

Rating: NC-17 for m/m slashy goodness

Disclaimer: Joss's. I'm just a housewife. No money.

Truth or Dare

by

Byrne

Friday

I blame Dawn. She finished her final exams and instead of being a normal teenager and running off to celebrate with her high school friends she decided that she wanted to hang with the Scooby gang at the Bronze for a night of dancing and soda and gossip. We were all silly enough to oblige and, as the demon population in Sunnydale seemed to be taking a spring break, we were all pretty happy and relaxed.

The band was good and loud, the ladies were all in their finest dancing gear and we had arrived early enough to snag not only a couch but a couple of comfy chairs as well. Spike and I sat on either side of Buffy and the three of us smiled indulgently at Willow and Tara, sitting on chairs next to each other. They were both being a little shy with each other, but it was pretty clear that they were moving closer and closer to being back together. I'm not sure what happened with Buffy and Spike, but in recent months they seemed to have reached an understanding of sorts. Not only did Spike stop stalking her, but she stopped trying to kill him, and now they were actually getting along. The only thing more surprising was that Spike and I were getting along.

After the wedding-that-wasn't it was Spike who landed on my doorstep and forced me to see some truths. He was piss drunk but I was sober enough to listen; after the fighting, of course. I managed to work out some anger on his chipped head and when I was done beating the piss out of him I cleaned him up and let him yell. He screamed at

me, threatened me, and pretty much tore up my entire life and laid it all bare. Then he sprawled on the couch and declared, "You'll only be an asshole like your father if you want to be." He looked at me very seriously and passed out.

We spent the next three days going back and forth between my apartment and his crypt, screaming at each other, trading insults and anger and hatred, spewing the kind of crap that we always did. Somewhere in the middle of day two I lost my voice and just got to listen. It was not a pleasant experience, but I listened. When my throat healed enough to talk we didn't yell anymore, we just...talked. By the time we were finished my apartment was trashed and his crypt wasn't much better. But we didn't hate each other anymore.

So, there we were, the whole damn Scooby gang, including Spike, indulging Dawn in a night out without hell demons and monsters. Spike and I had beer, the ladies stuck to soda, and we danced. At some point a young guy wandered over and asked Dawn to dance. Spike and I stood up, doing our big

brother act. The kid was smart enough to look worried, but Dawn just rolled her eyes and moved off to the dance floor, her little friend trailing along behind. Buffy laughed at us, but when she saw how close they were dancing she grabbed my arm and we danced right next to them. Ha. Dawn didn't seem impressed.

The next couple of hours passed like that. Dawn danced with the kid or with us as a group, Willow and Tara danced with each other or sat close together and Spike and I took turns dancing with Buffy. There was a slight amount of big brother panic when the band started a ballad, but that was easily solved with Willow and Tara dancing on one side of Dawn and her friend, Buffy and Spike on the other. The band followed with another ballad, so I cut in on Spike and took Buffy for a turn around the floor, much to Dawn's increased annoyance. I think she was worried that Spike and I would scare her dance partner away completely. Silly girl, she should have been worried about her sister. Spike and I may look intimidating, but Buffy is truly the scary one when she's feeling all protective of her little sister.

Finally, the band took an extended break and we all sat down to rest and refill our fluids. Spike and I were getting a little buzzed, but one death look from Willow stopped that action.

"Okay, you guys, stop scaring Peter," Dawn said with a glare.

"Who us? Are we bothering you?" Buffy teased.

Dawn scowled at her, knowing that Buffy wouldn't really do anything to make Peter leave. "I know you all are just trying to make it clear that you care, but please tone it down. He's just a guy, it's not like I'm going home with him."

"Damn right," Spike muttered. I have to admit that I agreed strongly with that.

Willow leaned forward and calmly said, "You will tell me if he needs the shovel talk, right?"

Dawn rolled her eyes again (why do girls always do

that anyway?) and said of course she would and we moved on to other topics.

Spike was actually in a silly mood and between us we managed to tease Tara enough to make her blush, which was more of a challenge than it would have been a year ago, and bother Buffy enough to make her swear at us. All in all, we were a happy group. Buffy headed to the bathroom to clean up the damage we had inflicted on her shoes (apparently beer stains leather-thus the swearing) and the band started back up.

With another ballad.

Peter appeared out of no-where and swept Dawn onto the dance floor, followed by Willow and Tara. I looked at Spike. He looked at me.

"Let's cut in on the witches, split 'em up."

"Dawn'll kill us. We said we'd cool it." I stood up anyway.

Spike looked at the dance floor, where Peter was wrapping himself around Dawn and whispering in her ear. Or yelling, it was pretty noisy.

"Right then, c'mon. She can tell us off later." Spike looked a little grim as he stood up and stalked towards Willow and Tara.

Spike was hovering just behind me as I tapped Tara on the shoulder and, in my best gentleman accent, I politely said "May I cut in?"

Tara looked at my grin, at Spike, and finally at Willow. She smiled sweetly at me and growled. "Mine."

Willow beamed at her and held her a little tighter. "Go find someone else, boys," she smirked.

Dawn hadn't missed the conversation and looked delighted with the turn of events. "Hey, no tag team dancing! Cool. If you wanna bug me you'll have to dance with each other." She had obviously been paying far too much attention to Spike when she

was younger; she had his evil smirk down pat.

Spike raised an eyebrow at her and glanced at Willow and Tara. They were laughing at us. Then, as I stared at him, something terrifying happened. He got that glint in his eye, the same one he got just before the beer 'accidentally' hit Buffy's shoes. He swung an arm onto my shoulder and put the other hand on my hip.

"Dare you."

I guess I looked sort of freaked and run awayish, because he smirked and said, "What, gonna back away from a dare?" Oh, taunting, how I missed you. That did it.

I put on my imitation of Willow's resolve face and said "You're on." I mirrored his actions with my arm and hand and there we were, about a foot apart, swaying in a lazy circle together.

He looked a little surprised, but that faded fast into smugness. After all, what did he have to prove? The

Big Bad could dance with whomever he liked and get away with it. Dawn was nearly hysterical with giggles and the lovely twosome who had turned us down were just as bad. Fine. I'll show them.

I slid the hand I had on his hip under his duster and around to the small of his back. As I jerked him closer to me I grinned at him and said "Double dare you."

That got him. We were only about an inch apart now, not touching but in definite personal space. I moved my arm, getting ready for him to back away so I could do my victory dance, when he got his imitation of the resolve face on and just smirked again. No one backs down from a double dare. Especially not the Big Bad.

There we were, two mature but half drunk men dancing in the Bronze. Oh my God, I was dancing with Spike. Suddenly I didn't know where to look. We were so close together that it would be rude to ignore him, but I wasn't about to stare into those blue eyes for the rest of the song. I couldn't look at

the girls, they were busy laughing at us. We were turning in a slow circle so I couldn't watch the band. Then I realized that I was, in fact, just looking into those bluer than blue eyes. And they were looking back.

There was no music in my ears any longer. There was no crush of bodies around us, the laughter had faded, the smell of sweat and booze was gone. All I could see was Spike. All I could hear was the sound of my breath, coming a little faster now, a little harsher. All I could smell was leather and hair gel, and a little bit of cigarette smoke. When was the last time I had actually seen Spike smoke? When was the last time I noticed how he smelled? Never?

Then the dance was over and we parted. We lead the others back to the table where Buffy was waiting for us, her eyes wide. We all sat down, Spike and I far apart.

"What the hell was that?" Buffy asked.

"That, Slayer," said Spike, "was a dare. Don't you

know that Xander never turns down a dare? And he always wins at Truth or Dare."

Dawn wiped her eyes and finally stopped laughing. "Oh, a challenge! I want in. Xander, tomorrow. Call me at ten and we'll do a little Truth or Dare."

The others looked excited and someone found a piece of paper and a pen. Where do women keep all these things? Guess that's why they carry purses.

Willow took charge. "Okay, Spike had his turn, and Dawn is down for tomorrow. I'll be next. Buffy?"

"I think I want to be in this one late in the game, when he is getting run down," she laughed. "Put Tara after you. I'll go last."

"All right then. Here, Xander, this is your schedule. You will call each of us on the day we are listed. This is straight Truth or Dare, no doubles. If someone, including you, passes, the other player decides on the forfeit." She handed me the paper and I had become a participant in round robin Truth or Dare,

Scooby style.

About eleven o'clock the evening wound down because Buffy had to work the next day. Tara caught a ride home with them, and I found myself walking to my car with Spike.

"So, uh..." I started.

"What?"

"You want a lift to your crypt, or do you want to get a movie? It's still early."

He thought for a minute and looked at me. I tried not to blush. The last thing I wanted was for him to think that dancing with him had given me the wiggins in any way. I was actually concentrating very hard on forgetting that I had danced with him, that I had touched him, smelled him. Had my hand on his back and felt the way the muscles in his back moved, noticed that he was really easy to move with...

"Yeah, okay. But no horror flicks. You got beer?"

"Huh? Oh, yeah, I have beer. How about something with explosions?" I unlocked the car and we piled in, heading to the video store and back to my place.

Later Friday night

Two explosion laden movies and six beer later Spike left. It was amazingly unweird having him there after our public display of macho determination not to back down. We sat on the couch with popcorn between us and made fun of Bruce Willis and Mel Gibson, drank beer and ignored the fact that we had danced.

After Spike left I cleaned up the beer bottles and went to bed. I don't know when he came back, but I woke up in my bed with him standing just inside the bedroom door.

"Spike? What are you doing here?"

He shrugged one shoulder and didn't say anything. Just stood there.

"Do you want something? Did you forget something?" I rubbed at my eyes, trying to brush sleep away. He just nodded and stepped a little closer.

I was not surprised to realize that I was getting a little hard, but I tried to control my breathing and my heart rate. I don't know how well vampires smell arousal, but I do know how well they hear heartbeats. A voice at the back of my mind was screaming "Vampire! Spike! Man! Bad!" but there was a louder voice crying out "Man! Good man! Pretty man!"

Spike took off his duster and laid it over the chair. His shirt followed and he sat down to unlace his boots. I just sat there and watched. The strength in his shoulders and the smooth plane of his abdomen called to me. My fingers ached to touch his skin, to see if the muscles were as firm as I thought.

Breathe, I thought. Just breathe.

"Uh, Spike? What are you-"

"Need to see you, Xan. Need to touch you." He stood up and undid his pants.

Okay, lost control of the breathing thing there. Seemed to have lost control over the blood flow in my body as well, as my cock became harder and pressed against my boxers.

"W-what? Um, are you under a spell or something?" I moved back in the bed, sitting up straighter as he walked towards me, perfectly naked now, perfectly Spike. A predator. A hungry predator.

"Shut up, pet. Won't hurt you." He reached the bedside and lowered his head to mine, kissing me slowly. My lips parted and then his tongue was in my mouth, stroking my pallet and I could taste him, feel the cool slickness of his mouth, feel his need. My cock jumped and I moaned into the kiss. He lowered himself onto the bed and fisted his hand in

the hair at the back of my neck.

"So warm, so sweet. Fuck, Xander. So warm."

He was under the sheet and I could feel his body weight press down on me, our mouths glued together and our hunger growing more frantic. He relaxed onto me and our erections brushed and then pressed close together.

"God, Spike," I gasped.

He growled softly and started moving on me, grinding our hips and our cocks together. The hand in my hair pulled tighter and he moaned into my mouth.

"Fuck, so hot, so hard, fuck yes..."

"S-spike..."

He pressed harder and I moved against him, couldn't get enough, wasn't sure where my hands were, only aware of his body on mine, his erection

against mine. With a muffled shout I came.

I woke up soaked in sweat and my boxers were stuck to me in a cooling mess.

Fuck. Jesus.

I stripped the bed and took a shower before I looked at the clock. It was still dark, but I doubted if I would get back to sleep. Hell, only six fifteen. All right then, Saturday morning cartoons and sugary cereal, a combination to comfort anyone of my generation.

A freaking wet dream. I can't remember the last time I had one. A dream about Spike, no less. Okay, dealing with the whole "Spike is my friend" thing. He stuck around when Buffy was gone, he loves Dawn, he helps us out because he wants to. That four day bonding session we had was pretty extensive, and yeah, he's hot. But I'm not sure I want to get all groiny with him. I mean, dreams don't mean shit unless you're the Slayer, and it's not like I've been with anyone since Anya. Just a little

frustration build up on top of the weirdness at the Bronze. That is all. Okay, I can go with that.

Saturday Morning

At ten o'clock I phoned Dawn.

"So, what'll be? Truth or dare?" I tried to sound menacing and evil, but she didn't buy it.

"Dare." No hesitation and can I say how glad I was? I really don't think I want to hear any of Dawn's truths. It is hard enough acting like her big brother when I don't have any reason to worry. If living on the Hellmouth has taught me anything, it's don't go looking for trouble, it's coming anyway.

"I want you to..." I paused for drama.

"Get on with it, Xander."

Summers women can be cranky in the morning.

Don't let anyone tell you different.

"Geez, in a rush? I want you to drink a gallon of water and go sit on the roof for three hours this afternoon."

She laughed. "Yeah, right. That's the best you can come up with? Easy."

"Now, now, don't you worry, Dawn. I'll be there to supervise, and I'm guessing that if you make it to three hours-if, mind you-you will fly off that roof faster than Buffy chases vamps."

"Sure, Xander, we'll see." I could actually hear her smirk. I have to get her to spend less time with Spike. "So, your turn. Truth or dare?"

I hadn't actually put much thought it, but hey, does that surprise anyone? "Uh, truth, I guess." Oh oh. Would you offer your secrets to a teenager? I told you I hadn't put much thought into it.

"Okay let me think." There was a short pause, then

she said, "So, last night at the Bronze?"

"Yeah?" Can I say 'oh oh' again?

"The groove thing you had going with that British guy? Oh, let's see, what was his name again? Oh yes, Spike?" She was enjoying this far too much.

"Yeah?" I think I sounded calm, despite the alarms going off in my head and the twitch in my pants. Here I thought I would have some control over my body when I wasn't a teen anymore. I tried to think about demons and scary things in the night, but that just led me back to the Bleached Wonder.

"Did you like it?" she stage whispered.

"What do you mean?" Stall, stall, try to think of a not-lie. I can't actually cheat at Truth or Dare, can I?

"I mean, Xander, did you like dancing with him? Did it make you gooshy inside? Did it make you want to do it again? You didn't actually run out of the place in horror, you know. And I saw the way you were

staring into each other's eyes. You kind of got lost there for a few minutes. And you looked so cute together." She was giggling again.

"That was more than one question, Dawn. Pick one." I think my voice cracked, and my pants were uncomfortable. I absentmindedly ran a hand over my chest, accidentally brushing my nipple. When I had to suppress a gasp I knew I was in trouble.

"You okay there, Xan? Okay, did you or did you not like dancing with Spike?"

Not much leeway there. "It wasn't awful," I finally said.

"I knew it!" she crowed. "I could tell just looking at you guys! So, when are you going to see him again? Any kissage?"

"Oh my God, Dawn, no! We are not talking about this. You are not thinking that. There is no that." Okay, denial is a comfortable place. I grew up in Sunnydale, I do denial very well, thank you.

"Yeah, yeah, whatever. So when is the great roof climb to be? I want to shop sometime today."

I told her I would be there at about three and we hung up.

Saturday Afternoon

Dawn was on the roof with some magazines and I was in a lawn chair on the ground with a book. She had been on the roof for two and a half hours and I was watching her over the top of the pages. She was getting wiggly. Yay me.

"What's going on?" Buffy said as she came out the back door.

"Oh hey, Buff. Dawn's doing her dare."

"She's on the roof? That's it? I'm a little disappointed in you."

"She's got to pee, but she won't admit it."

"You are evil. How much did you make her drink? Is it time to water the garden yet?"

"It is, in fact, about that time. I'll get the hose, you talk about waterfalls, or floods or something."

Ten minutes later Dawn was pacing on the roof. She wasn't quite swearing at us, but that was coming soon. Buffy was in her element, sitting back on the chair spinning a long drawn out tale about a flooded river, complete with sound effects, and I was hosing off the driveway. Dawn sat down again and announced that she wasn't going to give in. We just smiled.

With five minutes left on the clock Buffy suddenly stood up and loudly said, "I have to pee. I'll be back in a minute." She walked into the house as Dawn started cussing, and in a few seconds stuck her head out of the window in the master bath.

"Hey Dawn! Listen to this," she said. And then she flushed the toilet.

Dawn broke. She jumped from the roof to the patio and barreled into the house.

Shame that, only two minutes left and she would have made it.

Patrol was boring that night, only three fledges which Buffy handled easily. The night was quiet and warm, and I got home at about ten. Saturday night and I was hanging out at my place again. Alone. Buffy was going a girl thing with Willow and Dawn and I had actually been told to leave. I guess I'm not a girly man after all.

I turned on the TV and grabbed a Coke from the fridge. There didn't seem to be anything on that I hadn't seen before and the sports were, well, sports. Maybe I am a girly man. I turned the TV off and paced a little. Hell, there must be something to

do. Maybe go to the Bronze, shoot some pool. Find somewhere else and...do what? Drink? Nope. Not my father. Not drinking because I'm bored and there isn't anything else to do.

A knock on the door made me jump. I grabbed a cross and a stake and called out "Yeah, who is it?" as I crossed the room.

"S'me."

Spike. Eek. Breathe. Breathe. Fuck.

Saturday night

I opened the door and let Spike in.

"What's up?" I asked as he headed to the kitchen with a brown paper bag.

"I went to the Slayer's and they kicked me out. They've got some sort of goop on their faces, and I

swear Red had cucumbers on her eyes," his voice came from inside the fridge. He stood up and closed the fridge door. "I wanted to watch a movie, and they weren't letting me in. Not that I'd want to stay in a house of women with goop on their faces, but anyway...so here I am. You got plans?"

"Nope. Nice to know that I'm first choice though," I said in a hurt voice.

"Poor Whelp. I didn't want to get the whole 'oh, very manly choice of videos, Spike' speech, now did I?"

I eyed the movie rental box with interest and picked it up. "Oh, this is a good one, actually. I'll let you stay if you make the popcorn."

He snorted at me and hunted down the popcorn box. He set the timer on the microwave and asked "Seen it before? Not too bad, is it?"

"Saw it with Anya and got pleasantly surprised. Didn't know you were into chick flicks though," I

ducked the popcorn box he threw at me.

"Shut up and watch the movie, Harris."

"Well, that was pretty good," Spike said as he stretched. "He wasn't really like that, though."

"Um, Spike? Shakespeare lived, like, centuries before you. You can't tell me that you knew him, or that you know what he was like when he was in love."

"Don't be a git. Studied him enough to know. Read the works, you get a feel for the writer." Spike went to the kitchen. "I'm going to heat up some blood, you want something?"

"Yeah, Coke. You read a lot of Shakespeare?"

"Read a lot of anything. Not much else to do with my days, is there?" he said, coming back with my drink. He got his mug from the microwave and sat

on the easy chair across from me.

"So who's your favorite author?" I asked, curious and trying to picture Spike spending his days with his nose in a book. Wonder where he keeps them. There's not a lot of bookshelves in the crypt.

"Lots of them. Depends on my mood. Right now I'm on a mystery kick, pulps from the forties. Lots of guns and loose women." He raised an eyebrow and wiggled it, kind of a funny leer without the dangerous aspects. "How 'bout you? I know you can read, you must have read something good in school. What's your favorite book?"

I looked at him appraisingly. Saturday night in my apartment, watching Shakespeare in Love with a guy who's almost a hundred and thirty years old and talking about books. I didn't think the Hellmouth got this strange.

"Favorite book. I like sci-fi, but my all time favorite is To Kill a Mockingbird." Ha, that got him. He looked surprised and a little pleased.

"They teach that at school these days?"

"Maybe, I don't know. Wasn't big on the English electives. I read it on my own."

He looked at me intently. I couldn't figure out what exactly was in that look, it was kind of searching, kind of hopeful. Softly, he said, "That's the one where they find out that the monster next door isn't a monster at all."

I stared. My mouth was a little dry, and I suddenly felt like I was about to screw up in a big way. I grabbed my Coke and swallowed mechanically, then met his eyes again. "Yeah. That's the one." My voice was as soft as his.

After a long moment he blinked and the moment was gone, thankfully. "Good book that. Ever read Jane Austen?"

After an hour or so of book talk he stood and put on his duster. "Gonna go kill something and head back

to the crypt. You on patrol tomorrow?"

I thought for a moment. "Nope, I have Monday night. Tomorrow is laundry. Just as scary. Slay the pile of demon clothes, and hope that the fabric softener isn't possessed."

He chuckled and shook his head. "'kay. I got patrol on Monday, too. See you then." Then he was gone.

Sunday Morning

I made it through the night without any dreams about male vampires and was in a pretty good mood as I sorted the laundry. I put one load in and grabbed the phone while it went through its cycle.

"Hey, Wills. Truth or dare?"

"Oh goody! My turn. I know what you did to Dawn, and if that is the best you can do I'm going with dare." She sounded just like Willow should, happy,

giggly and full of energy. I smiled. It was nice to have her back, nice that she was returning to a life without magick in one piece.

"What are you doing tonight?" I asked, an evil plan forming.

"No, not tonight, Xander. I won't let you ruin tonight. I'm going out to dinner with Tara at that new Italian place on Union street, the nice one."

Perfect. "Don't worry Will, you'll like this. I think. I dare you to..." Again, the dramatic pause. She didn't like it any more than Dawn had.

"Xanderrrrrrr!"

"Heh. Made you whine. I dare you to go out to dinner with Tara tonight with no underwear on."

She sucked in air and started her patented Willow-speak. "No! I can't! Xander, that's awful. I mean, what if she...what if we...Xander! You're mean. You're hoping she'll find out. I can't believe that I

am actually considering...no, I'm not. Tara would think...well, she'd be right, but still. You're serious?"

"Uh huh. No underwear. Tonight. Nice romantic dinner with Tara." I grinned at the phone and pictured Willow's face. She must have been scarlet.

"Okay, smart guy. Your turn. Be warned that your dare will play heavily on what I do to you. Truth or dare?"

This time I didn't have to worry about my choice. Willow could make a very scary dare, I had no doubt, but she was my best friend for, like, forever and I didn't actually have any secrets that I couldn't share with her. Nope, no hesitation from this guy. Stupid me.

"Truth." I admit I was feeling pretty smug.

"Okay, I have a question. Truth only, right?"

"That's the rule."

"Are you ready to start seeing someone? I mean after Anya and all?"

That was a little more serious than I had planned on. Huh. Well, let's see. Am I ready to go find some woman and get to know her, date her and move along the relationship path? Hell no. Am I ready to be set up? Again, not a chance. But what if it is someone I already know, someone I don't have to impress. Someone I am already comfortable with?

"Uh, let me think a second," I sounded pathetic to my own ears.

Willow's voice was quiet and soothing. "I'm right here, Xander. Take your time."

Am I ready for a relationship? I hate being alone in the evenings, I hate coming home from the site to an empty apartment. I hate waking up alone. But does that mean that I want a girlfriend, or does it mean I want a roommate? I tried to imagine the apartment with someone else's stuff mixed in with mine. A pile of books on the coffee table, a coat

hung by the door, another toothbrush in the bathroom. That was...nice. Hey, that coat is long and black.

"Urk."

"You okay?"

"Yeah, yeah, just had a brain squeeze." Was I ready to admit to myself that the only person I was interested in perusing at all was an undead man? Oh look, I just did.

"Wills?"

"Here. Got your answer?" Still that quiet, supportive voice.

"Part of it. I'm not ready to meet someone new, but I could see myself starting a relationship of some sort with someone I know." That was vague enough. I hoped.

"Good. I was worried that you were just going to

shut yourself off." God, Willow is the best. I love her. "Got a lucky lady in mind?" Urk, once more. Ah, she left me an opening.

"Nope, no ladies in mind. But if I find one I'll tell you."

"Good. I think I'll just print off a copy of the shovel talk to hand out when you and Dawn start bringing people around. Hey, do you think I should include Spike on the list of people who have to get the shovel protection?"

"He'd love that." Actually, I think he would.

"I've got to go. Buffy wants me to help her rearrange the living room. I think she's been watching too much HGTV. Do you know anything about Fen Shui?"

I laughed. "Hey, I build, I don't decorate."

We said goodbye and I finished my laundry. Forgot the fabric softener. Tried to clean the bathroom but

the sight of my lonely toothbrush made me think about picturing another along side it.

I tidied the apartment and decided that rearranging furniture may be a good idea. After I finished I didn't like it so I switched it back and collapsed onto the couch, sweaty and sticky. Shower time.

The heat of the water was soothing and the spray felt good on my back. I washed my hair and let the soap tickle its way down my chest as I just relaxed. Willow was right, I had been shutting myself off. But really, I don't see a problem. I was with Anya for a long time, and let's face it, that ended really badly and I hurt her a lot. Granted, I had sort of come into my own since then, thanks to a certain bleached vampire being pissed off enough to battle my insecurities. So where was I now? Not interested in finding a girlfriend. Interested in Spike, if my dream was any indication. Okay, subconscious, let's take an honest look at that.

Item one, the dancing at the Bronze. Liked it. Liked moving with him, and enjoyed having my hand on

his back. Got lost in his eyes somewhere. Dawn's words from yesterday suddenly floated to the top of my mind. '...And I saw the way you were staring into each other's eyes. You kind of got lost there for a few minutes.' Oh. Oh? I picked up the soap and started lathering my chest.

Item two, that dream. Don't really need to go into detail there, it was sort of self explanatory. But it was...hot. My hand moved soap further down my body. Picturing Spike in my dream, standing there naked. So pale and strong, his defined muscles, his body moving towards me. His cock, erect and proud, almost hitting his stomach. I moved my own hand to the base of my penis, more than half hard in the heat of the shower. I started to stroke myself lightly as I remembered the dream, the way he kissed me. I brought my other hand down to cup my balls and I pulled a little harder on my erection. So good, so right. Pictured Spike there, his hand on me. I moaned a little when my fantasy took on its own life. Spike, with me in the shower, his hand on mine as I jerked off. His hand pulling harder, a little tighter. God, he's so hot. I wanted his hand on my

now rock hard cock, I wanted his thumb to sweep the pre-come off the darkening head. I wanted him to taste me. Yeah, that's it, Spike nuzzling my neck in the shower, one hand on my cock. Licking my chest, moving down my body. The shower spray beading in his hair, his cool mouth washing me, his hand claiming me. My hand got faster as I stroked, rougher. God yes, Spike on his knees in front of me, his tongue slipping out of that perfect mouth and oh so gently sweeping across my cock. I was fucking my hand now, lost in this warm wet world, trying to imagine what it would feel like to have that mouth around my shaft, licking and sucking. What it would be like to have my cock in his mouth, feel his tongue glide over the vein, stretching him, filling his mouth oh fuck yes need that need to come oh hell Spike I want to come so bad for you

I cried out as I shot against the wall and leaned back in the cooling shower spray panting. Okay, seem to be attracted to Spike.

What do I do about it?

A brief interlude

What the bloody hell am I going to do about this? He likes *To Kill a Mockingbird*. We've got that whole eyes meeting at the right time crap going on. And I swear I could smell something off him tonight.

So the birds want a ladies night and I'm stuck with a video in my hands and no one to watch it with. Not much choice really, it's either go back to the crypt and watch it alone or stop by the whelp's. Being alone is going to kill me. You know what I mean.

All the way there I have a voice in my head saying "Don't push it, git. There is no fucking way you can think that he might be interested. All you did is dance, and that was on a dare. Go back to your crypt and bury your head in the sand." But there's this other voice, too. I think it's my dick. It's just replaying the night at the Bronze over and over. The way he pulled me in and the way his eyes look. Hell, those eyes. Dark and fluid and deep. The second

voice is talking about the heat of his body and the way he let me stay close to him. It's babbling on and on about how we're at least friends now, and how we can relax around each other. It's saying "Give it a shot! Take it slow, but at least find out what's there."

So I go to his apartment and we watch a sappy movie. It's nice. We talk about books. Even better. We have that intense eye thing.

Yeah, I want him. But Christ I'm bad at this sort of thing. Dru. Angelus. Buffy.

Buffy at least is a good person, someone I can count on in a fight. She was honest enough with me and with herself to end whatever the fuck it was that we had and still be a friend. I know she'll never love me. But what would she do to me if she figured I was panting after one of her Scoobies? Then there's Red. Imagine, if in some weird dimension that looks like this one, Xander and I actually made a go of it. What would she do? The entire gay bit wouldn't faze her, but me and her best mate? I can hear it

now, the same speech she gave soldier boy when he was with the Slayer: "If you hurt him I will kill you with a shovel. I will beat your head in." or some such thing. She meant it, too. The only reason she didn't was because he left in a helicopter before she could. Hell, with me all it would take is opening the curtains at the wrong time.

I want him.

Monday

Work was a relief. I had to think about what I was doing with my hands, where I was walking. There was no room for daydreams or panic attacks. Good work, soothing work. Easier to push Spike and all my thoughts about my sexuality away when I working with a power nailer.

At lunch time I called Tara, for the first time in this game knowing what I was going to do.

"Hey Tara, it's Xander. You ready?" I tried to keep my voice light, knowing I wanted her to choose truth.

She did, claiming that what I had done to Dawn and Willow (hey! She found out. Way to go, Willow!) had marked her for life and she would never accept a dare from me.

I looked around. There wasn't anyone too close to me, and the cell phone allowed me to walk around if anyone came close enough to hear my end of the conversation. Deep breath. Time to find out some truth.

"Tara, do you think I'm gay?"

"Um, aren't you supposed to ask about me? I thought you would ask about Willow and last night..." she seemed a little flustered.

"Not that I wouldn't love to know or anything, but I really want your honest opinion about me and the whole gay thing." I studied the toes of my work

boots and tried to remain calm. This is Tara, I told myself. She's sweet and gentle and lovely, and you can trust her.

"Xander? Is there someone...I mean, have you...?"

"No, but I've been having these, well, one dream and a daydream and I want to know what you think. I mean, what do I do?" Help me Tara, come on, I thought.

"Okay, relax a little. Think about it. You have had relationships with women, and you are attracted to women, right?" I made an agreeable sound. "So now you are thinking about guys too?"

"Not so much 'guys' as 'guy'," I admitted. It's Tara, I told myself again. It's just Tara.

"Oh, I see. Okay, then maybe we are in the realm of bi-sexual. But maybe it's just him. Have you ever been attracted to a man before?" See, that's why I asked Tara. She's smart. Other guys, let's see. Oz. Nope, nothing. Riley. Ish. Giles. Not going there.

Angel. Oh oh. Maybe it's a vampire thing. Which is worse? Other guys...Larry? That was freaky and I can't think about that now. The guy who delivers pizza on Friday nights. Short dark hair, crooked smile, broad shoulders, long fingers. Am I supposed to notice the pizza delivery guy's hands?

"Possibly," I tell Tara.

"Official diagnosis is potentially bi. Are you okay with that?" She sounded concerned.

"Yeah," I sigh. "I'm okay with it. But what do I do about it?"

"We're out of the bounds of the game now, Xander," she said gently. "Do you want to talk about this with me, or should I get Willow to see you after work?" And I thought I was insecure.

"No, it's okay, this is fine. But I'd like to tell her the news myself, if you don't mind. I don't want you to keep a secret from her or anything, but I think I should be the one to say 'Hey Willow, I'm bi too!', if

you know what I mean." I moved further away from where my crew was eating.

"Of course. Now, what do you want to ask me? You said 'guy', so I assume you've met someone. Do you want to ask him out?"

"Gah," I replied with great intelligence. "Actually, it's someone I've known for a while, and I don't know how he feels, but I think I would like to find out. But it's not like I can just say 'hey, let's get a beer' and see what his reaction is, because..." Well, that should clue her in. I think I'm missing a subtlety gene.

"Because it's someone you would say that to anyway. I got it," she said. There was a pause and I used the time to study my boots again. "Xander? Truth or dare?"

Oh. Right. Game. "Uh...not up for much in the daring department, so truth I guess. No, wait, I did truth the last two times. Dare."

"You sure?"

"No, but go ahead, pay me back for what I did to Willow."

I think I actually heard her blush. She giggled a little and said, "I know what I want you to do, but I have to set it up. I'll meet you all at Buffy's after patrol tonight and you can do it then."

"Oh, very mysterious. I don't think I'm too worried though." I smiled as she tried to give me an evil laugh. Tara just doesn't have evil in her. Mind you, that growl she gave me at the Bronze was full of something I don't want to get too close to. "I have to go now, lunch is done and I have walls to build."

"Don't build your walls too high, Xander. Trust me. It will be fine," she said and then she hung up.

Monday night

We all met at Buffy's and got paired up for patrol.

"Okay, Willow, you and Xander take the east side and Spike and I will take west. I think that there is something really creepy and big over there, and I don't want to risk you getting hurt. Now, weapons." We all grabbed stakes and knives and whatever else seemed to fit the mood and headed to the cemetery. I was glad I was paired with Willow, it would give me a chance to talk to her, and I wouldn't have to deal with Spike while I was still sorting out what to do.

Willow and I walked along in an easy silence, keeping an eye out for things that go bump and grr in the night.

I was kind of hoping that Willow would just sort of guess what was on my mind and start talking about it, but apparently 'Xander is having groiny thoughts about a guy and wants to talk about it' wasn't on the list of things she was thinking over. I took a breath and decided that I had better start talking before I chickened out completely. Besides, that

was the easy part. If any of my friends would understand same sex attraction it would be Willow. If you want to talk about being attracted to vampires, on the other hand, you go to Buffy.

"You remember yesterday when you asked me if I was ready to start seeing someone? And I said that I didn't know any women I wanted to date?"

We stopped walking and she looked up at me, her eyes big and wide and a small smile starting to curve the corners of her mouth up. "Yes, I remember. You were telling the truth, too. I would know if you lied. Your voice gets deeper when you lie to me." The smile was growing.

"It does? I'll try to remember that. Point is, there isn't a girl I'm interested in, but..." I stopped, my throat suddenly dry. Was it going to be like this every time I told one of my friends that I'm bi? Well, there was really only three more to tell, four if you count Giles. Maybe it is just easier over the phone. Long distance should make it really easy to tell him.

Willow just waited, her eyes a little shiny.

"Will, I'm bi, and I know this guy, and I really like him, but I'm not sure how to tell if he's interested." I turned and started walking again, not really away from her, but just back to patrolling. She grabbed my arm and spun me into a hug. Ah, Willow hugs. They're the best.

"Xander, I'm glad you figure that out. I'm glad you like someone. Can you tell me who?"

"Umm, yeah, I guess I can. I mean, if he likes me I'll want you guys to know, and if he doesn't I would want you to know that too. You're my best friend. So yeah, I guess I can tell you." I started walking again.

"Xander. Tonight? Next week? When I'm old and gray? Who is it already?" Willow's not real big on patience. I looked around the graveyard and spotted a stone bench.

"C'mere. Sit with me." We sat next to each other

and I put my arm around her shoulder and kissed her temple.

"Getting the wiggins here, Xander. I have to sit for this?"

"No, I do. Give me the shovel talk."

Both of her eyebrows shot up and her mouth made a perfect 'O'. She stood up and sat back down. She stood again and walked three steps, then turned around. Oh oh, resolve face.

"Xander Harris, if you hurt Spike I will beat you over the head with a shovel. He's my friend, and I don't let anyone hurt my friends." Then she threw her arms around me and hugged me until my ribs creaked.

Patrol was quiet for us, thank God. Willow wanted to talk about Spike, and I was a little freaked by the whole thing. I was pretty sure she meant it about

the shovel too. I made her swear to keep quiet about my (crush? thing? feelings?) secret, and she promised to be good. We got back to Buffy's and went in through the kitchen.

"Oh my God, that stinks. What the hell is that smell?" My nose was telling me to just turn and leave and not come back. Spike and Buffy stood in the kitchen, trying to get slime off their clothes.

Buffy glared at me and said, "The hell with this. I'm going to the backyard. Willow, could you get my robe and meet me out there, please? I'm going to burn these clothes." Willow went upstairs and Buffy went out. I looked at Spike.

He was covered in orange slime. It was in his hair and down the back of his duster, and one sleeve was covered in streaks of the stuff. His jeans didn't have as much on them, but his boots were slick with it.

"Yuck," I said. "Is it dead?"

"Yeah, mate. Slayer took one shot of it to her new shoes and it died right after. Don't see why she didn't kill it before it got me though. Crap, this stuff is rank. I better go, I think I've got stuff at the crypt that'll get this off. Need a shower though. Fuck." He started for the door.

"Hey, um, you can go to my place after you de-slime, if you want. You know, use the shower. I have hot running water, you don't." Was that my voice? Yep, that was me. Stupid mouth.

"Thanks, pet. You going there now?" He had one hand on the door knob, ready to leave.

"Yeah, I think-oh shit. No, I have to meet Tara here and do her dare. I'll be there soon though."

He smiled and looked interested. "Right, how is that going anyway? What's Glinda going to make you do?"

"I have no idea. She said she needed to set it up and would meet me here. The rest is okay, I made Dawn

go up on the roof for three hours after drinking a gallon of water."

He snorted. "She make it?"

"Nope. Two minutes shy. I'm not sure if it was the hose or Buffy flushing the toilet though."

"Evil. I like it. What about Willow?"

"Can't tell you. She did it though, and I think Tara's happy."

He laughed. "Right then. I'll go scrape this off and come back here. Tell Glinda to wait for me."

"Sure, Spike, I'll do that. Right." He nodded and laughed again, and then was gone.

I turned around to go to the living room and bumped into Willow.

"That was very smooth, Xander. Just think, you'll have a naked Spike in your bathroom soon. If I

didn't know any better I would say you planned for him to get slimed."

"Xander wants a naked Spike in his bathroom? Willow, robe please? I'm rather not dressed right now." Buffy's arm reached around me and grabbed the robe that Willow held out.

I admit that the sound I made may have been a yelp. "No, I so do not. That was Willow trying to be funny and get me back for her dare. Naked Spike is not something I want to contemplate, thank you." With that I swept out of the kitchen.

Willow and I went to the living room and discovered Tara and Dawn were already there, ignoring a big box on the coffee table.

"Hey ladies. What's in the box?" I asked, moving towards it.

"Your dare," Tara said, not looking at me. I jumped back.

Dawn grinned madly and said, "I cannot wait for this. It is too good. Get you, Pee creep."

"Pee creep? That is so lame. I am not a Pee creep. You're just not up to the Xander challenge." She made a mocking sound and gave me a look that I can't even describe. It was sort of 'you'll see' mixed with 'die now'.

I sat down on the floor and Willow sat next to Tara. Willow caught my eye and made her puppy dog apology eyes, and I smiled at her. No harm, no foul. In a few minutes Buffy came down, dressed again.

"So," I said, "what's in the box, Tara?"

"Didn't Spike say to wait for him?" Willow asked. I glared at her.

"I'm sure he won't mind missing-" I started to speak but the female voices in the room were louder than mine and I got out voted.

"Actually," Tara said, "this works for me. Xander,

your dare is to open the box. That's all. You can think about it until Spike gets here." She looked very earnest and innocent. The faint beginnings of worry started tingling in my stomach.

I checked the box out. It was wood, about two feet square and carved. The hinges were brass and it looked pretty old. I had no idea what the carvings were, it looked like people, but I couldn't tell how old they were or what they were wearing. I think there were leaves too.

Willow leaned forward and inspected it too. After looking intently at the brass latch she turned to Tara and said, "I had no idea you had one of these. Where did you get it?" Oh good. A witchy thing. That's reassuring.

"It was my grandmother's. She used to bring it out at family get togethers and trick people into opening it. The women all thought it was a scream, but the men...I think that's why they tried to convince everyone that the women in my family are demons. They had hurt feelings." She smiled and

Willow laughed. I swallowed, hard.

It was fifteen minutes before Spike got back to the house.

"Right then, what's the dare? C'mon whelp, I want to shower." He still had orange stuff in his hair, but he did smell better. The duster actually looked fine, and he had changed his boots.

"Go ahead, Xander. I dare you to open the box." Tara sounded perfectly at ease. The others all leaned forward expectantly. I stood up and walked around to the other side of the box, so they were all in front of me. I reached out to flip the lid open.

I hesitated. I knew that they wouldn't actually hurt me physically. But they would love to get a laugh at my expense. Most likely something would fly out of it at me and I would scream or something. Okay, I told myself. Just relax and be prepared.

"You backing down, Xander?" Dawn sounded smug.

"No." I was annoyed. I reached out and opened the box. There was a flash of blue light and some red smoke swirled around me. The air cleared and I was fine.

There was a shocked silence and then they all started laughing. Well, not so much laughing as gasping for air and clutching their sides. Spike actually slipped off the wall he had been leaning against and lay on the floor laughing so hard he was crying. Tara and Willow were holding each other up and Buffy just kept pointing at me and trying to talk.

"What?" I asked, in a perfectly reasonable tone. They laughed harder.

I looked down at my sweatshirt and jeans. Which were now a green house dress and pink sweater. I had on blue low heeled shoes. I was dressed like a woman.

"Huh. Funny."

Dawn pointed to the mirror on the wall. I got a sick

feeling in my stomach as I walked across the room and peered into it.

Yup. Woman. My cheekbones were more defined and my jaw was narrower. The stubble was gone and my skin was smooth. My hair was longer and curled around my shoulders. I was a woman. A thought occurred to me and I tried to be subtle about checking it out. I rounded on Tara.

She had been expecting that, I guess, because as soon as I faced her she said, "I'll turn you back right now, just stand still and I'll chant. You'll have your penis back in a minute!"

Spike choked. Dawn reminded me to check out my breasts before they were gone. I didn't.

Tara finished chanting and there was blue smoke this time, and a red flash of light.

It took a few minutes for everyone to stop laughing and calm down.

I crossed to Tara and my brave Willow jumped in between us. I reassured her that I wasn't going to hurt her girl, and she stepped back. Not very far though.

I drew Tara into my arms and hugged her. "Thank you," I whispered in her ear. She smiled and I knew that she understood I meant it for the phone call earlier.

"Now," I said, turning to the rest of the room, "who wants to try the great box of change next? Dawn? Spike?" No one seemed eager to try. "Tara, that was a great dare. I will hesitate before going up against you again. Spike, you smell. Let's get out of here."

As we left Buffy called out "Don't forget to call me tomorrow! I have great plans for the last day of your game."

"I'm frightened for you," Spike said. I appreciated the sentiment.

We got to my apartment and Spike headed for the bathroom. I pulled a beer from the fridge and turned on the TV.

"Xander, where's your towels?"

"Oh, right. Sorry, didn't get all the laundry put away. They're on the chair in my bedroom, all stacked up." I leaned back and closed my eyes. I had just sent him into my bedroom. So he could get a towel. To dry his naked body off with after he used my shower.

I really have to stop thinking all together.

I heard the water turn on and started flicking through channels, not paying any attention to the TV. I can't think about him in there, I can't. He'll know, he'll sense it, he'll know I want him. Can't let him know until I have an idea where this is going.

Endless minutes later the shower stopped and I started thinking about gross stuff to tame my

twitching erection. Damn. God damn.

Spike came out of the bathroom, fully dressed and mostly dry. His hair was sort of all over the place.

"Don't suppose you have any hair gel?" he asked.

"Nope, it left when the girl did," I said with a grin.

He grinned back. "Could get Tara to turn you back into a girl. Then you'd have the stuff around for me."

"No thanks, I like me better like this."

He stared right in my eyes and then he looked me up and down. "So do I, mate. Much better this way."

Monday night, Interlude

Fuck, I am such an idiot. The whelp looked terrified.

His heart rate was through the roof and I knew I smelled arousal. He was just staring at me like I was about to attack him, and not in a good way. I looked away from him and caught the TV out of the corner of my eye. Swimwear competition. I am such a fucking git.

So I smirked at him and said, "You are one ugly woman, Harris. Stick to being a bloke if you can." He relaxed a little, and I think I may have managed to not screw up entirely. But bad enough that I can't stay. I leave within minutes and head back to the crypt. Took out a group of four fledges on the way, worked off a little steam. Not enough though. It took me half an hour with my hand working my cock to get calm enough to sleep.

I am such an idiot.

Tuesday morning

I don't want to go to work. I just want to stay in my

bed and hide from the world. I must be out of my mind.

Spike tore out of my apartment like he had a fire to put out somewhere and I just sat there. The way he looked at me was telling me one thing, but the way he reacted... When he looked at me like that my heart leapt. There hadn't been any chance to control my breathing and if vampires can smell desire he must have known. His eyes. I know what I saw. At least, I thought I did. Then he left.

I went to bed and tossed and turned for an hour. What did I do? How did I make him run away like that? Shit.

The site wasn't busy enough to keep my mind totally occupied. We had inspectors on the lot and that always slows us down. I was showing one of them around when my cell phone rang.

"Hello?"

"Hey! Truth or dare?"

"Hold on a second." I apologized to the inspector and walked towards the foreman's shed. "Not a good time, Buff. I'm showing a big wig the site."

"Oops. Sorry. I got called into work early, but that means I'll be home earlier. Can you call me about two-thirty this afternoon?"

I said sure and returned to my job. She sure was eager. I was a little worried about that, then I remembered she had said something about having a big plan. Okay, worry growing. Like I need anything else to worry about.

At two-thirty I took a coffee break, sat in my car and dialed Buffy.

She answered with a cheery "Truth or Dare?"

"That's my line," I said, "and you are far too happy about this. I'm scared."

"You should be. I'm the only one left and I have

been paying attention to what you have been doing. Strategy girl, that's me. Okay, not so much strategy, but definite planning. So, Truth. Or. Dare?"

I did a little mental recap. So far picking Truth had me face my bi-sexuality and admit to being attracted to a male vampire. Dare had turned me into a woman. Buffy wasn't that great at magick and I was sure she wouldn't make me do anything that would hurt, so it was a pretty easy choice.

"Dare." Oh, listen to that: my fate being sealed with the sound of a lock clicking closed.

Buffy practically screamed, she was so happy with my choice. "Perfect! This is so great. I have you now, you may as well just ask what the forfeit is, 'cause there is no freaking way you will go through with this." She laughed, and I have to admit that she was the first one to actually sound evil. My stomach churned.

"Just get on with it. I don't back down, so you may as well forget about the forfeit." God, I am so stupid

sometimes.

"I dare you to ask a specific person out on a date. A real date. And the person I choose must know that it is a date, not just a movie and 'Hey, let's get a burger'." My stomach settled down, but only because the cold steel of terror was rushing through my body. I knew where this was going.

I babbled something that must have sounded like "Sure, Buffy, that sounds like a great idea. Who do you have in mind?" What I was actually trying to say was "I am the king of Truth or Dare and always will be, but I will share my throne if you promise me you aren't going to actually do this to me."

"Xander? Are you ready for this? Oh God, this is fun. I can't wait to tell the others that I won. That I actually beat you at this. Okay, okay, here it is. I dare you to ask Spike on a date." She snickered into the phone.

I took a deep breath and said, "Okay."

Silence.

"Pardon me? You did hear me, right? I said I dare you to take Spike out on a date."

"Uh huh. I said okay." My hand was shaking so hard I had to hold onto the steering wheel and grip the cell phone tighter so I wouldn't drop it.

"Uh, all right then. I mean it though, you realize. You actually have to do it. You're sure you don't want to just forfeit?" She sounded so disappointed.

"I'll do it." Breathe. Flex fingers. I counted to ten and then from ten to one. Okay, there was a good chance I could live through the next few minutes. Then I would call Willow and panic.

"Buff? Truth or dare?" Time for payback. I stared through the window of the car, not really thinking about anything.

She was distracted. "Oh, right. Um, truth, I guess."

"What will you do if he says yes?" I didn't even know I was going to ask that until it was out of my mouth.

"What? If he says...oh my God, I hadn't even thought of that. I didn't think you'd take the dare. I guess if he says yes and you guys go on an actual date I'll just...die of curiosity and wonder what dimension I'm in. Then I'll grill you both for hours for details and hope to God that you know what you're doing. Then I'll deal. I mean, we've seen stranger stuff haven't we? That whole Giles on band candy comes to mind, and I really don't want to think about that. It would be major strange, but I guess it wouldn't be necessarily a bad thing. What will you do if he says yes?"

"Take him out," I replied. "Coffee break is over, I'll see you at sunset for patrol."

She said bye in a vague and distracted voice and I went back to work. My hands stopped shaking after a bit.

Tuesday night

I never got to call Willow and have my panic attack. We had to rebuild a unit at work and I barely had time to eat before going to the cemetery for patrol. I pulled up just as the rest of the gang were separating.

"You're with me, whelp," Spike called out as he started walking.

I ran to catch up and he handed me an ax. "What are we after?" I asked.

"Gorbish demon. It's living in one of the mausoleums, far side of the graveyard. They aren't really dangerous, but not something you want living this close to a populated area. Buffy and Red are taking on a nest of vamps. Glinda gave them some sort of powder that will stun them enough that they won't be able too fight to hard. Between Buffy and the way Red can use a stake they shouldn't have

any trouble."

Spike was walking fast and talking too much. Usually the only reply I would have gotten was "Demon in that mausoleum, we want to make it move."

I just nodded and followed him, keeping the ax away from my body. I hadn't had any time to figure out a plan for asking him out. I had reached a rather good conclusion though. If I asked him and he said yes, great. If he said no, I could blame it on the dare and go back to being Xander, token male friend. But I wanted him to say yes.

We got to the demon's home and Spike gave me some more details.

"They have claws, but they don't use 'em much. They prefer to spit. Avoid that, it stings. We don't really want to kill it, we just want it to understand it can't stay here. The best way to get its attention is for me to go in and get it out here, in the open. You try to stay out of its way until you can get behind it.

I'll take the front. If you get a chance, hack at one of its tails. They'll grow back in time, but it needs the tails for balance. If we can't make it leave it will at least head somewhere quiet to heal." He hauled the door open and rushed inside. I was still contemplating a creature with more than one tail.

Quickly, I moved to the side of the crypt, to the right of the door. Spike came flying back out at a dead run, followed by a demon which looked like something in a drug induced nightmare. It wasn't very tall, maybe six feet, but it did have three tails. I didn't see much of its face, but it seemed to be blue, and sort of smooth. The back was bumpy and had lots of tiny little horns. I moved in closer, keeping Spike in view. He was landing kicks and punches on the demon and was speaking a language I had never heard.

The demon yelled something out and Spike backed off, giving me a wave that said wait there, don't attack yet.

Spike said something else, and apparently the

demon didn't like it much 'cause the next thing I knew Spike was cursing a blue streak and running back into the fight. The Gorbish was trying to claw at him but Spike was moving too fast. He was kicking out and dancing away, trying to avoid the green spit the demon was shooting. I ran in and started chopping at the middle tail. Two swipes with the ax and I was faced with two feet of twitching, unattached tail. The Gorbish didn't seem to notice. I started on the second tail.

Without warning the demon turned on me and I jumped out the way of a claw. Spike roared and I looked up to see him launch himself onto the demon's back. He was in game face and the Gorbish started pawing at him, trying to get the vampire off its back. I grabbed the ax and hacked at the tail. As the second tail came off the demon stumbled and fell over. Spike stood up and came over to me. I nodded to tell him I was fine and his human face slipped into place. He nodded once and went over to the demon.

Spike started talking again and the demon briefly

replied. Spike said something else in a firm tone of voice and the demon keened and whimpered. Once more Spike spoke and the demon finally nodded. Spike nodded too and walked back to me.

"You okay, mate?" he asked, pulling a pack of cigarettes out of his pocket.

"Yeah, fine. It didn't get near me. You?"

Spike inhaled and blew a plume of smoke out.
"Fine. Nice fight. She's going to leave, head for the coast. Let's go see if Buffy and Willow need help with the vamps."

"She? That is an ugly woman, Spike. I was much more attractive than that," I said as we started walking.

Spike laughed. "Yeah, you were at that. Still better as a bloke though." He looked sideways at me and smiled. I blushed.

"Can I ask you something?" I said, still walking,

looking around for bad guys.

"Sure. Can't promise to answer though."

"Well, this is sort of out of the blue, but I wondered what you thought. I was talking to Dawn a while ago about dates and stuff and we were disagreeing about the perfect first date. She said movie, I said dinner. What do you think?" Okay, I know, but it was the best I could come up with. If I was to ask him out I at least wanted to ask him to do something he liked.

Spike stopped walking. "Never dated much, I'm not the best one to ask. Dru turned me, Harm just moved in 'cause we were having sex. I don't actually think I've ever been on a date. I mean, I've gone to parties and such with people, but not like you mean."

I stood facing him and nodded. "Yeah. Cordy and I stole moments where we could, Anya and I had sex first too. So, what do you think? Perfect first date, hypothetically?"

We started walking again and he seemed to give it some thought. "Well, movies are okay, 'cause if you don't know the person well you can be together and not have to keep a long conversation going. Then, if you get a drink later you have something to talk about. Mind you, plays are better. You can talk about it more; how the acting was, the writing, the direction. I mean, what can you say about a movie that has been edited to death? After 'cool explosion' you're out of stuff to say. So, a play and then drinks. Unless you're really into the person, and then I would say a play followed by dinner. More chance to talk and the dinner invite kinda screams 'I want to spend time with you'. Perfect first date for Nibblet though is dinner at her house with the rest of us there to inspect the jerk." He pitched his smoke away and turned to face me.

"I don't buy the 'Dawn and I were talking' shit, Harris. What do you want?" His eyes were serious and his posture was rigid. His hands were stuffed into the pockets of his duster. He leaned forward a little and I caught that smell again, hair gel, leather

and smoke.

I took a quick breath and said, "I got dared to ask you out and I wanted to take you somewhere you would like." Hey, honesty has to be a good thing in this sort of situation.

Spike stared at me, his eyes wide. He opened his mouth and snapped it shut again, then blinked.

"You took a dare to...Holy fuck. Wait, you wanted to take me somewhere I'd like?" He didn't look like he was going to beat the shit out of me, so I nodded.

"Buffy was sure I would back down, but you know me. At any rate, you don't have to say yes, I'll just do her forfeit."

We started walking again. I looked at him out of the corner of my eye. He seemed to be thinking about it. He glanced at me a couple of times and I was just starting to wonder if I should say something when he stopped walking, yet again.

"Okay, ask me."

"W-what?"

"Can't say yes or no until you ask me out. Ask me."

My heart skipped a couple of beats. Oh, there's that panic attack. Okay, I can do this. He knows I'm going to ask him out, so I don't have to worry about him hitting me. I stood in front of him and looked at his face. His eyes were intent and serious, but his mouth was soft and almost smiling. I squished the remaining tendrils of panic into a little ball and forced it aside.

"Spike," I said, "would you like to go to a play and out for dinner with me?"

His eyes widened slightly and then he was himself again. He allowed his smile to grow and he nodded once. "I think I would like that, Xander. When?"

When? How the fuck should I know? "Um, I'll see what's playing and give you a call tomorrow

evening?" I said, suddenly weak legged and wanting to run home and hide under my bed.

He grinned at my panic and "Sure, mate. Call me."

~*~*~*~*~

Willow and Buffy had taken care of the nest with no trouble.

"I think some of them weren't home," Buffy said. "There were only six there. I'll come back in the daylight and clear out the rest. Hey, Xander, you ready for your forfeit?"

"Xander! You forfeited to Buffy? Oh my God, what did she do to you?" Willow was staring at Buffy in awe.

"No, I didn't forfeit. I did her dare. So there, Buffy." I was positively gleeful, the look on her face was stunning.

She turned to Spike who just smirked at her. "Oh my God," she said. "I'm going home now. Willow, I need you to make me comfort food, the world is too weird for me now."

"Sure, Buffy. Ice cream is easy. But what's going on? What was the dare?" Willow's wide eyes looked to Buffy, then me and darted to Spike.

"Well, it's like this," Spike said. "Xander and I have a date. He's asked me to a play and out for dinner. Seems the Slayer underestimated the whelp and me. You take her home and get her sorted out with the chocolate she's going to need, and I'll walk this one back to his car." With a grin at Willow Spike turned and started walking toward where I had left my car.

Willow looked like she was going to leap out of her skin. "You really asked him out? And he said yes? Oh my God, Xander, call me later, okay?" I nodded and grinned at her.

Buffy grabbed her arm and hauled her off saying

"Chocolate ice cream, Willow. Chocolate ice cream and it will all make sense."

I walked back to my car, quickly catching up with Spike. He didn't say anything until we got there, and then he just smiled at me and said "Call me tomorrow and let me know the details, pet."

"Sure, Spike," I said, trying to sound casual. "I'll call right after work."

He nodded and walked into the darkness. I drove home and didn't do my victory dance until I was in my apartment with the blinds drawn. It was a great victory dance.

Tuesday night. Interlude

He asked me out. I have an actual date.

Yeah, so it was on a dare. I'll worry about that later, right now I just want to enjoy the fact that he asked

me out. For dinner no less. That has to mean something, I told him flat out that dinner means something more than drinks. His eyes when he asked. Just so effing beautiful. Dark and moist and serious. He was scared I'd say no, the nervousness just pouring off of him. He wanted me to say yes and the relief in his face when I did...

God, I want him. Buffy did me a favor with that dare, I'll have to thank her somehow.

Guess I didn't bollocks it up last night after all. I need a drink. And a smoke.

Okay, picture him. No harm in a little fantasy, not tonight. Tonight I enjoy this feeling. Tonight I let myself dream and pretend. Time enough for second guessing and doubt later.

He'll be shy and tentative. I'd swear he's never been with a bloke, so when I reach out for him he'll be wondering and nervous. Gently kiss him, taking it slow. Nibble at his lips, taste him, wait for him to respond. That's it, open that soft mouth a little.

So sweet. Tastes like candy and coffee. Strong tongue, smooth teeth. Sample his flavor, get to know his mouth. One arm over his shoulders, drawing him to me. The other arm around his back, holding him. Make him safe. Kisses on his jaw, his breath on my skin. He's so warm. His heartbeat picks up and the heat is pouring off of him. Lick at his neck, tease his earlobe. Hear him pant a little.

His hand on my back, pulling me closer. God yes. That's it, hold me to your chest, Xander, let me feel your body next to mine. His lips on my neck now, licking and sucking and kissing. Hands on each other, the feel of his chest and his arms, the strength in that body. His hands wandering on my back and he kneads my muscles, the feel of his cock getting hard against my hip. Press into him, kisses and tongue on his neck, pull the shirt from his pants. Skin on skin, need it. Yank my shirt off and yes right there, lapping at my nipples, moving all over my body, kissed and licks and fingers exploring me. Get his shirt off, see that chest, taste it. God, I'm so hard.

Kiss his mouth hard, plunder it with my tongue. Grind his hips with mine, feel our erections as we move and rock together. Drop my hands to his ass and just pull him in. Can't get close enough, need more, need to touch him with all that I have, need to see...

Drop to my knees and undo his pants. Shoes off, pull the pants down, slow, slow. Listen to him breathe, the way he says my name "God yes, Spike, need you" Take him in my hand and learn the way he feels.

Fuck. So beautiful. Taste him, lick him, suck him. The length of his cock, the weight of it. Play with his balls and hear him moan, beg me to make it last.

"Xander, so good, gonna make you feel so good..."

Stand and kiss him, wrap my hand around his erection and stroke him, nice and slow. Hold him as he shudders. Stop before he gets to close.

Too many clothes, got to get my pants off. He watches me while I strip, his eyes dark with wanting me. He's got his hand on his cock, stroking himself while I stand there watching. Fuck yes, so fucking hot like that. I watch him pull himself off for me, and touch myself for him. Stand there, jerking off for him, watch while his hand gets faster and his hips jerk. Move my hand faster and tighter, moan his name, hear him cry out.

"Jesus, Xander, yes, like that pet, I want to see you come for me, fuck, so nice"

I can't stand, my knees are weak and I fall to the floor as I watch him come.

Friday. Date night.

I can do this, I thought to myself. I have buttoned shirts before, lots of times. So how come the button holes are too small this time?

I had to pick Spike up in an hour, the play started at eight. Sylvia. I had no idea what it was about, but I thought there was a dog. We had reservations for ten at La Maison. I was more nervous than I thought I would be. I needed to puke. Again.

As I headed for the bathroom I heard a knock at the door, and Willow calling to be let in. I pulled the door open and ran back to the toilet. When I came out she was in my bedroom looking at shirts.

"You'll be fine, just go eat some crackers and take a shower. I'll get your clothes." She smiled at me encouragingly.

I just nodded and went to eat crackers. When I got out of the shower there was a stack of clothes on the counter. Dark pants. Cream shirt with (ack) buttons. Dinner jacket. When I finished fighting with the buttons I studied my reflection in the mirror. Not bad. At least I didn't look like I'd been barfing since four thirty.

Willow smiled when she saw me. "You look great.

Really. Do you want a pep talk, or just a hug?"

"Um, I think I need both. Will, I'm a wreck. Did Buffy tell you about last night?"

Buffy and I had been on patrol together, the first time since I had asked Spike out. She was still talking about how she hadn't expected me to do it, when we were jumped by two vamps. They weren't fledges and they gave a bit of a struggle. Well, for me anyway. I was fighting one and was just about to stake him when Buffy, in mid tussle with her vamp suddenly yells out, "Oh my God, Xander! You like him!" Then she staked her vamp and kicked mine out of the way just before he pinned me down. The vamp came back up and she turned to him, shouting "We are in the middle of something here!" and she threw her stake in his direction. Bull's-eye. The vamp dust settled on us as I looked into her eyes. She looked stunned and curious, and a little pissed.

"Yeah, I think I do." I got up off the ground and prepared myself for the wrath of Buffy.

She stomped her foot and said, "Why am I always the last to know? Why? When did this happen?"

"Well, you're not the last to know this time. Spike doesn't know, Dawn and Giles don't and I don't think Tara does for sure. And it happened on Sunday or Monday." I held my arms out to her and she accepted my hug.

"That's different then. I hate being last. Are you sure? I mean, it is Spike. Not that he isn't lust worthy, but he's sort of a guy."

I laughed and hugged her tighter. "I know he's a guy. And I figured out the lust thing about the same time I figured out that I like him. Thanks for the information, though, it could have been embarrassing if I didn't know."

She punched me on the shoulder (ow) and grinned. "Idiot. So, he doesn't know? Are you sure? He did say yes to the date thing."

We started walking again. "No, I'm not sure. But I expect that I'll know either way after tomorrow night."

Buffy smiled at me, sort of sad. "Yeah, I guess we'll know then."

"She told me. She's happy for you; we all are. Now listen to me. This is just a play and dinner. It's your friend, Spike. He knows you and he likes you, nothing is going to change that. Just go get him, enjoy the play, and have a nice meal. Trust me, it will be fine. Call me later if you want, or we can have lunch tomorrow." She gave me her best smile and hugged me tighter. "Love you, Xander."

"Love you too, Willow."

"Go now. It's time to get Spike. And have fun!"

I went. To my car, through the streets, to a cemetery to pick up my date.

Friday

I think I made a groove in the floor by pacing back and forth.

I was nervous, I admit it. Why wouldn't I be? I was about to go on a date with a man whom I was hoping would be interested in more, and I wanted him. I was pretty sure that the reason first dates were so important was because they were a test. If you can survive the tension leading up to the actual date you were worthy of actually going on said date.

I did a last minute check. I had fed and cleaned my mouth, pretty sure that blood breath would be a turn off. I was clean and dressed. I was pacing. I really wanted a reflection, just for a few minutes so I could check to see if I looked like a total idiot. Black leather pants, tight where they should be and looser in the leg. Gray sweater of some soft knit

that made it cling to my body. Black leather jacket, not the duster. The jacket was loosely cut, hitting about mid thigh. Silver chain around my neck and fresh polish on my nails.

Should have worn the red silk shirt. Shit. Why did I try to do things a little differently? I knew the red shirt looked good, maybe there was time to change. Nope, time was up, I could hear him walking towards the crypt. His heart was a little fast, I guessed he was nervous too.

He knocked at the door and I counted to five before crossing to open it. Couldn't look too eager, could I? I pulled the door open and stepped back for him to enter. He was fidgety and twitchy, but he smiled at me and I knew that he wanted to be there. He was just nervous like me, but I was hiding it better.

"C'mon in," I said, as I took in the sight before me. I had seen him dressed up before, but this was...different. This was for me. He looked so fucking hot it was all I could do not to throw him up the wall and shag him senseless. A dinner jacket,

and that cream shirt...I was thankful I didn't have to breathe. He was looking at me expectantly and I realized he had said something.

"Huh? Oh, yeah, ready to go. Let me grab something first and we can head out." I turned and headed to the ladder down to my more private area. Lunging across the bed I snatched up a tube of lube and thrust it into a pocket of my jacket. One can always hope.

We walked to his car and I caught him looking at me. Not sneaking a glance from under his eyelashes, actually turning his head and staring.

"What? Is my hair messed up?" I was probably a little snarky. He was giving me the jitters.

"No! I mean, no, your hair is fine. It's just...I mean, I don't think I've seen you dressed like this before," he stuttered out, before he looked away from me.

Shit. "So? What do you think? It works?" I raised an eyebrow and did my rakish James Bond impression

and spun like a fashion model. Got to lighten the mood somehow.

He laughed and grinned sheepishly. "Yeah, it works. I like the sweater." His ears were getting red. Heh.

We got in the car and managed to make polite chit chat on the way to the theater. By the time we found our seats and got settled there were only about ten minutes left to curtain, so we busied ourselves by studying the program and trying to figure out what the play was going to be about.

"Harris, this is about a dog. And a marriage. Did you know that?"

"Nope. Well, I thought there was something about a dog, but there wasn't a hell of a lot of choice. There's only one theater in Sunnydale, and this is what's playing, so shut up and watch the play." He wasn't so nervous anymore. Neither was I.

The play was okay, from what I remember. There was a group of drunk women in the front row who

kept trying to talk to the actors, which was pretty funny. I was thinking that things were going to get really exciting if the director finally got fed up and came out to let the drunks know how much their efforts were appreciated, but it never happened.

Midway through the second act I shifted in my seat and wound up with my foot and leg pushed up against Xander's. He froze for a moment and I was going to move away but he suddenly relaxed. He didn't move, so I didn't. His heart kicked up a notch, though, and it was a couple of minutes before it evened out. I kept sneaking looks at him. The play was pretty funny and he laughed at all the right times. He looked so good when he smiled like that. Our legs were still pressed together and I started getting hard.

He moved around in his seat and put his hand on his thigh, near his knee, not quite touching my leg. It looked like a perfectly natural move to me, so if it was an invitation he was actually managing to be subtle. I was impressed if it was a move, and I debated on whether or not to find out. The safest,

least pushy thing I could think of was to put my hand on my leg, next to his. What I wanted to do was grab his hand and drag him into the parking lot where I could let him know what he was doing to me in no uncertain terms. I was positive that anything like that would end the evening fast though, and if he was really upset I would be greeted by a very pissed off Slayer shortly after.

God, how pathetic. William the fucking Bloody and I was sitting in a theater wondering if holding hands was moving too fast. Screw that. I was about to move away from him all together when he did the bravest thing I think I have ever seen him do. His head turned to face me and he smiled, his brown eyes full of fear and hope and something else. His hand reached for mine and our fingers tangled together, palms together, resting on my thigh. I squeezed his hand a little and tried to smile gently, but I think it came out as a grin.

We watched the rest of the play like that, only letting go when the curtain came down for the final time and the house lights came up. The walk to the

car was silent, but comfortable, both of us smiling and walking too close together.

We talked about the play on the way to the restaurant, but I don't think Xander had a clue what it was about. He knew the character's names, and he knew that it was funny, but the finer details were lost to him. Good thing. I wasn't even sure what the character's names were.

Dinner

There was a play. I knew that 'cause it was dark and there were people applauding at the end.

We got to La Maison and were seated quickly at a table for two near the back. It was a nice place, dim light and good food. We spent the meal talking about books and what was going on with my current construction job; Spike actually seemed interested in that and asked some good questions. I was glad that we were sitting across from each

other so I could look at him. He wasn't acting as nervous as I felt, which was good. If we were both as tightly wound as I was this whole thing, whatever it was, would go nowhere. He was just Spike, cool and relaxed, chatting about the food, other meals he'd had somewhere, and the play.

I was so hard it hurt. If he knew he didn't let on, thank Christ. Embarrassment is a major turn off.

I thought it was a pretty safe bet that he was comfortable with the whole date thing. He dressed up for it, and we held hands. Yeah, it was good. We were moving forward, and I stopped trying to say just the right thing all the time and be myself. We laughed some, and we enjoyed the meal.

When the food was gone and I had paid the bill we sat there a moment longer. I managed to get myself arranged well enough that my erection wouldn't be too obvious when I stood up, and I think he saw that. I blushed and looked at the floor. He didn't say anything, so I guess it was cool. I mean, he's a guy, he knows that our parts take on a life of their own

sometimes. Besides, I'd bet it was a little flattering. I knew I'd be flattered.

We started to leave the restaurant, me leading. He was buttoning up his leather coat when we got to the narrow doorway, and I guess he wasn't paying too much attention to what was going on around us. A group of four people were coming in the door and I twisted sideways to let them pass. At least one of the four was in a drunken state, 'cause when he started to fall over he didn't stop.

Spike was next to me before he noticed the human toppling and when the guy grabbed Spike's shoulder to catch himself he pushed Spike right into me. And, oh fuck, right into my cock. Jesus. It was all I could do not to come on the spot, and yes, I moaned.

I opened my eyes when I realized that Spike was still pressed into me. I looked into his eyes, his pupils were large and his eyes were a deeper blue than I had seen before. He moved slightly and I realized that the hardness pressed into my hip wasn't his hip bone.

When he spoke his voice was husky and he had to clear his throat. "Is this the part where you say 'My place or yours?' " he asked.

I managed to speak, but my voice was strained and low. "No, this is where I say let's get the hell out of here before I ruin my pants. Then I say we're going to my place."

He nodded and grabbed my hand. We were out the door before anyone could blink.

We got to my car and I was shaking so bad I couldn't get the key in the door to unlock it. Christ, he was so hard, I couldn't think. I could still feel him pressed up against me. Fuck, why wouldn't the key go in?

Then Spike was there, turning me around, pressing me against the car.

"Calm down, luv, I'm not going anywhere. We have lots of time." His voice was soothing, but the heat in

his eyes and the way his body was pressed on mine were making me crazy. He had one arm around my shoulders, the other hand was on my hip. Like when we were dancing.

"Yeah, I know," I gasped. "But I really want to..."

"So do I, but we have time. Think about that. We'll just get in the car and drive. It's easy." His voice was smoother than it had been in the restaurant, but his hips were moving in a slow circle, grinding us together.

"Shit, Spike," I said and then we were kissing. Our mouths were fused together and I had my tongue practically down his throat. God, so cool and soft, his mouth was like tasting something I had never had but always wanted. My hands clutched at his coat, bringing him closer to me, drawing him into me. Our hips were thrusting together and I never wanted it to end.

He drew back a bit and swore. "Damn it. I was wrong. We have to get in the car right now or the

main event is going to be over before we get out of this parking lot."

I nodded and kissed him again. He moaned into my mouth and tore away, gasping. He stepped back and growled, "Car. Door. Unlock it now."

I was panting, but I did what he said. I don't know how we made it back to my building without having an accident but we did. He kept moving in his seat and it was all I could do to keep my eyes on the road. We didn't speak.

All the way into the building and down the hall to my apartment we avoided touching each other. By some miracle the door lock was easier to open than the car's had been and then we were inside.

Spike pushed the door closed and grabbed me, thrusting me up against the wall. We were chest to chest, our legs braced together and I could feel his erection pressing into me again. Our kisses were frantic, our tongues slipping together and moans filling the air. My hands were roaming over him,

unbuttoning his coat, pushing it to the floor. I had one hand flat on his back holding him fast to me, the other hand getting tangled in his hair. As he held me to the wall with his body weight and his hands on my shoulders I pulled his head back by his hair and dove for his neck, leaving wet open kisses along his throat.

"Xander, Christ yes, like that. Bloody hell that's good."

I gasped against his skin as his hands moved over my chest, pushing my jacket out the way, pulling and tugging at my nipples. I groaned and mouthed his neck harder, breath harsh and fast. He tried to unbutton my shirt, but I had his head tipped back and he couldn't see. I licked his neck from his collarbone up to his ear, my tongue firm, tasting his cool skin, the flavor of smoke and spice and earth and Spike. I started sucking, biting gently, trying to keep that taste with me as long as I could. He shook and I sucked harder, groaning.

He swore again as he fought with my shirt. I lifted

one foot and braced it against the wall, intending to propel us toward the couch, but the move just brought his leg between my thighs and we were grinding again, our cocks pressed tight together and I couldn't get enough, couldn't stop moving with him. His length was pressed into mine and I didn't have a chance to breath before the sensation was too much.

"Fuck, Spike, harder, need to feel you, oh Jesus, oh shit yes, like that, just like that, so hard, so fucking hard..."

He grabbed my hair and pulled my head away from his neck. His hips were pushing at mine faster and harder as I rocked against his leg. His mouth found mine, our kiss was deep, almost painful in its intensity, and I was shuddering in his arms.

"Xander, now pet, now, do it please, come for me, Xander, come now, fuck yes, pet, I'm gonna come..."

He threw his head back and groaned and I could

feel him tense. His leg was rock hard, I thrust twice more against him and cried out, "Spike, oh God yes, Spike!" and I came, braced against the wall, leaning into Spike. He suddenly jerked in my arms and cried out a stream of nonsense and I knew he had come too.

~*~*~*~*~

We slid down the wall and landed in a tangled pile on the floor, both of us panting. Xander twisted around and kissed me, gently this time, and then sprawled on his back.

"That was...intense," he gasped.

When I could speak I said, "I don't think I've ever come fully dressed before. Yeah, that was intense."

He chuckled. "Hell, I'm still wearing my coat. God, I'm a mess."

I just smiled. We lay there for a few minutes,

waiting for our legs to get some strength back. Finally he rolled over and looked at me.

"We better get cleaned up. I'll go start the shower." His eyes were warm and playful, and I could still see desire in them. He leaned over and we kissed again.

We got up off the floor and he shed his coat, dropping it over the couch on his way to the bathroom. I started to peel off my sweater when I realize something. "Fuck! Leather pants. Drycleaner is going to love this."

Xander laughed and changed direction, going into the kitchen. He came back out with a damp cloth, still smiling. "Here, this should get most of it off."

"Ta, luv," I said, and start to undo my pants. He was still there, watching me. My mind flashed to my fantasy, a lifetime ago, the night he asked me out. Him, watching me strip. I was getting hard again. I thought it might be all right, though, his eyes were darkening and his breathing was shallow. He licked his lips and started unbuttoning that damn shirt, his

eyes not leaving mine.

I toed off my shoes and waited until he had his shirt undone. I finally pulled my sweater off and I heard him catch his breath. I walked over to him and put my hands on his chest, opening his shirt and pushing it off his shoulders. He's so broad, his muscles defined from his work. His shirt fell to the floor and I ran a finger over his chest and down his stomach, following that fine line of hair. He put one hand on my side, stroking lightly, and moved the other over my body, pausing to tease a nipple. We were both panting again, and I was worried I would never get those pants off.

Slowly, I pulled him towards me, and I dipped my head to his chest, making him arch back a bit so I could lick and suckle at his nipple. The hand on my side gripped me harder and he moaned softly.

"Spike, I want to see you. Please Spike." God, he's lovely. I lifted my head and released him, stepping back. I finished undoing my fly and started to lower my pants. He dropped a hand to his own buttons

and started doing the same. I had to tug a bit to get the tight leather past my hips, but when I bent over the pants came off smoothly, and my socks followed. I kicked them away, the damp cloth and cleaning the leather forgotten. I straightened up and looked at him.

"So beautiful, Spike. You are so beautiful." My semi-stiff shaft jumped at that and I wanted to see him naked. More than anything, I wanted to see him before me, proud and strong.

Without another word he finished undoing his trousers and they slid down his legs. He lifted one foot and took off his sock, then the other, the pants shoved out of the way. He put his hands at his waist, thumbs catching the fabric of his damp boxers. He pushed them past his hips, and bent at the waist, forcing the shorts off. Then he stood up and looked at me, eyes liquid with heat and wanting, eager for my reaction.

His shoulders seemed so broad when compared with his waist. His legs were well muscled and his

stomach was flat and tight. His erection was thick and dark and gorgeous.

"God, I want you," I managed. He smiled and stepped towards me, pulling me in once more.

The heat from his body was astounding. We were kissing gently at first, but getting more intense when he pulled back to breathe.

"Shower," he panted. "We are sticky. Need shower." He took my hand and pulled me toward the bathroom.

~*~*~*~*~

Shower. Nice shower. Naked Spike in my shower. Yeah, I was having a good night.

He was gently washing my back and I was just relaxing, letting him. We had managed to take the edge off our hunger pretty successfully and I just wanted to be with him. We kissed now and then,

and we explored each others bodies with gentle hands and lips. I never realized how different male bodies could be from one another, aside from obvious things like differences in weight. We were both fairly fit men, more muscle than not, but there were these amazing things I kept finding. Like the planes of his abdomen, and the way his shoulders flexed when he soaped my arms. The leanness of his legs compared to mine, and his foreskin pushing back as his erection grew.

We were still hard and getting harder. I suppose slipping soap coated hands all over each other wasn't the best way to cool off our wanting, but hell, who wanted to calm down?

I turned him so that he was under the spray and started washing him with the face cloth. If his groan was any indication he seemed to like the rough fabric on his skin, so I kept doing it, making small circles on his back and hips. I moved my hand down and rubbed the cloth on his ass and then lower on his thigh. His cock was leaking, his fluid mixing with the water. Suddenly I wanted nothing more than to

taste him.

I rubbed the cloth further down his legs, lowering myself as I did so. He put a hand out and braced himself on the wall, the other stroking my wet hair. I washed his calves and looked up at him. His eyes were unfocussed and his mouth was open slightly, his tongue lapping at the water running over his face.

"Xan...you don't have to..." he rasped.

I smiled and put my tongue out, just enough to oh so slightly lick the head of his erection. He gasped and jerked, his cock bobbing.

"Stand still," I said.

"Oh God, Xander, you're going to drive me crazy. You look so incredible there, water on you, your perfect mouth, those eyes," he babbled.

I put one hand around the base of his shaft and held it steady. I pushed away an attack of performance

anxiety-kind of late for that-and decided to do what I knew I liked. Slowly I started licking his length, long strokes from the base to the tip. The foreskin was almost all the way back now, the head of his penis almost entirely exposed. I ran my tongue over the head and dipped into the slit. I heard his head hit the shower wall with a thud and paused. A hand at the back of my head encouraged me to keep going.

I brought the other hand up to cup his sack and played with his balls while I coated his cock with licks. I moved a finger back and stroked his perineum just before I engulfed his head with my mouth. Swirling my tongue around the head I started to draw him further into my mouth, sucking a little harder with each breath.

"Oh yes, yes, like that. Feels so good, your mouth is so warm, so nice," Spike groaned.

I backed off a little until just the head was in my mouth and sucked hard. When he gasped I opened up and dropped my head down, taking in as much as I could, slicking his shaft with my tongue, getting

him as slippery as I could. When I had him in as far as I could I just stayed there and started using my hand to move the skin, creating friction with my hand and suction with my mouth.

"Fuck yes, Xander, that's it, faster just a little more..."

When I could I took a little more into my mouth and then stopped moving my hand. Spike groaned in frustration and started moving his hips, trying to keep the movement he needed. I pulled my mouth up his cock and started a steady motion, bobbing up and down his shaft, playing with his balls. He started jerking his hips with my rhythm, fucking my mouth. He had a hand on my head, trying to set the pace, but I wasn't having that. Whenever he tried to go faster I would stop and he would cry out in need and want.

"Please, please, Xander, I need you to touch me, please touch me, Xan..."

He was begging and it was the most perfect thing I

had ever heard. I opened my throat and took him as deep as I could; trying not to gag, I backed off just a little and sucked. His sack was tight and I knew he was close so I carefully moved the finger on that sensitive piece of skin back just a little and circled his opening.

His hips jerked and he lost all control, crying out "Fuck yes, Xander, oh god yes, I'm going to come oh Christ oh yes, Xander, pet, luv, yes!" His hand clutched at the wall as he filled my mouth and I swallowed around his shaft, licking and cleaning him. Then he pulled me up and pressed me into the wall of the shower and devoured my mouth in a searing kiss.

~*~*~*~*~

Bloody hell. That was incredible.

We finally made it out of the shower and got dried off. Xander was still hard, but when I reached for his cock to repay him for that beautiful blow job he said

that the water was getting too cold. He was right, but I hadn't noticed. When we were dry he took my hand and led me to his bedroom.

"Gotta say, this is a great date, pet."

"Yeah, it's going pretty well, I think," he said as we fell onto the bed.

We smiled at each other and he wrapped his arms around me, kissing me soundly on the mouth. We rolled until we were lying side by side, facing each other, kissing each other and running our hands all over, memorizing each other's bodies.

"Pet?"

"Mmmgh?"

"What do you want?"

He stopped licking my neck and glanced at me, surprised. "What do you mean? I want you."

"I know that, git, the evidence is poking at me." I smiled at him and he grinned back. "I mean, what do you want me to do for you? How should I take care of you?"

His eyes widened a little and he looked confused. "I-I don't know. I've never done any of this before. What do you want?"

"You've already given me more than I had dared hope for. I want what you want."

"Not helping, Spike. I just want to feel you, lie with you, kiss you..."

"Be in me?"

His erection didn't so much as jump against my hip as leap up and shout "God yes!" I chuckled and said, "Right then. We need lube." I started to get up and Xander clutched at my arm.

"Middle drawer. Table's on your side of the bed." His voice was cracking and his eyes were so wide I

thought I would fall in. I reached over and opened the drawer, searching for the tube. It was under three comics and a candy wrapper. Guess he didn't use it much.

I lay down next to him again and put the tube in his hand. We started kissing again, this time more frantic, almost like we did at the restaurant parking lot, like we did when we first got back to his apartment. I had my arms around him, pulling him on top of me. Finally he kneeled up above me and opened the tube.

"Which way?" I asked, hoping I didn't have to explain all the options.

His eyes got even darker and he said, "I want to see you. I want to look at you when I enter you, I want to see you when I move and I want to see you when you come."

Good God.

I just nodded and spread my legs. He put some lube

on his fingers and leaned back down to kiss me. I put a hand at the base of his neck and just held him there, tasting him. We were still kissing when he moved one of my legs, draping it over his shoulder. I felt his hand brush past my cock and then there was a finger teasing my entrance, and thank you pushing inside. I gasped into the kiss.

He moved his finger slowly and carefully, letting me get used to it. He pushed a little deeper and muttered into my mouth, "Should be right about here-" and he crooked that wonderful finger and I cried out.

He looked smug. He withdrew the finger and then he pushed two inside of me and started moving them, sliding in and out, stretching me. He brushed my prostate on about every third stroke and I was going out of my mind. He dribbled more lube onto his hand and used three fingers for a half dozen strokes and finally pulled them out.

"Sorry, Spike, I have to do this now, sorry, wanted to make it so good for you, but I have to..." he

babbled as he lubed his cock.

"Hush, don't be sorry, it's perfect, want you inside me, want your cock in me, do it now Xan, please."

He put the head of his cock at the entrance and nudged, slowly pushing past the ring of muscle. Oh god, it felt so good, so right. The slight burning was soon gone and the head of his erection was inside.

"Spike. Open your eyes. Look at me."

I fought to get my eyes open and when I did he smiled. "Want you, Spike. Want you like this."

"Want you, Xander."

He pushed slowly into me, gently. Taking his time, trying not to hurt me. When he was buried in me he leaned over once again and kissed me softly. "Never hurt you."

"I know."

"But I am going to fuck you into the mattress."

"Ghaagh"

"Yes. Ghaagh." Then he started to move. Long, deep strokes, almost all the way out and then slamming into me. With every thrust he hit the sweet spot and I would moan.

"Spike, so tight. God, you're so tight. You're beautiful, you're so hot. Fuck, you feel so good around me, squeezing me, milking me. Christ, this is so good."

Slamming into me. His hips moving in his own rhythm, setting a brutal pace. Those long strokes were replaced by shorter, harder ones, filling me completely. He held my hips steady, his fingers digging into my ass as he fucked me.

"Xander, Christ, Xander. So hard, yes. Fuck me, Xander, fuck me!"

He let go of my hips and wrapped a hand around

my erection, jerking me off in time with his thrusts. Then he shook his head and slowed down a little, letting go of me.

"Want to hold you down. Please, Spike, please. Touch yourself for me, just jerk off for me."

I groaned and did as he asked. He pinned my hips down with his hands and thrust that beautiful cock in and out of me while I stroked and pulled myself. We were both raving nonsense, repeating "Yes, God yes" over and over.

"So close Spike, I'm gonna come, please, I want to watch you come with me, Spike."

I shot all over my stomach and chest, ribbons of white mingling with our sweat. I shuddered and jerked with my release and Xander stopped moving, his cock deep inside me and he groaned as well.

"God yes, Spike, so good, thank you, Spike."

He collapsed onto my chest and we lay there, not

willing to move. Possibly not able to move.

After a while he rolled off of me, pulling out as he did. I moaned, both at the loss of his cock in my ass and at the feeling that I wouldn't be walking anywhere for a while.

We looked at each other and took in the mess.

"Wonder if there is any hot water yet?" he said.

"Only one way to find out," I said with a grin.

He looked at me in disbelief. "Yeah, I send you to shower while I get some food together. Get going, Blondie."

Twenty minutes later we were sitting in the kitchen, all clean and shiny. He was eating cereal and I had a nice warm mug of O neg. The blood was a surprise. Xander said he understood that it was good manners to have your date's favorite food on hand. I like that man.

"So, what do we tell the others?" I finally ask.

"We'll tell them it's all Dawn's fault for making us go to the Bronze."

"Sounds good. Let's go to bed."

The End