

Lost Soul

by

Creed

and

Echos Revenge

"Soddin' Poof, give me a tasty morsel like that and then take it away," Spike groused as he left the school, his head still ringing from the ax blow. It wasn't just the principle Angel talking the boy away. There was something about the boy that called to him.

When he got back to the warehouse Dru was in one of her moods, but surprisingly lucid at the same time. After telling him what a fool he was and that he would never beat the Slayer she up and left him. Told him not to follow her and that the stars had told her they would not meet again for many years. He had watched her leave and started drinking. By the time the sun came up, he was as close to passed

out as a vampire could get, and he slipped right into sleep.

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"I don't see why you're complaining, Xander. At least this way you were useful," Buffy said the next night, after Xander expressed his displeasure at being used as a party favour by Angel.

"Gee, thanks. Maybe I could have at least been asked first or told what was going on instead of Deadboy going all caveman and dragging me off to meet his kid," Xander said as he went from annoyed to pissed off.

"She's kinda right," Willow said quietly. "There wasn't much else you could have done really, and Angel probably didn't have time to explain things to you."

"You really need to get over this jealousy thing with

Angel," Buffy added. "You badmouthing him is not going to make me dump him."

"Screw them," Xander muttered after storming out of the library. "Don't know why I bother. Now if I could just have a nice vamp show up to kill." He let his voice trail off as he hefted his water gun of holy water and his stake.

Spike stalked along behind Xander in the shadows listening to him. So the boy was feeling rejected thanks to that stunt his sire had pulled. At least the boy hadn't been in on the plan. Spike wondered just what the hell his sire had been thinking and exactly how fast that boy could be with his gun and stake.

Deciding he needed to get more information on the boy, Spike trailed him to his house and then headed back into the night to find a meal. He didn't want to get hungry when he watched the house, and the boy, later that night.

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Between avoiding the Slayer and his pool of a sire it was almost an hour before he got back to the house. He didn't even have to get close to smell the blood and was already walking toward the door when the boy stumbled out bleeding from his nose and some cuts on his arms. He wasn't really thinking as he stalked up to the boy to find out what happened.

"Fuck, could this day get any worse?" Xander said when he saw who was walking toward him. "My friends bitch me out for not being happy Angel offered me to you as a snack, my dad beats the crap out of me for no reason, and to top it off I get to be a late night vampire snack. This is all Deadboy's fault."

"Wasn't planning to snack on you, pet, but I might have to take a taste once I get you out of here. You do have all that blood just lying around," Spike said as he took Xander's arm.

"Can you just kill me now? I really don't feel like walking to wherever it is you want to kill me and I'd rather skip the beating and torture. Kinda tortured out tonight already," Xander said as he was all but drug along the street.

"Not gonna kill you, s'been years since Angelus gave me anything. Wouldn't be polite to just turn around and kill you would it?" Spike said.

"You should go talk to Buffy. She thought it was really cool that I was useful, too," Xander said, yelping when Spike tugged too hard on his arm. "Said I should be happy Angel found a use for me."

"Oi, is that right?" Spike asked with a raised eyebrow. "I could definitely find another use for you, mate."

Xander gave a bitter laugh and planted his feet firmly. "If I wanted that I could have just stayed at home instead of running when dad got distracted. Can we skip the whole undead rape thing and get right to where you kill me?"

Spike took advantage of Xander's suicidal moment and stepped forward, crowding into the boy's personal space. In a matter of seconds, his left hand was on Xander's shoulder, holding the boy firmly in place if he decided to escape. His other hand moved more slowly, reaching up to Xander's face. He didn't pause when Xander flinched. Instead, Spike rubbed his thumb across Xander's lips to pick up the blood from his nose bleed, then brought it back to his mouth to suck on it slowly.

"Not gonna kill you, pet. Not gonna rape you either," Spike said when Xander's self-preservation instincts kicked in and he tried to get away from Spike's hand. "You're mine now, and I'm not letting you wander around all bloody, so you're coming with me."

"Why are you doing this?" Xander demanded in a whisper. He didn't understand why this Master vampire wasn't draining him of every last drop of his blood. Of course, he could just be planning to play with his meal like a cat tormenting a frightened

mouse.

"Told ya, you're mine now. Now let's get you somewhere safe," Spike said backing up and taking Xander's hand again.

Xander looked down at their clasped hands and sighed. What alternatives did he have really? If he went back home, his father would start round two on him. His friends... or at least the people he called his friends weren't an option. The despair he felt had morphed into hopelessness.

"Less thinkin', more walkin', pet," Spike instructed and tugged on the boy's hand.

"You're not going to hurt me?" Xander asked as he was hurried down the street. "I mean Angel told us all how evil you are, but right now I'm not so sure I trust what he says."

"My nicknames are William the Bloody and Spike," Spike growled. "Got the last one cause I like to torture my victims with railroad spikes. That evil

enough?"

"So you are going to kill me?" Xander asked sounding resigned but not trying to pull away anymore.

"Nah... not yet at least," Spike answered. "You amuse me, pet. Not a lot of things amuse me. Just remember I got the power to off ya whenever I want."

Xander didn't answer, just stumbled along behind Spike as they made their way back to Spike's warehouse. When they walked in and he saw the minions milling about the main room, he pressed up against Spike but still didn't say anything. He just wanted to go to sleep somewhere. He didn't really care if he woke up but he wanted to fall asleep without thinking any more.

Spike glared at his minions and changed into game face. "This boy is mine," he said. "You so much as look at him cross-eyed and you'll be dust."

There were muttered acknowledgements as all of them suddenly decided to look at the walls. Spike had dusted several of them for no reason when Dru left and none of them wanted to draw his attention now.

Spike pulled Xander after him as he went into the room he'd barricaded off as his bedroom. There was a big four-poster bed in it, but all of the girly shit Dru had insisted on was gone. He'd torn it down and burned it in an angry fit when she left. "Home sweet home."

"Can I sleep now?" Xander said looking longingly at the bed. "I just want to sleep and forget about all this for a while."

"You can sleep 'cause I say so." Spike figured the shape the boy was in, he'd sleep through at least most of the day.

"Okay," Xander said, kicking off his shoes. He pulled off his over shirt and wiped most of the blood off his face and hands before crawling into bed, still

wearing his pants and t-shirt. He knew falling asleep with vampires all around was probably not the best idea, but he forced thoughts of that aside and was asleep in seconds.

Spike waited until he was sure the boy was asleep and then sat down on the edge of the mattress. Someone, likely his dad, really had walloped on him and his face would be swollen and bruised in the morning. He reached out and moved Xander's bangs from his forehead. He'd always had a soft spot for the beaten and broke souls of this world.

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Xander was disoriented when he woke up the next morning and thrashed around trying to figure out where he was. The night before came crashing into him when he saw Spike laying on the edge of the bed. He panicked for a moment, then calmed down somewhat once he realized they were both still dressed and Spike was outside the covers.

"Evening, pet," Spike mumbled, slowly getting up. "Just lay still for a few more minutes while I send a minion for some food for you."

"Not hungry," Xander claimed.

"Bollocks, you've slept for sixteen hours and I can hear your stomach," Spike said. He moved over to the bedroom door and poked his head out. After talking to whoever was on the other side he closed the door and came back to stand next to the bed. "It's gonna be a few minutes, pet. I want them to get you something fresh and that takes a bit of time."

"Something... fresh?" Xander gulped. He was not sure of what in the hell that meant. He had an image of the old Master of Sunnydale dragging in victims to feed on. "You're not going to turn me are you? I'd rather die."

"Not going to kill you. Not going to turn you yet, and I'm not sure if I ever will," Spike said, sounding

annoyed. He'd already decided to turn the boy, but saying so now would just have scared him. "I'm not even going to beat the shit out of you or try to give you away to some vampire that might drain you. Hell you're safer here than with your friends or family."

"Safe?" Xander actually snorted. "I'm never safe."

"You're safe here." Spike reached over and ruffled Xander's hair. He wasn't sure when he'd decided not to eat the boy, but he was used to taking care of someone and wasn't going to fight it. He was a Master vampire and could do whatever he felt like. "Anyone wants to get to you has to go through twenty some minions and a Master vampire. There's a bathroom through there," he said pointing toward the door in the corner. "Sink and shower work, but you might want to check the toilet. I put some clean clothes in there too so why don't you get cleaned up while the minions are getting your food."

Xander told himself the only reason he got up from

the bed to shower was to get the dried and crusted blood off his skin. He didn't want Spike to think he was actually listening to him.

While Xander was in the shower Spike called in a minion to clean up the bedroom and re-make the bed while Spike got the table ready for dinner. He had another minion drain him a few glasses of blood from one of the human minions. He was still thinking about turning the boy, but wanted it to be voluntary. He didn't want to have to beat the boy into submission after he was turned. He wanted a willing child so he was going to have to put some effort into him.

Spike decided the boy was taking too long and pounded on the door after the shower stopped. "Oi, what's taking so long?"

"I'm not coming out in these clothes..." Xander grumbled through the door. "They're too tight!"

"Pet, you'll look good in them," Spike said. "No one here is going to hurt you so you don't have to try to

hide in those baggy clothes you normally wear. I'm going to come in and get you in two minutes and you'll either eat in the clothes I left for you or eat naked."

Exactly two minutes later, Xander skulked out of the bathroom. He was wearing a pair of tight jeans and a white muscle shirt that clung to his chest.

"Obvious these aren't my size..."

Spike let his gaze travel from Xander's face down to his feet then slowly back up. "Those are just your size, Xan," he said letting a little growl underlay his voice. "Food should be here in a minute. Why don't we sit down?"

"Did you get some fast food?" Xander asked as he sat down stiffly on the sofa. Burgers and fries were a mainstay of his diet with no one at home who gave a shit to cook for him. "McDonald's isn't really junk food you know."

"No, pet, sent one of the older minions out to get you a real meal. Steak and all the fixings I think. He's

supposed to pick up some desert too," Spike said. "If you don't like it just let me know and I can send him back out for something else."

"Steak?" Xander immediately perked up. He'd been living on canned soup, fast food and pop tarts for as long as he could remember. "Does the baked potato have sour cream and bacon bits? Oh and maybe... maybe a piece of chocolate cake wouldn't be bad."

"If anything's missing we can send him out to get it." Spike could tell he'd made the right choice by sending out for some real food. It sounded like the boy never got a decent meal from the way he was almost drooling over the thought of the dinner.

"I really don't eat that much..."

Spike pulled Xander closer to him on the couch. "Food's almost here," he said, pleased that Xander didn't seem bothered by their thighs pressing against each other. "Eat up and we'll go out and have some fun after."

"What kind of fun?" Xander asked warily.

"Thought we'd go to a bar I know. One that we won't have to worry about the poof or the slayer showing up at. If not you can tell me your idea after dinner," Spike said as he took the food from the minion and waved him out of the room. Xander was hardly paying attention to him as the dishes were laid out. Spike had sent his minion to the most expensive restaurant in this shithole of a town and it looked good even to him.

"It even has vegetables..." Xander groaned as he took in the garlic-battered baby carrots. He didn't remember the last time he'd had vegetables that looked so fresh.

Spike just grinned as he watched Xander start to dig through the food. It was refreshing to have a human who understood what he was but who was not trying to get anything from him. He sipped his blood for a few minutes but the noises of pleasure the boy was making as he ate were just too much. He started snagging pieces of food off Xander's plate

and tasting the various foods.

"I thought vamps couldn't eat food?" Xander mumbled with a full mouth. The steak had been prepared rare and a little blood dribbled from the side of his mouth.

"We can eat it, but it doesn't fill us up. Still tastes good though," he said grabbing another piece of steak just before Xander speared it with his fork. "The poof and the slayer not tell you much about vampires?"

Xander licked the blood at the corner of his mouth away carefully, with Spike's eyes riveted on the unknowingly sensuous act. "Deadboy and I don't exactly get along."

"Deadboy? You call him that to his face?" Spike asked trying to hold back his laughter. When Xander nodded yes, Spike gave up and started laughing uncontrollably while thinking about this human calling Angelus 'Deadboy' over and over. "Pet, that's the funniest thing I've heard in years. I think I'm

gonna borrow that name for the poof."

"Maybe I could start calling him the poof... if you explain what it means to me," Xander answered back with half a smile.

"Poof, nancy boy, basically any reminder that he let me fuck him a few times. He liked it when I did it, but he hates for anyone else to find out," Spike said, snickering at the look on Xander's face. "Guess he hasn't shared that with his slayer yet."

"He and you..." Xander coughed and started to turn red. It wasn't out of shock, but that he couldn't see the two of them together in any way that involved tenderness or giving.

"Yeah, wouldn't mention that in front of him though unless I'm around to protect you. Soul or not he might do worse than hand you over to an evil vampire like me for a snack. So, all done with the desert and ready to go out for a bit o'fun?" Spike asked, noticing the cake had vanished too fast for him to even get a taste.

Xander shrugged. "It's not like I have anything better to do, but I usually don't go out when my bruises are still so fresh."

"You're not going to have to worry about that anymore," Spike growled. "No one gets away with hurting what's mine, but for now you get a choice. We're going to a demon bar where no one will care about the bruises. If you want, I can give you just a taste of blood and they'll be healed up by the time we get there or you can leave them."

The idea of drinking blood threatened to upset the meal he'd just eaten. "Bruises are fine. I'm used to them," Xander said quickly.

"Bloody hell, that bleeding poof hasn't used his blood to heal you all up after fights has he?" Spike asked picking up on Xander's reaction to the thought of drinking blood. "You'd think that with a soul he'd actually start caring about more than himself. Up to you pet, but there's no reason for you to be injured if you don't want to be. Won't

take more than a sip or two."

"I... I don't like blood," Xander insisted. Of course, the truth was he remembered a time when he craved fresh blood and flesh. The idea of what he had been and could have done still revolted him.

"Okay then, bruises it is. Let's go," Spike said as he got up and called for some minions to clean up.

"So exactly why are we going out?" Xander questioned as he followed behind Spike. He wasn't sure why he was doing what the Master vampire wanted, but he was well fed and rested. Maybe Spike really wasn't going to harm him.

"Because I'm bored and because taking you to this place will ensure that every demon in Sunnyhell knows that you're off limits," Spike said while he picked out five minions to escort them. "That and I have a feeling you've gotten a one-sided view of the demon world from poof and friends."

"Demons are evil," Xander quoted the belief held by

his friends. "They aren't human."

"No shit we're not human. Evil's relative though, pet, and demons don't have a lock on it. Your folks are more 'evil' than most types of demons," Spike said then smirked as they walked outside. "Not saying I'm a good guy mind you, but you lot kill any non-humans, even the ones that are peaceful."

"There's no such thing as a peaceful demon. Giles would've told us if there was," Xander insisted. "It's not like demons fall in love, get married, have kids and all the white picket fence shit. And my dad's not that bad..."

"Right, the watcher is going to have his slayer out checking to see if the demons are good or not. Even if he knows, he's not going to tell her. And most demons do fall in love... or their version of it. As for kids, vamps are one of the only demons that can reproduce without having kids," Spike said. "And don't go defending your dad. He's no better than mine was so I know what I'm talking about when I say he's worse than most demons."

Xander didn't want to talk about his family, but he was intrigued by Spike's past. "What was your dad like? The real one, not Deadboy."

"Too much like yours, and Angelus was even worse for ten or fifteen years," Spike said then fell silent while they continued walking. "We're here, pet. You just follow my lead inside. No one's gonna hurt you and if anyone bothers you let me know."

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"I still can't believe that demon said he had thirteen kids... spawn and a wife at home." Xander leaned in closer to Spike out of habit, so the vampire could hear him as they exited out of the loud bar.

"Yeah well those demons have up to eight spawn at a time. They won't have any more for a while. Those kids take over a century to grow up. Most demons have large families. If they didn't fight so much the

bloody planet would be overrun," Spike looked around. "You want some more food before we go back? Not sure how often humans need to eat."

That comment made Xander snort. "You were human once. And I'm a teenage boy, I'm always hungry."

"Right. You, go get some food and bring it back to the warehouse," Spike said pointing at one of the minions. "Make sure it's something light. The boy's going to bed soon."

"Don't bother, Spike. I've gotta go home now."

"Not letting you go back there," Spike snarled. "Told ya no one was allowed to hurt you any more."

"I don't have a choice... they're my parents! I live there and I have to go to school on Monday."

"You'll stay with me. It'll be safer then going back to that place," Spike said. "Don't need to go to school either."

"And do want then?"

"Letting me protect you would be a start," Spike hissed.

"Look, I appreciate that, Spike, but I'm not quite ready to move into a warehouse of vampires and lose my tan. We can still hang out as long as this whole not killing me thing is going on, but I need to go home," Xander said looking at the ground while he rushed his words out.

The boy had a stubborn streak alright. Sometimes it was a good idea to give your prey a little space before you closed in on them for the last time. It made the chase all that more interesting and he was sure Xander would be back. "Fine, you can go back, but if that git lays one finger on you..."

"He will, but I can handle it. I have been for years," Xander said with a small sigh. "He's not too bad after a beating like the night before last. Won't be anything too bad."

"Just remember who you belong to now, pet," Spike said in a low dangerous voice. "No one has the right to hurt you. So you can go back, but I'm going back with you."

"Okay, just as long as you don't kill them," Xander said. He really didn't want to be responsible for getting his parents killed, but the thought of Spike and his dad talking was nice in a slightly evil way.

"Yeah, I won't kill them right now," Spike agreed. "Too good for that bastard," he added under his breath. He'd only promised to not kill them now, there was always later.

"Um, Spike, do you think I could keep the clothes?" Xander asked just before they got to his house. "I don't have any money to buy new clothes right now and I'm running a little low on stuff to wear."

"Wouldn't have it any other way," Spike said and then added, "Unless ya want to run around naked, that is."

"No, no naked running around for me. Now remember, you promised not to kill them," Xander said before he opened the front door. "Come in, Spike."

Spike entered the house and wasn't surprised to see that it was a neat and ordinary house, just like any other boring house in suburbia. Of course Spike knew what dirty little secrets the middle class could hide. "I'll remember that invite for next time."

"Where the fuck have you been," Xander's father said looking up at him from the couch and turning down the volume on the TV. "And why the fuck are you bringing your little faggot friends around here?" He got up and started up and shuffling toward them while he spoke.

"Cause this faggot wanted to see how big of an asshole you really are," Spike growled.

"Get your friend out of here then we're going to have a talk," Xander's father emphasized 'talk' while

glaring at him.

Spike stepped between Xander and his father. He took out a cigarette and lit it, puffing the smoke into the big man's face. "Figure you've talked enough."

Something clicked for Mr. Harris and he backed away from Spike a little. "Don't need to talk to you," he blustered. "Just get out of my house."

Mr. Harris had several inches and at least forty pounds on Spike, but Spike could snap him like a twig if he liked. "Don't think so. Gotta clear a few things up with you first."

"Like what," he sneered. "This is my house and I'll do what I want here. You need to keep your nose out of places it doesn't belong. And you," he pointed at Xander. "You stop smiling and go to your room."

"Yeah, go up to your room, Xan." Spike's tone was a low hiss. He flicked his still glowing bud at Mr. Harris. "I gotta talk to your dear ol' daddy."

Xander looked at Spike for a second. He wanted to stay and see what happened. He wasn't sure if it was to make sure there was no killing, or in hopes of seeing his dad get what was coming to him.

"Come up before you go?"

"Sure thing, pet," Spike all but purred and made sure to use the pet name. "Off ya go. Don't mind any noise...."

"Okay," Xander said before heading up the stairs. He caught himself before he reminded Spike about the no killing. There was no reason to let his dad know there would be no killing.

"So ya like to smack your kid around, eh?" Spike sneered at him.

"I don't know what he told you, but it's none of your business. You don't want to find out how I take care of him too then you better leave," Tony Harris said reaching for the baseball bat he kept behind the couch.

Spike used his speed to reach the bat before Harris could and then snapped it across his knee like it was a twig. "Nice try, fatso. Would've used it myself, but I prefer a more... hands on approach."

"What, what," Tony said backing up. "What the hell do you want?"

Spike backhanded Tony and spat. "I want you to leave Xander alone."

"He's my kid. I just do what's needed to keep him in line. Why do you care anyway?" Tony asked. He was starting to get scared, but he was not going to let some little punk scare him in his own home.

"Do you have any idea what I am?" Spike growled as he changed into game face. It was crude, but effective.

"Fuck," Tony said going pale and cowering in the corner. "Please, don't kill me. You can have him. I won't try to stop you or tell anyone. My wife's

upstairs too."

Spike grabbed Tony by the throat and slammed him against the wall, only to lift him off the floor with one hand. "Coward. Keep your hands off of her, as well. You're right. The boy does belong to me, but he's gonna stay here until he realizes that."

"I won't touch either of them ever again if you let me live," Tony blubbered. "I'll do whatever you say."

"Don't so much as breathe on what's mine." Spike smacked Tony against the wall once more before he dropped him and switched back to his normal face.

Spike was still fuming as he walked up the stairs to Xander's room. The thought that his boy had grown up here with that creature touching him had almost pushed him to ignore his promise not to kill. He didn't want to scare the boy off though and they had a few more things to talk about. He sniffed once to locate Xander's room and walked in without knocking.

He caught Xander in the process of pulling off the tight shirt Spike had given him, hoping to change into something baggier. "Oh... hey."

"Pet, we are going to get you some new clothes soon," Spike said taking in the bright orange t-shirt lying on the bed. "That thing downstairs is still alive, but he won't be touching you or your mother again."

Xander pulled on the obnoxious t-shirt and made sure it covered the tight jeans. "Umm, thank you?"

"Told you I'll take care of you, Xander. Your mine and I take care of what's mine. You tell me if anyone gives you any trouble," Spike sat down on the bed and pulled Xander down to sit next to him.

"Speaking of people causing you problems, if you won't stay with me you're going to run into the poof. If he says anything you tell him to sod off. Remind him that he gave you to me and if he tries to change that now your life, and his, are forfeit. Tell him I'll settle this score if he breaks tradition."

"You know, I'm getting kind of pissed off that people think they can just give me away," Xander grumbled. "First Angel, now my father..."

"Won't happen again, pet. You're mine now and I don't plan on giving you away," Spike said pulling out his wallet. "Here's some dosh since I doubt that wanker ever gives you any. Get yourself some clothes. Good clothes like the ones I gave you. Should be enough there to get whatever else you need. Minions are spreading the word that you're off limits so most things should leave you alone from now on. You need anything else?"

Xander looked down at the money and then back up at Spike. "You know the mall is open after sunset on most nights..."

"Then I'll take you tomorrow. I'll be here at sunset," Spike said grinning. The boy was opening up to him faster than he'd expected. "We'll just avoid mirrors. You're gonna have to take my word on what looks good." He squeezed Xander's thigh briefly before he

stood up. "You sure you don't need anything else?" He didn't want to leave the boy alone, but he wanted to give him some time to think. Plus, he would be outside the house most of the night making sure that piece of shit downstairs behaved himself.

"No, I'm fine," Xander muttered. Part of him was relieved that Spike was leaving, the other part of him didn't want to be alone. He wanted to see Spike again soon. "But can we do the mall day after tomorrow? I have to go to see the others tomorrow and I've been missing two days. I don't want them asking questions."

"Okay, pet. I'll come by tomorrow after you get back just to see how you're doing," Spike said. He didn't want him around the slayer, but until the boy was ready he couldn't let his friends get worried. With one last look at his boy he headed out of the room.

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Angel was lurking in the corners of the library watching Buffy chatting inanely with Willow about something to do with shoes. He'd tuned them out and wanted to get this stupid meeting over with, but they couldn't do it until the boy was here.

"Hey everyone, the Xan-man is here. What's tonight's meeting about?" Xander called out as he walked into the library. He hadn't noticed Angel in the shadows and was thinking the meeting would be fairly painless to get through. He wondered when Spike was coming by because he didn't want to miss him.

Angel's head snapped up when the boy came into the room. He automatically recognized the smell of Spike mingled with the usual sent of Xander.

"Hallway, Harris...." he growled.

"Excuse me, Deadboy? You have some other vampire waiting out there you want to give me away to?" Xander asked still smiling. He couldn't

believe he was baiting Angel like this, but knowing Spike would kill Angel for touching him did wonders for his courage. After all, Spike had taken care of his dad and he was scarier than Angel had ever been.

"I said outside!" Angel growled again and then he realized how that must sound when Buffy and Willow looked at him. "I need to talk to you about that."

"G-Man, is there time for Deadboy and me to talk in the hall?" Xander asked not so subtly checking his pocket for a stake.

Giles was too busy checking a reference to even notice Xander's begging tone. He didn't even raise his head, only waved his hand absently. "Sure... sure, just hurry up..."

"Okay, I'll be back in a minute, girls," Xander said walking back toward the hallway with Angel behind him. "If you hear any screaming come stake Deadboy for me."

Angel made sure to close the door behind him and then pushed Xander against some lockers. "Didn't know you had a thing for necrophilia, boy."

"Um, sod off?" Xander said hesitantly. It didn't sound nearly as cool coming from him. "Spike told me you'd try to cause a problem, but it's too late. You gave me to him and there's some vampire rule that says you have to stay out of it now."

Angel moved into Xander's personal space and pulled down the neck of his shirt to expose his neck and shoulders. "You might be wearing his scent, but you're not wearing his mark. I can do whatever the hell I want to you...."

"Let go of me," Xander said trying to pull away from Angel. "What the fuck do you care? You handed me over to him to buy yourself some time and now you want to bite me?"

Angel laughed and let go of Xander, watching as the boy lost his footing and fell to the floor. "You think too much of yourself, boy. You're not worth the

effort, and, if you think Spike's going to let you live, you're delusional, too. I was there when he was a fledge and I trained him. He loves to rape and torture his victims."

"I don't think you know him at all," Xander wasn't sure why but he was blindingly mad that Angel was trying to badmouth Spike. "It wouldn't be anything new anyway. My dad has been beating me two or three times a week since I can remember. None of you ever figured out what was happening, but Spike did and he took care of it."

"I knew," Angel scoffed. "You have victim written on your forehead. The others just don't give a shit."

"We done? There is supposed to be a meeting here tonight," Xander said, strangely calm all of the sudden.

"Yeah, we're done, but you'd better not tell anyone about your relationship with Spike," Angel warned. "I don't need Buffy on my case for your mistake."

"I won't bring it up, but I'm sure they'll figure it out in time," Xander said walking back to the library. "Although Buffy might not be the one you have to worry about."

Angel narrowed his eyes as he watched the boy escape. He didn't know why he was so mad. Ever since Spike and Drusilla had come into town he'd been on edge. He didn't need the reminder of what he'd been staring him the face. When he'd first smelled Spike on Xander, his reaction had been regret that he'd had any part in handing the young man over to Spike, but that had quickly been replaced by a flash of jealousy. He'd trained Spike for years and the jealousy was residual and instinctual from the time they'd spent together.

The meeting went smoothly until they were about to wrap up. "Um, guys," Xander said calmly. "I just had one question. When we stepped outside Angel told me he's known for a while my dad likes to beat the shit out of me regularly. He said you all knew about it too and just didn't care. Just wanted to know if that was true. I guess it would explain why

you all didn't mind me being offered as a vampire snack. I may as well be useful once before I get killed at home."

Giles dropped the book he was reading on the floor, while Buffy and Willow just sat there with their mouths hanging open. In fact, the gum Buffy was chopping on fell out of her mouth while she gapped like a fish. She blinked a few times and then stammered, "W-What? Are you serious, Xander?"

"Yeah, I'm serious, and I just wanted to know if Angel was telling the truth. Now that dad's been convinced he should leave me alone I wanted to know where I stood with everyone else. I mean, I know Angel had to have been able to smell the blood from the wounds on me sometimes so I believe he knew about it, but I wasn't sure about the rest of you," Xander said trying to ignore the look on Angel's face.

"Xander!" Willow cried out. "I know you're dad yelled at you and stuff... but you never said that he... hit you!"

"This is quite serious. Are you sure it's safe for you to go home?" Giles finally managed to ask. "And, no, I don't think any of the rest of us knew about this." While he talked Giles was glaring at Angel.

"Oh yeah, dad's not going to bother me anymore. He might yell at me, but he won't do anything more than that," Xander said standing up. "Deadboy knows how I took care of things and I'm sure I don't have to worry anymore. Right Deadboy?"

"Yes," Angel mumbled through clenched teeth.

Realizing from Angel's response he really had known about this Buffy started glaring at him too. "Xander, we really didn't know," she said. "If you need me to threaten him I can come home with you now."

Angel didn't have much to lose now, so he thought maybe he'd try and get the tables turned on Xander. "Didn't you hear, he already has a knight in shining armour? Why don't you tell them who?"

"You told me not to mention his name," Xander said innocently. "Actually it was more like threatened. Did you change your mind already?"

Angel just wanted to smack that little smirk off of Xander face, but with the death glare Buffy was giving him, he doubted that would be a good idea. "This isn't my fault."

"Everything turned out good so I'm not blaming anyone," Xander said still the picture of innocence. "I wasn't planning on bringing any of this up tonight, but Angel wanted to talk about it. Now that we've cleared the air I feel much better. I should get home though. It's getting late."

"What, you don't want to tell them you've all but become Spike's fuck toy?" Angel hissed in frustration.

"So now I can talk about him right? This is getting kinda confusing, and I don't know where you get the fuck toy thing. Spike took care of me. He got my

father to leave me alone without killing him, and it's all thanks to you giving me to him," Xander smiled. "So I guess I should say thank you." Xander started walking toward the door. He'd had his fun but he really didn't want to get any further into this conversation.

Angel stood and stared at Xander's back as he walked out. The rest of the group was too stunned to say anything and he had decided talking around Xander was a bad thing. He couldn't quite believe the boy had stood up to him like that.

~*~*~*~*~

When Xander got home, all of the cockiness he'd felt around Angel flew out the nearest window. He knew his father probably wouldn't cross Spike and hit him again, but he couldn't undo a lifetime of conditioning. So he came home from the school and snuck into his room, waiting with the door shut for Spike.

"Ello, pet," Spike said, sweeping into the room with no warning. "Everything go okay today?"

"Oh, hey Spike." Xander actually jumped in surprise. "You gotta learn not scare me like that. I kinda had a bit of a run in with Deadboy."

"The poof didn't cause you any problems did he?" Spike asked with a scowl. "He was always causing problems and that's before he got a bleeding soul." He walked over to Xander and looked him over carefully.

"I think I got one up on him actually," Xander said with small chuckle.

Spike went into game face and started snarling when Xander told him what Angel had said out in the hallway. Then, when Xander recounted the end of the meeting, Spike was nearly doubled over from laughter. "Pet, I'm proud of you," he said once he stopped laughing. "The poof didn't have a clue who he was messing with when he confronted you, did

he? Bet he's not going to be really popular with your friends for a while."

"That was the plan," Xander admitted. "Maybe it's time that someone else got the short end of the stick."

"You be careful around him though, pet," Spike said placing his hands on Xander's shoulders and staring at him. "He's got a nasty temper and we don't want to bring that past the soul if I'm not around to take care of him. Your friends gonna be a problem? I don't fancy getting staked outside your house."

"I don't think so, but I didn't really stick around to find out," Xander said. "Next time I'll make sure they understand not to attack you."

"Pet, you need to sleep," Spike said when Xander yawned. He shucked off his duster and boots. "I'm going to stay here for a bit. Make sure no one comes by and bothers you. Might wanna tell that slayer that there're two minions outside your house every night to guard the place. She don't need to be

killing those two. They know not to eat while here."

"You're going through a lot of trouble for me," Xander noted, watching as Spike moved on the bed without his duster.

"Told you I'd protect you didn't I? Be easier if you stayed with me, but that's up to you," Spike said fighting a smile. He was still surprised how fast the boy was opening up to him. "Now get in bed and get some sleep. You need to be rested for tomorrow."

Xander quickly realized he couldn't sleep in his jeans. "Ahhh... where are you gonna be again?"

"Right here," Spike said still on the bed. "As long as you're going to sleep I may as well get some rest too. Not gonna hurt you, pet."

Xander got out of the bed and shuffled from foot to foot nervously. He felt like a dork for asking this, but he couldn't help it. "Can you ahhh... turn around or close your eyes or something?"

"You trust me to keep my eyes closed?" Spike asked with a grin, trying to get Xander to forget his nervousness. He grabbed a pillow and pulled it over his head. "Good thing I don't need to breath," he said through the pillow.

Xander couldn't believe a deadly killer could make him laugh. In fact, Spike didn't look like an evil demon laid out on his bed with a pillow on his face. He didn't act or appear much older than Xander himself. Xander quickly undid the buttons on his jeans and started to struggle out of them.

Spike was sneaking peeks at Xander, using his hearing to tell when his face was turned away from the bed. His pet looked good out of his clothes he realized with surprise. He had expected the boy to look nice, but not this nice. Once Xander had some pajama bottoms on Spike purposefully peeked when he knew Xander would be looking. As soon as Xander caught his eyes he slammed the pillow back down, almost blocking out his chuckles.

Xander wasn't sure what came over him, but he started laughing, "No fair!" He launched himself onto the bed and landed on Spike, trying to wrestle away the pillow.

"What'd I do?" Spike asked trying to sound innocent while still laughing. He let Xander pull the pillow away. They wrestled around for a minute. Spike wasn't sure how he managed to keep it fun and non-sexual, but he did. "You still need to sleep." He finally used his strength to roll Xander onto his back. He pulled the covers up and over him leaving himself on top of the covers.

Xander was breathing heavily from their mock wrestling match. It should have felt unpleasant with Spike laying on top of him, but he was uncomfortable for another reason. His cock was starting to fill and in a haze, he shifted and kissed Spike softly on the mouth.

Surprise washed through Spike almost too fast to note. He hadn't expected this and he knew he had mere seconds to decide what to do now. With a

mental groan he decided the boy was not ready for any more yet and pulled back. "You need your sleep, pet. You're safe now," he said running his thumb over Xander's lips. He leaned in for another brief kiss before curling around his boy and starting to purr.

"Like a big cat..." Xander said with a large yawn and closed his eyes.

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Xander woke slowly the next morning with sunlight already streaming into his room. As he stretched the previous night came back to him and he grinned. Kissing a guy was more than a little strange, but he was focused on how safe Spike had made him feel. Plus, he couldn't remember when he'd slept so well. He hadn't worried about the demons outside or inside the house all night and there were no bad dreams.

He rifled through his closet and finally settled on the jeans Spike had given him. Most of his clothes were getting pretty threadbare and the final decision was his memory of the way Spike looked at him in the tight jeans.

He stared at the phone for a minute before deciding to call Giles. He asked him to set up a meeting in an hour so he could talk to them all at once. He knew if he called Willow she'd want to talk about things on the phone. At least with the sun up the meeting would be Angel free, if Angel was even welcome at the meetings now he thought with a smirk.

Since it was Saturday, Giles called the meeting at his house. On his way there, Xander was feeling pretty damn good about himself. The bruises on his face were still bright, but they would fade. What was important was that he felt good about himself for the first time in months, if not longer.

"Good morning," he said as Giles let him into the apartment. "Wow, everyone is here already and I got here early even." He picked out his usual chair

for Giles' house meeting and sat down.

"Yeah, you're usually late," Buffy noted. "What's with that? Hopped up on caffeine and sugar again?"

"No need. The Xan-man got a good, restful night of sleep. It's nice not worrying about things that go bump in the night," Xander cleared his throat.

"That's one of the things I wanted to tell you. Spike has some minions guarding my house. We'd appreciate it if you didn't go slaying them or anything. They won't eat at all on guard duty."

"You've got baddies playing guard dog on your house?" Willow asked. "That's creepy. Major bad karma."

"Not all of us have slayer strength or witchy powers. Some of us just have parents who might just help the bad guys," Xander said trying to keep from becoming bitter. They were not going to ruin his good mood if he could help it. "I just wanted to make sure you would leave Spike and the guard minions alone and make sure we were all okay after

last night."

"Angel says you're exaggerating everything," Buffy said. "He talked to us for hours and explained the situation."

"And what exactly did Angel say I was exaggerating?" Xander asked, his voice turning cold.

"We already knew he pretended to be Angelus and turn you over to Spike, but you were never in any danger," Buffy explained. "He also said he assumed the blood and bruises were from patrolling, not your father. He helped us realize that you have a problem, Xander...."

"You, you," Xander realized he was yelling and didn't even know what he wanted to say. "You don't know what went on in my house and neither does Angel. I can almost see Buffy believing him over me, but I thought you would have believed me, Willow."

"You're involved with a vampire, Xander," Willow said. She wasn't able to look him in the eyes. "We

discussed it and think it's best if you come to live with Giles, now. That way you won't have to be around your father..."

"Is there going to be room for both of us here? I mean if the whole friends with a vampire thing is so bad I'm sure Buffy should stay here too for her own protection seeing as she's dating one. Actually, Willow, you should probably stay here too. Werewolf boyfriend and all," Xander glared at them. "You sure you want all of us living with you, Giles?"

"Now Xander, please do calm down," Giles coughed uncomfortably. "Both Angel and Oz are different. They both have souls and they are the girls significant others. Are you saying you're in a relationship with that thing?"

"That 'thing' happens to be the only person who's ever figured out what was going on at my house and done anything about it. He took care of me. Didn't kill my parents when I asked him not to... I don't really care if he has a soul or not. He's treated

me better than any of you ever have, and, not that it's anyone's business, we are not having sex," Xander said.

"Of course not," Giles agreed, although he was obviously humouring Xander. "We really are sorry for not noticing your predicament at home previously, but now we're ready to rectify that. You come live with me and you'll stay safe."

"No. I'm safe enough where I am now. Only reason you want me here is because you don't like Spike. If he wasn't around you'd leave me where I was just like Angel did. Oh, and Buffy," he spun around to look at her. He was pretty sure this was another tidbit she didn't know. "If I were to have a relationship with Spike I am so not calling you mommy."

Buffy bolted out of the chair, "What you mean by that?"

"I was referring to the fact that as Spike's sire, Angel is like his father, and you are on your way to being

his mother. Though, the fact that Angel's like his dad, but let Spike fuck him is a little weird," Xander said. He was fighting a grin as Buffy's face as that sunk in.

"This is way too incestuous," Buffy snapped. "Spike is like an uber baddie and I'm sure he's lying. Why can't you understand that? You need to stay away from him."

"Thanks for being so excited that I'm happy and someone's looking out for me," Xander said bitterly as he got up. "I'm sure I'll see you all in school sometime."

"Xander! Buffy!" Giles shouted. "This temper tantrum is quite enough. Stop being such a child and see the truth."

"Explain it to me, Giles," Xander said stopping by the door. "In small words so I can understand."

"Fine.... Spike. Will. Kill. You."

"Nope. Don't think so, and, seeing as if it weren't for him I would have probably been dead two days ago, I think I'll trust him. Plus, I'm sure Angel wouldn't have used me as bait in what was actually a binding ritual that gave me to a soulless killer would he?" Xander said opening the door and walking out of the apartment.

Xander was lost when he started to walk the streets of Sunnydale. It was safer than wandering around at night, but he still was in a haze. He didn't know how long he'd been walking when he showed up around the corner from Spike's warehouse. Before he could really think about it and get scared, he knocked on the first door he could find. Spike would take care of him and none of the Scoobies would know where to look for him.

A human minion opened the door with a growl.
"What do you want?"

"Um, I was looking for Spike," Xander said nervously. "I'm Xander," he added when his request to see Spike didn't seem to get much in the way of a

response.

"Right, the Master's new pet," The minion said and let Xander pass him. "The Master said you'd be back some time. Get in off the street."

Xander wanted to glower at some minion dismissing him as a pet, but as long as it got him in to see Spike it didn't matter. He walked into the cool, almost dark warehouse and looked around. The vampires were obviously in other rooms and the main area just had three humans moving around, including the one at the door. "Can you just tell me where to find Spike?" he asked the one that had let him in.

"In the bedroom, Master's Pet..."

"Hello, I have a name which I already gave you, and I could have guessed he was in his bedroom. I just don't remember exactly where that was from the last time I was here or I wouldn't be asking now," Xander said. "I didn't come here to be treated like an idiot. I can go home or back to Giles if I want that."

"Whoa... whoa... don't get all snippy. It's just a nickname, meant in all respect. You should be happy to be the Master's Pet. Means you won't get killed or nothin'. A lot of this sorry mob would do anything to be in your place, but then, none of them look like you...."

"Get outta here!" Spike hissed at the minion in game face. He'd heard his pet come in and was awake enough to hear him being given a hard time which was not what the boy needed. "Sorry about that, pet. Won't happen again," he said taking Xander's hand. "Come back to my room."

"Hey, Spike..." Xander faltered as he stayed frozen in place. He wanted to be with Spike, but he wasn't sure if it was such a good idea right now.

"Pet, I can't stay awake long in the middle of the day," Spike said tugging on his hand but not using his strength to just drag his boy along. "Just come back so I can lie down. I don't wanna leave you out here with the minions after that one was so rude."

"I don't know if I like you calling me pet... like some sort of dog," Xander complained. He didn't have a problem with the name, but he was a little upset with the way the minion had treated him.

"S'not that, Xander," Spike said. "You're not a dog and the minion was out of line. I'll explain it to him later. I like calling you pet. Don't let one minion bollocks things up. Now, please, come back to my room with me." Spike managed to force himself into an imitation of a yawn hoping that would get the boy moving. He really wasn't too awake yet and wanted to lie back down.

Xander remembered the last time he'd shared a bed with Spike and how he'd literally purred. He wanted to hear that again. "Yeah, guess it's like the middle of the night for you.... You should go back to bed."

Spike led the now willing Xander back to his bedroom and got him sitting on the bed. "Gonna nap with me, pet?" he asked rhetorically as he pulled Xander's shoes off and moved him into the

bed. He pulled his boy up against him and started purring softly waiting for him to relax.

"I like it when you purr...." Xander said softly and he hesitated before he started to play with Spike's hair.

"Just don't go telling anyone, pet," Spike chuckled. "You're the first human to ever hear me purr. So, you want to talk about what happened with the slayer and her friends or just want to sleep?" He could smell traces of the slayer and knew his boy had gone to see at least her before he'd come to the warehouse.

"Nothing that hasn't happened before," Xander mumbled.

Spike growled for a minute then forced himself to calm down and go back to purring. "Doesn't matter, pet. If they're too blind to see how special you are it's their fault." He pulled Xander a little closer as he talked and started running a hand up and down his boy's arm. "Sleep now. Things will be better tonight."

"Could..." Xander had to stop speaking to yawn.

"Could get used to this." He felt safe with Spike and he hadn't realized how tired he was. He hadn't been sleeping much for a long time and one nights sleep wasn't enough to make up for that.

"Me too, pet," Spike whispered back just loud enough for Xander to register before he drifted off to sleep. Once he was sure his boy was asleep he let himself drift off too.

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Xander woke up with Spike sleeping on his chest and he could feel a low purr emanating from him. It was a very addicting feeling and Xander started to run his hands up and down Spike's back without opening his eyes. Slowly his hands made their way lower until they were resting on Spike's ass.

"Morning, pet," Spike said stretching slowly from

where he was resting on top of the boy. "You ready to get up and do some shopping?" He felt Xander realize where he had his hands and freeze up. With an unvoiced sigh he rolled off the boy and onto his side where he could look at him while giving Xander a chance to stop blushing and open his eyes.

"Yeah... yeah, shopping would be good," Xander said quickly. "Nice public mall."

"Gotta get you some food first. You want me to send a minion out or get something on the way?" Spike asked running a hand through Xander's hair.

"Not that hungry," Xander shrugged. He usually was always hungry, but he was still upset about what had happened with the Scoobies.

"You need to eat something," Spike said. He got up and stuck his head out the bedroom door for a few minutes. "They're bringing something for both of us. We can eat quick and then go out. Get you a real meal later."

"Really, Spike... I don't want to be to be too much trouble."

"Pet, I told you I was going to take care of you. This is no trouble at all." Spike waved the minion at door over to the bed and took the tray before waving him back out. He handed Xander the sandwich and juice off the tray. He picked up his glass of fresh blood and fought to stay out of game face when he took a sip. The boy needed to get used to him drinking blood.

Xander made a face when he saw Spike drink the glass full of blood and then picked up his sandwich. He opened the bread and looked at his suspiciously, then sniffed at it experimentally. When he figured it was regular roast beef, he shrugged and took a large bite. He mumbled with a half full mouth, "I thought you drank blood fresh?"

"Sometimes I do," Spike said. "I am a vampire, pet, but you know you're safe with me right?"

"Yeah... I'm just surprised you don't... kill people all

the time. Happy about it."

"Master Vampire here. I'm not some fledge that has to eat every night or kill every time I feed. Now finish up so we can get outta here. Store's not open all night," Spike said as he got up.

Xander stuffed the rest of the sandwich halfway into his mouth, then smiled at what he thought was a funny joke. "So, you get a big kick when people call you Master?"

Spike paused briefly when he heard his boy say 'Master.' He wondered if he could adjust himself without being noticed. "Yeah, pet, I like being called Master."

"Power freak," Xander snorted playfully. He gulped the juice down and then realized he was still hungry. "Maybe we can stop for some junk food at the mall...."

"We'll get you some real food after we're done. There are a few restaurants in town that are used to

vampire patrons." He led Xander out to his motorcycle while they were talking. "Just don't go telling the slayer about those place. The demon who owns it is Raltesh, totally harmless."

"Oh yeah?" Xander said. He was starting to accept that not every demon was dangerous. "Any of the clothing stores we going to owned by demons?"

"There are a few. They got better clothes then the mall I'm sure. Demons there are little rougher, maybe we'll try one of those stores later."

They drove to the mall on Spike's motorcycle after ten minutes of convincing Xander that it was safe. Of course, Spike noted as they walked into the mall, "If you want to be completely safe on me bike, I should get you some proper clothes for it."

"You don't have to buy me that too," Xander said as he followed Spike into the mall. "I mean you don't really have to buy me anything if you don't want to, but it is nice not shopping at a thrift store for once."

"I got lots of money, pet," Spike said and directed Xander over to an out of the way store. "Found this place when I came into town."

"Spike, that store sells leather. Like, just leather stuff," Xander protested as he was led into the store.

"Uh huh," Spike grinned widely. "That's the idea. Said I'd get you the right kit, didn't I?"

"Okay, but if I look weird I get to say no," Xander said hesitantly. He didn't get a chance to say anything else before the salesman swooped down on them and started talking to Spike about what Xander needed.

Xander wasn't exactly sure how he ended up walking out of the store with several pairs of leather pants in a bag and wearing a black leather jacket. Well, okay... maybe he did know. It might have had something to do with the look in Spike's eyes when he'd come out of the dressing room.

"You look good, pet," Spike said again. He could tell that his boy was going to have to hear it more than a few times before he believed it. From the smile he got it was starting to sink in at least a little though. He did look good, too. It was a good start at least. "Now we need to get you some t-shirts and boots." When Xander stopped suddenly looking worried he started looking around to see what had scared his boy.

There was some teenage girl watching them with a disdainful look on her face. Spike vaguely recognized her from hanging around the Slayer. "Old flame?"

"No, she doesn't talk to me other than to insult me. She kinda got sucked into the whole Scoobie thing though so she knows about Buffy and vampires and stuff," Xander said trying to angle them away from her.

Cordeila had other ideas, and, despite the large numbers of bags she carried, managed to corner them. "Never thought I'd see you here, Xander.

Don't you usually do that whole hand-me-down beggar look?"

"Watch your mouth, girl," Spike growled before Xander could answer.

Cordelia didn't back down, instead looking down her nose at Spike as if to say 'how dare you growl at me'. "Looks like your new sugar daddy has an attitude, Xander."

"He's not my sugar daddy. He's a friend, not that you'd know what that was," Xander said trying to push himself in front of Spike. He knew how good Cordy was at twisting things around and messing stuff up and he didn't want her talking to Spike.

"Oh a... 'friend'," Cordelia said, drawing out the last word with a long look at Spike's leather jacket and died hair. "Those kind of friends are always the best kind."

"Come on, Xan," Spike said taking his hand and pulling him away. "We'd best leave the bint alone

before I decide to take up snacking in public." He made sure she could hear him and see his game face flash on and off too fast for anyone else to really catch.

That was the first and only time that Cordelia voluntarily left a pair of Gucci shoes as she stumbled over her bags as she fled. She continued to stumble and ended up snapping the heel of her stilettos before she got away.

"Spike," Xander said trying not to laugh too loudly. "Spike, that was so awesome. I've never seen Queen C run away like that." He was leaning against Spike still snickering as they started to walk toward whatever store Spike had in mind next. "Did you see the look on her face?"

Spike had seen that very look thousands of times over the past century, but it was refreshing to see the humour it elicited from his boy. Spike wrapped his arm around Xander's waist and pulled him in a little closer. "Yeah, that was all for you."

Xander was practically bouncing while Spike pulled him into some store and got him several tight t-shirts. Once they were bagged and Xander had a put on the white one, he was dragged off to get a pair of nice leather boots. "You got an ID?" Xander asked after they had walked out of the shoe store.

"Yeah... why?"

"Well, I always wanted to get an earring, but dad wouldn't let me. He won't complain now so I just need an adult to sign the paperwork and I could get one tonight," Xander said. "An earring is alright isn't it?"

"Yeah," Spike tried to keep his voice normal. "More than okay. If we're gonna do though, gonna do it right. Saw a nice jewelry store across the way."

"Cool. What do you think I should get? Could get a hoop or a stud, but I guess if you're going to pay for this too you can pick something out for me if you don't mind. That way you can pick something that matches all this. We have to go get some food after

this, okay?" Xander said.

"Yeah...", Spike agreed again. He seemed to be agreeing a lot for the last little while. "Stud, definitely a stud."

"Whatever you want, Spike. I'll just sit down with the bags while you pick it out," Xander said after they got inside the store.

Spike ended up picking out a white gold stud with a bright, high quality sapphire in the middle. He made sure the salesgirl didn't mention the price to Xander and she was more than happy to accommodate the man for the commission alone.

Xander was a little nervous as the salesgirl got ready to pierce his ear and grabbed Spike's hand before she could get started. "Hey, that didn't hurt," he said once it was in. He got up to go look in one of the mirrors next to the display case after he had gotten a rundown on how to take care of it. "I like it," he said tilting his head to the side. "Is it okay if we go eat now?"

"Yeah," Spike answered yet again. He wanted to take his boy out for a fancy meal, but his face lit up when they passed some greasy food place in the mall, that he couldn't resist. There were different ways to spoil him, just as long as he was spoiled.

"Go ahead, pet," Spike said handing him some money. "Just get it to go. I'll call a minion to pick up this stuff and your food." He pulled out a cell phone while Xander hurried over to a Hot Dog on a Stick booth. Spike shook his head while he talked on the phone. Watching his boy eat those was going to be another test of his control.

When Xander came back, he had a stack of four hotdogs on a stick for himself and pushed something that was foiled wrapped across the table to Spike. "Gotcha something," he said almost embarrassedly.

"Thanks, pet. I'll eat it when we get home," Spike said smiling back at him after he peeked at the hamburger. "Minion'll be here to get our stuff by

the time we get out to the bike." He watched Xander almost inhale the first three hotdogs while they walked and thought he had escaped unscathed. He slowed down on the last one though and was just nibbling at it as they walked through the parking lot.

Spike almost lost it when Xander pulled out a packet of ketchup out of his pocket and put it on the end of the hotdog and slowly started to lick and nibble at it.

"Is there someone here?" Xander asked looking around when he heard Spike growl. "We've never had to patrol the mall before."

"No one around," Spike answered.

"Okay," Xander said around the corn dog he'd gone back to eating. "I thought I heard you growl. Hey, can I come back to your place for the night? I know my parents will leave me alone now, but I don't want anyone to be able to find me yet. If you don't mind me being there."

"Be happy to have you around, pet," Spike sighed and adjusted his crotch again. His boy was definitely a tease when he came out of his shell. If he had his way, Xander wouldn't be going back to his parent's house again. "You make things interesting."

Xander finished off his last hotdog while Spike passed the clothes over to a minion. He was just reaching for the helmet when he remembered his new earring. "Um, Spike, I'm don't think I'm supposed to wear a helmet with the earring. It's will push it all out of place and the girl said not to touch it other then to spin it around for as long as possible."

Spike motioned for the minion to take off and the idiot knew that meant quickly. Spike reached out and grabbed Xander's chin lightly. "Trust me?"

"Of course I trust you, Spike," Xander said. "You've been nicer to me then anyone else ever has."

Spike leaned forward and licked the pierced ear

slowly, even drawing the lobe into his mouth and sucking on it gently. He wanted to heal the small wound and the hint of Xander's blood intoxicating.

Xander was so focused on wondering why Spike's tongue felt so good on his ear that he didn't notice the faint ache from the piercing fade for a minute. "Wh-wh-what are you doing?" he stammered out as he felt himself flush.

Spike nipped the lobe softly and whispered, "Just taking away the pain..."

When Spike released his ear, Xander twisted around to look at him which left their faces inches apart. "Thanks, it feels like it's all healed," he said softly while he tried to fight another wave of blushing.

"It is," Spike whispered again. "I can keep all your pain away."

"Please..." Xander breathed softly and he was the one who leaned forward and touch his lips to Spike's. The vampire's promise was like the lure of

the sirens. To be safe... to have someone to love him was everything he always wanted.

Spike brought one hand up to cradle Xander's head as he slowly deepened the kiss. His boy tasted so good and he hadn't expected him to be willing this fast. He carefully flicked his tongue over Xander's lips waiting for any sign he was moving too fast. He wasn't going to scare the boy away now.

Xander surprised Spike when he was the one who deepened the kiss and wasn't hesitant about searching out Spike's tongue. He may have been tentative about starting a relationship, but he was a young man who knew what he wanted at this exact moment and that was Spike.

Xander moaned into Spike's mouth when he felt the kiss deepen. He was lost in the kiss until he felt Spike's pushing up against him. "Maybe we should go now?" he asked with his eyes on the ground. He wasn't sure he what was going on and the ride back to the warehouse would give him some time to think.

"Yeah... yeah, that would be a good idea," Spike agreed, trying to keep his composure. He could have had sex here without hesitation, but his boy had pulled back. Besides, seduction was much more practical when there was a nice big bed nearby.

"Thanks... for taking me out," Xander said after he'd gotten on the bike behind Spike. "It was fun."

"Get used to it, only the best for you...." Spike kick started the bike and tore off, but more carefully than usual.

~*~*~*~*~

The next morning, just before the sun came up, Spike had Xander cradled in his arms. His boy had fallen asleep hours ago, but Spike couldn't force himself to sleep and was waiting for the sunrise to make it happen. Xander had kissed him twice more and was just wearing a pair of boxers and a t-shirt

now. He hadn't even said anything when Spike had slipped into bed with him wearing just boxers. Spike ran his fingers through his boy's hair and smiled. If anyone else had spent a night teasing him like that... but he knew Xander was not doing it on purpose. The boy was just working things out and Spike was pretty sure in a day or two he'd be ready to give himself to Spike.

Xander woke up slowly and didn't panic when he realized where he was and who he was with. He felt comfortable deep in Spike's lair, knowing no one could hurt him. Maybe he would stay for awhile.

"Morning, pet," Spike said when Xander blinked his eyes. "Not quite ready to sleep vampire hours yet I see."

"Always liked the night...," Xander said with a large yawn. "Not so bad."

"I'll be mostly asleep soon. What do you want to do today? Any of the human minions will handle whatever you want while I'm asleep, or you can just

stay here if you're still tired," Spike said, still wrapped around his boy.

"Sleeping for awhile doesn't sound too bad...."
Xander didn't want to dislodge Spike's octopus-like limbs.

"Kay, wake me up if you decide to get up," Spike said after a slow, sleepy kiss. "I'm about to go to sleep."

"I'll stay," Xander said and decided maybe it was time to see if he could watch over Spike while he slept.

Xander spent a few hours just drifting in and out of sleep and watching Spike. He looked peaceful while asleep and was still protective of Xander. He was completely still unless Xander moved then he'd tighten his arms just a little and mumble something. He took the time to think about how safe he felt with Spike and by noon had made up his mind to move in if the offer was still open. "Spike, can you wake up a minute?" he asked shaking him slightly.

Spike wasn't a "morning" person. Normally he'd snap and snarl at anyone who dared wake him up unless it was an emergency. But this was Xander and he managed to sound somewhat civil when he mumbled. "Pet?"

"Remember when you said I could stay here all the time? If you still want me, I was going to go to my house and get the stuff I really wanted and move it back here," Xander said nervously.

Without missing a beat, Spike mumbled back, "If you wait til night, I'll come with you."

"I know, Spike," Xander said. "But I'm awake now, and I want to do this on my own. My dad won't even be home so you don't have to worry about him."

"But it'll take you at least two trips to move all your stuff," Spike tried to negotiate a little now that he was more awake.

"I gotta do this on my own. It would be cool if I could borrow the car that minion was driving last night though. Then I could just load it up and get it all at once. I don't have much I want to keep but it would take at least two trips to carry it back," Xander said.

"You mean it'll all fit in the car?" Spike asked. Obviously the boy had fewer possessions than he'd thought.

"Yeah, I don't have that much stuff, and I don't want to keep everything I have. Can I go? I won't be gone long," Xander asked.

"I'll send one of the human minions with you to help," Spike said. That way his boy would be protected and wouldn't have to do any heavy lifting.

"Okay, someone to drive would be nice. He can wait in the car and guard my stuff after I get the first load down," Xander said giving Spike a quick kiss.

"I'm going to go now so you can go back to sleep and I'll be all done when you wake up."

"Alright, pet, but we're gonna go shopping again, and you'll be able to get whatever ya want."

"Thanks," Xander said as he wiggled out of Spike's grasp. "Can I just tell one of the minions what I want? Or do I need to send one in here or something?"

"They know to listen to you," Spike said. He had instructed them to follow Xander's wishes in everything that wouldn't cause Spike harm.

Xander observed the human minion as he drove and noted that most of them looked relatively the same. There was nothing special about the human minions that Spike kept around and that pleased Xander. He definitely wouldn't be happy if all of Spike minions and fledges were young and attractive.

He checked carefully for any sign of his father's car as they pulled up. It looked like no one was home so he told the minion to wait in the car. Once he got

up to his room and looked around, he realized there was even less he wanted than he thought. He shoved a few of his clothes into a pillowcase. The few comic books and toys he'd managed to save were packed into his suitcase and he was done. With everything packed he headed back downstairs, surprised at how easy it was to just leave the house he'd grown up in.

When he went out on the front porch he found the human minion cowering on the ground in front of Buffy. The middle aged man was bleeding and Buffy was about to kick him swiftly in the ribs when he yelled out for her to stop.

"What's going on here, Xander?" Buffy asked ignoring the minion to focus on him.

"I'm leaving," Xander said. "Leave him alone."

"What, you think you're moving in with Spike or something? I don't think so. Angel warned me that you were insecure enough that Spike might be able to fool you so I'm just going to take you to Giles and

we'll keep you there until we can fix you," Buffy said advancing on him.

"Fix me?" Xander demanded. He clutched the suitcase in front of him with an iron grip. "There's nothing to fix. What are you going to do... drag me away?"

"Xander, don't make this difficult," Buffy said advancing on him. "We know what's best for you and Angel will help you get over Spike. He can explain what he's done to you."

"What, he gave me away now he wants me back?" Xander snorted sarcastically as he started to back up. "Leave me alone, Buffy."

"I tried to be nice, but I've had enough of you badmouthing my boyfriend while you want to live with Spike. I guess with all the other problems you've caused by attracting even more demons for us to deal with I shouldn't be surprised. You can either come with me quietly or I'm going to drag you back before you cause any more problems,"

Buffy said, reaching out to grab his arm.

Xander threw his suitcase at Buffy hard and stumbled away from her. "Stay away!" he shouted. "You don't want to cause trouble? Fine. Let me go to Spike and you'll never see me again!"

Buffy was so focused on Xander she didn't notice the minion getting up behind her. He was human so she didn't get any warning from her slayer sense when he smashed her over the head with a potted plant. "Hurry," he hissed at Xander while grabbing for the suitcase. "She's a slayer and will wake up fast."

They rushed into the car and the tires spun in their haste to get away. Xander was in the passenger seat and he was panting heavily. There was no going back now. She'd wanted to turn him over to Angel and who knows what would have happened to him then. His head hung and he clutched at his temples with his hands.

"May I ask a favour?" the minion asked timidly once

they were almost back to the warehouse.

Xander was startled out of his despair and turned his head. "What?"

"Slayer's going to be hunting me now. I knocked her out. If you ask Spike to let me stay in the warehouse from now on he'll do it for you," the minion said.

"I can do that," Xander agreed. At least this particular minion would protect him, even if it was to get Spike's favour.

Once they had the car pulled into the side garage Xander grabbed his pillowcases of clothes and the minion got the suitcase over Xander's protests. The guy looked pretty beat up from Buffy, but he insisted he was fine. Xander tried to be quiet as he walked into Spike's bedroom, but he could see him moving as soon as he stepped inside the room.

"S-Spike?" Xander didn't realize that he was shaking and that his voice cracked.

"Pet, what happened?" Spike asked. He was fighting sleep but he knew Xander was upset at something and he forced himself out of bed. As soon as he scented the air he could smell blood, and he went into game face before he realized it wasn't Xander's. He let his face slip back to normal and wrapped his arms around Xander, pulling him toward the bed.

"She tried to take me to Angel," Xander started to babble and clung to Spike. "She said they needed to fix me..."

"Bloody hell, pet, not letting you out without me for a while." Spike pulled off Xander's clothes. Once he had him stripped down to his boxers he pulled him in bed and under the covers. "You're safe here," he said before starting to purr.

Xander was responding to the welcoming sound, but he'd come to a decision on the way home. The old Xander was dead and his life was forever changed. Spike offered him everything he always wanted and it was time he took it. There was

nothing left to be afraid of. He shifted until he was lying on top of Spike and just looked down at him, studying the face that he didn't see as evil.

"Can you change?" he whispered.

"What do you mean, pet?" Spike whispered back. He could feel the anxiety in the boy and the question was confusing him. He didn't think Xander wanted him to go into game face.

Xander started to caress his fingers over the bridge of Spike's nose. "I want to see the other you... show me?"

"Whatever you want, Xan," Spike said shifting easily into game face. His purring deepened and roughened as he felt his boy's fingers ghost across the ridges on his face. "What's this about?" He didn't want to push things but he couldn't figure out what was going on.

Xander didn't answer, but leaned over and slowly ran his tongue over the ridges. He kept his eyes

open and locked with the blue eyes that he had watched turn gold.

"Pet," Spike groaned as he got uncomfortably hard. "You sure about this? I don't want to take advantage of you if you're just upset." Even as he was asking for permission he was running his hands up and down Xander's back in slow strokes.

"Do you love me?" Xander suddenly demanded.

"Yes, pet, I do. Wouldn't be asking permission and treating you like this if I didn't," Spike said quietly. "I want to keep you with me and safe forever if you allow it."

Xander leaned in closer until his breath was ghosting over his Spike's ear. "I dreamed about you biting me...."

"Do you want to be mine," Spike said fighting not to growl. "To be my only childe forever." While he was talking he brought one hand up to tangle lightly in Xander's hair. "I want you, pet. Won't ask if you're

sure again after you say yes one more time."

There was no hesitation on Xander's part. "Yes." He'd been on the brink of suicide when Spike had found him and the bruises were still fading from the last beating his father had given him. Spike gave him the one thing he'd never felt before... hope.

"Love you, Xander," Spike said. He pushed his face back into human guise and pulled his boy in for a kiss. No fangs until he was ready to turn the boy. There would be plenty of time for that later. He'd control himself this time to make sure there was no fear or pain at the moment he claimed him.

Between kisses that Xander returned passionately, he whispered back, "I love you, too."

Spike flipped them over so he was on top of Xander and started kissing his way down Xander's neck.

"When it's time, I'll claim you right here," he whispered when he'd worked his way down to where Xander's shoulder and neck met. He scraped blunt teeth lightly against the skin before continuing

onto Xander's chest.

"Been thinking about this, too...", Xander moaned lightly. "A lot. Didn't want to admit it to myself... but, I..."

Spike hummed against Xander's chest in answer and sped up his movement down his stomach. Much as he liked listening to his boy talk he wanted to get him to communicating with moans. As his tongue circled around Xander's bellybutton, Spike slipped his boy's boxers off without letting the material or his hands touch his cock.

"Sex is good. Much better idea than talking," Xander said as he caught on quickly, and tried to wiggle around so his cock would brush against Spike.

Spike grabbed his hips to hold him still then moved down to start kissing his way up Xander's cock. Once he got to the top he used his tongue to swipe off his first real taste of his boy. "Like that, pet?" he asked before swallowing him all the way down.

"Gah..." Xander only managed to gurgle. Spike was trying to suck his brain out through his cock.

Spike had to pull off way too soon, but he could tell that Xander was close enough as it was. Grabbing the lube that had been wedged under the mattress since Xander's first night in the room, Spike moved up and started kissing his boy again. He let their cocks brush together just enough to keep Xander panting into the kiss while he started running a lube coated finger up and down between Xander's cheeks.

Xander was a little scared. This was the first time he'd be having sex with anyone, but he was all about losing his virginity, especially with Spike. He shifted his legs wider to allow Spike better access.

Spike moaned into the kiss as his finger slipped inside Xander and was wrapped in heat. As soon as he felt Xander start to relax he started working a second finger in. "Soon, pet," he whispered. "Then we'll be together forever."

"Forever..." Xander breathed heavily. He arched his back at the promise and the feelings of pleasure washing over him. "Can't believe you want me... no one ever wants me..."

"I want you," Spike said before lifting himself up. Three fingers were starting to move freely inside Xander and he could tell his boy was ready. He lifted Xander's legs up onto his shoulders and placed his cock at Xander's opening. "Open your eyes pet," he said as he started to push in. "Need you to watch until we're done."

Xander opened his eyes obediently and gasped softly when he saw how beautiful Spike's eyes were. The blue irises were flecked with gold and they memorized Xander. "Master..." he breathed out reverently.

"Gods, pet," Spike growled as the combination of sliding all the way into his boy and hearing him say 'Master' forced his game face fully out. "You're perfect." He stilled his movement and waited for Xander to get used to his cock.

"Only because I'm yours...," Xander answered back and would have tried to force Spike's cock deeper if he could move more freely.

"You were always perfect, pet," Spike said. He'd felt Xander's movement and started thrusting. He'd mapped out the location of his boy's prostate, but wanted to wait until he was buried in him before stimulating it. With his first thrust he rubbed as much of his cock along it as he could and was rewarded with a moan that shook Xander's whole body.

"Again!" Xander demanded. He might have been a virgin, but that didn't mean he was some timid little mouse.

Spike didn't answer, but started driving into him repeatedly. He could tell that neither of them would last much longer so he moved Xander's legs from his shoulders to around his waist. "Almost time," he growled out as he lowered his face to Xander's neck and started lick the area he was going to mark.

Xander tilted his chin up to further expose his neck to Spike. "Make me belong to you... Master." He'd heard the minions call Spike that, and now it felt right for him use the title. Not out of fear, but respect and love.

Spike's fangs slid into Xander just as they both started to come. Spike made the feeding as pleasurable as possible and by the time both of their orgasms had died off Xander was almost drained. A few more mouthfuls and Spike brought his head up to tear his wrist open. He whispered how much he loved Xander over and over while his boy eagerly fed from him. The pull of blood from his veins was almost becoming painful by the time Xander stopped and went still. Spike knew he'd given him more than three times as much blood as he'd been instructed was proper, but with Angel and Buffy out there he wanted his boy to be almost as strong as him.

Spike hungered for blood. He felt groggy and tired; sure he looked more deathly pale than normal. He

had enough strength to shout for a minion to bring his Master blood before he collapsed next to his new Childe.

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Spike was just beginning to get his strength back as morning approached. He'd drank more blood over the night than he could ever remember drinking before. He was just watching his boy and running his hands over his chest. He didn't expect him to wake up until the next night at the earliest so he was shocked when Xander rolled his head onto Spike's shoulder and mumbled something before falling asleep right before the sun came up.

Spike was in the over protective stage that came with turning a new Childe. He wouldn't sleep until Xander woke up and stayed awake. With the creation of a new minion, it just took a quick nip and let them have the smallest amount of his blood, but Xander was going to be a cherished and spoiled

Childe.

Xander moved closer to being awake when Spike shifted under him. He somehow knew the sun was up and he needed to sleep but he wanted Spike. Instinctively he nuzzled at Spike's neck still not really awake.

A new vampire Childe was like a human infant in that they had the constant hunger to feed from their creator. Most Sires would turn their Childer away simply because they didn't want them to be too powerful. The emotions of a new Childe were volatile and that action was seen as rejection. It caused the Childe to rebel which in turn caused their Sire to punish them and it turned into a cruel cycle that ended with a new psychopathic vampire.

Xander moaned happily in his sleep when he felt Spike pressing his face against his neck. He didn't register the words telling him to feed but he could read the permission in his Sire's touch. His new fangs barely broke the skin as he drank so slowly Spike couldn't feel the actual blood loss.

Spike was instantly hard and knew the sensation of his Childe feeding would be enough to keep him up all day. He signaled for more blood when one of the minions came in to check on them as instructed.

Xander was only taking a trickle of blood now, more nursing for comfort than anything else. Spike smiled indulgently and stroked his hands through Xander's hair. He knew Xander was going to be needy and he was looking forward to that.

It was another three hours before Spike felt Xander's fangs slide out of his neck. His boy's mouth stayed fastened on the same spot even without the lure of blood. Spike's cock throbbed every time Xander's body forgot it didn't need to breathe anymore and air brushed across the fading bite marks. Spike felt the utter exhaustion of noon pass, and, a few hours after the sun began its journey back down, he felt Xander's fangs slice back into him to continue nursing on his blood.

His minions kept bringing him fresh blood to replace

the pints Xander drank. He estimated it must have shortly after sunset when Xander started to stir. He wondered what kind of Childe Xander would be.

"Sire," Xander said softly as soon as he woke up and lifted his face from Spike's neck. He could feel the air brushing against his skin and hear the minions moving around outside the room. It was almost overwhelming, but as long as he was looking into his Sire's eyes nothing could bother him. He reached one hand out hesitantly towards Spike's neck, and, when he got a nod to continue, gently stroked the spot he had been feeding from all day.

"Childe..." Spike answered softly. "Still hungry, pet?" He knew he was haggard, but he'd never turn away his Childe.

"No, Sire, I'm not hungry," Xander answered. "It's... I'm... I still feel like me just more somehow. I thought being turned would change me into something different?"

Spike continued to pet Xander's hair. "Nah, not

someone different. You're still you, just more powerful and you don't have all those normal human hang-ups. You can protect yourself now."

Xander's eyes started to glaze as he leaned into Spike's hand. "Need you, Sire," he moaned as one hand went down to stroke Spike's cock. "Please, Sire."

"See? You're inhabitations are gone...," Spike laughed happily. "Let me show you what a century of experience can do..."

~*~*~*~*~

Several hours later a very satisfied Spike relaxed under the spray of the shower while his Childe cleaned him. Xander was very eager and very happy. The only time he'd gotten upset out of all the things they'd tried had been when Spike mentioned who he'd learned one of his tricks from. It seemed the mention of any of Spike's past lovers

earned a growl and a glare from his boy. They need to get cleaned up and go out though. His boy wanted to hunt.

"You want to stay in Sunnydale for a while, pet?" Spike asked. If the answer was yes, then he'd have to teach his first hunting lesson to his Childe.

"For a few days at least if we can. I don't want Willow to have to worry about me," Xander said. "And I want to say goodbye to them and maybe scare the hell out of my father." The last was delivered with an evil smirk.

"If we decide to settle in one place for a while, you'll have to learn how to drink blood without killing your victim," Spike said, patting Xander's ass playfully. "Doesn't draw as much attention. Of course, we can always travel wherever ya want... see the world."

"It will be easy to go wherever we want won't it?" Xander said excitedly. "You have years of experience and I know all about how watchers and

slayers operate. Plus, as long as we aren't killing people they shouldn't be too worried about us."

"Got some place special in mind?" Spike would take his Childe wherever he wanted to go.

"Maybe England?" Xander asked. "I'd like to see where you grew up and hear about the London you knew, Sire." He turned off the water and started drying Spike off. "Are we going to hunt soon? It's Buffy's night to patrol the north side of town so if we head to the southern part we can be undisturbed."

"Wear your new clothes for your Sire." Spike turned off the shower and started to dry Xander off with a fluffy towel. He had a feeling that from now on he wouldn't be staying in run down warehouses or crypts with Xander to take care of. "And I'll teach you the joy of hunting those who prey on their own kind. Maybe some pimps are on the menu tonight...."

"Yes, Sire," Xander said, purring into Spike's touch

as he was dried. He went into the bedroom and pulled on the pair of black leather pants Spike had gotten him and then the boots. He thumbed through the solid t-shirts for a minute before deciding he really didn't need a shirt. He shrugged his new leather jacket on, letting it hang open and went over to watch Spike dress.

Spike was just about to pull on a shirt when he saw Xander standing there watching him. "Definitely like that look on you, pet," he moaned and threw his own shirt on to the floor. "Why not make a matched set?"

"I'm not sure," Xander said with a frown. "I may be too young to focus on anything other than my Master when he's showing all that skin." He managed to keep a straight face as walked over to Spike and ghosted a hand over his chest, not quite touching until he had permission. He couldn't believe how fun this was. He'd trusted Spike to take care of him after turning him, but he hadn't thought it would be this fun.

Spike covered Xander's hand with his own until it pressed right over his heart. "That's the idea," he grinned. "Now I gotta teach you about sex in public places...."

"It's going to take years and years to teach me all these things and make sure I remember them, Sire," Xander said grinning as they walked out of the bedroom.

There were two minions lounging near the door who immediately stood up when their Master and new Childe walked into the room. One was the human, middle aged man who had rescued Xander from Buffy. He visibly sucked in his gut when Xander neared.

Spike felt Xander tense for the briefest second when the minions focused on him before relaxing against him. "Gather all but the outer guards in the main room," Spike said to the minions. "Time to meet everyone, pet. They'll obey you like they obey me."

Xander leaned in close and whispered back, "And I'll obey you, too."

"Careful, pet, or we're going to skip up to the sex in front of minions lesson," Spike whispered as they walked into the main room of the warehouse. Spike looked over the close to twenty-five minions gathered in the room proudly. This was the largest group of minions he'd had in a long time and most of them were actually pretty useful. If it was possible he planned to take most of them with him when they left.

"Spike?" Xander rubbed his hip against Spike's hip. One of the minions had done him a favour and it was time for his reward. He pointed to the minion and whispered in his Sire's ear. "That one saved me from Buffy."

Spike looked at the human minion and motioned for him to come forward. "The human minion who took on the slayer and knocked her unconscious. That's most impressive," Spike said. "My Childe told me you wished to avoid contact with the slayer

from now on so, until we leave, you are excused from any duties outside the warehouse unless you want to go out." It was a pretty big reward to give a minion but Spike figured that, more than anything else, would inspire the others to protect his boy with their lives.

"Thank you, Master Spike..." the man beamed gratefully and then turned to Xander. "Thank you, Master Xander."

"Right then, speaking of leaving, that's what we are all doing soon. Start getting the place packed up. When we get back from hunting the rest of you can go out and hunt. Stick to the south side tonight and stick to those who deserve to die," Spike said. "No need to get the slayer anymore pissed off than she is."

"Yeah, that's my job!" Xander snorted. Before he left town, he was certainly going to confront Buffy.

~*~*~*~*~

The next night Spike woke up just before his Childe and spent a few minutes staring at him. He'd been bloody gorgeous on the hunt the previous night. To be honest, Spike wasn't sure he'd been needed. The boy already seemed to know almost everything he needed to about hunting and a lot of other stuff. Then again, Xander was probably one of the most knowledgeable vampires at their turning ever. How many willing vampires had a few years of vampire hunting experience?

Xander might be more powerful than the average childe, but he was also more dependent than most childer. Sure he could go out and survive on his own, but he didn't want to. He was a willing and treasured Childe who had no desire to be away from his Sire. He had no reason to fear Spike.

Spike felt his boy start to wake and nuzzle at his neck. "Yes, Childe," he whispered and let him take a few mouthfuls of blood. That was followed by a kiss and then Spike reluctantly pushed himself into a

seated position. "Almost dark, pet. You still want to call the witch and have them come over here? It could get dangerous, but we should be fine. I don't think Angel will want to kill you and he'll know killing me right now would be really bad for you."

"If you don't wish that, Sire, then I won't do it," Xander said. "But I'd like to say goodbye to Willow and I'd like to... I'm not sure why I want to see the others. I want them to see me like this... I want them to fear me."

"They should fear you, but they may hate you too, pet," Spike said handing him a cell phone.

"Hate is better than nothing and that's what I was... I was a big fat nothing to them," Xander said as he took the cell phone from his Sire. "I want people to notice me now, Sire. I won't be invisible anymore."

"No, pet, you'll never be invisible again," Spike said softly. While Xander got on the phone he went over the plan with the minions. He wasn't taking any chances tonight. On top of the minions guarding

them, Xander was supposed to let him talk to Angel after he had talked to Willow. Hopefully he'd convince the rest of them that this was no more than a meeting and they'd be safe if they didn't start anything.

Xander flipped the cell phone shut and looked somberly at Spike, some of his new confidence weakening. "How can they still make me feel that way when I don't have a soul?"

Spike took the phone and started dialing his sire. "Just because you don't have a soul doesn't mean you don't have feelings. You were turned willingly and without pain. You're a lot more human than most vampires."

Angel answered his phone with a short snap. "What?"

"Just letting you know I don't want any trouble, peaches. Xander wants to talk to his friends somewhere he feels safe. You've got my word none of me or mine will start anything so keep your

slayer and her friends in line alright," Spike said. He put enough menace in his voice that Angel would know he was ready for trouble if it came to that.

"Remind me why I made you again?" Angel growled on his end. "You were always so demanding."

"I've given my word, Angel. You know I won't break it, but if any of you start anything it will end badly for some of you, if not all of you," Spike said. "I'd rather not risk me or my boy getting hurt, but if you can't control your slayer we'll be ready."

"I promise not to start anything," was all Angel said. In other words, he was threatening that if Spike started something, he would finish it. "You still in the same hovel?"

"Yeah, bring them on over. We'll be waiting," Spike said hanging up. "We got a few minutes before they get here, pet." Spike turned to Xander. "Let's go sit down. One of the minions will show them in."

When the Scoobies were shown into the room by

a wary minion, they saw Spike lounging in an overstuffed couch in front of a neat fire in a barrel. Xander was lying down with his head resting in Spike's lap and still wearing the leather pants and jacket, with no t-shirt.

They all looked shocked, but it was Angel who figured it out the fastest. He narrowed his eyes as realized just how short a time it had been since Buffy had seen the boy in the sunlight. Spike had to have fed him massive amounts of blood for him to wake up that early, and the boy had to have potential to be a powerful Master Vampire on top of that. "Remember what I told you," he hissed to Buffy and the rest. He hadn't expected Xander to be turned and things could get messy.

Xander didn't move right away, instead he was too busy purring in Spike's lap. He soon arched his back and rubbed his face against Spike's crotch. "They're here, Master..."

Spike ignored the shocked gasps and smiled at his boy. "Say what you need to say, pet," Spike said,

pulling Xander up so he was sitting in his lap. He made sure to keep one arm around the boy so he couldn't get out of arms reach. He had to keep him close so he could protect him.

"You don't need to 'rescue' me anymore," Xander smirked at Buffy. "Don't need or want to be rescued from the perfection I've found."

"Xander, what's going on?" Willow asked taking a step forward. "You're acting really friendly with Spike. What did he do to you?"

"He honoured me by making me his Childe," Xander said plainly and rubbed up against Spike purposefully. He wasn't ashamed of what he was now. This was his destiny.

"But Buffy saw you two days ago. If he had turned you after that you'd still be sleep," Giles said interrupting the girls. While he spoke he was looking back and forth between Angel and Spike.

Spike continued to caress his Childe's back to

comfort him. "None of your business, git."

"I just wanted you all to know I was happy here and to say goodbye," Xander said leaning back into Spike. "And to say thank you to Angel for giving me to Spike. I was pretty upset at the time, but I guess you knew it was for the best, didn't you, Angel?"

"William, you turned the little bastard?" Angel growled, stalking towards his own Childe. "What were you thinking? And then you go and give him too much blood..."

"Careful, Sire," Spike bit the word off harshly. "You know the rules as well as I do and you freely gave him to me to do whatever I wanted with. I gave him a choice in spite of that, and now it's my choice how I raise my Childe." Spike was pulling Xander behind him while he talked and nodded to the minions that were ringing the interior of the warehouse. They moved out of the shadows ready to attack if needed.

"Angel!" Buffy snapped. "He's not worth it. Xander's

dead. I'm not willing to risk you for that... thing."

"Buffy, that's still Xander," Willow shouted at her.
"We just have to get rid of Spike and fix him somehow."

"There's nothing to fix!" Xander hissed, changing into game face. He was too young of a fledging to be able to control it yet. "I'm not evil! I just see things more clearly now!"

"It's all right, pet. They're not going to hurt you," Spike said softly. Once his boy had calmed down he snarled at all of them in game face. "You lot just can't leave him alone, can you? Ignored him and never realized what was going on under your noses. Now that he's happy you want to take it away to make yourselves feel better. My boy has said his goodbyes, peaches, so get them out of here. We won't cause any problems before we leave town."

"Xander..." Giles tried to intercede. "You seem reasonable enough. Now maybe you want to..." He hesitated when both Spike and Xander growled.

"...need to stay with... your Sire, but wouldn't you like your soul back?"

"No," Xander growled. "I don't need it. I'm still me... just more. You don't have to worry, I won't be eating anyone who doesn't deserve it, and I think Spike's going to do the same." He moved so he was standing shoulder to shoulder with his Sire. "And even if you do find some way to soul me like Angel I'll just find a way to get rid of it. I'm happy."

Giles sighed heavily and his shoulders slumped. He turned the rest of his group and said in a saddened tone, "Then the boy we know is dead. Let's remember him the way he was."

As his former friends trooped out of the building without another word Xander realized they didn't really matter. He burrowed up against his Sire and nuzzled his neck, silently asking permission.

"Go on, Childe," Spike purred encouragement. "I'm your family now."

The End