

Summary: Riley is back, Xander is not pleased.

Categories: [Angel/Buffy](#) Characters: Ensemble

Genres: Gen, Het, PreSlash, Slash

Warnings: Caveat Lector, None Given

Challenges: None

Series: The Beginning Series

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Story Notes:

AN: Takes place during most recent season of Angel (5?) except for the last episode. W&H are still going strong, but Connor is gone and only Angel remembers that he ever existed. Cordy's in a coma. Just think of it as an AU since I have little knowledge of Angel storyline canon. I've seen about 8 episodes total.

AN2: I am aware that Xander's name changes to Alexander depending on the POV. And I am also aware that it can be annoying. What can I do? Alexander insists on it since he decided that he outgrew the name Xander.

1. [Chapter 1](#) by MultiMapper

Chapter 1 by MultiMapper

Riley walked cautiously into the lobby of the Hyperion hotel. Xander stood before him with a determined look on his face and a battleaxe in his hand. After a moment of undisguised tension between them, Angel walked into the room.

"Can I help you?" Angel asked, giving a disapproving glance at Xander.

"I have some business to discuss, maybe we should talk privately." Riley said with his own disapproving glance.

"Anything you have to say, you can say in front of Xander." Angel responded.

Angel cast a surreptitious glance at Xander who shifted his eyes toward Riley and took an obvious inhale.

Taking the hint, Angel took a casual inhale of breath through his nose and understood Xander's wariness. He smelled the blood of at least a dozen demons. At this revelation, he focused his preternatural hearing and heard Riley's heartbeat racing at almost twice a normal human's.

Oblivious to their realizations, Riley continued, "Fine, I need to enlist the aid of Angel investigations to find the home of a demon underground railroad of sorts. We've been tracking them from South America and all signs lead to Los Angeles."

Angel had been focused on Riley while he spoke, then he glanced again at Xander. With another quick flick of his eyes, Xander indicated the front doors. Angel took another unneeded breath and picked up the scents of two others outside the doors, both steeped in demon blood.

"Thank you for wanting to include me Angel, but I have no business in your business." Xander said and turned to leave.

"Fine. Would you call Gunn and tell him we may have a job?" Angel said casually.

Xander nodded as he went into the lounge to make the call.

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"Gunn, this is Alexander. Angel wanted me to call you and let you know that we may have a job."

Alexander said, trying to figure out how to tip Gunn off.

"Alright, do I need to come over?" Gunn asked.

"I don't think so, just be available. I was wanting to take Willie for a walk and hoped you would join me. You know where Angel likes to walk in the afternoon? Could you meet me there in a few minutes? I just need to get Willie's things together." Alexander said, trying to sound normal.

There was a moment of silence on the phone before Gunn replied, "Uh... yeah, I know the place. I know how much Fred likes to go on walks with you, still, she should probably stay home." Gunn said, hoping that he wasn't being too obvious or too obscure with his question.

"I hate to think of Fred being at home all alone, she's such a social creature. She really needs to be around other people." Alexander nearly choked on the words, but had to get the message across.

"Your right, it would be a shame for her to be boxed in on a day like this. Go get your things together and I'll see you in a few." Gunn said quickly.

"See you then." Alexander responded and hung up the phone.

Alexander walked out of the lounge and noticed that Angel and Riley had gone into Angel's office.

He made his way quickly upstairs and into his room where he found Wesley watching Willie play in the shower floor.

"Get his things together and meet me in the basement, I'm going to get Cordelia and we're getting out of here. Gunn's going to meet us in the tunnel." Alexander said quickly before leaving again. He was glad that he and Wesley had discussed some of Angel's adventures during their visits or he might not have known about the entrance to the tunnels in the basement.

Wesley quickly gathered the baby and went down the back stairs to the kitchen. He went to the refrigerator and put ten blood bags into the diaper bag, then from beside the refrigerator he grabbed a handful each of plastic bags and towels and some bottles of water. As quickly and quietly as possible he made his way into the basement to wait for Alexander.

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Alexander gathered the comatose form of Cordelia close then threw her over his shoulder in a fireman's carry. He quickly made his way down the back stairs and into the basement where he found Wesley and Willie waiting for him.

"What's this all about?" Wesley asked with worry.

"I'll tell you once we're in the sewer. Help me get this open." Alexander said with strain in his voice.

Together they were able to open the heavy door that blocked the sewer tunnel entrance from the basement. Once through, they heard movement to their right.

"Nice day for a walk." Alexander said with tense humor.

"Yeah, you wanna tell me what the hell's going on?" Gunn asked with absolutely no patience.

"Sure, let's get moving and I'll tell you as we go. I assume we're going to meet up with Fred?"

Alexander said.

"Yeah, this way." Gunn said shortly.

"Upstairs, Angel is talking to Riley Finn, he used to be a member of a top-secret government operation call 'the Initiative'. They captured demons and performed medical experiments on them. They are the ones who put a behavior modification chip in Willie's father's head. They also cut parts from living demons to make a frankenstein's monster of human, demon and technology. This guy upstairs just walked in, stinking of demon blood, and asked for Angel to do a job for him. There were two of his people guarding the front door, so they probably had guards on the other entrances too. They are known to use wire taps, so I have to assume that they were listening to us on the phone. And I probably just told them all about Willie and myself if they intercepted my email to the Sunnysdalers."

"So what do you think they wanted with Angel?" Wesley asked, as he tried to remember what he knew of the initiative.

"There's no way to be sure. I'll tell you what I know... they modified Riley to make him some kind of super soldier, save your Captain America jokes for the end, please. A few years ago they figured out that the super soldier thing was killing him by burning him out. So they had to do an operation to reverse some of the super soldier effects. One of those effects was a resting heartbeat of around 150. Just now, Riley had that old familiar heartbeat which says to me that, at the very least the super soldier part of the initiative program is still alive, I think that's enough reason to at least consider that the rest of it has been revived as well."

Wesley thought for a moment and summarized, "So we have enhanced human soldiers stinking of demon blood guarding the front entrance of the hotel. Those seem to be the facts, without speculation."

"Yes, I'd say that's fair. Guys, do you think I overreacted?" Alexander asked timidly.

"Not at all Alexander, you acted in the best interest of us all..." Wesley started.

"What about Angel?" Gunn interrupted.

"I don't think he's in any danger at the moment. If they wanted to take him against his will, they would have stormed the place. I'm guessing they are going to try to get Angel to do a job for them. They'll probably tail him, tap his phone and stuff to find his contacts. Once they've learned what they want, they won't need him anymore and then they'll either capture or kill him. And if that happens, I pray they kill him." Alexander said with a diminishing voice.

They continued on in silence until Gunn indicated an exit from the sewer tunnel. Alexander had been so focused on the events that he had forgotten he was carrying Cordelia on his shoulder until he tried to climb the ladder.

They emerged from the sewer into a cluttered basement. Gunn led the group up to the ground floor of an obviously abandoned building and said, "I'm going to go get Fred, she's nearby. I'm guessing you think that she's being followed?"

"I have to assume that she is. We also have to get a message to Angel to let him know that we're safe. He'll be free to do a lot more if he doesn't have to worry about us." Alexander said thoughtfully.

"So, the cell phone is probably out of the question." Gunn said.

"Yeah, it's possible to track your location if you use the cell. We need to call Angel from a public

phone. A short message so they don't have a chance to track us." Alexander said while rocking his son in the stroller.

"What message?" Gunn asked impatiently.

"Tell Angel that we went for a walk and met up with Cordelia. We're going to visit with her for a while so don't worry, we are all fine." Xander said then turned back to the baby.

"Yeah, that should do it. I'll call from the mall where Fred is waiting." Gunn said, getting ready to leave.

"Watch out for tails. Stop in and visit with friends if you need to. We'll be waiting here. If we have to move, we'll need someplace to meet. Got any ideas?" Alexander said to the group in general.

"Lorn's bar. It's been empty since it was nearly destroyed." Wesley said giving Gunn a questioning look.

"Yeah, if I don't see you back here, I'll see you there." Gunn said on the way out the door.

"Perhaps I should go with him?" Wesley asked, concerned.

"No, if we have to move, I'm depending on you to take care of Willie. I can't carry Cordelia and Willie both." Alexander said worriedly.

"Try not to worry Alexander. There is no way for them to find us. And Angel will be able to take charge of the situation once he knows that we're safe." Wesley said in a comforting voice.

"Thank you Wesley. I really needed to hear that. When I smelled that demon blood, I was so scared for Willie. When I think of what people like that would do to him, I want to kill them all." Alexander said with a trembling voice.

"It's a father's duty to protect his child to the best of his ability. It's natural that you would want to remove all threats toward your child. Just remember, if you kill them, this thing will follow you around for the rest of your life. Think of William, do what's best for him and you'll be fine." Wesley said quietly.

[*****]

Angel had heard parts of Xander's conversation with Gunn as he led the soldier into his office. He understood what Xander was doing and approved. Although he didn't know everything about Riley Finn, he knew enough. He knew that Finn had been one of the soldiers that captured and chipped Spike, that the smell of demon blood that this man carried spoke of years of killing, and that this man was trying to use him.

"So, I just want to be clear on what it is that you expect me to do." Angel said, trying to stall to give Xander time to get everyone out of the hotel. "I'm going to have some coffee, can I get you anything?" He asked, in the interest of wasting time.

"No, thank you." Riley said shortly. Angel slowly and methodically prepared a cup of coffee with amounts of sugar and cream measured with a scientist's precision.

Angel took his seat behind the desk and took a slow drink of coffee, then gave Riley a look that signaled for him to begin.

"Demons are making their way into this country from South America. We have been trying to stop it from the other end, but as soon as we get close to shutting them down, they pack up their

operation and move. The only constant is wherever they set up the other end of the operation, the demons are always sent to L.A. We want to find where and how they are coming in and stop them." Riley said with military efficiency.

Angel wasn't buying it for a minute. A person doesn't live for 250+ years and not learn a few fundamental truths along the way. If these people were part of a government agency looking for demons entering the country, they had the resources to accomplish the task without his help. They were probably here to follow him, find his contacts in the demon community, and once they were confident that they knew where the demon population were living, they would most likely carry out a mass capture or extermination.

"There was one demon that I could have asked, but he died about two weeks ago. With the recent upheaval in Sunnydale, my contacts may not be as easy to reach as usual. I'll have to ask around and see if I can turn anything up." Angel said slowly with an air of professionalism.

Riley nodded as if he approved. Then Angel continued, "You said 'We', I'd like to know who I'd be working for."

Without a flinch Riley said, "There are officials in the Venezuelan and Brazilian governments who are aware of demons and have hired my team to deal with the problem."

"Why should they care? The demons are leaving, I would think that they would hold the door open and wave 'bye'." Angel said with forced humor.

"The demons are working as mules for the drug lords of South America. The government officials are trying to curtail those illegal activities." Riley said seriously.

Angel fought to keep a neutral look on his face. Angel thought to himself, [Does this guy actually think I would believe this? Oh well, I have to keep him talking.] Then he said slowly, "Do you have any information that I can start with, a name, location, anything I can use to help me pry for information?"

"Certainly, here is a folder with the solid leads that we've compiled, so do we have a deal?" Riley questioned as the phone rang.

"Excuse me." Angel said as he answered the phone.

"Hey Angel, this is Charles. Xander wanted me to let you know that we went for a walk and met up with Cordelia. We're going to visit with her for a while so don't worry about us, we're all fine." Gunn said from the payphone.

"That's good to know, I'm with a client right now, but if I can get away later I was thinking of stopping by your sister's place." Angel said in a casual tone.

"I might see you there when we've finished our visit with Cordy, I've gotta go. Bye." Gunn said before he hung up.

"Bye." Angel said and hung up the phone before turning his attention back to Riley.

"Sorry about that." Angel said carefully, picking up the envelope as he got up and walked toward the door. "I think I have everything I need to get started. I assume that my standard fees won't be a problem."

"No problem. You can contact me at the number on the envelope when you have some information." Riley said with a smile.

Angel shook Riley's hand as they approached the front door and watched as Riley left the building.

He waited, concentrating his preternatural senses to detect if the soldiers were going to leave. After a few moments of conversation that was too quiet for Angel to hear through the heavy doors, Riley left the other two soldiers at the entrance where they were obviously going to stay.

Angel quickly gathered weapons, a few bloodbags, and a change of clothes and made his way to the basement. He found the door to the sewer tunnel closed but not locked. He forced the door open and made his way as fast as possible to the old abandoned factory where Gunn's sister had met her final death.

[Part 2]

"Wesley, have you noticed how big Willie is getting? I mean, he's not even two weeks old and he's almost two feet long." Xander said with concern.

"Yes, he is growing at an alarming rate, but while I know little about such things, I believe his mental development is progressing with his physical growth. He has started scooting himself and I dare say, he will be crawling by the end of the week." Wesley said in a comforting tone.

Then Wesley continued, "Since you are obviously concerned, you should ask the doctor if this is normal for him. But until then, consider that since he has inherited some of your more... aquatic... traits. Reptilian and Amphibian young tend to mature quickly from hatchlings to adults and then enjoy long adulthoods. It is possible that this is the case for William."

Alexander looked at Willie with a frown and said, "I suppose."

Wesley squatted in front of Willie and said, "Say Poppa... Poppa."

Willie, happy to be receiving attention said, "Da da."

Alexander watched, transfixed. Then he squatted next to Wesley and said to Willie, "Say Poppa... Poppa."

Willie turned his attention to his poppa and happily said, "Pa pa."

Then he turned and looked at Wesley and said, "Da da."

Wesley and Alexander sat in shock as they realized what was happening. To prove the theory, Wesley moved behind the stroller, out of Willie's sight. "Pa pa pa pa pa."

At a look from Alexander, they traded places and Willie said, "Da da da da."

The two men were about to explode into cheers of happiness when movement caught their attention.

Cordelia's body began to tremble. Alexander and Wesley moved to either side of her reclining form. They held on to her as the trembling became a full fledged seizure. They both laid hands on her and tried to restrict her movement without hurting her.

"What else can happen?" Alexander asked, then received an 'I can't believe you said that' look from Wesley.

Before Alexander could say anything in his defense, Cordelia's back arched, her head tilted back, and a bluish black shadow flew out of her mouth as she hoarsely screamed.

Finally, after agonizing moments her body relaxed.

Wesley noticed that she wasn't breathing. Without hesitation Wesley began to perform CPR.

After three rounds of chest compressions and breathing into her mouth, she gasped for air.

Wesley could feel her heart beating under his hand.

Then, with eyes still closed she said in a raspy voice, "Ewwwwwww!"

Then she licked her dry lips, furrowed her brow in concentration and said questioningly, "Wesley?" and opened her eyes.

"Cordelia?" Wesley asked breathlessly.

"You can take your hand off my boob now." She said with a weak smile.

[*****]

After a few minutes of trying to make Cordelia comfortable and a bottle of water, the question and answer session began.

"Why am I so weak? And what happened to Doyle?" She asked weakly but with intensity.

Wesley and Alexander looked at each other then down at Cordelia.

Alexander was finally composed enough to ask, "What is the last thing you remember Cordy?"

"We were on this ship, trying to help a bunch of half-demons escape from some crazy nazi type demons that wanted to kill anyone with even a drop of human blood. Doyle was going to try to destroy this human killing thing they had. He kissed me for luck and then I was here." Cordelia said tiredly.

Wesley felt that he had to tell her the truth, "Ms. Chase, the events you are speaking of occurred nearly four years ago."

"Oh my God, I can't believe this." Cordelia sat in stunned disbelief, then said, "What happened to my hair?"

[*****]

Gunn led Angel and Lorn toward the room where the others were waiting. He stopped to survey the situation and heard what was being said.

"Buffy the Vampire Layer can do Angel AND Spike and no one cares. I have a couple nights with Spike and I'm a whore?" Xander huffed indignantly.

Then they heard a female voice say, "Yep."

Gunn entered the room and stood in shock at the sight of Cordelia laying awake and aware on the floor.

Angel and Lorn walked in next, Lorn was frozen, much the same as Gunn but Angel ran to Cordelia and gathered her into his arms.

"Uh, Angel? I don't know what our relationship was like in the last four years but as far as I remember, this wasn't in the job description." She said with as much menace as she could muster.

There was a quick recap from Wesley of how Cordelia had regained consciousness followed by an equally quick recap from Angel of what Riley wanted.

"Why do you think he was trying to convince me of that ridiculous story?" Angel asked in genuine puzzlement.

"Probably because he believes it, he's unusually stupid, even for a human." Alexander said with a grin.

Wesley, Gunn and Cordelia gave an indignant "Hey!" as Alexander laughed.

"I was just kidding guys." Alexander said with a smile. Then he remembered the other major event of the day.

He squatted in front of Willie and said, "Say Poppa."

And Willie obliged with a "Pa pa."

Then Wesley moved beside Alexander, Willie saw him and said, "Da da."

Angel moved to Alexander's other side and Willie noticed, he looked up at Angel with an angry expression and said, "Blah!"

[*****]

Lorn led the group through tunnels, back alleys and finally into a seedy looking neighborhood. There weren't any problems traveling except trying to keep Cordelia quiet about where Angel's hands were while he was carrying her.

As the group walked inside a ratty looking little home they were amazed at the beauty inside the house. The place was comfortable and welcoming. A familiar voice came out of the back of the house. "There you are! Oh my, let me see the little one. Isn't he precious, what did you name him?" The Shamenka asked in a rush.

"William Jesse Harris, Ma'am." Alexander said with a smile.

"Liam, you're looking much better than when last I saw you." She said with a knowing smile.

Angel just answered with a sheepish, "Yes ma'am."

"Please, put the young lady down on the sofa, I suppose you boys have important things to discuss. Why don't you go on out to the kitchen while I talk with the young lady and tend to the child?" The Shamenka said in a tone that meant 'do it now'.

[*****]

The men-folk met in the kitchen, talking and arguing, as men do, until they came up with a plan. Lorn, Gunn and Angel each left the house to gather trusted men to aid them. The first stage of the plan was simple. Recon, follow the men guarding the Hyperion and find out how many there are, where they stay, what routes they take, and the like.

Gunn arrived back at the house first, he had four men and a woman with him, all obviously skilled

fighters. They were gathered in the kitchen, drinking coffee and leaning on counters when Angel arrived with six stout vampires. The vampires and the homies stared each other down for a moment until Lorn walked in leading six of the biggest, ugliest demons that anyone had ever seen.

After some uncomfortable introductions, everyone was told what was going on and sent to do their reconnaissance. They were going to watch the soldier boys, and as long as the soldiers stayed put, nothing would happen, but the minute they made a move to take the hotel... Let's just say there would be some fat and happy demons and vampires if the soldiers made that move.

[*****]

Angel, Xander, Gunn and Lorn made their way back into the Hyperion via the tunnels. The Shamenka had agreed to care for Cordy and Willie with Wesley's help until the Riley problem had been resolved.

Angel began making telephone calls to various vampires, all of whom said the same things to him. Demons were leaving L.A. and heading for Ohio. If any demons were arriving here, they weren't staying.

When Angel had completed his last call he summoned Gunn to the phone to make his series of calls. And all the calls had the same result. Next Xander made a series of calls, then came a series of calls made by Lorn, although no one but Lorn knew what he was saying, for authenticity's sake, he made the calls.

Before Xander got on the phone to make the final call he asked, "Isn't this plan kind of obvious? I mean, it just stinks of a setup."

Angel considered Xander's words and asked, "Do you remember how you first described Riley to me?"

"Yeah, I said he was dumb as a sack of doorknobs."

"Have you changed your mind?" Angel asked with a smile.

"Nope."

"Then why don't you make the call that will remove all his doubts?" Angel said happily.

Xander picked up the phone and dialed, a moment later he said, "Buffy?"

"Xander? Oh God! It's great to hear from you. How are you? I got your email, how's William? You should have called sooner, we've been so worried!" She rambled.

"Woah Buff, before we catch up, I have a business question for you. How are things going with your hellmouth?..."

And as they had planned, Buffy told Xander how the Cleveland hellmouth was busier than Sunnydale ever was and how the demon population was nearly as big as the human population.

About an hour later Xander finally hung up the phone and rubbed his ear. "If that didn't do it, I don't know what will." He commented as he walked around the lobby.

"All we can do now is sleep and wait for the call." Angel said, and the group of men went their separate ways to get some rest.

The next morning Angel put the icing on the cake by calling Riley and telling him that he couldn't find any evidence of a demon underground but he had heard from reliable sources that Cleveland was nearly overrun.

Within an hour of Angel's call to Riley, there was a call from one of Gunn's scouts saying that the soldier boys were packing up and heading out.

[*****]

Two days later in the lounge of the Hyperion hotel, Willie crawled across the floor at full speed and grabbed onto Angel's pants leg trying to pull himself to stand. When he lost his grip he yelled, "Blah!"

Angel just smiled indulgently as the frustrated Willie scooted across the floor and tried the same technique with Wesley's pant leg. When he lost his grip this time, he got an angry look and screamed, "Blah!"

The entire group of adults was now watching the child try to stand. Willie went to his poppa's leg and strained and pulled until he managed to pull himself fully to standing. He looked around the happy faces of the adults who were clapping and cheering.

When Willie looked into his Poppa's eyes he said, "Bloody 'ell"

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