.
"Be nice, pet, I still have a good forty minutes on the bindings."

"Whatever will you do with me?" Xander asked as he tightened his ass muscles and made the plug wiggle. His cock was starting to get back into the game, too.

"Whatever I want," Spike said as his hands stroked over Xander's raised ass. "Whatever you want."

Xander managed to actually think about his answer before he just blurted something dumb this time. "I want to know that I'm making my partner happy," he said first because that was the most important to him. Spike's hand, which had been stroking his butt, stopped. "Maybe it's healthy and maybe not... I don't know, but I know I'd do a lot if it made you happy. And I really do want to play with all those toys you have."

"So, you do like the cuffs and chains," Spike said as he finally continued with the strokes along Xander's bare skin.
"Oh yeah, and the gags. It's good to not be tempted into saying something stupid."

"I think maybe we need to do a little more talkin' for a while, pet," Spike said seriously, and Xander didn't argue. This had been a near-disaster. "For example, what do you want right now?"

"For you to get what you want," Xander answered immediately. Spike's fingers had been tracing the vein on Xander's cock, making hot shivers of lust travel up into Xander's helpless body, and again, he paused.

"If it made me happy to bite you?" he asked seriously.

"That's on the green list."

"Fuck you?"

"Um, is there a list more green than green?" Xander asked. He could feel the cushion give slightly as Spike crawled up between his open legs. Xander's cock was painfully hard. "Oh fuck yeah," he whispered.
"I was going to bloody explode, walking away and letting someone else have you," Spike admitted as he pulled the plug out and slipped a finger inside.

"Um, not so much green on that plan," Xander said.

"Yeah, I caught that, pet," Spike answered as he twisted a second finger into him and pressed deep into Xander where the plug didn't quite reach. Xander hoped that the squeal that came out was manly, but he suspected it wasn't. He tried to react. He struggled to squirm or thrust or twitch, but he only wore himself out and sagged against the cushion as Spike worked fingers in him.

"You look interested, pet." A slick hand caught Xander's cock and slid up it once, and Xander gasped for air as he nearly came. Finally Spike was pressing against Xander's hole, the head of his cock much bigger than the plug and pressing forward. Xander gasped for air as the muscle stretched and burned. He couldn't escape it or press back into it, and he genuinely didn't know which he wanted to do.
By the time Spike was pressed up against Xander's thighs, Xander had lost all coherent thought. The burn and the pressure in his cock became the center of his world. Slowly, Spike pulled out and then pressed in again, and Xander felt a shiver even though his body still couldn't do so much as twitch. With each stroke, Spike went faster until Xander breathed in time with the thrusts, blowing out air each time Spike slammed into him until Xander couldn't hold out any longer and he screamed and came all over the table.

His muscles turned to water, and now Spike's fucking came even harder, and Xander rode the waves of lust until Spike growled and thrust in one last time. Strong hands landed on his shoulders, and Xander wished he could see Spike's face. Then again, being so totally tied down was seriously hot.

"Spike?" Xander asked.

"Yeah, pet?"

"Just... did you like it?" he asked softly. Yeah, it was the most pathetic question in the world, but after all this, he just needed to know.
"I bloody loved it, pet." Spike promised. Xander closed his eyes and just let himself enjoy how his body felt. It was enough.

The Hand that Feeds

"Gin," Xander said as he put the cards down. Clem glared at him. "You're cheating, aren't you?"

"Would I cheat?" Xander asked innocently.

"You're Spike's partner. You would definitely cheat," Clem said as he reached through the bars to gather the cards back up.

"Oi, that's my lover you're insultin' there," Spike said. Xander looked up to see Spike leaning against the wall.
"Spike!" Xander exclaimed with a lot of relief and just a little hint of lust already starting. He was definitely Spike-addicted.

"And I would never say anything against him," Clem said without even trying to make himself sound believable. "And since you're back, I'm going to go get cheated by someone else."

"Thanks for babysittin'," Spike said as Clem stood up.

"Any time," Clem agreed as he headed out of the room, handing the key to the cage to Spike as he left.

"So, how ya feeling?" Spike asked as he stepped forward and looked Xander up and down. Under the jeans and flannel shirt, Xander had any number of straps that might be considered uncomfortable. And there were places that were definitely chafing. And he'd just spend three hours locked in a rather small cage in his own basement.

"Horny," Xander answered as he leaned against the bars of the cage. He had just enough room for a
chair and a small table and a spot to stand up. When Xander had suggested that he was only staying behind if Spike caged him, he hadn't actually expected Spike to take the game so far. The fact that he had installed a Xander-cage in the basement was more than a little hot. "So, what did Willow say about me missing the hunt?"

"She asked if you were feeling alright. I told her I wasn't having you hunt cockatrice."

Xander nodded, not offended at all, especially not since he and Spike had taken out a half dozen of the ugly little buggers on their own yesterday. "And I bet she was surprised to hear that I'd agreed to just... stay behind," Xander said as he rapped a knuckle against the cage.

"She was a bit surprised, yeah," Spike agreed. "I might have suggested that she butt out of our business."

"Oh great, so I should expect an intervention soon," Xander said with a sigh. "You know, considering that she was all rah-rah girl when I was thinking of going
after you, she really spends a lot of time worrying about me now."

"She cares about ya. Of course, if she sees you in there, she's going to worry more," Spike said as he pursed his lips and considered Xander.

"You wouldn't." Xander crossed his arms over his chest and then yelped when he hit his newly pierced nipple. "Okay, ow."

"Git," Spike said with a resigned shake of his head.

"Spike, you're going to let me out of here, right?" Xander said with his best puppy eyes.

"Don't know," Spike offered with a smirk. "What bargaining chip have you got?"

Xander groaned as his cock cage grew suddenly tighter. "Um, you could..." Xander tried to think of something he could give Spike permission to do, but Spike pretty much did what he wanted. "You can't touch me if I'm in here and you're out there," Xander finally pointed out as he backed up to the far wall and used the iron bars as his weapon to
deny Spike all the touching the vamp loved so much.

"Ya think I have that little control?" Spike asked with some amusement.

"Yep," Xander said as he ran his hands over his shirt and then started on the buttons. Humming the tune from Knight Rider, he rocked his hips from side to side and pulled one button after another free, revealing the leather harness underneath. Licking his finger, Xander ran it along his newly pierced nipple, making it pebble and the bar through the piercing rose.

Xander could see the yellow flashes in Spike's eyes now as he slowly let the shirt fall off his shoulders. Still moving to the music in his head, he caught his thumbs in his jeans and traced the skin along his stomach, going for the tease instead of the immediate reveal. Spike walked up, the cage key in hand as he leaned against the bars.

"Teasin' yourself, too. I'm willin' to bet I can hold out longer than you can," Spike pointed out with a smirk.
"But it's so much more fun if you don't hold out," Xander pointed out as he unbuttoned his jeans and pushed them down just far enough to show a few wisps of hair.

"Cheeky little brat," Spike complained.

"If you want me to be," Xander answered as he opened the zipper a little and let his jeans slide down another inch. He swung his hips farther and let his hands roam over his chest, fingers exploring each seam where leather or steel rings pressed into flesh. He turned to face the wall, giving Spike a nice view of the buckles right between Xander's shoulder blades where he couldn't reach them.

The vampire hissed, and Xander could smell victory. Slowly he eased his jeans down just far enough to show the padlock that kept his chastity belt firmly in place. Swinging his hips slowly, he sank low enough to reach his shoes and pull the laces free. When he rolled his back and rose again, he could hear Spike breathing heavily. Xander half turned toward the cage door and smiled at Spike as he toed out of his shoes and raised his hands and did his best
imitation of a belly dance. He might have felt self-conscious if not for the fact that Spike's eyes never left his hips as the jeans slowly gave way to gravity. Once the jeans dropped, Xander ran a thumb over the harness that held the plug in and locked around the cock cage.

"I let you out, you spend the week in the harness," Spike said.

"Week? Come on, three days," Xander negotiated as he pinched his unpierced nipple and gave his best sexy look.

"Two weeks, and if you argue any more, it'll be three and I'll use the biggest plug," Spike threatened. Xander studied Spike for a second, and then sighed.

"Only because I don't want Willow to see the cage," he said as he stepped out of his jeans and then bent over to grab all his clothes.

"You'd find some way to misbehave and get sentenced to that harness anyway, wouldn't ya, pet?" Spike asked. For a half second, Xander
considered denying it since he still occasionally felt less than manly with just how much submitting he did, but then Spike had his own stories of being bottom boy for the Aurelius line.

"Probably," Xander admitted as Spike unlocked the door. "The cage isn't bad either. But having a babysitter is a little on the embarrassing side."

"Forget it, pet. The way you attract trouble, the soddin' house would catch on fire if I left you in there alone," Spike said as he caught Xander by the back of the neck and pulled him close for a kiss. Xander let Spike take control and waited a second before he kissed back with just as much passion. However, Xander had to pull back first with his human need for oxygen.

"Seems like the cell did you some good," Spike said, running a finger over the clear cock cage where Xander's cock was making a respectable if useless effort to escape.

"Once I saw Willow hadn't gotten you killed, yep," Xander said. "When I was playing cards with Clem, not so much."
"Can't say I want you getting all hot and bothered around Clem, and as long as Red is going through another break up, I'm a lot more spell-proof than you are, pet. One of these days, she's going to turn one of the slayers into a potted plant. And just for complaining after I put in all the work of installing that cell, I'm going to fuck you raw and never take off that cock cage," Spike whispered into Xander's ear. Xander groaned in desire and allowed Spike to pull him out and door and upstairs to their bedroom.

Turn Over an Old Leaf

Spike came down the narrow stairs and stopped at the bottom. Someone had hung a giant soddin' sun with a smiling face and gold rays above the couch, and Spike had a pretty good idea who. The gold Christmas balls tacked to the windowsill and the
African statue with a gold ribbon tied around the ankles was fairly... odd.

Xander practically came dancing out of the kitchen. "Happy Saturnalia!" Xander thrust a red sugar cookie at him and he took it out of surprise more than anything else.

"Pet?" he considered Xander with more than a little suspicion.

"It's our holiday!"

"Our holiday?" Spike asked as he looked around. A pile of gold Hanukkah coins lay on the coffee table and one of their chip bowls had been filled with dirt and pine cones. It looked like Red had gotten her hands on their flat keys.

"Well, yeah," Xander said as he took a big bite out of his own round sugar cookie. "Christmas and Hanukkah seem a little hypocritical of us at this point, especially since you and religious symbols can be a little non-mixy," Xander shrugged, "and the last time I made a big deal out of Solstice or Solace or whatever witchy thing Willow has in December, I
got a lecture on not cheapening her holiday by turning it into an excuse to exchange tacky presents. Oh, and for the record, my gifts are not tacky."

"Never thought they were, pet. Anya always complimented your tackle and your gift giving," Spike agreed absentmindedly. His vamp senses were picking up on something, and he was not so much love's bitch as to miss noticing that Xander had a bit of deviousness to him. And right now, Xander wasn't being particularly subtle about it either.

"Anya was easy to shop for," Xander said, his mouth half full of cookie. "She gave good hints... if you thought that the sales brochure with a sticky note, an arrow, and her ring size written on it was a hint."

"Took some of the surprise out of it, I suppose." Spike still couldn't quite figure out the game here. "So... Saturnalia? You're not goin' to summon some god by accident, are you?"

"What? No! Well, hopefully not," Xander amended himself. "But these are all human customs, no
demon rituals involved, and it's more about giving thanks to the universe for having a really good year!" Xander said as he pulled Spike toward the table.

Spike tried to take his normal seat only to have Xander tug him to the far side of the table. "Nope, Saturnalia is like backwards day."

"Backwards?" Spike asked suspiciously as Xander ducked into the kitchen.

"Yep, you do everything differently. The parents become the kids and the kids get to rule the house, that kind of stuff."

"Don't have kids," Spike pointed out as he sat in Xander's chair at the table. Xander came in, and Spike half thought that he'd get stuck with human food, but he still got his mug of blood. The first sip nearly made Spike choke. "Bloody hell. That's M'ra blood," Spike said as the demonic blood gave him a good buzz. The stuff was hard as hell to find, and it was actually more alcohol than blood. He took another drink, and closed his eyes as the warmth filled him.
"Well, I had to have something special, and I really didn't think giving you otter blood would be in the spirit of the holiday," Xander pointed out. "Oh, and since we're changing everything, you have to take off the belt," Xander said as he pushed his pants down far enough to show the padlock on the back of his harness. Spike frowned at it for a minute.

"Why?"

"It's Saturnalia," Xander said with a heavy sigh. "We do things backwards. Come on, Spike, get in the mood."

"Bloody hell, fine," Spike said as he pulled the key out of his t-shirt, bending down so he wouldn't have to pull the chain from around his neck. He opened the lock. "Now, you go wanking, and I'm going to have a whole new prezzie for you," Spike warned.

"Okay, you do know that's not exactly going to discourage me, right?" Xander asked.

Spike smirked. He did like the way his boy thought. "I'm hoping it won't," Spike admitted as he took another drink of the M'ra blood. The shite was
bloody wonderful, but he now was more suspicious than ever because Xander never wanted out of his harness. The tighter Spike held, the more Xander settled down. He was turning into a fine fighter and he actually listened and didn't go running hell bent for the center of the action without thinking about how he was going to get back out again. Bloody fuck. Prezzies. Spike thought about the stash he always kept for when Xander did something particularly good, and he had a thing or two stashed away that would make an appropriate Saturnalia gift.

By the time Xander reappeared, Spike was feeling mellow and very pleased with himself. He had himself a good life.

"So, Deadboy says this stuff doesn't really get you drunk as much as just make you really happy," Xander said as he sat in Spike's seat.

"It's like eating a hippy," Spike agreed, "but it takes more to get a vampire really drunk. Some days I wished I could'a got drunk easier, but it comes part and parcel with living forever."
"You know, whoever sits there should so have chains on, you know, in the spirit of doing things backwards," Xander said in an entirely too innocent voice.

"Oh?" Spike asked as he put his mug down and studied his lover.

"You want to do the holiday right... don't you?"

"Don't give a rat's ass about the holiday," Spike pointed out, "but wouldn't mind if it made ya happy, pet," Spike said carefully. The M'ra blood was making the edges a little fuzzy, and he wasn't entirely sure he was tracking everything as well as he should. Xander smiled and then turned and darted out of the room again. When he reappeared, he was panting from having run the stairs, and in his hands he had a set of chains Spike hadn't seen before. The dark manacles were connected by a short chain, and a long lead dangled from the center link.

"Hands out," Xander said with mock cheerfulness, but he could hear the stress. Boy was worried.
"No problem, luv," Spike said as he held out his hands. Xander was locking the manacles around his wrists when he spotted the tiny inscribed charm. Latin. He wouldn't be able to break these chains any time soon. He could either wait until Xander unlocked the manacles or crush his own hands to pull them free. When Spike pulled his hands close, he strained for a moment, checking to see if he was right, and not a single link gave.

"Want some toast?" Xander asked. He was swallowing a lot, his tongue making quick little passes over his lips.

"Sure, pet," Spike agreed. He picked up his mug and awkwardly ran a finger along the inside to catch the last of the M'ra blood. When was the last time he'd been chained? Probably the watcher's in that soddin' bathtub. But the heat gathering in Spike's stomach was a far, far older feeling. Dru was the queen and she'd ruled him, no question, but he'd never worn chains for her. Angelus was the last partner he'd worn chains for.
In the kitchen, he could hear Xander making normal morning noises, and he licked the M'ra blood off his finger. "Marmite or apple butter?" Xander called.

"Might as well get into the spirit of the holiday. Apple butter."

Xander came out with the food and Spike had to figure out how to maneuver in chains again. He watched the way Xander's eyes kept slipping down to the chains, and Spike couldn't help but smirk a little. It was nice to know that his lover was attracted no matter what circumstances. "So, any plans for the big celebration?" Spike asked as he took a bite. He made a face and put the toast down. Bloody Americans had no idea of proper breakfast food. On the other side of the table, Xander was making a face at his own toast with marmite.

"Switch?" Xander offered.

"Any time, pet," Spike said as he pushed his plate and the long chain dangling from his wrists clattered against the edge of the table. There for a second, he thought Xander might choke to death.
"Marmite... seriously with the gross," Xander complained as he finally recovered from his coughing fit. Spike didn't bother commenting as he raised an eyebrow and took the proper toast Xander pushed his direction in return.

"I don't suppose it's to everyone's taste. Me, I'm pretty open," Spike shrugged as he took a bite of his toast. He could taste Xander where the man had bit into the toast already.

"Open. Open is good," Xander agreed as he shoved food in his mouth at a terrifying rate. If it weren't Saturnalia, Spike would know exactly what to do... he'd just get out a nice big gag and give Xander's mouth something to fill it. But obviously today he was following Xander's lead.

Spike leaned back, and found his sprawl check by the chains so he had to shift and lean into the table. "So, ya never said if you had any plans for today," Spike said as he raised his eyebrow.

"You're not freaked out at all, are you?" Xander asked, and he could hear the envy.
"I was the submissive often enough to know how it feels when I'm with someone I trust," Spike shrugged, and he watched as Xander's eyes dilated in lust.

"Want to go upstairs?" Xander asked. "And I am not doing the Saturnalia thing very well," Xander added without taking a break. "Spike, we're going upstairs," he tried again in a firmer voice. "Oh, we are so going upstairs because I am so totally breaking the rule about not coming in so many ways that you're going to run out of punishments," Xander said, and Spike felt his cock harden immediately. Bloody hell, the boy was better at this than Spike would have given him credit for.

Xander stood up and walked over and caught the dangling chain and started for the stairs. Spike followed without comment, curious as to what Xander had planned. They headed for the attic playroom, and Spike mentally catalogued all the toys they might use. Depending on how bold Xander got, this might be interesting.
Opening the heavy door, Xander gestured toward a ladder centered under the main beam. "Up on that. Hook your chain on the clip."

Spike hesitated for just a second, long enough to judge Xander's seriousness before he headed for the ladder. The clip was set deep into the beam, and while Spike would be able to break either the clip or the beam eventually, this was fairly good planning on Xander's part. He reached up to clip one of the links.

"Make the chain shorter," Xander ordered. Raising an eyebrow at his lover's sudden bossiness, Spike did it, and this time his work passed inspection because Xander walked forward and put a hand on the ladder. When he got down, Spike discovered that his arms were pulled tight, so once Xander took the ladder away, he really would have a struggle to get himself free.

"I'm going to come in my pants," Xander whispered as he leaned into Spike's back, warm hands coming around to embrace Spike.
"If you're going to break the rules, I'd rather have your cock somewhere else when you do it," Spike admitted, and he could smell the rusty-salt scent of lust fill the air. He could feel the heat as Xander rested his forehead on Spike's back, his breathing ragged and fast.

"You're trying to break me," Xander accused him before he turned away quickly.

"Don't know what you mean."

"Evil vampire."

"Bloody hell, yes."

"We'll see how evil you are," Xander said as he turned around with a pair of scissors. He gave an eyebrow wiggle before he closed the distance between them and cut off Spike's shirt.

"Still feeling evil, pet."

Xander took a deep breath and studied Spike for long seconds. "Spike, you know that if you said 'no' I'd stop without getting upset, right?"
"Pet, I figure I'm as good as you are at setting my own boundaries, but I can promise you that you aren't going to come anywhere near mine," Spike said with just a little amusement. It might have been the wrong thing because Xander's expression turned very sly.

"We'll see," he said as he turned to the toy cabinet. He came back with nipple clamps. Spike had tried playing with them once, but once he got the nipple ring, Xander hadn't been able to bear them. However, Spike couldn't really fear the small clamps with their rubber edges. "We'll see..." Xander repeated as he clicked the clips in front of Spike's face, and only then did Spike realize that these were new clamps, and the teeth were metal. When Xander rolled Spike's nipple between his fingers and then snapped the clamp into place, Spike controlled his reaction. It was an old habit, older than Xander. It hadn't served Spike particularly well back then, and it obviously wasn't going to serve him well now because Xander tightened the clamps more than Spike would have expected... so much so that Spike couldn't control a hiss.
Looking deep into Spike's eyes, Xander stood silent and chewed on his lip. Spike knew that look well enough. "Wot? That all you got?" he taunted. The uncertainty vanished from Xander's face as he rolled his eyes.

"Show off," he said as he headed back to the cabinet. When he turned around with a cane in hand, Spike couldn't keep the shock off his face. When Xander's face immediately telegraphed his insecurities, Spike schooled his face into a sneer.

"Bloody hell. You'll never swing that hard enough to do more than tickle," he said dismissively, and that was enough to push Xander back into his role.

"You're so going to regret saying that," Xander said, and Spike could feel his nerves respond to that tone. Oh, his boy had some hidden talents. He expected Xander to start right in with the cane, but instead Xander circled him, letting the tip of the cane slide over his stomach and back. Spike couldn't resist twitching, and he tightened his arms and fisted the chains. Two, three times Xander circled before he took the cane away and held it in both
hands as he considered Spike's stretched body like a painter considering a canvas.

"You're so beautiful," Xander said, awe in his voice. "You're going to be more beautiful with my marks on you." Spike groaned as his cock complained about his tight jeans. He had a feeling his cock was going to hurt much more than his back when this was over. Xander's first hit caught him on the ribs under his left arm, and Spike growled as the pain forced the air out of him. Soddin' hell, the boy had put his weight behind that one. Before he could even gather the breath to swear out loud, Xander's next hit caught him low on the back.

Xander returned to circling, watching Spike carefully. "This is... this is not as hard as I thought," Xander said with a little laugh as he reached up and tugged the chain between the nipple clamps. Spike hissed and flashed into gameface as the pain stirred some deeper part of him, waking up a hunger and a power that had been dulled for so long that Spike had forgotten it. "You are so incredibly beautiful," Xander repeated. Without warning he brought the
cane down on Spike's stomach, and a growl erupted.

When Xander brought the cane down on Spike's back over and over, the heat tore through Spike and he growled as he arched his back into the blows. The cane paused, and Xander's finger trailed over the welts and cuts. "Okay, I would have been begging for you to stop by now," Xander said softly.

"I'm not weak," Spike snarled, and he could feel Xander's finger pause as it travelled across his back.

"You're incredibly strong. Sometimes you're so strong that I wonder why you put up with me," Xander said softly, and Spike growled deep and yanked at the chains so that the bolt screeched and bent a little.

"I wouldn't have you if you weren't strong," Spike snapped. "You faced down Angelus and take command of slayers," Spike pointed out, and he studied Xander as he came back around to the front, seeing him differently than he had before. While Xander was human, he was so much stronger than most humans. He hid his strength, but he
never acted out of the sort of fear that led others to hide or deny.

Xander brought his hand up to Spike's face, cupping his chin for a second before bringing a finger to Spike's lips. Opening his mouth, Spike sucked the finger in, tasting his own blood before he bit down and tasted Xander's right alongside it. Xander gasped, but waited until Spike pulled his fang out and then licked the wound closed.

"Ow," Xander said softly, and Spike cocked his head at the man. Xander was always doing that, like a predator that mimicked an injury to make itself seem less dangerous. He had dismissed Xander only to have his own plans ruined when the boy escaped the school and fetched Angelus, and then later the boy had provided the plan and weapon to kill the Judge. And Spike had seen Giles' spell for killing Adam. The others directed their energy outward, but the entire spell was powered by the heart, the only person whose attentions weren't on the battle. How had Spike ever missed seeing so much power there in his chains?
"Are you ready for more?" Xander asked.

"Yes," Spike hissed, not even near any of his limits. The cane came down and brought heat and life to his skin, awakening nerve endings that had slept for too long. Sometimes life just wasn't enough, but now Xander brought the cane down again, and Spike shook the sleep away. The world smelled brighter, and the copper of his own blood was a perfume he hadn't smelled in far too long. His growl was constant now, and when Xander reached around and grabbed his crotch, Spike snarled and writhed in the chains. His back was heat, but his cock was fire.

Spike was panting when Xander dropped to his knees in front of him and carefully unzipped him, freeing Spike's heavy cock from the tight prison. When Xander licked up the length, he really started fighting the chains, pulling until the bolt screamed and the beam made ominous creaking sounds, but Xander just continued to tease with his tongue, sucking the head into his mouth before abandoning it to lick at the balls.

"I am doing something, Spike," Xander pointed with another long lick at Spike's cock.

He snarled his frustration and twisted in his chains, desperate to break free, but then Xander swallowed his whole cock, and he just threw his head back and surrendered. Xander pulled back a little and then sank down again, swallowing around the head of Spike's cock. At another time and another place, Spike would have fought his orgasm back, afraid of the consequences for coming. Now, he knew he was totally safe. He came with a roar and then sagged in the chains.

Xander knelt between his legs for long minutes, a warm hand stroking up and down Spike's leg. The satisfaction and pleasure still echoing through his nerves distracted him from the smell for a second. Come. Xander's come.
"Had fun then, pet?" Spike asked with some amusement. Xander had shot his come across the linoleum on the floor.

"Oh yeah. You?" Xander asked as he looked up, and that insecurity was back.

"Bloody brilliant, pet. Of course, you came without permission, so there's going to be punishment for that," Spike said as he rolled his head and catalogued a whole new set of scents from the room. The leather and the dust and the musk from Xander was nearly overwhelming.

"Um, Spike, you're being a little extra special demony. Are we sure your soul doesn't come with a happiness clause?" Xander asked.

Spike raised an eyebrow and looked down and the worry on his lover's face. Well, he could fix that easy enough. The struggles had already twisted the clip out of shape, so a quick jerk freed the chain, and Spike was on Xander before he could even get off his knees. "No happiness clause," Spike said, but he had to admit he felt... he felt good. "Just a lot of happiness. And as punishment for being so cheeky
with the holiday, you're going to be chained to that bed for days. I'm going to be hand feeding you because you aren't even going to be getting up for meals, and the plug you're going to be stuffed with... oh pet, you're going to learn your place," Spike teased gently, his fingers stroking Xander's hair as the man settled under evidence that Spike's soul was still in control. "But that'll have to be tomorrow since today's still Saturnalia, innit?"

"Um, yep. And I promised that I was going to make you run out of punishments," Xander said as his arm came around Spike's waist and pulled him close. "And you're really okay?"

"Demon woke up a bit," Spike admitted. "Demon likes you about as much as the soul, so no worries, pet. The soul's still in control, and if the demon comes out a bit on Saturnalia, it's not a problem. I have to ask though, Xand, where did you get this idea? I never thought you'd like switching."

"Um, I actually prefer to be bottom," Xander shrugged, and Spike opened his mouth to call the day off right then and there. "But it's fun to just
roleplay for a day... fun with a side of completely hot," Xander hurried to add before Spike could say anything else, and he had come all over the floor. Spike studied him trying to see if he was being honest. "And the idea kinda came from Angel," Xander finally admitted with an embarrassed shrug.

"From... Angel?" Spike was downright gobsmacked. Xander smiled. "Never let it be said that I won't do anything to give a good Christmas present, and the only thing that made that conversation bearable was that he was way more with the metaphorical dying than I was. Angel torture is always a good thing," Xander nodded knowingly.

"You loon." Spike shook his head and pulled his lover close. "You'd bloody well better have that on tape."

"Oh, I do. So, what shall we do for the rest of Saturnalia?"

"Whatever you want, pet," Spike answered happily. He might be too old to live with this as his life, not after fighting so hard to free himself, but he was
mighty fond of Saturnalia. "Absolutely anything you want."

The End