Rating: R

Characters: Spike/Xander

Prompt: #32 Champagne

Warnings: m/m sex, some het sex, slight Buffy bashing *snicker*, passing mention of Spuffy *cough gag cough* but it's for a good reason, I swear! Also, some Bangel *gags some more*

Disclaimer: It may come as a surprise but I'm not Joss Whedon or Mutant Enemy and therefore I do not own Spike or any of his many shagging and verbal sparring partners. I weep for the injustice of it all and play with these characters in the fiction I write because this is pretty much all the fun I have.

Beta'd by kitty_poker1

An Orange Day

by

Eyezrthewindows

Part One
"Happy fucking Christmas to me," he growled to himself, glaring at the endless cloud of white flakes falling from the sky where they shouldn't be.

It was southern California! It wasn't supposed to snow here!

But it had. And it was.

And here he was, out on the extremely dangerous road on an errand that apparently couldn't wait until the weather wasn't so shitty.

Spike grimaced as he felt the tires slide against the icy road for about the hundredth time -- it got no less frightening as it continued to happen and anxiety rushed through his veins in a cold wash like acid. His fingers tightened around the steering wheel, knuckle bones white as his state of panic rose another notch. He wasn't used to driving in these conditions and wouldn't have been out had his lovely girlfriend not wanted something.

Wasn't that how it always went? The woman
wanted something and the man had to go out and get it or end up sleeping on the couch and not getting any for a week or more.

Not that he was getting any now. He should've just said no. It wouldn't have made any difference.

A sharp, thorough tongue lashing would sure to be at the forefront of all of his punishment if he didn't get the expensive champagne Buffy wanted.

Sometimes, he wondered if it was worth it -- being with her. She seemed to be more trouble than not.

But at least he wasn't in love with her. That was something.

With a mental shrug, he went back to searching through the falling snow for an open shop. Most were closed because of the unforeseen meteorological circumstances; also, it was Christmas Eve, and he really couldn't blame them.

They were the smart ones.
He'd be at home tucked away in front of the radiator with a blanket and hot cocoa with those neat miniature marshmallows, maybe with Buffy tucked under one arm, if he could be.

Snow fell thickly. His windshield wipers worked tirelessly and noisily to rid his windscreen of the sticky, vision-impairing stuff. Everything was covered in it and so was his car by now.

The roads were slick with ice.

The tires whirled in place as traction was lost and he skidded yet again across the road into the oncoming lane.

Thankfully, he'd seen very few come out during this type of weather. Most people were too smart to pull themselves from warm houses and warm beds and telly.

He was beginning to question his own intelligence in acquiescing to go out in this shit.
He sighed and cranked the heater up to the final notch -- he'd been saving that final turn of the knob but now he needed it. His knees shook and his fingers felt almost numb and his damn car wasn't putting out enough heat to combat the extreme cold.

He blinked and saw a lighted store front.

It was like an oasis in the desert to him.

"Christ, let it be a bloody wine shop. Hell, Wal-Mart would look good about now, even if that place is evil and buying something from there would get me slapped," he grumbled to himself, squinting to see what the sign above the shop said.

It was a restaurant, he noted with a slump of his shoulders, but perhaps they could be accommodating and just sell him a bottle of something so he could get back and thaw out his balls.
He nearly hit a lamp post as he was parking, the wheels slipping and sliding as he barely tapped the brakes to stop the car, and breathed a sigh of relief now that half the journey was over and he was almost home free.

He slouched into the eatery with his collar turned up and his face buried in the not even remotely warm interior of his duster.

Snow fell down the back of his shirt, making every hair on his body stand at attention, and he grumbled to himself as he tried to ineffectually pull his collar up a little more.

He really needed to get a better winter coat -- even if he'd never needed it before, there was no way of knowing if there'd be another season like this and it always paid to be prepared.

Looking cool in his nifty duster had had a price this time: his comfort.

His fingers were red and dry and throbbing -- like
the rest of his exposed skin -- when he slammed into the warmth of the building and he blinked snowflakes from his eyelashes and panted as he tried to catch his breath.

What he wouldn't give for a set of thick gloves, scarf and knit hat right about now.

He looked around through watering eyes and cleared his parched throat. Sniffling, he hoped his nose didn't begin to run because he didn't have any tissues on him.

A girl with an extremely bored expression on her face looked up at him, snapping her gum and arching an eyebrow. She was wearing a cloth headband to warm her ears, a scarf over her regular work uniform and some of those fingerless gloves on well manicured hands. "Can I help you? Want something hot to drink or eat or just want in from the cold? Have to order something if you're gonna stay here, though... Sorry."

Spike rolled his eyes at her lack of charity and
compassion for a poor bloke out in the cold and eased closer. Holding himself through the shaking he couldn't seem to stop, he asked, "You have wine?"

The girl perked up a little at the prospect of selling him something. "Sure thing! What're you looking for?"

"More in the way of champagne, actually. The good kind."

"Hmmm...I think I've got just the thing. I'll be right back, sir." She bounced off, ponytail swinging like a pendulum.

Spike blinked after her, briefly hypnotized by the twitching braid, shrugged and seated himself at one of the many empty tables.

When she returned with a bottle, smiling broadly, he groaned and stood up after only a few minutes of being able to rest in the warmth.
He shook out his throbbing hands and locked his knees.

She handed him the bottle and grinned up at him hopefully.

He looked it over to imply that he knew something about this sort of thing -- not that he did, he just didn't want to seem stupid -- then put on a careful mask and tried not to wince as he asked, "What'll this run me, pet?"

"Hundred thirty-five."

And that didn't include tax or the hefty little tip she'd probably expect for 'helping' him out.

He'd have staggered and fallen if he hadn't been holding such an expensive bottle of champagne. He barely kept his composure, eyes only widening slightly, and hoped Buffy liked it because that was a lot of fucking money for one bottle of anything.

He'd as soon have a six pack of good beer that
would cost less than twenty bucks.

He gingerly handed over the bottle, wondering faintly if it were made of gold or the contents of the bottle had been made from Ambrosia, and dug out his wallet with still-numb fingers.

He mourned the loss of his hard-earned cash already.

"You take a debit card?"

Oh, God, he hoped so. He only had sixteen dollars on him.

"Of course. Along with any major credit card," she replied helpfully.

He handed over his card and mentally waved bye-bye while the girl went and ran it.

When she returned she grinned at him and he took the card and put it back in his wallet -- he could swear it was smoking -- and frowned slightly as he
wondered how much her tip had cost him.

He'd find out on his next bank statement, he supposed. Let it be a surprise.

She gift-wrapped the bottle for him, lots of curling ribbons and sparkly bows and a jauntily, holiday coloured box, and waved a cheery little bye at him as he left.

He nearly fell as he hit a patch of invisible ice on the way back to his crookedly parked car, free arm pinwheeling, the other clutching desperately at his expensive box of bubbly liquid while his feet very nearly went out from under him. His heart stuttered in his chest when he almost dropped the champagne.

If he was going down, he was going to land on his ass or back because he'd be damned if that fucking champagne became a casualty of his ineptness at navigating in this type of weather.

He managed to make it back without breaking the
bottle and set it carefully in the floorboard so it wouldn't move around too much.

He breathed deep and slow, trying to even out his heartrate -- also to stop the wheezing the cold air had caused in his lungs -- and threw himself down in the driver's seat after he was done. He started the car with stiff hands prickling with painful cold, backed up slowly and then turned around toward his apartment.

He was slowly warming up from his little stint in the snow when he saw someone making his way down the side of the road with his arms wrapped around his middle -- looked like the man had just darted from the alley nearby.

He frowned and debated stopping and asking if the guy needed help because no one should be out on a night like tonight, out in the cold.

He smacked his hand against the steering wheel, causing needles of pain to shoot through his cold fingers, and sighed. He slowly pulled up alongside
the man and rolled down the window.

Shit, the warmth was seeping out now. This had better be resolved quickly. His bollocks were going to freeze and drop right off his body, if not.

"You need some help?"

The guy started, as if he'd been in deep thought and caught unawares, though Spike didn't know how he'd missed the loud growl of the car, turning blood-shot eyes tearing from the wind toward Spike.

Upon closer inspection, Spike realised this man was no man. He was a boy on the cusp of manhood. Looked around sixteen.

He also had a swelling, black eye and the look of someone who'd been well abused for a long time and expected it from everyone he encountered.

Spike wondered what had happened to drive this poor kid out in the snow. It had to have been bad if
he was braving freezing to death or frostbite to get away from it.

The boy shivered as he stepped, tentatively, closer to Spike's car and Spike noted that he wasn't dressed for such weather.

His hair was matted down underneath a knit cap covered in snow, but he had no gloves and was only wearing a light jacket. His shoes were a total loss and likely soaked through to his bare skin. What skin that wasn't covered by his unsuitable clothing was irritated and red.

The bloke was going to get hypothermia or something!

"Can I offer you a ride somewhere?"

The boy bit his bottom lip, chapped from the whipping wind, his eyes darting over Spike and the inside of the car as if Spike was some sort of rapist who picked up people from the side of the road and took them off somewhere isolated and had his fun
and then tortured them for a bit.

Spike had too vivid an imagination.

Finally, the boy sighed and looked down, hands trembling as he stuffed them in his pockets. His breath clouded out in front of him, quick and very loud to Spike's ears. "I d-don't have anywhere to go. Thanks anyway, though."

He started to return to his endless cold walk when Spike growled and bit out, "Look, it's ass-freezing cold out there; you'll die if you don't get some place warm. This is...weird but...you want to go back to my place and warm up for a bit? I promise I'm not a serial killer or anything. I just want to offer you some assistance because I know I'd want that if I were in your position. And I'm not trying to sound like a crazed psychotic, or a smartassed know-it-all, I swear."

The boy's lips quirked a little and amusement filled those reddened eyes. "Well....if you promise you're not a s-serial killer rapist or anything..."
Spike chuckled and unlocked the car and the boy opened the door with much effort and a lot of shaking.

He nearly fell inside, stiff from the cold, and Spike's eyes widened as he remembered.

"Mind the bottle! I've gone through a lot of trouble for that champagne and I don't want it broken."

"O-okay," the boy's teeth chattered. He carefully eased his legs into the floorwell and pointedly didn't get anywhere near the gift-wrapped parcel.

Spike breathed a sigh of relief and, once the door was shut against the searingly cold wind, he began driving again.

The boy held his hands out over the heater vents and shivered so hard that his half of the car jittered along with him.

"So, what's your name?"
"What's yours?" the boy countered, turning glittering black eyes on Spike. The purple of the bruise was just a shadow as the lamps they passed beneath briefly touched it.

"Well, I'd love to know the name of the bloke I just picked up from the side of the road but..." Spike arched an eyebrow and grinned. "Touche. I'm Spike."

"Spike?" the boy repeated incredulously.

Spike rolled his eyes. "All right, that's my nickname. My name's Will but I prefer Spike, okay?"

The boy grinned, chapped lips and red cheeks a surprisingly endearing picture against the backdrop of the snowy scenery passing them by at -- Spike looked at the speedometer -- the whole eleven miles an hour they were traveling.

"Xander," was the only thing the boy volunteered and Spike nodded thoughtfully.
"Nice to meet you, Xander."

"You too...Spike."

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In the home stretch, Spike noticed the flickering orange of fire in an alley not too far from home. Three homeless people stood around a trash can with a fire burning inside, hands outstretched, bodies noticeably shaking even from a distance.

Spike frowned, feeling a pang of sadness for those poor people.

He couldn't help them, they probably wouldn't have wanted the help anyway because of pride, but he was helping *this* boy because he really needed it.

They could at least take care of themselves but Xander obviously couldn't.
Didn't even have the sense to grab a better coat when dashing about in the cold... Or find somewhere warm to stay and wait out whatever he was running from.

Spike was such a bleeding heart.

He sighed and sped up a couple of miles, more than ready to be home in some dry clothes, basking in the warmth he was going to pay out the ass for since gas prices had gone up in recent months and his utilities were separate from the rent he paid monthly.

They made it to Spike's apartment complex without fanfare. There was only a minor mishap when he hit another patch of ice and -- steer into the skid, into it! the boy had screeched while clutching the door handle desperately with both hands -- managed not to kill them both or damage his expensive gift.

With said gift tucked protectively in one arm, he hurried into the building and sighed blissfully at the blast of heat that met him.
Xander followed timidly, arms wrapped around his body, still shivering, breathing heavily and obviously enjoying the heat.

"You all right?"

"Yeah, I'm fine," the boy said faintly, dark eyes darting around, even darker hair falling damply into his flushed face.

Spike frowned. "Going to have to get you some dry, warm clothes. You should probably have a hot shower as well... Warm you up a bit," he said as he directed him into the elevator and pressed the appropriate button. "Oh, and my girlfriend's probably up there waiting so don't be alarmed if she...starts yelling or something."

"Y-yelling?" Xander stuttered, wide-eyed.

Spike rolled his eyes. "I've been gone for a while and she hates it when I'm late. Doesn't have any patience or thinks I'm cheating or something. It's
always something with her."

"Oh."

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When they stepped inside the toasty apartment, Spike set his precious package in the refrigerator to remain chilled, his keys on the counter and saw that Buffy wasn't waiting for him.

His eyebrows knit together.

Odd. She was usually, though not of late, on top of him before he got a chance to completely shut the front door, whether it was to kiss the hell out of him or bitch at him for something or other.

"Bathroom's the third door on the right," he murmured, distracted, as he thought he heard something.

He pulled off his jacket and hung it up on a peg near
the door and then noticed there was a strange coat -- a large man's coat -- on one of the other pegs. That definitely wasn't his coat.

His eyes narrowed and then he stalked down the hall to the master bedroom, his body stiff with tension.

Now he knew where he'd heard the noise. It was coming from his bedroom.

And now he knew why Buffy hadn't been waiting for him.

She was shagging someone else in his apartment.

The stupid bitch!

He took a deep breath, opened the door and cleared his throat at the writhing couple in his bed.

"The hell is this, Buffy?"

Buffy's head snapped up, blonde, chemically
treated hair flying around her golden shoulders, blinking at him. Her naked body was glowing in the candle lit room, sweat dampening her skin.

"Umm...you're back..."

The man beneath her groaned and suddenly froze, teeth biting into his bottom lip as he came with a sharp bow of his back.

Buffy and Spike both stared at him incredulously and once the stranger had finished climaxing he cringed and looked sheepishly at them both.

"Sorry. I, uh..."

"I really don't want to know, git. Shut the hell up," Spike said from between clenched jaws as his hands turned into tight fists of fury. "So. Didn't expect me to find what you asked me to go out for, did you? That why you gave me that little task? Thought it'd take me all night to find some place, if at all, and you'd get your shagging in with that bastard there in my fucking bed?"
His chest heaved. "You barely work, you use my money as if it were yours, as if it were going out of ruddy style and I had a bottomless supply of it, you do as you please and don't care about my feelings...! What the fuck are you trying to pull? You attempting to pay me back for some indiscretion I don't know about? You're bloody well succeeding, and then some. Don't know what the hell I could've done to deserve something like this, though..."

He shook his head sharply and looked away from the disgusting, painful tableau in front of him, then he focused on Buffy's almost contrite face.

Buffy bit her lip, which at one time would've made Spike melt, and climbed off the neanderthal's body beneath her.

He didn't look at the bloke's softening cock or the fluids that ran down Buffy's thighs before she was able to cover herself but he was very aware of everything.
Looked like she hadn't been using protection.

He'd always known the bint was stupid. He'd been the one to take care of that in their 'relationship' because she hadn't ever acknowledged the need for any -- birth control pills didn't protect against disease, not that she probably cared.

She pulled her robe on over her nudity and cinched the belt. "Let's talk about this, William--"

"Don't fucking 'William' me, bint. I want you and that jackass out of here now."

"But it's snowing!" She pouted and tilted her head.

Spike rolled his eyes, glad he'd been delaying inviting her to move in with him. It had seemed like the next logical step in the development of whatever it was they were doing but...

"Should've thought about that before you were banging that guy in my bed. Who the hell is that anyway and why the hell were you fucking him in
my bed? Could've gone to his place or your little used flat... Have you no decency? No, of course not." He added, "Going to have to burn that sodding mattress now and I just got it a few months ago."

"That's Angel. He's an artist. He says I have the most perfect set of shoulders he's ever seen and I've been modeling nude for him for a few weeks and...well...it just happened. You've been distant and...I needed someone who cared about me and what I think. He listens, William."

Angel shifted, pulling the sheets around his body to hide his impressive nudity. Or it would've been impressive had Spike not been too busy seething with anger to notice.

"I don't care for his life story. I don't care how bloody 'distant' I was. I didn't deserve being cheated on. I've always been faithful to you. You should've just broken it off. Hell, I should've done it a long time ago. Would've been better..." He sighed and then was asking before he could stop himself, "When did 'it' happen and how many times?"
Buffy nibbled her bottom lip and pushed back her disheveled hair. "I didn't exactly keep count..."

Spike's eyes widened. "So, you cheated on me with that lackbrain over there more times than you could count and, what? You thought I wouldn't notice that you weren't having sex with me? We haven't fucked in nearly a month, Buffy! That's when it started, isn't it? That long ago? You began fucking him and then you figured you'd just stay here with me like usual, living off me, and just have your naughty fun on the side with him, eh? Not having it anymore, though. I'm through being your patsy. Get out. Now," he growled.

Buffy's eyes widened and her nipples puckered beneath the silky fabric of her robe. "Will--"

"Oh, you make me sick, bitch. I don't care if my anger's turning you on -- that's very unappealing at the moment, so don't even think about having one last shag with me for the road. Get your kit on, get your ass out and that's it. I don't want to see your
cheating face ever again, do you understand?"

Buffy sighed, running manicured fingers through her tousled hair. "Fine. If you don't want to talk this through--"

Spike snapped. He grabbed her arm, slung her into the nearest wall, where she banged her head, and spat, "I don't think you understand how incredibly brassed off I am right now, Summers. If you don't get yourself and your fuck toy out of here in one minute, I might do something I'll regret later but enjoy immensely now."

Her eyes widened and she swallowed. She knew very well he was a third degree blackbelt and was now probably remembering the tournaments in which she'd seen him kick the ass of every challenger he'd come up against, no matter how much bigger or seemingly better they were than him.

"O-okay. Angel," she called unsteadily, turning her head to the side so she wouldn't have to stare into
Spike's hard gaze, "we need to go. Get your clothes on."

The other man didn't say anything but Spike heard the bed squeak as it was vacated.

At least the git knew how to follow orders. Looked like Buffy had found the perfect guy to boss around, the man he'd never been.

Spike pushed away from Buffy and snarled at her when she tried to appeal to him. "Shut. Up."

He was at the front door holding it open before he realised what he was doing and a few moments later, when the two people who'd been fucking in his bed had left the sanctity of his bedroom without looking him in the eyes, he slammed the door behind them and locked it up tight.

He'd change the locks as soon as possible. The bitch had a key and he didn't want her coming back and letting herself in.
For now, though, he'd use his deadbolt religiously.

With his forehead pressed against the door, he ground his teeth and squeezed his eyes shut tight. He wasn't about to cry for her. She really wasn't worth it.

He slammed one fist into the hard wood and breathed through the pain. The physical pain was better than the emotional anguish he was feeling right now. He'd take that over getting his feelings hurt any day.

He heard a small noise behind him and whirled around, ready for more confrontation, when he saw the boy he'd forgotten about completely cowering under his fiery stare.

Part Two
He forced himself to relax and rubbed a hand wearily over his face -- not the one that throbbed with his rapid heartbeat because of its recent meeting with the door. "Xander. Hey. Forgot you were there. You didn't shower, did you?"

"I-I was going to but I couldn't find any towels and...and I came out to ask and..."

"You saw all that nastiness, eh? Sorry."

Xander raised a surprisingly broad shoulder that was, Spike noticed with a sort of vague interest, free of its thin jacket. "I've seen worse."

"I'll show you where the bath sheets are," Spike said, maneuvering around the boy and leading him to the linen closet. "Here," he said opening the louvered doors and handing Xander a big, fluffy towel and a wash cloth. "This is also where extra blankets and sheets and the like are kept... in case you need anything."

Xander stood looking down at the things Spike had
given him for a moment, then said, "I'm glad she's gone. She didn't deserve you. You shouldn't really feel bad about losing her, Spike. She's not worth that. Don't let her get to you. A part of you always dies when they get to you. Especially when they know they are and rub your face in it."

Then he escaped quickly into the bathroom, shutting the door with a soft click.

It seemed the boy wasn't just speaking about Spike's predicament.

Spike stared after him a moment before heading into his bedroom to glare unblinkingly at the disaster area that was his bed.

The stench of Buffy's infidelity permeated the entire room.

He grimaced and snarled as he grabbed some air freshener and used nearly the whole canister to rid the room of the odor and he sneezed a little as the overpowering smell of lemon swept up his nose and
grabbed hold of his sinuses.

He doused the candles and flung them out his bedroom window. Wax went everywhere but it was better than having the candles there.

He stripped the sheets and tossed them into the garbage, then hurled the mattress off the bed and pulled it with much grunting and effort and straining out the door. He dragged it down four flights of stairs, breathing hard and sweating by the time he was through, clothes wet and clinging to his body, and tossed it out the back door into the alley.

He'd sleep on the bare box-spring before he'd sleep in that filth.

~*~*~*~*~

Sitting down at his kitchen table in an old pair of worn sweats that had seen one too many washes and were now more gray than black, a mug of hot chocolate cupped in both hands with steam rising
from the surface into his face, he stared blankly at
the gaily wrapped package he'd set down in front of
him after he'd gone to put up the milk and
rediscovered its presence.

He'd forgotten about it, honestly, but now was
reminded of why he'd been sent out for it in the
first place and that he'd dropped even more money
on Buffy that he really shouldn't have that he'd
never see again.

Why did he keep doing this to himself? Letting
these people fuck him over like this?

Getting involved with Buffy had been easy and he'd
thought it would be a painless fling to pass the time
between real relationships but he was wrong.

He hadn't been in love with her, not by a long shot,
but he'd still gotten hurt because she'd cheated on
him.

Getting screwed around on wasn't fun, even when
emotions weren't involved.
He sighed and stirred a swirling pattern of nutmeg, cinnamon and miniature white marshmallows in dark chocolate.

He should give up on relationships altogether.

Yeah, right.

He hated being alone, couldn't stand being on his own. He'd always had to have someone, no matter who it was. He was dependent on people, liked being around them.

That was why he got hurt so much. Maybe 'stupid wanker you can use till you get bored' was tattooed on his forehead.

He sighed and decided to open the package. He was getting sick of staring at the bright wrapping paper and happy looking decorations.

Happy.
He snorted.

The ribbons and paper and box went into a crumpled heap in the trash bin and the bottle was placed back in the center of the table.

He watched it like it would disappear, unable to pull his gaze away, and wondered how he could've been taken for such a fool.

He'd known Buffy was self-centered and shallow when he'd met her but she'd shown true interest in him, had shown even greater interest in bed, where she performed with wild abandon.

It had been really great sex. Violent most times but good nonetheless. He'd enjoyed the hell out of it.

That's probably why he'd held on for so long. Her personality sure as hell hadn't been the reason.

Spike wondered idly if she'd been faking.

He'd never been with anyone who'd faked orgasms
before and he honestly didn't think she could've
because she was an atrocious liar and in the one
theatre production he'd seen her do...well, the men
in the audience hadn't been there for her wonderful
acting skills -- she'd been mostly nude in a scene or
twelve.

That set his mind at ease...a little.

He finally looked away from the bottle and
wondered what he'd do with it.

The restaurant wouldn't take it back, he'd bet his
ass on that, and he didn't particularly like the stuff...

There was no use for it now, really. He'd gotten it
for...

His lips tightened and he finished off his cocoa with
one big gulp and then went to the sink to wash out
the mug.

Christ, he'd spent over a hundred quid on a fucking
bottle of champagne he didn't even want.
He sighed and shook his head silently.

He really was a pushover. He should learn to say no to people.

It would keep his wallet fat and his emotions unscathed.

From behind Spike, Xander suddenly cleared his throat and he nearly dropped the mug in the sink. He barely managed to save it and then set it down carefully after rinsing away soap suds.

His heart raced from the surprise and he took a deep breath. Forcing a lighter expression to his face, he then turned to face the boy. "Feel better?"

Xander's eyes were dark and knowing but he didn't say anything about Buffy, thankfully. He shrugged a bony shoulder and rubbed a towel end over his wet hair, which sprang up into an unruly mess. He wore Spike's bathrobe and, honestly, looked better in it than Buffy ever had.
"Yeah. That was nice. It was cold out there."

Spike grinned, crossing his arms and cocking a hip to lean against the sink. "No, really?"

Xander smiled slightly. "Yeah, I know. Understatement." He sobered a little, letting the towel ends drop on either side of his neck. "Umm...could I have something to wear while my clothes are drying? This robe is nice and all but...being pretty much naked around a stranger's a little weird, even for me. No offense or anything, Spike."

"None taken." Spike straightened and smacked himself on the forehead. "Was going to go rummaging but I forgot. Old age is catching up, I suppose. Follow me, Xan. I'm sure I've got something."

Xander laughed, following Spike out of the kitchen. "You're not old, Spike."
"Feel it sometimes," he muttered, hands buried in a bottom drawer as he knelt on his haunches, searching through it. He found an old sweater and some sweatpants he hadn't even remembered he had and handed them to the boy -- they had been an old lover's he couldn't bear to part with. "There ya go."

"Thanks," Xander said, smoothing his hands almost reverently over the worn material.

He looked like he'd never gotten something without strings before.

That saddened Spike even more.

Christ, he was in a bad mood. The holidays sucked.

"Off with you," Spike said gruffly.

"Umm..." Xander paused and bit his lip.

"What?"
Xander flicked a dark-eyed gaze up at him briefly. "Could I have some of that hot chocolate?"

Spike's mood lightened just a bit and he smiled faintly. "Sure."

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He turned a considering look on the boy as he was heating up some more cocoa.

He really couldn't guess an age, no matter how hard he tried. Those dark eyes of Xander's held knowledge, experience and hurt that no teenager, no child, should experience but he looked so damn young.

And he sat at the kitchen table on the other side of that champagne bottle, staring into him like he could reach his soul.

The look seared into Spike, making him fidget and have to turn away from it.
He finished making the cocoa and poured Xander some, then himself some more.

"What are you going to do with it?"

Spike looked up from dumping little marshmallows into his mug, frowning. "What?"

Xander didn't flinch hard but Spike saw that he did only because he was staring directly at him at the time. "Th-the champagne. You got it for her, right?"

Spike sighed and let his spoon drop into his mug with a clatter. He slumped back against his seat and crossed his arms, glaring at the offending bottle.

"Don't really know. Not much on champagne, me. It was always her forte, not mine. Expensive shite, that. Feel like tossing it out the ruddy window."

The only sounds for a while were Xander's swallowing and Spike's heavy brooding.
Spike finally sighed and took his nearly full mug and poured out its contents. He didn't want it anymore.

Rinsing out the sink, the saucepan and his used mug, he asked, "So...want to watch some telly?"

Xander brought his own empty mug over to rinse out and said, "Okay."

Was the boy always this agreeable? Spike wondered as they left the kitchen and settled on the couch in front of the flickering tube.

~*~*~*~*~

They sat in silence but for the tv. Spike didn't really have anything else to say and he knew Xander probably didn't want to volunteer anything about his own life.

Yeah, sometimes conversation was over-rated, anyway.
Two strangers could sit in a room together in dead silence. That wasn't awkward or strange at all.

Spike sighed and shifted again, rolling his eyes and letting his head fall back until it hit the couch.

~*~*~*~*~

"Why Spike?"

Spike blinked over at Xander blearily, having been dozing with the remote clutched in one hand. His neck had a crick in it and one ass cheek was numb from sitting in the same position for too long. He shifted to alleviate some of the soreness brought on by the pins and needles that were now slicing through it. "Huh?"

"The name," Xander repeated. "Why Spike? Why not, I dunno, Mallet or Shiv or Hammer or Chainsaw or something?"

Spike snorted, wiping at the drying trail of spittle
that had worked its way out of his partially opened mouth during his brief rest. Attractive, that.

"Old mate of mine back in Primary School gave it to me. Was really into the railroad and anything to do with it...said I needed a tough guy name and came up with that because it appealed to him, I suppose. Even had himself a real railroad spike...gave it to me before he ran away when we were fourteen. I still have it tucked away somewhere. Still miss him."

Spike got a faraway look in his eyes as he remembered shy, scrawny Wesley with the overly large glasses, love for books and knowledge and the fear of his bastard father. "Yeah, can't seem to let it go. He was one of the best friends I've ever had. Don't know what happened to him, though. I wonder, every now and again, what's happened to him... Hope he's happy, now. Sure as hell wasn't then."

Xander stared at him thoughtfully, compassion lurking in the depths of his eyes. "I have...had a friend like that. Jesse. He died a few years ago in a
car accident. His dad was drunk and plowed head-on into a semi. They say he died instantly. His dad survived...he's paralyzed. It sucked."

"I'm sorry."

"So am I."

~*~*~*~*~

Spike must've slept because he woke up.

It always threw him off when that happened.

He liked to know he'd been asleep by actually making it to bed and waking up there.

Then again, he grimaced, eyes still closed as he snuggled up closer to Xander's chest and enjoyed the weight of the boy's arm across his lower back, he probably didn't want to use that bed again.

He didn't have a mattress, anyway.
He'd sleep in the guest room until he fixed that.

Guest room was nice. Just rarely used. Probably dusty and needed airing out.

But that was better than sleeping in Buffy's and strange, hulking caveman brow guy's musk.

He shuddered and Xander's embrace tightened.

Spike finally slitted his eyes open and shut his gaping mouth, blushing faintly as he noticed he'd drooled a large puddle onto Xander's borrowed sweatshirt.

He wiped ineffectually at it and then scrubbed at his face.

Then he noticed how he'd been sleeping and wondered how he'd gotten there.

He remembered sitting side by side with Xander, watching telly, then a brief period where he'd been
dozing -- he assumed the boy had too -- and then he'd gotten up to piss, veering away from his bedroom to the other bathroom down the hall. He'd returned to the couch to find Xander flopped on it sideways, lying full length on it.

He'd stopped for just a moment, watching the boy sleep, then he'd shrugged and crawled onto it beside him.

It made for a tight fit for two full-grown men but it was cozy.

Now, though, he was straddling one of Xander's legs while Xander was snoring lightly, sprawled on his back. He lay practically on top of Xander, between the brunet's body and the back of the couch.

His hard-on was pressed into the crease of the boy's thigh and was throbbing gently with the desire to override all his good intentions and morals and just hump the conveniently placed leg.

He took a deep breath, set his jaw and began to try
to maneuver his way out of this potentially sticky situation.

But then Xander moved, stretched, and his breathing changed as he began the murky ascent back to the surface of consciousness.

His thigh rubbed deliciously against Spike's erection and he had to bite back a groan.

Spike's eyes darted up to the waking boy's face and he met Xander's dark, sleepy eyes as they opened.

"Er, morning."

Xander smiled and tightened his hold on Spike. "Morning to you, too." Eyebrows rose. "Are you...?"

Spike blushed and dropped his head back onto Xander's shoulder. He hid between body and cushion. "Sorry. Don't really have control over that. He does all his own thinking."

"Think I've noticed that in my own personal
experience," Xander responded softly, shifting just enough to press his own erection into the thigh Spike had wedged between both his own.

Spike started and then froze when he felt Xander's answering arousal. His own cock pulsed in response but he tried to ignore that for the moment.

He swallowed hard, took a breath and raised his head to look warily into the boy's face. "We should probably get up. Looks to be light outside now...you'd probably like breakfast and..."

"At the risk of sounding way out of character -- not that you'd know that, I guess, since we only met a few hours ago and it's not like we know each other's life story or anything -- I think I can hold off on the food because there's something I want more right here."

Spike's eyes widened as he was gripped by the back of the head and pulled down to meet Xander's lips.

His eyes fluttered shut and he automatically opened
his mouth and melted into the kiss.

Boy could kiss, he'd give him that.

He could kiss *very* well.

Xander mapped out the interior of his mouth like a professional whore. Spike was even shown a thing or three about what the human tongue could really do.

He was suitably impressed.

And then Xander's hand touched his ass and he came out of his passion-induced euphoric fog and realised what he was doing and with whom he was doing it.

He wrenched his mouth free and scrambled from the boy's grip and heaved in great gasps of air as he flung himself into the easy chair at least four feet away from the now flummoxed brunet.

"We shouldn't be doing that!" he grit out, shoving
his hands in his hair and trying to ignore the throbbing of his needy cock.

Xander looked thoroughly debauched, lying there spread out, blatantly hard, lips red and swollen and wet from Spike's saliva.

And noticing all of that wasn't helping Spike's situation at all!

He looked down, staring at his hard-on, trying to will it to go away.

"Umm...why?" Xander asked quietly, sounding hurt.

"I think you know why."

"Pretend I don't and tell me anyway."

Spike snorted derisively and still refused to look at the boy. "For one? We only just met last night. Two? I just got cuckolded by my fucking bint of a slag girlfriend. Three? You're too bloody young for me. Four? I might possibly be taking advantage of
you. Five? I could go to jail. Enough reasons for you? Sure as hell are for me!"

He heard Xander leave the couch, felt the footsteps as he padded towards him but he forced his gaze to stay down.

Lightly tanned bare feet filled his vision. Feet with little dark hairs scattered over the long toes and the top.

He scoffed at himself.

Stupid kid and his stupid cute feet.

Cute?

Christ.

Xander knelt, forced his hands away from his head and Spike was coaxed into looking into his eyes.

He really didn't want to, though. Those eyes were hypnotic and alluring and...
Well. He'd probably do things, any number of things the boy might want him to do if he only asked.

"One: So what? Stranger things have happened. Two: Getting comfort from someone isn't exactly a bad thing...especially when the someone's offering it freely. Even wants it as much as you do, probably. Three: How old are you? You can't decide you're too old or I'm too young if you don't know what my fucking age is! Four: Like hell. I started it. I knew what I was doing and what I wanted and I still want that so... Five: You're so not going to jail. Even if that was a possibility, I'd never tell anyone, okay?" Xander shook his head, slightly amused, and Spike peered up at him anxiously. "So...we gonna keep hashing this out or are you going to let me have my wicked way with you?"

Spike coughed out a slightly hysterical laugh. "You got all the answers, don't you? Or you think you do, anyway." He sighed. "You're too young to know what you want and I'm too fucked over to know what I want. I'm in pain because of her and I don't
want to bring that onto you by using you."

"Would it help if I said I was twenty?" Xander asked hopefully.

Spike blinked. "You're twenty? Bloody thought you were fifteen. Snatching the cradle, was what I was thinking. You look fucking young."

"I moisturize," Xander said flatly, lips curling upwards a little in amusement. He pressed forward into the vee of Spike's spread legs. "Now, if we could get back on topic here..."

"When were we ever on topic, git?" Spike mumbled just as Xander's mouth took his. "And since when do you get naked with strangers? Said you weren't comfortable earlier..."

Xander merely grinned and took his mouth again.

And later, when they were all snogged out and had cleaned up the spunk and were cozied under a blanket on the couch, Spike couldn't stop thinking.
Eventually, though, he stopped and went to the kitchen.

He felt Xander come up behind him but the boy didn't move to touch him or say anything because he knew what Spike was looking at.

"What do you think I should do?"

He saw Xander jump and then shrug out of the corner of one eye.

"I don't know. Drink it or don't...but don't let it consume you. I mean, I know it's just champagne but...it means more, doesn't it?"

Spike turned his head and blinked slowly at the boy.

Such a smart one, he was. Knew more about life than a person would think he did.

Eventually, Spike grasped the bottle of champagne, broke the seal and opened it with a soft pop.
It didn't gush and the cork didn't explode across the room like in the movies. It was actually rather disappointing.

But Spike set his jaw and took a look at Xander as he held something so simple, something so expensive, something that had cost him more than just money.

It had also brought him something better and gotten rid of something that had been sucking him under.

"Share it?"

"Okay," Xander said simply, watching him.

Spike took a breath and extended the bottle to Xander. "Don't need glasses. Don't want to dirty them up with it. Take a drink."

Xander lifted the bottle by Spike's wrist and drank a sip, then let go. His face was unreadable.
Spike watched him swallow it, then glanced down at the bottle in his hand. He lifted it to his mouth and let it flow out onto his tongue.

He frowned as he let the bottle drop with his arm and then his eyes widened.

He ran to the sink and spat out his mouthful.

"Christ! That's some awful shite! Should've known it'd be horrid. Buffy liked it!" He marched over to the balcony, opened the doors with a flourish, letting in snow and cold as ice wind, and stepped out. "Screw this. Hundred odd bucks out the ruddy window, it is, but I really don't care."

He tossed the bottle out. The champagne spilled in an arc of sparkling liquid as it fell all those feet to hit the ground with a muffled thump -- the snow was far too thick to get a satisfying crash.

He stared down at it for a moment, then shivered and noticed snowflakes sticking to his eyelashes.
He went back inside, shut the doors and huffed hot breath into his freezing hands.

"That's that, then," he finally said, rubbing his palms together and shuddering.

Xander tentatively came over to him and wrapped him in his warm embrace.

Spike sagged into it gratefully and let himself be led back to the couch, where he was bundled up and pulled into a tight embrace he wasn't sure he'd ever want to be free of.

Everything else he'd worry about later.

Here Endeth the Story